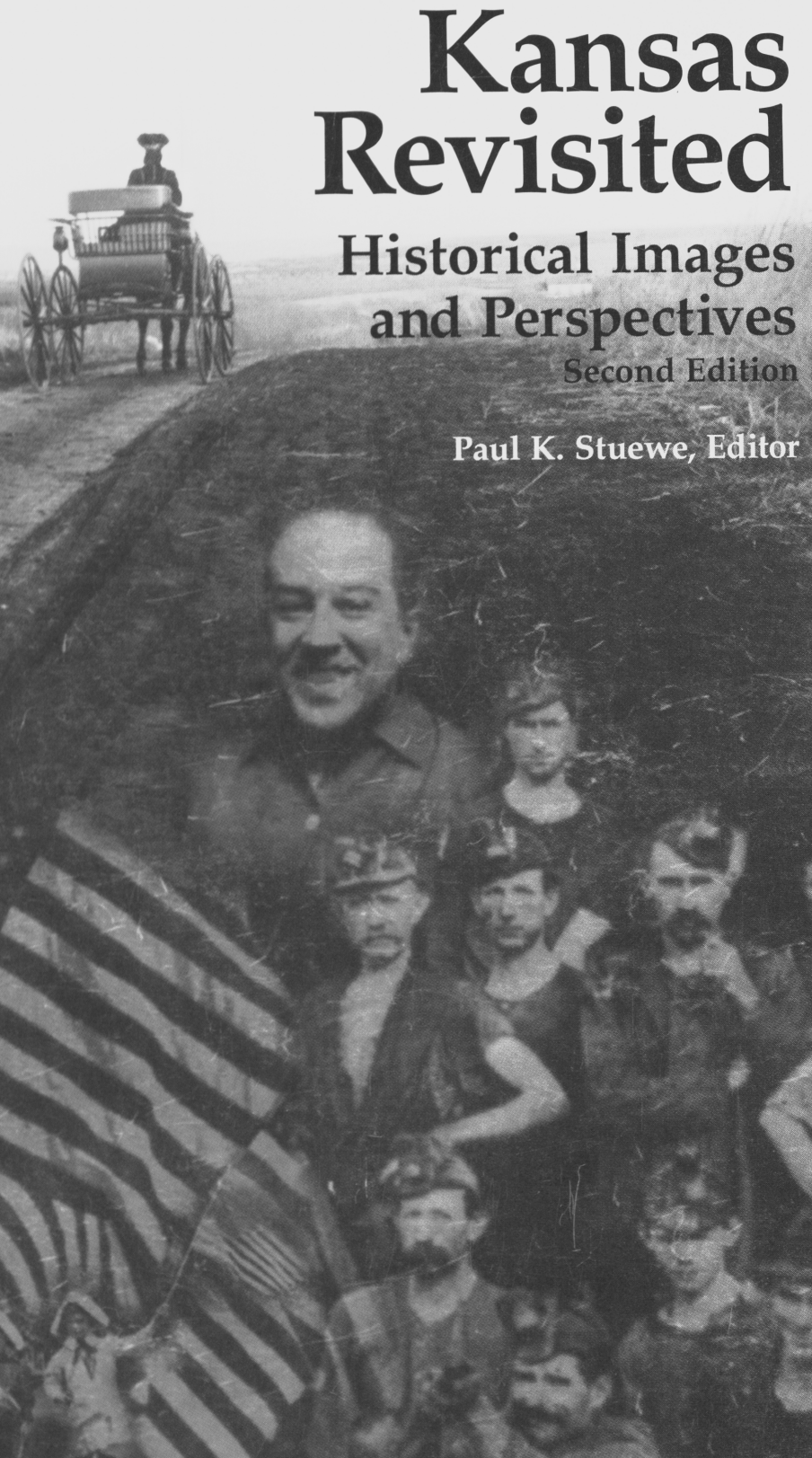
Kansas Revisited

Historical Images and Perspectives

Second Edition

Paul K. Stuewe, Editor



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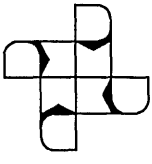

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To Beth, and our daughter, Elizabeth

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Preface

It is my hope that *Kansas Revisited: Historical Images and Perspectives* will provide a sense of the people, times, issues, and places that help make the Kansas experience meaningful. State and local history is important in understanding one's culture and roots and in developing a sense of community and shared responsibility. History helps us recognize that life is a process and that we must constantly try to learn from experience and to exercise better judgment.

This second edition of *Kansas Revisited: Historical Images and Perspectives* includes nine new articles. Most of these articles were written since the first edition was published but a few classics were added also.

This book is not a definitive source on Kansas history. Although the selections are organized chronologically, some important people and events are neglected or omitted. Because of their limited exposure in many American history and Kansas history textbooks, we have given special attention to Kansans of color and Kansas women, specifically in the Sheridan, Stone, Armitage, Smith, Woods, Schofield, and Dandridge and Tuttle articles. Agriculture, also an often overlooked part of our history, is addressed in the Shortridge, Saul, Clanton, Isern, Bentley, Krider and Clifford, and Bentley and Fund articles. Including a range of scholars, not just historians, gives this book an interdisciplinary flavor.

The age-old questions of Kansas character and image are explored in some depth in Chapter One, the only chapter not directly associated with a particular time period. Carl Becker's famous characterization of Kansas as "no mere geographical expression, but a 'state of mind', a religion, and a philosophy in one" is also assessed by such

notable historical figures as William Allen White and Karl A. Menninger. Contemporary scholars C. Robert Haywood and James P. Shortridge explore the complexities of Kansas culture and stereotypes and the state's journey to maturity. The themes of character and image are addressed in many of the articles throughout the book.

Kansas Revisited: Historical Images and Perspectives presents both positive and negative aspects of our experience. While Becker's article will fill Kansans with pride, Unrau's article on the depopulation of the Kansa Indians will make many readers remorseful. The Armitage, Smith, and Schofield articles show strong Kansas women overcoming great odds, but the barriers were even higher for African Americans as Woods, and Dandridge and Tuttle point out. Krider and Clifford, Bentley and Fund, and Averill conclude the book with assessments of the present and visions of the future.

Each chapter introduction briefly explains the chapter contents and provides historical perspective. Although the footnotes were removed and some selections were abridged for this anthology, the full citation for each selection will guide those who wish to read the entire piece. Each chapter concludes with a short bibliography of books and articles for further reading. The sources listed combine classic with contemporary scholarship. The "Suggested Readings" sections list many works that I would have liked to include in the book. This edition also includes an annotated list of useful Internet sites on Kansas history and culture.

I am greatly indebted to the Kansas authors whom I contacted for ideas and articles. They provide the insight that helps us better understand our roots. A special thanks to Nancy Colyer for asking me to do this project and to Donna Butler, Nicolette Bromberg, Kristin Eshelman, and Nancy Sherbert for their help in selecting photographs. Thanks are also due to Malcolm Neelley, Teresa Stevenson, and Joan Davies, who provided word-processing and layout services. Virgil Dean insightfully guided me in selecting new articles for this edition. But most of all I would like to thank my editor, Barbara Watkins. Her background in Kansas history as a researcher, writer, and editor made me feel comfortable in this undertaking and grateful for the opportunity.

Finally, I hope that those who "revisit" Kansas in the following pages will gain a better appreciation for Kansas history and for the diversity of our culture and its people.

Chapter 1

Images of Kansas: Classic and Contemporary

Perhaps more than most states, Kansas has an image that has changed over time as the country has changed. When Kansas became a state on the eve of the Civil War, the so-called "Kansas Question" and "Bleeding Kansas" were headline news in the Eastern press. As the focus of national attention, Kansas was a symbol in the struggle for freedom and represented a new beginning, a place where great experiments could be tested. The desert myth was replaced by the garden myth, pioneers settled, the railroads came, and the Cattle Kingdom was born. The Exodusters sought to create a new community after Reconstruction failed in the South. Women saw Kansas as an opportunity to gain suffrage at the state and national levels. They adopted the state flower, the sunflower, as their symbol. Social and political reformers from prohibitionists to populists saw Kansas as fertile ground for their causes. Kansas had the image of a state where important things were happening. But the nation was changing at the beginning of the twentieth century from an agrarian economy to an industrial economy and people were leaving rural areas for larger cities. Kansas's image suffered as a result.

Chapter One begins with the article "What Happened to Kansas?" by Robert Haywood, a Kansas historian and teacher. Haywood examines Kansas at various points in its history and addresses the love-hate ambivalence many have felt about the state.

William Allen White of Emporia, journalist, world traveler, and advisor to presidents, was one of the most important figures in Kansas history. His essay, "Kansas: A Puritan Survival," originally published in *The Nation* in 1922, assesses the effects of the state's Puritan roots on its development. Although White lauds Kansas' egalitarian principles, he laments its inability to produce great poets, painters, musicians, writers, and philosophers.

Carl L. Becker's article, "Kansas," was written in 1910, when he was a young professor at the University of Kansas. Becker, who later gained national acclaim, characterizes Kansas as "no mere geographical expression, but a 'state of mind,' a religion, and a philosophy in one." Becker concludes that "the Kansas spirit is the American spirit double distilled," combining elements of Puritanism, individualism, liberty, conformity and materialism.

With his father and brothers, Karl A. Menninger founded the world-famous Menninger Clinic near Topeka in 1925. A Kansas native, he scolds the state's residents in this 1939 *Kansas Magazine* article, "Bleeding Kansans," for their self-depreciation instead of seeing the beauty and idealism the state has to offer.

James P. Shortridge, professor of cultural geography at the University of Kansas, provides a thought-provoking framework for assessing Kansas in "Cowboy, Yeoman, Pawn and Hick: Myth and Contradiction in Great Plains Life." Shortridge analyzes these stereotypes and then suggests that Kansas residents might replace these images with a culture better grounded in current realities of plains life.

The articles in this chapter provide the reader with a better understanding of the nature of the historical image and character of Kansas. The nature of the Kansas character continues to be a hotly debated question from the statehouse to the coffee shops throughout the state.

What Happened to Kansas?

Robert Haywood

From time to time, paid "authorities," national humorists, native champions, visiting firemen, and those who simply love the state have taken up pen or typewriter to tell the world what happened to Kansas. Most admit to being considerably mystified by that "geographical expression" and its fate. Words like "dilemma," "ambivalence," "divergent," "strange," and "dichotomy" crop up with predictable frequency. Natives who are exposed to this rhetoric are grateful no one has as yet put a finger on the precise pulse or cleared the air of all mystery. They enjoy the effort, doubt the conclusions, and generally keep their own counsel.

A sampling of five commentaries from the vast array available are offered here in chronological order as being either typical, notorious, or somewhat close to the mark.

