

## Elwood's Historic Archway



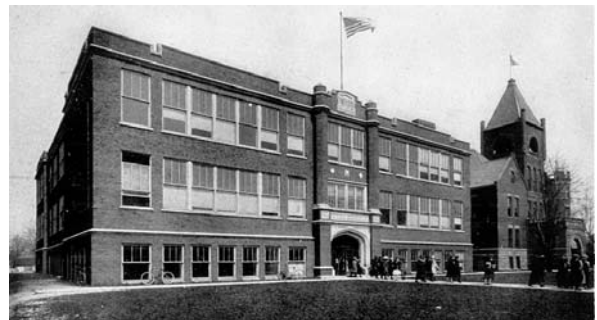
This archway was once attached to the porch of the Central School Building in downtown Elwood. The city of Elwood is the birthplace of [Wendell L. Willkie](#), a candidate for President of the United States in 1940. Willkie came to Elwood to accept the nomination and spoke briefly under this arch before the celebration was moved to the city park where he gave his acceptance speech. The top part of the arch is engraved with the words "*The Hope of Our Country*" to reflect the importance of all of the youth who pass through it. The Central School no longer exists, but the archway stands between the current Elwood Middle School and Elwood Community High School as a reminder of education's role in shaping future generations.



This is a picture of Wendell L. Willkie's motorcade through downtown Elwood prior to his welcome under the arch in front of the Central School building. The picture became his most popular campaign picture. Below is a picture of one of Willkie's campaign buttons.



To the left, is a picture of the Central School building as it would have appeared when Willkie graduated from high school. Wendell was the son of the original high school teacher and first superintendent of schools, Herman Willkie.



Another school building that became the new high school was constructed adjacent to this building in 1915. The new high school was renamed Wendell L. Willkie High in 1944.



Wendell L. Willkie requested to give his acceptance speech under the arch of the Central building. However, the crowd was too large for the front lawn of the school. This is a picture of the crowd at the school to hear Willkie give a few introductory remarks and to invite all to go to Callaway park for the actual speech. The motto above the arch had been highlighted in chalk to make it more visible to the crowd.



This is a picture of the [crowd](#) at the Elwood city park to hear Wendell Willkie accept the nomination for President of the United States