The first to attract national attention was William Allen White's now famous, or infamous, editorial of 1896. For White there was no mystery. He knew what the trouble was. Kansas was being made to look the fool by a crop of "shabby, wild-eyed, rattle-brained fanatics" and lecturing "harpies . . . telling the people that Kansas is raising Hell and letting the corn go to weeds . . ." This was not an analytical essay; it was a political tirade written in a fit of peevish pique during the height of the McKinley-Bryan campaign. Yet, his name-calling of the Populist opposition (who were clobbering the established Republi-

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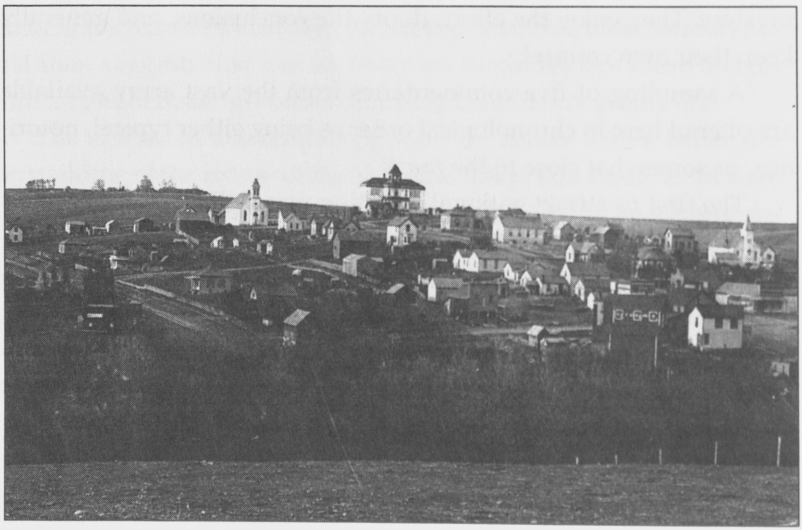
From Robert Haywood, "What Happened to Kansas?" *Humanities* 10 (Winter 1985): 1–2. Reprinted with permission of the Kansas Humanities Council.

cans at the local polls), fastened an image on Kansas that has been as tenacious as that of the Wizard of Oz, lasting because the editorial was widely circulated, cleverly written, and sounded like what a hick state ought to be.

In calmer moments, White exulted in the excellence of Kansas village life and reflected the true Progressive fear that this utopia might be subverted by industrialism and economic centralization. The public never remembered that side of the Emporia oracle. Who knows anyone who has read *In the Heart of a Fool* or *A Certain Rich Man*?

The most unlikely spokesman for Kansas was a benign Mount Oread college professor, who helped establish his reputation with a whimsical, literary apology for being in Kansas in the first place. Why, Carl L. Becker asks, as an intellectual Eastern observer, would anyone riding a train between Kansas City and Lawrence look out the window at the sunflowers and say with great feeling, "Dear old Kansas!"? It was for him a profound mystery, resolved only when he discovered Kansas roots reached deep into his own Puritan New England. Even then, he found Kansans very different from the people back East. Kansans were idealistic, peculiar, distinctive, and individualistic, although marked by "a certain uniformity . . . much after the same pattern."



Goff, Kansas. Goff's image is of a classic small Kansas town. Surrounded by open fields, its buildings—on square-cut streets—include churches, an imposing school on a hill, a few stores, and well-tended homes.

Clearly, Becker was having difficulty coming to grips with the strange folk on the prairies.

He did find many positive attributes. The Kansas pilgrims were blessed by an "instinct to endure" and to joke about the endurance. He marveled at their enthusiasm and their assumption that, destined to succeed, they had the right and obligation to point the way—the morally correct way—to less fortunate people. What saved this self-righteousness from becoming disastrous dogma was an abiding "passion for equality." It was a prideful virtue a New Englander could respect. Although Becker saw Kansans devoted to certain high ideals, as well as concrete principles, what made Kansans different was their being "in touch with a certain cosmic process," not something inherent in the land, but rather, a unique "state of mind."

Since Becker served the state far better than its own journalists, Kansas has frequently called in other outsiders to sort things out and tell the state where it's going. In 1954, Allan Nevins, a New York journalist turned historian, was invited to do the job for the Kansas Centennial Conference and presented several cogent, sometimes tendentious observations to mark the occasion. He found much to praise in the early, pioneer experience, from the bloody days of John Brown through the frenzied era of "Sockless" Jerry Simpson. Those early fighters and Populist hell-raisers did much to preserve liberalism and individual freedoms. In those days, Kansas had been "a cutting force" in the American system.

Now (that is, 1954), after a hundred years, new dilemmas faced the state. The crucial challenge for Kansas, as for the nation, was to preserve the "ancient freedoms while pursuing the inexorable path of consolidation and centralization" under an expanding "militarism." In all honesty, Nevins wasn't very hopeful that the state, which had offered so many solutions early on, was still up to the job. Nevins found that Kansas had become over the years neglectful of the arts and culture, "relatively uneducated, unread, untravelled, and largely unaware of historic fact or current world trends." Kansans simply weren't qualified any longer to point the way.

More recently (1976) an expatriate voiced some of the same concerns over Kansas' diminished capacities. Kenneth S. Davis wrote of the discontent rekindled by the ambivalent emotions he experienced on returning to his home state after an absence of fifteen years. Once

he crossed the border into Kansas, he experienced a ". . . sense of relinkage with a particular vitally significant space . . . a sense of renewing acquaintance with a distinct personality about whom I deeply cared . . . and as our tour continued, this sense, this generalized emotion, was increasingly permeated by those powerful ambivalences of pride-and-disgust, pleasure-and-exasperation, even passionate love-and-hate, which Kansas used to arouse or provoke in me when I lived within the borders." What perturbed Davis most was his awareness of rich promise unfulfilled—"the Puritan conviction turned to petty prohibition, the Populist leadership no longer in the vanguard of social progress, and civic idealism soured into unmitigated self-righteousness." He was dismayed to find "the two most publicized issues before the legislature . . . were 'bingo' and liquor," an irritation shared by many Kansans.

An even more recent evaluation, by Neal R. Pierce and Jerry Hagstrom, echoed the Davis lament. They found Kansas an "eclipsed state" living "in the shadows," with its old "national role . . . diminished." "Indeed," they wrote, "nowhere on the American continent can the eclipse of a region or state as a vital force—a focal point of creative change or exemplar of national life—be felt so strongly and poignantly as in Kansas." They quote a contemporary professor at Kansas University, less benign than Becker, who suggested that Kansas ought to be declared "a national monument, the best source of quality human talent—most of it for export." What is left, apparently, is the flat, mediocre center of the nation. "Take any measure of government policy and performance—from taxation to services, highways to education—and Kansas will rank midway in the fifty states."

The rest of the Pierce-Hagstrom piece was given over to a listing of Kansas assets. Many were found quite tarnished—such as an agricultural economy blossoming in the old Dust Bowl, but threatened by inflation, poor markets, and a depleted Ogallala Aquifer; and the two largest municipalities—well-managed but suffering from racial discords. Other resources could be bragged about in the old-fashioned Becker manner—aerospace plants, federal and military prisons, oil and gas wells and plants, Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*, marijuana harvests, and "the largest area of essentially untouched prairie anywhere on the continent." Of all these good things, they judged the "amazing" Menninger Foundation to be the greatest.

You can tell the authors were trying to be kind to the old state. It's the sort of condescending kindness Kansans have grown accustomed to ever since Dorothy flew off on the typical, calm tornadic day.

All five essayists agree it's been a glorious past. Kooky sometimes—but entertaining, loveable, and productive. Nevins, who was especially enamored of those early fighters, was also aware that Kansas had toyed with "every incoherent and fantastic dream of social improvement and reform, every economic delusion that has bewildered the foggy brain of fanatics, every political fallacy nurtured by the misfortune of poverty and failure, rejected elsewhere . . ." There were two sides to the Kansas coin, he discovered. "If the reformer grew passionate, so did the conservative." The good ol' days were certainly a mixed bag.

Davis, who was nearest to understanding the Kansas psyche, agreed that Kansans always represented ambivalence. There is no coaxing uniformity of value out of the complexities of Kansas emotions and convictions. Kansans are rarely of one mind. For every virtue, there's a favored vice, for every asset, a lateral liability.

Why Kansans were, and perhaps still are, a unique bundle of recognizable contradictions has been hard to understand. Davis spent considerable time discussing the weather and the land, and their psychological influence on Kansas' conception of life and how to live it. "When the environed is a living entity, the environment is actively internalized, becoming part and parcel of the individualized psyche . . ." Such profound rationalization of uniqueness and territorial personification leads to many questions. Was the loneliness of the prairies of Kansas different from the isolation of North Dakota? Were Kansas grasshoppers larger and more gluttonous than Nebraska's? Is there anything in Comanche county terrain that resembles Finney or Johnson counties? Is it not Kansans' understanding of their environment rather than the land itself that colors their comprehension of the state?

Although each essayist was writing from his own point of time and experience, all found the passing of time had altered Kansas from the early-day freaks and fighters, and not for the better. What they are really complaining about is lost youth and the coming of maturity.

And it's true that it's harder to get a good bond scandal worked up these days because of the sophisticated governmental checks. It's

also true Nancy Kassebaum is following a different track than Carry Nation, and doesn't grab as many national headlines. Most Kansans are pretty happy about that. Bob Dole's national leadership certainly equals William Peffer's and his oneline sarcasms are about as pungent as Yellin' Ellen Lease's. The mediocre ranking doesn't always hold, either. Kansas never climbed to the national average of unemployment in the last recession, or, for all of her exported young people, lost a congressman following the 1980 census. If Jefferson's dream of a nation of yeomen farmers has faded, western Kansas has led in pioneering farming as big-business, which seems to be the latest in ordered efficiency.

While Kansas has lost some of its flamboyancy in its middle age, there still remains something of the old psyche. Her people are not more of one mind than they ever were. Some twentieth-century puritans in the state still talk of open saloons, the evil of bingo spreading beyond church basements, and the unholy threat of a Greek goddess atop the capitol building. Others believe the millennium will come with pari-mutuel betting, liquor by the drink, and statuesque goddesses wherever you put them.

The love-hate ambivalence is still much with the natives. It is fed by history, climate, land, religion, and a mingling of races. If Kansans don't understand it, they have come to accept, appreciate, and, just like their grandfathers, brag about it. Those who stay, in the main, seem to be enjoying the more dignified pace of mature middle age. What was lost in mystery and bombast, Kansans believe has been more than balanced by decorum and the good life.

Kansas: A Puritan Survival

William Allen White

It is curious how State lines mark differences in Americans. There are no climatic differences between Kansas and Missouri, and small climatic differences between Kansas and Nebraska; yet the three States hold populations in which are marked differences—differences at least which Americans may distinguish. Doubtless to Chinamen all Americans look alike! But Americans know the differences between Americans North, East, South, and West, and dwellers in a section know minor differences between persons living in neighboring States in the same section of the United States. The larger sectional differences in Americans may be somewhat the result of climatic influences. But the distinguishing points between a Kansan and a Missourian, between a New Yorker and a citizen of Vermont, between a Georgian and a Virginian or a Louisianian, or between an Oregonian and a Southern Californian arise from the changes in men made by social and political institutions.

Kansans are marked by Puritanism. "Kansas," said our greatest statesman, John J. Ingalls, nearly forty years ago, "is the child of Plymouth Rock." In the beginning of the settlement of Kansas, the State was invaded by immigrants from New England or sons and daughters of New Englanders, who came to Kansas to make this a Free State. Congress left the question of slavery to the voters of the new State. A fair fight in an open field ensued; the abolitionists crowded out the

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From William Allen White, "Kansas: A Puritan Survival," *The Nation*, April 19, 1922, pp. 460–62.

William Allen White, editor of the Emporia Gazette, *was a progressive Republican who became an important influence on state and national politics. White won the Pulitzer Prize in 1922 for his editorial writing. Many journalists considered him the outstanding editor of his day, and he was one of the most widely quoted writers of the century.*

proslavery people, outvoted them, and captured Kansas. The first Kansans, therefore, were crusaders, intellectual and social pioneers, converters of various sorts; which if you like to live comfortably upon your soft yesterdays, means that Kansas was full of cranks. Slavery being abolished your Kansans had to begin abolishing something else. Abolitionism was more than a conviction; it was a temperamental habit. It is a good or a bad habit according as you feel that you are your brother's keeper or that the devil should take the hindmost. Soldiers from the great war for the Union flooded into Kansas attracted by the free homesteads. But only Union soldiers could get free land, so Kansas was settled in the seventies and eighties almost exclusively by Northerners—partisans bitterly controversial and biologically marked by a blue stripe under the waistcoat; Yankees and children of Yankees. Something had to happen to Kansas with such a population. It happened. It was prohibition, adopted forty years ago. Curiously enough the Republican Party in Kansas always indorsed prohibition in its State platforms and through its candidates, while the Democratic Party, representing the feeble protest of the easy-going citizenship that had come in to Kansas in the fifties and sixties bringing slaves, opposed prohibition. But the Democratic minority was negligible and the prohibitionists took away the liquor of their less scrupulous neighbors as their slaves had been taken. For two decades the prohibition problem engaged Kansas. It was a hard fight, but it never wavered. The Puritan won. The Law and Order League in every town and county worked day and night, and to make the victory surer five years after prohibition came in, the State allowed women to vote in municipal matters, and women having the ballot in the towns where liquor was sold never stopped until prohibition succeeded. It required laws which permitted search and seizure, which prohibited doctors prescribing liquor, and druggists from keeping it in stock, laws which permitted the confiscation of liquor-running automobiles, and which made the second offense of the liquor seller a felony, sending him to the penitentiary for it—but in the end, prohibition won. Your Puritan is no slouch; he is thorough at all costs; thorough and fairly consistent.

For then came Populism. Populism had its genesis in the South probably; and it ran a mild course in the Dakotas and Colorado and Nebraska, States all more or less like Kansas in climate, in economic status, and in blood and breed. But because of the blood and breed,

because of the Puritan inheritance of Kansas, the dour deadly desire to fight was deemed wrong for the sheer sake of obliterating wrong. Kansas took Populism much more seriously than her sister States. Kansas produced most of the leadership of Populism. And long after Populism was defeated and forgotten Kansas clung to it, adopted its creed, and forced a dilution of Populism upon an unwilling nation. The insurgence of insurgency, the progressiveness of the Bull Moose, was the restless spirit of Kansas trying to realize the dream of Populism. Murdock, Bristow, Stubbs, Allen and Capper in the uprising of the first two decades of the century gave to the national movement a certain blind crusader's enthusiasm. It was with a ghoulish grin that Victor Murdock met a fellow Kansan the morning when Roosevelt threw his hat into the ring in 1912.

"Well—he's finally in," said the Kansan.

"And it's a fine joke on him," says Victor.

"Why?" says the Kansan.

"Because he thinks it's '60 and it's only '48," chuckled the Puritan, delighted that a great man was to aid a good cause and go to defeat in it, even if the great man did not dream what was ahead of him.

That was the Kansas of it. Murdock had no remote thought of hesitating because he saw the inevitable defeat. Defeat was his meat and drink. But he had his sneaking doubts about the Puritan zeal of Roosevelt, who was practical Dutch, doughty, and gorgeously militant; but with a sly sweet tooth for victory and its fruits. Your Puritan regards any sweet tooth as a weakness bordering upon sin! So Kansas has delighted in causes rather than conquests.

After prohibition succeeded and Populism passed, the pioneer spirit of Kansas engaged itself in several social and political experiments, most revolutionary then; but now they have become sane and commonplace attitudes in the ordinary way of life. The theory, for instance, that the State has a right to interfere in the individual's habits on behalf of the better health of the people of the State. Under the State Board of Health which had unusual police powers Kansas abolished the common drinking cup and the roller towel from public places, took over the distribution of various toxins against contagious diseases, inspected hotels and food stores, and closed them up when they were unsanitary. The State also guaranteed bank deposits and restricted

the sale of stocks and bonds to projects that had State approval; established a State hospital where crippled children may be cured at State expense; printed its own school textbooks and distributed the books at cost; tightened its grip on public utilities operating in the State; passed a law which virtually socializes all Kansas industry except agriculture, and passed the long line of legislation, once referred to as socialistic and now merely sneered at as laws of Meddlesome Mattie, but accepted by most of the progressive States of the Union and loudly bewailed by those who believe in the laissez-faire theory of morals and economics.

Kansas delighted in being among the first to pass all of these and actually the first to enact many of them. Again it was the Puritan spirit cropping out. Prohibition had kept out of Kansas hundreds of thousands of Germans and Scandinavians and Bohemians who flooded Nebraska and the Dakotas in the eighties and nineties, and the New England strains of blood continued to dominate the life of the State. Nearly 77 per cent of our population is of American-born parents. The Puritan blood even now is the strongest current—almost the only current directing our thought in Kansas. We censor the movies and prohibit them on Sundays. We forbid race-track gambling—indeed gambling of all kinds is illegal; stop the sale of cigarettes—or try to. We permit Sunday baseball, but only because it is amateur sport and is not commercialized. We prohibited the thing called white slavery before the passage of the Mann Act, and commercialized prostitution has been stopped in Kansas, as entirely as commercialized horse-stealing or commercialized arson or commercialized larceny of any kind. All these inhibitions against the natural tendency of depraved man cut loose from the apron-strings we are pleased to call moral restrictions. We make the questions moral issues arising before and after the passage of our restrictive laws. We go to the churches and schools for our political majorities. The politician who tries to assemble a majority without the churches and schools, without the women, without what is known as the best influences in the community always finds himself leading a minority. He rails at the long-haired men and short-haired women; he rages at the Pecksniffian attitude of life. But it is deeply ingrained in the Kansas character. It seems so infernally pious; so hypocritical to those who oppose these causes. Yet at base these questions—abolition, prohibition, health, stability of savings, ciga-

rettes, prostitution, gambling, and social and industrial justice—are not moral but economic in their value to society. Slavery would not work in a modern world; neither does the saloon; cigarettes and common drinking cups and prostitutes and roller towels and impure foods and long working hours cut down the producing power of men, cripple their economic efficiency; so puritanism which is always keen about the main chance makes a cause out of abolishing them, sings hymns—as, for instance, "Onward, Christian Soldiers," or "Where is my Wandering Boy Tonight," or "The Slave's Lament"—and quotes texts and holds prayer meetings to gild the main chance with the golden glow of piety. But after all it is the main chance the Puritan is after. He is an idealist planning a great democratic civilization; but one wherein a dollar will travel further, work harder, and bring in more of the fruits of civilization than any other dollar in the world. The waste of slavery, the social expense of the saloon, the venereal disease, the crooked stock seller, the purveyor of expensive schoolbooks or impure food, or the dishonest banker— each immediately becomes a check to the Puritan scheme of things and automatically is invested with evil! Meddlesome Mattie is the machinist operator who is forever listening into the works to hear a knock or a bur-r-r; and hearing it, jabs her monkey wrench into a lot of fun for some one, not because it is fun, but because it costs too much to maintain the bad adjustment.

So much for the institutions of Kansas—for her society and politics. Now for the life of Kansas, for which she has instituted her laws and social standards and upon which they rest. What manner of people are these Puritans who sing hymns and quote texts and glorify moral issues to cover the main chance, who glorify God to grease their busy dollars? As a pragmatic proposition does their civilization work? Is it worth while? Are people freer, happier, more prosperous, more comfortable and wise under this order of things than they are under the scheme of things which shrugs its Latin shoulders and says it does not care; says to waste is human, to enjoy divine? First let us look at the material side. As to wealth, for instance. Ten years ago the figures indicated that the county in the United States with the largest assessed valuation was Marion County, Kansas, a county in central Kansas, not materially different from any other county; Marion County happened to have a larger per capita of bank deposits than any other American county. Its average of per capita wealth and per capita bank deposits

was not much higher than the Kansas average. Yet no man in Marion County was then rated as a millionaire, but the jails and poorhouses were practically empty. The great per capita of wealth was actually distributed among the people who earned it. They were sober, so they saved; they were healthy, so they worked. They were well schooled, so they worked to purpose and with direction and made money. They were clear-brained, well-bred, cold-blooded Yankees, who knew exactly what they wanted, how to get it and where to put it. That is your Kansan. Typically he lives either upon an eighty-acre farm or in a detached house within a fifty-foot lot, near a schoolhouse, with an automobile in the garage, whether farmer or town dweller; if a farmer he lives upon a rural free-delivery route along which the postman brings to him at least one daily paper, one weekly paper, and one monthly; if a town dweller he lives upon a paved street, a sewer line, a telephone wire, an electric light and power conduit and a gas main. In the county wherein these lines are written, an ordinary Kansas county, the number of telephones exceeds the number of families, the daily newspaper prints as many copies as there are heads of families and in the towns the number of electric light connections is more than the number of residences. Water and gas are common and the bank deposits for the town and county are $6,260,000 and the number of depositors 21,500 in a county with the total population of 26,496 people. Ninety per cent of the families are within five miles of a high school in this county, and 25 per cent of the children of high-school age attend the high school. The county contains two colleges and the attendance from the county in the colleges is 623! A farm agent who receives $2,200 a year advises the farmers about crops, helps them to overcome bugs and pests, and organizes them for marketing. The county is spending a quarter of a million upon its own hospital and no citizen of the county is in jail. Twenty-five miles of hard-surfaced roads are under construction and as much more ordered in. It costs less than $2,000 last year to try all the criminals that infest the courts, and a preacher is police judge of the county-seat town. He commits less than a dozen men a year to jail— and this in a town of 12,000 surrounded by a county of 26,496.

This is a Kansas average, and there is your ideal Puritan civilization: a prosperous people, burdened neither by an idle and luxurious class who are rich, nor taxed to support a sodden and footless class

verging upon pauperism. A sober people practically without a criminal class, an intelligent people in so far as intelligence covers a knowledge of getting an honest living, saving an occasional penny, and living in a rather high degree of common comfort; a moral people in so far as morals consist in obedience to the legally expressed will of the majority with no very great patience for the vagaries of protesting minorities. A just and righteous people in so far as justice concerns the equitable distribution of material things, and righteousness requires men to live at peace among men of good-will. A free people in so far as freedom allows men and women to have and hold all that they earn, and makes them earn all that they get. But a people neighbor minded in the Golden Rule, a people neighbor bound by ties of duty, by a sense of obligation, by a belief in the social compact, in the value of the herd, in the destiny of the race. All these social totems are concentrated in the idea of God in the Kansas heart. We are a deeply religious people. Time was when they used to say in Kansas that the Republican Party and the Methodist church were the spiritual forces that controlled the State. "Ad astra per aspera," to the stars by hard ways, is the State motto, and kindly note the "hard ways." Ours is no easy approach to grace, no royal road to happiness, no backstairs to beneficence. There is no earthly trail paralleling the primrose path in which one can avoid the wrath of God and the lady next door. Life and liberty are indeed highly esteemed in Kansas; but the pursuit of happiness only upon conditions set forth in the Ten Commandments, the Golden Rule, and their interpretation by the Kansas statutes.

Still we are not a joyless people. We laugh easily, and for the most part kindly. But we often approve the things we laugh at; we laugh one way and vote another. Our sense of humor saves us, but not entirely whole; we have never laughed ourselves out of our essential Puritanism. Laughter as a solvent has been tried—the anti-prohibitionists tried it, the opponents of Populism tried it, the defenders of Cannon and Aldrich and conservatism tried it. But they all failed as flatly as the Missourians and the gay Southerners failed who tried to laugh at the abolition rifles by dubbing them "Beecher's Bibles." Deep in our hearts is the obsessed fanaticism of John Brown. Joy is an incident, not the business of life. Justice as it works out under a Christian civilization is the chief end of man in Kansas.

But alas, this is begging the question. For who can say that the establishment of justice is the chief end of a state? Indeed who can say

even what justice is? Is it just that every man should earn what he gets and get what he earns? Or is it just that those who see and feel and aspire to do great things—to make life beautiful for themselves and others— should be pared down to the norm in their relations with mankind? Is it justice to establish a state where the weak may thrive easily and the strong shall be fettered irrevocably in their most earnest endeavors? Should a state brag of the fact that it distributes its wealth equitably—almost evenly—when it has produced no great poet, no great painter, no great musician, no great writer or philosopher? Surely the dead level of economic and political democracy is futile if out of it something worthy—something eternally worthy—does not come. The tree shall be known by its fruit. What is the fruit of Kansas? Is happiness for the many worth striving for? What is the chief end of a civilization? What is the highest justice?

What we lack most keenly is a sense of beauty and the love of it. Nothing is more gorgeous in color and form than a Kansas sunset; yet it is hidden from us. The Kansas prairies are as mysterious and moody as the sea in their loveliness, yet we graze them and plow them and mark them with roads and do not see them. The wind in the cottonwoods lisps songs as full of meaning as those the tides sing, and we are deaf. The meadow lark, the red bird, the quail live with us and pipe to us all through the year, but our musicians have not returned the song. The wide skies of night present the age-old mystery of life, in splendor and baffling magnificence, yet only one Kansas poet, Eugene Ware, has ever worn Arcturus as a bosom pin. The human spirit—whatever it is in God's creation—here under these winds and droughts and wintry blasts, here under these drear and gloomy circumstances of life, has battled with ruthless fate as bravely and as tragically as Laocoon; yet the story is untold, and life no richer for the nobility that has passed untitled in marble or in bronze or in prose. Surely the righteousness which exalts a nation does not also blind its eyes and cramp its hands and make it dumb that beauty may slip past unscathed. Surely all joy, all happiness, all permanent delight that restores the soul of man, does not come from the wine, women, and song, which Kansas frowns upon.

Yet why—why is the golden bowl broken, the pitcher at the fountain broken, and in our art the wheel at the cistern still? This question is not peculiarly a Kansas question. It is tremendously American.

Woman driving buggy through Kansas countryside, 1902. Photo by Joseph J. Pennell.

Kansas

Carl L. Becker

Some years ago, in a New England college town, when I informed one of my New England friends that I was preparing to go to Kansas, he replied rather blankly, "Kansas?! Oh." The amenities of casual intercourse demanded a reply, certainly, but from the point of view of my New England friend I suppose there was really nothing more to say; and, in fact, standing there under the peaceful New England elms, Kansas did seem tolerably remote. Some months later I rode out of Kansas City and entered for the first time what I had always pictured as the land of grasshoppers, of arid drought, and barren social experimentation. In the seat just ahead were two young women, girls rather, whom I afterwards saw at the university. As we left the dreary yards behind, and entered the half-open country along the Kansas River, one of the pair, breaking abruptly away from the ceaseless chatter that had hitherto engrossed them both, began looking out of the car window. Her attention seemed fixed, for perhaps a quarter of an hour, upon something in the scene outside—the fields of corn, or it may have been the sunflowers that lined the track; but at last, turning to her companion with the contented sign of a returning exile, she said, *"Dear old Kansas!"* The expression somehow recalled my New England friend. I wondered vaguely, as I was sure he would have done, why any one should feel moved to say "Dear old Kansas!" I had supposed that Kansas, even more than Italy, was only a geographical expres-

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From Carl L. Becker, "Kansas," *Essays in American History Dedicated to Frederick Jackson Turner* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1910), pp. 85–111.

sion. But not so. Not infrequently, since then, I have heard the same expression—not always from emotional young girls. To understand why people say "Dear old Kansas!" is to understand that Kansas is no mere geographical expression, but a "state of mind," a religion, and a philosophy in one.

There are those who will tell us, and have indeed often told us, with a formidable array of statistics, that Kansas is inhabited only in small part by New Englanders, and that it is therefore fanciful in the extreme to think of it as representing Puritanism transplanted. It is true, the people of Kansas came mainly from "the Middle West"—from Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Iowa, Kentucky, and Missouri. But for our purpose the fact is of little importance, for it is the ideals of a people rather than the geography they have outgrown that determine their destiny; and in Kansas, as has been well said, "it is the ideas of the Pilgrims, not their descendants, that have had dominion in the young commonwealth." Ideas, sometimes, as well as the star of empire, move westward, and so it happens that Kansas is more Puritan than New England of to-day. It is akin to New England of early days. It is what New England, old England itself, once was—the frontier, an ever changing spot where dwell the courageous who defy fate and conquer circumstance.

For the frontier is more than a matter of location, and Puritanism is itself a kind of frontier. There is an intellectual "West" as well as a territorial "West." Both are heresies, the one as much subject to the scorn of the judicious as the other. Broad classifications of people are easily made and are usually inaccurate; but they are convenient for taking a large view, and it may be worth while to think, for the moment, of two kinds of people—those who like the sheltered life, and those who cannot endure it, those who think the world as they know it is well enough, and those who dream of something better, or, at any rate, something different. The frontier is the seed plot where new forms of life, whether of institutions or types of thought, are germinated, the condition of all progress being in a sense a return to the primitive.

Now, generally speaking, the men who make the world's frontiers, whether in religion or politics, science, or geographical exploration and territorial settlement, have certain essential and distinguishing qualities. They are primarily men of faith. Having faith in themselves, they are individualists. They are idealists because they have

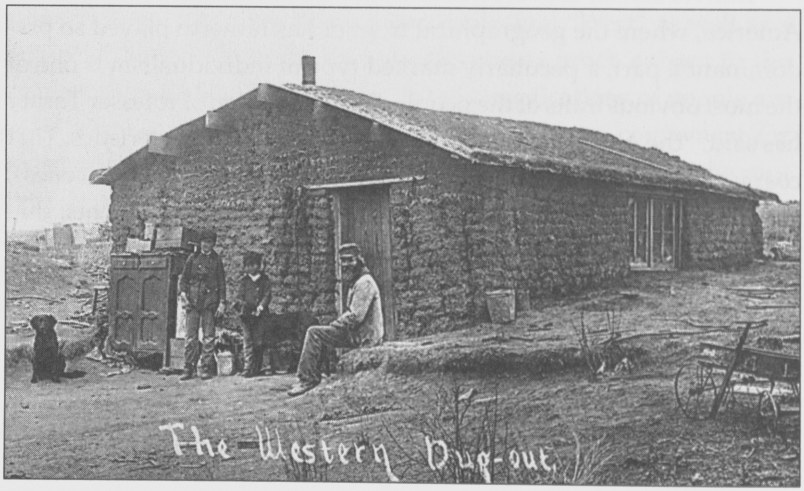
faith in the universe, being confident that somehow everything is right at the center of things; they give hostages to the future, are ever inventing God anew, and must be always transforming the world into their ideal of it. They have faith in humanity and in the perfectibility of man, are likely, therefore, to be believers in equality, reformers, intolerant, aiming always to level others up to their own high vantage. These qualities are not only Puritan, they are American; and Kansas is not only Puritanism transplanted, but Americanism transplanted. In the individualism, the idealism, the belief in equality that prevail in Kansas, we shall therefore see nothing strangely new, but simply a new graft of familiar American traits. But as Kansas is a community with a peculiar and distinctive experience, there is something peculiar and distinctive about the individualism, the idealism, and the belief in equality of its people. If we can get at this something peculiar and distinctive, it will be possible to understand why the sight of sunflowers growing beside a railroad track may call forth the fervid expression, "Dear old Kansas."

I

Individualism is everywhere characteristic of the frontier, and in America, where the geographical frontier has hitherto played so predominant a part, a peculiarly marked type of individualism is one of the most obvious traits of the people. "To the frontier," Professor Turner has said, "the American intellect owes its striking characteristics. That coarseness and strength combined with acuteness and inquisitiveness; that practical, inventive turn of mind, quick to find expedients; that masterful grasp of material things, lacking in the artistic but powerful to effect great ends; that restless nervous energy; that dominant individualism, working for good and for evil, and withal that buoyancy and exuberance that comes from freedom." On the frontier, where everything is done by the individual and nothing by organized society, initiative, resourcefulness, quick, confident, and sure judgment are the essential qualities for success. But as the problems of the frontier are rather restricted and definite, those who succeed there have necessarily much the same kind of initiative and resourcefulness, and their judgment will be sure only in respect to the problems that are

familiar to all. It thus happens that the type of individualism produced on the frontier and predominant in America, has this peculiarity, that while the sense of freedom is strong, there is nevertheless a certain uniformity in respect to ability, habit, and point of view. The frontier develops strong individuals, but it develops individuals of a particular type, all being after much the same pattern. The individualism of the frontier is one of achievement, not of eccentricity, an individualism of fact arising from a sense of power to overcome obstacles, rather than one of theory growing out of weakness in the face of oppression. It is not because he fears governmental activity, but because he has so often had to dispense with it, that the American is an individualist. Altogether averse from hesitancy, doubt, speculative or introspective tendencies, the frontiersman is a man of faith: of faith, not so much in some external power, as in himself, in his luck, his destiny; faith in the possibility of achieving whatever is necessary or he desires. It is this marked self-reliance that gives to Americans their tremendous power of initiative; but the absence of deep-seated differences gives to them an equally tremendous power of concerted social action.

The confident individualism of those who achieve through endurance is a striking trait of the people of Kansas. There, indeed, the trait has in it an element of exaggeration, arising from the fact that



Western Kansas was at the heart of the "sod-house frontier" that stretched from Canada to Texas and into Colorado and Wyoming. Scarcity of wood, water, and fuel prompted innovations unique to the Great Plains—windmills and barbed wire, as well as sod dugouts.

whatever has been achieved in Kansas has been achieved under great difficulties. Kansans have been subjected, not only to the ordinary hardships of the frontier, but to a succession of reverses and disasters that could be survived only by those for whom defeat is worse than death, who cannot fail because they cannot surrender. To the border wars succeeded hot winds, droughts, grasshoppers; and to the disasters of nature succeeded in turn the scourge of man, in the form of "mortgage fiends" and a contracting currency. Until 1895 the whole history of the state was a series of disasters, and always something new, extreme, bizarre, until the name Kansas became a byword, a synonym for the impossible and the ridiculous, inviting laughter, furnishing occasion for jest and hilarity. "In God we trusted, in Kansas we busted," became a favorite motto of emigrants, worn out with the struggle, returning to more hospitable climes; and for many years it expressed well enough the popular opinion of that fated land.

Yet there were some who never gave up. They stuck it out. They endured all that even Kansas could inflict. They kept the faith, and

Interior of a turn-of-the-century sod house of Charley Davis and his family in Smith County. Living in isolated locations under primitive circumstances required strength of character and self-sufficiency.

they are to be pardoned perhaps if they therefore feel that henceforth there is laid up for them a crown of glory. Those who remained in Kansas from 1875 to 1895 must have originally possessed staying qualities of no ordinary sort, qualities which the experience of those years could only accentuate. And as success has at last rewarded their efforts, there has come, too, a certain pride, an exuberance, a feeling of superiority that accompany a victory long delayed and hardly won. The result has been to give a peculiar flavor to the Kansas spirit of individualism. With Kansas history back of him, the true Kansan feels that nothing is *too much* for him. How shall he be afraid of any danger, or hesitate at any obstacle, having succeeded where failure was not only human, but almost honorable? Having conquered Kansas, he knows well that there are no worse worlds to conquer. The Kansas spirit is therefore one that finds something exhilarating in the challenge of an extreme difficulty. "No one," says St. Augustine, "loves what he endures, though he may love to endure." With Kansans, it is particularly a point of pride to suffer easily the stings of fortune, and if they find no pleasure in the stings themselves, the ready endurance of them gives a consciousness of merit that is its own reward. Yet it is with no solemn martyr's air that the true Kansan endures the worst that can happen. His instinct is rather to pass it off as a minor annoyance, furnishing occasion for a pleasantry, for it is the mark of a Kansan to take a reverse as a joke rather than too seriously. Indeed, the endurance of extreme adversity has developed a keen appreciation for that type of humor, everywhere prevalent in the west, which consists in ignoring a difficulty, or transforming it into a difficulty of precisely the opposite kind. There is a tradition surviving from the grasshopper time that illustrates the point. It is said that in the midst of that overwhelming disaster, when the pests were six inches deep in the streets, the editor of a certain local paper refined his comment on the situation down to a single line, which appeared among the trivial happenings of the week: "A grasshopper was seen on the court-house steps this morning." This type of humor, appreciated anywhere west of the Alleghanies, is the type *par excellence* in Kansas.

I have already said that the type of individualism that is characteristic of America is one of achievement, not of eccentricity. The statement will bear repeating in this connection, for it is truer of Kansas than of most communities, notwithstanding there is a notion abroad

that the state is peopled by freaks and eccentrics. It was once popularly supposed in Europe, and perhaps is so yet, that Americans are all eccentric. Now, Kansans are eccentric in the same sense that Americans are: they differ somewhat from other Americans, just as Americans are distinguishable from Europeans. But a fundamental characteristic of Kansas individualism is the tendency to conform; it is an individualism of conformity, not of revolt. Having learned to endure to the end, they have learned to conform, for endurance is itself a kind of conformity. It has not infrequently been the subject of wondering comment by foreigners that in America, where every one is supposed to do as he pleases, there should nevertheless be so little danger from violence and insurrection. Certainly one reason is that while the conditions of frontier life release the individual from many of the formal restraints of ordered society, they exact a most rigid adherence to lines of conduct inevitably fixed by the stern necessities of life in a primitive community. On the frontier men soon learn to conform to what is regarded as essential, for the penalty of resistance or neglect is extinction: there the law of survival works surely and swiftly. However eccentric frontiersmen may appear to the tenderfoot, among themselves there is little variation from type in any essential matter. In the new community, individualism means the ability of the individual to succeed, not by submitting to some external formal authority, still less by following the bent of an unschooled will, but by recognizing and voluntarily adapting himself to necessary conditions. Kansas, it is true, has produced its eccentrics, but there is a saying here that freaks are raised for export only. In one sense the saying is true enough, for what strikes one particularly is that, on the whole, native Kansans are all so much alike. It is a community of great solidarity, and to the native it is "the Easterner" who appears eccentric.

The conquest of the wilderness in Kansas has thus developed qualities of patience, of calm, stoical, good-humored endurance in the face of natural difficulties, of conformity to what is regarded as necessary. Yet the patience, the calmness, the disposition to conform, is strictly confined to what is regarded as in the natural course. If the Kansan appears stolid, it is only on the surface that he is so. The peculiar conditions of origin and history have infused into the character of the people a certain romantic and sentimental element. Beneath the placid surface there is something fermenting which is best left alone—a la-

tent energy which trivial events or a resounding phrase may unexpectedly release.

This trait finds expression in the romantic devotion of the people to the state, in a certain alert sensitiveness to criticism from outside, above all in the contagious enthusiasm with which they will without warning espouse a cause, especially when symbolized by a striking phrase, and carry it to an issue. Insurgency is native in Kansas, and the political history of the state, like its climate, is replete with surprises that have made it "alternately the reproach and the marvel of mankind." But this apparent instability is only the natural complement of the extreme and confident individualism of the people: having succeeded in overcoming so many obstacles that were unavoidable, they do not doubt their ability to destroy quickly those that seem artificially constructed. It thus happens that while no people endure the reverses of nature with greater fortitude and good humor than the people of Kansas, misfortunes seemingly of man's making arouse in them a veritable passion of resistance; the mere suspicion of injustice, real or fancied exploitation by those who fare sumptuously, the pressure of laws not self-imposed, touch something explosive in their nature that transforms a calm and practical people into excited revolutionists. A people which has endured the worst of nature's tyrannies, and cheerfully submits to tyrannies self-imposed, is in no mood to suffer hardships that seem remediable.

II

Idealism must always prevail on the frontier, for the frontier, whether geographical or intellectual, offers little hope to those who see things as they are. To venture into the wilderness, one must see it, not as it is, but as it will be. The frontier, being the possession of those only who see its future, is the promised land which cannot be entered save by those who have faith. America, having been such a promised land, is therefore inhabited by men of faith: idealism is ingrained in the character of its people. But as the frontier in America has hitherto been geographical and material, American idealism has necessarily a material basis, and Americans have often been mistakenly called materialists. True, they seem mainly interested in material things. Too

often they represent values in terms of money: a man is "worth" so much money, a university is a great university, having the largest endowment of any; a fine building is a building that cost a million dollars, better still, ten millions. Value is extensive rather than intensive or intrinsic. America is the best country because it is the biggest, the wealthiest, the most powerful; its people are the best because they are the freest, the most energetic, the *most* educated. But to see a materialistic temper in all this is to mistake the form for the spirit. The American cares for material things because they represent the substance of things hoped for. He cares less for money than for making money: a fortune is valued, not because it represents ease, but because it represents struggle, achievement, progress. The first skyscraper in any town is nothing in itself, but much as an evidence of growth; it is a white stone on the road to the ultimate goal.

Idealism of this sort is an essential ingredient of the Kansas spirit. In few communities is the word progress more frequently used, or its meaning less frequently detached from a material basis.

III

In a country like America, where there is such confident faith in the individual, one might naturally expect to find the completest toleration, and no disposition to use the government for the purpose of enforcing uniform conditions: logically, it would seem, so much emphasis on liberty should be incompatible with much emphasis on equality. Yet it is precisely in America, and nowhere in America more than in the west, that liberty and equality always go coupled and inseparable in popular speech; where the sense of liberty is especially strong, there also the devotion to equality is a cardinal doctrine. Throughout our history, the west has been a dominant factor in urging the extension of the powers of the national government, and western states have taken the lead in radical legislation of an equalizing character. This apparent inconsistency strikes one as especially pronounced in Kansas. The doctrine of equality is unquestioned there, and that governments exist for the purpose of securing it is the common belief. "A law against it" is the specific for every malady. The welfare of society is thought to be always superior to that of the indi-

vidual, and yet no one doubts that perfect liberty is the birthright of every man.

Perhaps the truth is that real toleration is a sentiment foreign to the American temper. In America we imagine ourselves liberal-minded because we tolerate what we have ceased to regard as important. We tolerate religions but not irreligion, and diverse political opinion, but not unpolitical opinion, customs, but not the negation of custom. The Puritans fought for toleration—for themselves. But having won it for themselves, straightway denied it to others. No small part of American history has been a repetition of the Puritan struggle; it has been a fight, not for toleration as a general principle, but for recognition of a civilization resting upon particular principles: in exterior relations, a struggle for recognition of America by Europe; in interior relations, a struggle for recognition of "the West" by "the East." The principle of toleration is written in our constitutions, but not in our minds, for the motive back of the famous guarantees of individual liberty has been recognition of particular opinion rather than toleration of every opinion. And in the nature of the case it must be so. Those who create frontiers and establish new civilizations have too much faith to be tolerant, and are too thoroughgoing idealists to be indifferent. On the frontier conditions are too hazardous for the speculative and the academic to flourish readily: only those who are right and are sure of it can succeed. Certainly it is characteristic of Americans to know that they are right. Certainly they are conscious of having a mission in the world and of having been faithful to it. They have solved great problems hitherto unsolved, have realized utopias dreamed of but never realized by Europe. They are therefore in the van of civilization, quite sure of the direction, triumphantly leading the march towards the ultimate goal. That every one should do as he likes is part of the American creed only in a very limited sense. That it is possible to know what is right, and that what is right should be recognized and adhered to is the more vital belief.

That liberty and equality are compatible terms is, at all events, an unquestioned faith in Kansas. The belief in equality, however, is not so much the belief that all men are equal as the conviction that it is the business of society to establish conditions that will make them so. And this notion, so far from being inconsistent with the pronounced individualism that prevails there, is the natural result of it. In Kansas at

least, no one holds to the right of the individual to do as he likes, irrespective of what it is that he likes. Faith in the individual is faith in the particular individual, the true Kansan, who has learned through adversity voluntarily to conform to what is necessary. Human nature, or, at all events, Kansas nature, is essentially good, and if the environment is right all men can measure up to that high level. That the right environment can be created is not doubted. It is not possible for men so aggressive and self-reliant, who have overcome so many obstacles, to doubt their ability to accomplish this also. Having conquered nature, they cheerfully confront the task of transforming human nature. It is precisely because Kansans are such thoroughgoing individualists, so resourceful, so profoundly confident in their own judgments, so emancipated from the past, so accustomed to devising expedients for every new difficulty, that they are unimpressed by the record of the world's failures. They have always thrived on the impossible, and the field of many failures offers a challenge not to be resisted.

To effect these beneficent ends, the people of Kansas turn naturally to the government because they have a very simple and practical idea of what the government is and what it is for. The government, in Kansas, is no abstract concept. Kansans think of the government, as they think of everything else, in terms of the concrete. And why, indeed, should they not? Within the memory of man there was no government in Kansas. They, Kansans, made the government themselves for their own purposes. The government is therefore simply certain men employed by themselves to do certain things; it is the sum of the energy, the good judgment, the resourcefulness of the individuals who originally created it, and who periodically renew it. The government is the individual writ large; in it every Kansan sees himself drawn to larger scale. The passion for controlling all things by law is thus not the turning of the hopeless and discouraged individual to some power other and higher than himself for protection; it is only the instinct to use effectively one of the many resources always at his command for achieving desired ends. Of a government hostile to the individual, they cannot conceive; such a government is a bogus government, and its laws are bogus laws; to resist and overthrow such a government, all the initiative and resourcefulness is enlisted that is devoted to supporting one regarded as legitimate. There is a higher law than the stat-

ute book; the law of the state is no law if it does not represent the will of the individual.

Kansans love each other for the dangers they have passed; a unique experience has created a strong *esprit de corps*—a feeling that while Kansans are different from others, one Kansan is not only as good as any other, but very like any other. The philosophy of numbers, the doctrine of the majority, is therefore ingrained, and little sympathy is wasted on minorities.

It goes without saying that the general level in Kansas is thought to be exceptionally high. Kansans do not regard themselves as mere westerners, like Iowans or Nebraskans. Having passed through a superior heat, they are westerners seven times refined. "It is the quality of piety in Kansas," says Mr. E. H. Abbott, "to thank God that you are not as other men are, beer-drinkers, shiftless, habitual lynchers, or even as these Missourians." The pride is natural enough, perhaps, in men whose judgment has been vindicated at last in the face of general skepticism. Having for many years contributed to the gaiety of nations, Kansas has ceased to be the pariah of the states. Kansans have endured Job's comforters too long not be feel a little complaisant when their solemn predictions come to naught. It is inevitable that those who think they have fashioned a cornerstone out of the stone rejected by the builders should regard themselves as superior workmen.

To test others by this high standard is an instinctive procedure. There is an alert attention to the quality of those who enter the state from outside. The crucial question is, are they "our kind of men?" Do they speak "the Kansas language?" Yet the Kansas language is less a form of speech, or the expression of particular ideas, than a certain personal quality. Some time since a distinguished visitor from the east came to the state to deliver a public address. He was most hospitably received, as all visitors are, whether distinguished or otherwise, and his address—permeated with the idealistic liberalism of a half century ago—was attentively listened to and highly praised. But to no purpose all these fine ideas. The great man was found wanting, for there was discovered, among his other impedimenta, a valet. It was a fatal mischance. The poor valet was more commented upon than the address, more observed than his master. The circumstance stamped the misguided man as clearly not our kind of man. Obviously, no man

who carries a valet can speak the Kansas language. Needless to say, there are no valets in Kansas.

The feeling of superiority naturally attaching to a chosen people, equally inclines Kansans to dispense readily with the advice or experience of others. They feel that those who have worn the hair shirt cannot be instructed in asceticism by those who wear silk. In discussing the university and its problems with a member of the state legislature, I once hazarded some comparative statistics showing that a number of other states made rather more liberal appropriations for their universities than the state of Kansas did for hers. I thought the comparison might be enlightening, that the man's pride of state might be touched. Not at all. "I know all about that," he replied. "That argument is used by every man who is interested in larger appropriations for any of the state institutions. But it doesn't go with a Kansas legislature. In Kansas, we don't care much what other states are doing. Kansas always leads, but never follows." And, in fact, the disregard of precedent is almost an article of faith; that a thing has been done before is an indication that it is time to improve upon it. History may teach that men cannot be legislated into the kingdom of heaven. Kansans are not ignorant of the fact, but it is no concern of theirs. The experience of history is not for men with a mission and faith to perform it. Let the uncertain and the timid profit by history; those who have at all times the courage of their emotions will make history, not repeat it. Kansans set their own standards, and the state becomes, as it were, an experiment station in the field of social science.

The passion for equality in Kansas is thus the complement of the individualism and the idealism of its people. It has at the basis of it an altruistic motive, aiming not so much to level all men down as to level all men up. The Kansan's sense of individual worth enables him to believe that no one can be better than he is, while his confident idealism encouraged him to hope that none need be worse.

IV

The Kansas spirit is the American spirit double distilled. It is a new grafted product of American individualism, American idealism, American intolerance. Kansas is America in microcosm: as America

conceives itself in respect to Europe, so Kansas conceives itself in respect to America. Within its borders, Americanism, pure and undefiled, has a new lease of life. It is the mission of this self-selected people to see to it that it does not perish from off the earth. The light on the altar, however neglected elsewhere, must ever be replenished in Kansas. If this is provincialism, it is the provincialism of faith rather than of the province. The devotion to the state is devotion to an ideal, not to a territory, and men can say "Dear old Kansas!" because the name symbolizes for them what the motto of the state so well expresses, *ad astra per aspera.*

Bleeding Kansans

Karl A. Menninger

Sometimes when I have just returned from the mountains or the seashore, friends who meet me on the street exclaim sympathetically but enviously about my trip: "Were you not sorry to leave?" They ask, "Isn't it hard to come back from such beautiful places into the drab monotony of our Kansas scenery?"

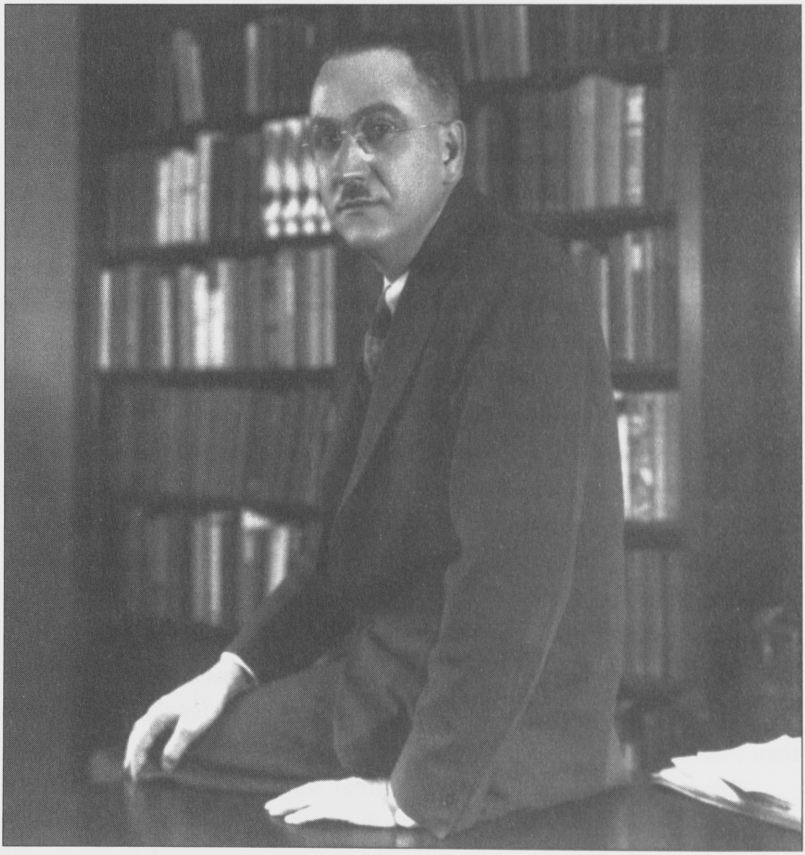
When they say such things I cannot answer them; I cannot even look at them for fear of betraying my thoughts. I look at the ground or I look past them to the horizon. Inwardly I recall the words of a famous Kansan who wrote to his wife on December 10, 1854:

". . . Our food is mush, molasses and bacon, mixed plentifully with dirt three times each day. Thus we live in Kansas. *A more lovely country I certainly never saw*—and yet it looks worse now than at any other season. I am told by those who know that in the spring and early summer when the grass and shrubbery and flowers appear it is beautiful beyond conception. So I think it must be. And in a few years when civilization by its magic influence shall have transformed this glorious country from what it now is to the brilliant destiny awaiting it, the sun in all his course will visit *no land more truly lovely and desirable than this. . . .*"

This man was one of the truly great Kansans because he had vision, a vision not only for the future, but for the present realities. And he had come to Kansas from one of the most beautiful states in the union, Pennsylvania.

From Karl A. Menninger, "Bleeding Kansans," *Kansas Magazine* (1939), pp. 3–6.

I am well aware that the other side of the road looks smoother and the grass in the opposite field greener, but I believe this inability of some Kansans to appreciate their own state has a far deeper psychological origin. It is observable in so many different ways. I have sometimes called it, in our professional jargon, a characteristic feeling of inferiority. We seem to share it with the state of Arkansas which is also a beautiful and creditable state, but whose citizens are often ashamed of having originated there. I see the self-depreciation of Kansans exhibiting itself in the form of a sense of uneasiness, an apologetic manner when in the association of the representatives of older and wealthier states, and in a tendency to join with them in a banter-



With his father and brothers Karl A. Menninger (1893–1990) founded the world-famous Menninger Clinic. Menninger's writings and ideas about mental health helped change both attitudes toward mental illness and the public institutions that served individuals with mental disabilities.

ing ridicule of our state instead of recognizing how much this represents a defense of their own ignorant provincialism. But more serious, I think, is a kind of asceticism, a willingness to accept as our fate and lot a far less comfortable and joyous existence than could be ours almost for the asking. This, too, springs from our self-depreciation.

No one could ask for a better illustration of this than the prohibition sentiment of the state. I know, as everyone else knows, that there are relatively few total abstainers in Kansas, but to keep up appearances we must not buy or sell liquor publicly. We must smuggle it in from Missouri to the cynical but gratified amusement of our less hypocritical eastern neighbors. We comfort ourselves with the logic that because some men are fools all men must be martyrs. The fact that there may be joy in wine is forgotten in the face of the fact that there may be tears in rum. Kansans have no sense of superiority about their prohibition. Some comfort themselves with a puritanical sense of self-righteousness, but it is cold comfort. For the same energies that have prohibited the open sale of liquor would have gone much further had they been invested in the promotion of beauty, the improvement of highways, the enlargement of parks, the fostering of music and art.

Not but what we have done fairly well with music and art. I am proud of what we have done. But I am afraid that most of my fellow Kansans are not. They are not proud of it because they realize that it is so much less than we could have done had we not had an ascetic disapproval of joy or anything that would make it appear that we were a happy, progressive, successful state. We want to be "bleeding Kansas." When someone calls us a typical prairie state we get angry, not because we think we have been misunderstood but because we fear we have been understood too well and our shame publicly exposed.

I would be happy to believe that our feelings of inferiority are only the expression of an innate modesty, a feeling of revulsion against the flamboyant, bombastic egotism of California and the similar arrogance of a few other states. Unfortunately I cannot believe this. Kansas does not refrain from announcing that it has the best of this or the best of that because of our essential good taste; Kansas does not announce it because Kansas does not believe it. When I tell friends that I think our scenery is beautiful and that our climate is delightful (Cyrus Holliday said that it was better than that of sunny Italy) my friends think that I am ironic or a little "touched." They would much rather

read in the paper that we had broken a heat record so that they could use it to prove their martyrdom than to reflect that hot weather is the healthiest weather of all and that fewer people die from the effects of the climate in Kansas than in almost any other state. Yesterday it was 97 in Los Angeles; it was 70 in Topeka. But I am sure this fact was not headlined by any Kansas newspapers, and I am more certain that it was not headlined by any California papers. Last week New England was ravaged by a terrific wind storm which did more damage in one hour than all the tornadoes have done in Kansas since the dawn of civilized history, but I am sure that this was not noted by any Kansas newspapers nor by any of the eastern newspapers which still play up "Kansas cyclones."

Not long ago the son of a colleague came to me for advice in regard to entering my Alma Mater, the Harvard Medical School. He was afraid that he would not be admitted. I remarked that the fact that he was a Kansan would probably be to his advantage in his consideration by the committee. "Well," he exclaimed, "that will be the first time that coming from Kansas ever did me any good!" I could not think of any reply to this. He was a handsome young fellow, a member of the third generation since the pioneers. His family has prospered (in Kansas!) and he was as nattily dressed, as sophisticated in manner as the boys I have known from Harvard and Hopkins, and Pennsylvania. But the poor fellow does not know it. He labors under a sense of inferiority which is pitiful. He goes to college with a sensitiveness which will probably make him either a recluse or a noisy eccentric.

I am fairly familiar with the physicians of America, and I can honestly say that I believe that we have within the confines of our state medical men quite as capable as those in most other comparable localities. Ambitiously we endeavor to maintain a medical school, but we do not trust it to be staffed by Kansas doctors. The students of the medical school of the University of Kansas are instructed by men borrowed from Missouri, Missouri doctors from Kansas City.

The phenomenon of the city of "Kansas City, Missouri," is perhaps the most brilliant illustration of my thesis. Poor Kansas City is an orphan town; it has no parent state. Missouri disowns it as a metropolis; St. Louis is the Missouri city, and Kansas City should be the Kansas city, but it isn't. Rather, it is and it isn't. It is located largely in

Missouri, populated largely with ex-Kansans, depends upon Kansas for its economic existence, supplies Kansas with traveling salesmen, truckdrivers, and racketeers, instructs Kansans how to vote and considers Kansas its great backyard. Kansans, none the less, think it is a great metropolis and speak of it reverently as "the city."

Think of a state smart enough to issue a Magazine [*Kansas Magazine*] like this one! Think of a state with people wise enough to abolish capital punishment fifty years ago. Think of a state with people in it capable of erecting a structure like the Santa Fe Railroad or an organization like the Capper press. Think of a state with a Historical Society such as ours. We have heard a lot about wheat, but consider the trees; we are the only state in the union without a national forest, and yet we are also the only state in the union with more trees in it than at the time it was settled. Think of a state with people in it like William Allen White and Ed Howe and Nelson Antrim Crawford, Howard Carruth and Esther Clark, John James Ingalls, Charles M. Sheldon, Kirke Mechem, and W. G. Clugston, Birger Sandzen, and many others. You know this is not a state of mediocrities. The same humility of spirit is to be observed in the Kansas intellectuals, in the Kansas voters, and the Kansas press. In their eagerness to be broadminded, tolerant, democratic, they have listened receptively to many prophets, some false, some true, and have followed them fervently. This fervent response—a response sometimes bordering on fanaticism—is regarded by many easterners as characteristic of the people of Kansas. In abolition, prohibition, Populism, anti-tobacco legislation, Brinkley worship, Winrodism, etc., they have gone off the deep end with desperate seriousness, and in so doing earned for themselves the name of being a humorless, puritanical people, incapable of joy and grudging in their attitude toward those happier than themselves.

This is not a pretty reputation and naturally one shrinks from accepting this description of oneself and his friends and neighbors. Oddly enough, however, we do accept it almost unanimously and meekly endure the opprobrium and ridicule of other states. This I believe to be due to a humility and self-distrust so great as to be crippling to our energies.

For the fanaticism of Kansans is due, I believe, not so much to puritanical self-righteousness, the desire to reform and inhibit, as it is to a wish to identify themselves with the best, the most idealistic and

fruitful ways of life. And because they feel pathetically unequal to maintaining these ideals and to living at the high pitch at which they conceive other more gifted people to be living, they fence themselves about and reinforce their tense strivings with laws and prohibitions.

In discussing Kansans it is usually assumed that their strictness is aimed at coercing other people to their beliefs, to reform the wicked. The reformer's psychology is often described as being a desire to keep others from the sinful pleasures he secretly indulges in or at least burns to indulge in. This unsympathetic portrayal of the reformer as a hypocrite and a dog in the manger has some truth in it; but this very intolerance of the intolerant betrays an unconscious hypocrisy in the hypocrite-hater. To put away the temptation to indulge in more paradoxical but perhaps confusing expressions, let us state it more plainly by saying that at heart everyone is a reformer in the sense that he must curb certain anti-social tendencies in himself which he openly deprecates but yearns to indulge. We say that his attitudes are unconscious because he is not aware of such yearnings and would probably develop all kinds of defensive symptoms if he began to be aware of the strength of unlawful desires in himself. The activities of the zealot who rushes about making life miserable for other people may be considered as one form of defensive symptom of this type. His activity therefore is chiefly directed against himself, in spite of its apparent direction toward the world in general. The world may avoid him, trip him up, laugh at him, and find many ways of overcoming the discomfort he causes, but he has no way of circumventing his own unrelenting harshness toward himself which drives him to take desperate measures to reinforce his failing defense against anti-social urges.

I began by saying that we live in a beautiful state, a state settled by brave, intelligent and far-visioned people; then I had to add that our intelligence and our vision do not seem to have prevented us from developing a vast inferiority, not a real inferiority but a feeling of inferiority. I related this inferiority to feelings of over-conscientiousness which in turn I think may be an echo of the pioneer struggles of our immediate ancestors. We need writers and artists to proclaim the beauty of Kansas and to demonstrate the intelligence of the majority and not the eccentricity of the lunatic fringe.

The members of the press have a special responsibility in this matter. I have long felt that the newspapers could modify the unfavorable

opinions of the outsiders if they would modify the feelings of Kansans about themselves. For the men of the press reflect this attitude of inferiority; indeed they encourage it; they exploit it. They like to brag about breaking heat records and raising freaks. They feel a little shamefaced in writing about our cultural attainments. The newspaper reporters seem to feel impelled to pull a wisecrack if possible, and the desk man would rather think up a funny headline than an accurate one. They deceive themselves into thinking the people like this. The truth of the matter is that too many of the newspaper men do not take their own work seriously. They do not take their state seriously. If the Wichita newspapers, for example, would give more space to the glories of Kansas and less to the iniquities of Topeka; if the Topeka newspapers would give more space to the cultural activities of the city and less to the political goings-on in the State House, and if all the editors of all the papers would read the *Kansas Magazine* and print excerpts from it instead of lifting paragraphs from the *Kansas City Star*, we would have an even better state than we have now, and we would have more fun living in it or visiting outside of it.

Cowboy, Yeoman, Pawn, and Hick: Myth and Contradiction in Great Plains Life

James R. Shortridge

Anyone who lives in Kansas knows that outsiders hold strong and varied stereotypes of plains people. New residents innocently inquire about cowboys, and many visitors expect to see heroic, self-sufficient farmers, descendants perhaps of Laura Ingalls Wilder or Ántonia Cuzak. Still others talk about "victimized" Kansans—poor peasants who suffer continuously under a series of discriminatory economic practices initiated by eastern corporations and the federal government. Finally, there is the yokel image: folks who still dress in flour sacks and know only the Kansas versions of Minneapolis and Manhattan.

These common views raise complex questions for a person wanting to understand the true cultural personality of the plains. Do longtime residents hold views similar to those of outsiders? How did the stereotypes originate? How do plains people deal with contradictions among the myths and between myth and reality?

The story can best be unraveled historically. Indians and cattlemen, in the 1860s, were the first plainsmen to attract much attention

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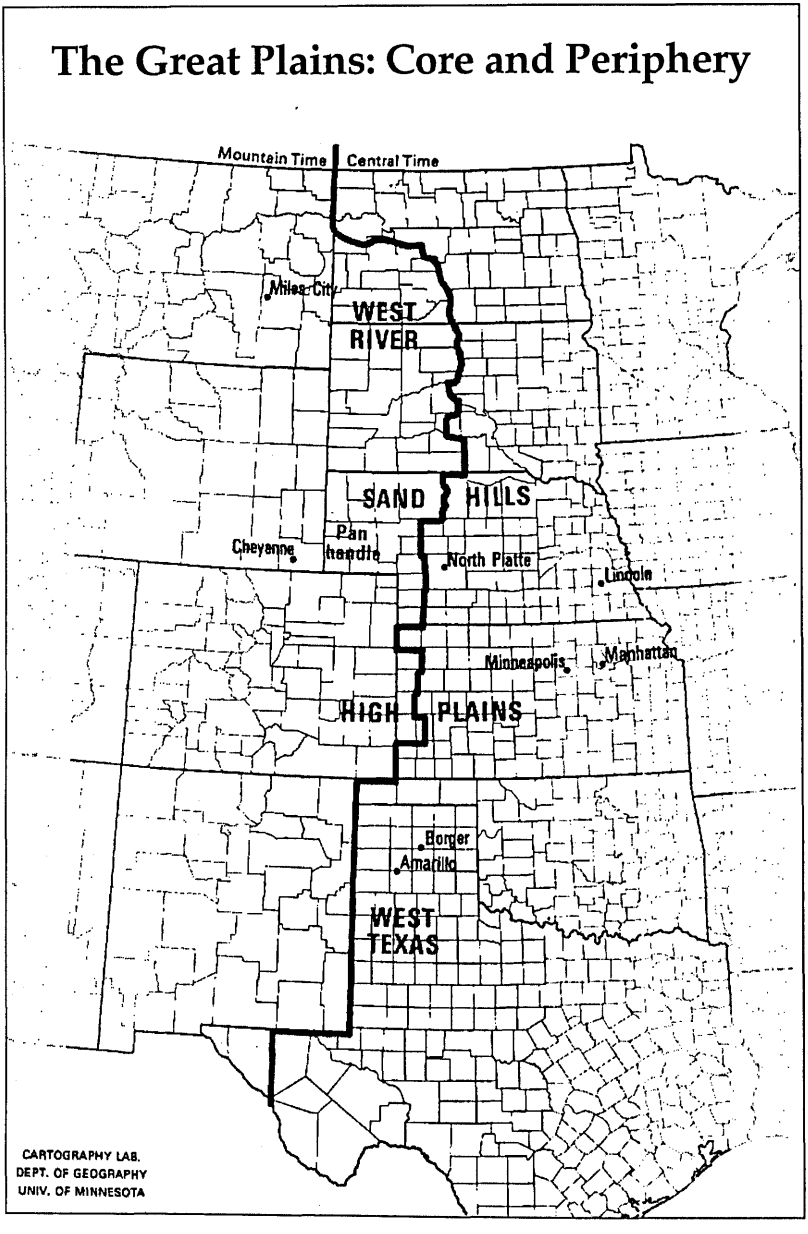
From James R. Shortridge, "Cowboy, Yeoman, Pawn, and Hick: Myth and Contradiction in Great Plains Life," *Focus* (October 1985): 22–27. Reprinted with permission of the American Geographical Society.


The Great Plains: Core and Periphery
Mountain Time
Central Time
Miles City
WEST RIVER
SAND HILLS
Cheyenne
Pan handle
North Platte
Lincoln
Minneapolis
Manhattan
HIGH PLAINS
Borger
Amarillo
WEST TEXAS
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from the American public. Neither group had a positive image. Indians were usually branded as dangerous, nomadic heathens, and the cattlemen fared little better: they were "barons," monopolizing the land at the expense of small farmers. Horace Greeley provided a typical assessment in 1859:

> I fear this cattle-ranching, with long intervals between the ranches, is destined to half-barbarize many thousands of the next generation, whom schools can scarcely reach, and to whom the sound of the churchgoing bell will be a stranger.

Acting on these negative judgments, the federal government passed legislation to concentrate most of the Indian groups in one place (Oklahoma) and to discourage large-scale ranching. Farmers were the beneficiaries in both cases. It is impossible to know exactly how these farmers saw themselves, but accounts of them in the popular press of the time uniformly depict a resolute, yeoman society, soon hailed as the latest and purest version of Jeffersonian democracy. Everyone could own land and thus be independent; all were ennobled by contact with the natural world. The land was rich enough to bring prosperity to a diligent worker, yet sufficiently harsh to keep one humble and self-reliant.

A special relationship has developed between the plains and the yeoman farmer myth. This myth, fundamental to American self-identity, had previously found regional expression in the South and in the old Northwest Territory. Neither location proved wholly satisfactory. Slavery and its aftermath clearly distorted the image in the South, whereas urbanization and industrialization in places such as Chicago and Cleveland challenged rural society in the North. The focus for the yeoman farmer or pastoralist rhetoric thus gradually shifted westward, first to the central plains and then to the plains generally. There it has seemed to find a permanent home. For a hundred years now the plains have stood midway, both literally and figuratively, between eastern industry and western wilderness. The wholesomeness of L. Frank Baum's Dorothy or the ideals of "truth, justice, and the American way" which Superman received from his Kansas stepparents are still seen as quintessential human qualities of the plains.

Although pastoralism is the dominant symbol for plains culture, it has never been without challengers. The first, what I call the pawn image, was initiated in the late 1880s by economic depression and poor

weather, which brought about a financial crisis. Defaults on farm loans were common and, since eastern capital had financed much of the plains development, the crisis assumed a sectional guise. Plainsmen—especially western plainsmen—suddenly seemed to lack control over their own destiny. They damned eastern businessmen as unfeeling exploiters of their condition and found convenient scapegoats for the problems in bankers, railroad owners, and even the federal government. The experience united the plains states politically, but it also created a cultural paradox that continues to blur the regional identity. How could one believe in the ideals of self-sufficiency and independence central to pastoralism and simultaneously see oneself "under the lion's paw," a pawn of the eastern business establishment?

Good weather and agricultural prices returned to the plains in the late 1890s. These favorable conditions placed a damper on manifestations of western discontent, and pastoralism began to reassert itself. Soon, though, perhaps in 1902—the year Owen Wister published *The Virginian*—a newly romanticized view of the cowboy arose as another competing symbol. Cattlemen, a group largely ignored or denigrated during its heyday, became mythic as soon as the open range had disappeared. The associated imagery—so familiar as not to need

Cowboys, Wallace, Kansas, about 1873. Like the pioneers on the sod-house frontier, cowboys symbolized self-reliance and individualism.

repeating here—also included values associated with the yeoman farmer, particularly independence and self-reliance. In fact, given the economic ups and downs of farming in previous years, the idealized cowboy was the more fitting repository for such traits. Hundreds of times, in pulp novels and in the movies, cowboys and farmers met each other on the plains frontier. Most often the cowboy was the more heroic figure, triumphing over the rather dull, unimaginative creatures known derogatorily as "nesters" or "sodbusters."

The pastoralist view of life again became ascendant during the second decade of this century. Farm prices were good, and a new generation of yeomen extended wheatfields across the Montana prairies. This mood lasted until the mid-1920s, when economic conditions again deteriorated. Hard times revived the pawn concept of the 1890s to some extent, but as depression continued into the 1930s, beliefs grew more complex. The "Okies" emerged as a new central symbol. Views toward these farmers who had failed were initially sympathetic, but perhaps only during the worst drought years. To the outsider, the gaunt faces caught in photographs suggested poor education, lack of intelligence, dependency, and even laziness—the very antithesis of a heroic yeoman.

The "Okie" image, expanded to the plains generally, continues today in modified form. Its "victim" associations receded with the return of prosperity, but the socially backward stereotype remained, reinforced by the dullard view of farmers commonly portrayed in "westerns." The result was the final plains stereotype: the simple-minded hick or yokel.

Oscillations among the four images characterize the recent past. Cowboy romanticism has waned perhaps, judging by the output of motion pictures on the subject. Pastoralist ideas have revived with the wave of urban disillusionment that has swept the nation. The recent crisis in farm credit has even revived the pawn concept. The Posse Comitatus, an extremist action group, sees another plot by eastern bankers to gain control of the nation's food supply. Failures of small local banks, it argues, are part of the grand scheme.

The persistence of the four idealizations of plains life can be attributed largely to the rapid changes that have occurred during the short Anglo history of the region. Eastern sections of the country have experienced periods of relative stability, enabling a local value system

and regional personality to emerge; the plains has not. The closest regional parallel may be southern California. Each place lacks a well-established past and thus has become a focus for a complex series of national myths. In California, a rapid progression of economies has led to an identification of the state with the concept of change itself and with worship of the new. The plains serves a nearly opposite function for the nation. It is the regional repository for several contradictory historical myths that apparently need to be maintained. Cowboys are perfect symbols for self-reliance and individualism, yeoman farmers for morality and democracy. The yokel appeared when urban America required a rural cousin to stand in contrast to its newly acquired sophistication.

Characteristics associated with the cowboy and the yeoman farmer, the two most positive myths, currently dominate the way plains residents and others see the region. A large national survey of college-age people in 1980, asked to characterize plains residents, produced the following familiar terms: friendly, easy-going, natural, honest, thoughtful, moral, and modest. Another set of traits traditionally associated with the plains is missing, however. Instead of imagery comparing the region to a vigorous and idealistic young adult, the identification is now with an older person. Survey participants from the plains and elsewhere identified conservative and materialistic traits as more descriptive of the region than liberal and idealistic ones.

Living with these myths is not easy for plains residents. Youngsters and thoughtful adults alike find no satisfactory answer to questions of who they are and what they stand for. The imagery of cowboys and yeomen is somewhat flattering and therefore believed; still, they know that these myths cannot be more than partially applicable to their now largely commercial and urban existence. The hick associations too are half-believed, and plains residents fight against them feverishly with slogans such as "Oklahoma is O.K." and "everything's up-to-date in Kansas City." Overall, young plainsmen view their home region somewhat negatively and would move away from their states if they could. Such a perception of home was not found in other regions surveyed. Older plains residents seem to be happier, although no formal survey for this age group exists. Perhaps these people identify with the aging yeoman of the myth and focus on the advantages of rural life rather than on its limitations.

Some observers see signs that plains residents may eventually replace the myths with a culture more closely aligned with the realities of modern plains life. They point to the imposition of minerals severance taxes by several states. These new laws, by which the producer areas acquire money to invest in various economic development projects, let the region assume more control over its own destiny. Farmers too are becoming better organized, less willing to be under the thumb of forces beyond those of nature; this may lead to the disappearance of the pawn association. In short, it may be that enough time has passed for plainsmen to begin to develop a realistic self-identity.

The evolution of a more contemporary plains culture, however, is not yet complete; the region is still somewhat defensive and parochial. Nevertheless, there is reason for optimism. Plains life, through its isolation and agricultural heritage, is strongly connected to the land and to the past. As such, it can provide for the nation a touchstone for some fundamental values. A sense of morality survives here, along with a sense of community. Faddish, artificial values have not taken a strong hold. One key to a mature plains culture is a growing awareness that the positive values coming from a rootedness in place are important in giving meaning to life. Just as important, however, is the simultaneous realization that these values may be maintained today without the stagnation and provincialism that traditionally have accompanied them. Modern communication and transportation systems have eliminated the extreme isolation that once produced these negative traits.

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Chapter 2

Environment and Early Peoples of Kansas

The Great Plains is the original home of man in the New World. As Roy E. Gridley, University of Kansas professor of English, explains in his article "Images from an Older Kansas," in 1898 fossil hunters in Logan County unearthed the skeleton of an extinct species of bison embedded with a man-made stone spearhead—clear evidence that man has lived on the Plains for at least ten thousand years. Gridley's article, originally published in *The Kansas Art Reader*, investigates "the images and perspectives that tell us what it is like to be human and, especially, to be human in Kansas." His collection of images of the land before it was settled discusses such issues as "counterfeit geography" (the desert-garden myths), pre-historic man, and early explorers and adventurers. One can see early Kansas through the writing of such early travelers as William Gilpin, Zebulon Pike, Josiah Gregg, and Francis Parkman.

James C. Malin (1893–1979), a brilliant and controversial University of Kansas historian trained in ecology, agronomy, and social science methodology, focuses his attention on "Kansas: Some Reflections on Culture Inheritance and Originality." In the study of the American West, he is part of the triumvirate, which also includes Frederick Jackson Turner and Walter Prescott Webb, from which this field of knowledge derives its theoretical constructs. Malin calls Kansas' boundaries artificial and its environment a transition zone, a meeting ground where an intermingling of cultures occurs, where differences, not likenesses, were the rule. He traces Kansas population origins and town

planning and answers the question, "How did New England wield as much influence as it did, and how was the legend about New England parentage and Puritanism imposed upon Kansas tradition contrary to so conspicuous a weight of available facts?"

The Kansa Indians are of special interest to William E. Unrau, professor of history at Wichita State University and author of several books on this tribe. Unrau concludes that while epidemic diseases such as smallpox and cholera were devastating to the Kansa, the white man's policy of negligence and self-interest virtually destroyed the tribe. This frank account of neglect parallels the experiences of other American Indians throughout the country.

Images from an Older Kansas

Roy E. Gridley

I want to offer a collection of images of the land *before* it was settled and before those straight lines we call the boundaries of Kansas were drawn. It will be a brief portrait of the land before its wilderness, in the poet William Stafford's phrase, "subsided and became a state." I hope this perspective from an earlier time will add to the rich variety of Kansas images.

The Prairie-Plains region was the subject of a letter written to the New York *National Intelligencer* in October of 1857. The letter writer was William Gilpin, who lived in Independence, Missouri. Gilpin was an interesting man. He was a visionary and a dreamer who had the habit of looking (in his mind's eye) out over the unsettled areas of western America and imagining what the future might bring. He was also a systematic and rather tough-minded collector of information and statistics about the western regions. When he looked westward across the recently created Territory of Kansas, Gilpin did not see the bloody border warfare going on in eastern Kansas or the struggle between Free-Staters and Slave-Staters that made Kansas such an important national issue in the 1850s. Rather, he saw something that led him to attack what he called the "counterfeit geography" that had for half a century described the Plains as the Great American Desert. Gilpin recognized the fertility and future productivity of the region and was angry at Eastern misunderstanding. Three years later, Gilpin included

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From Roy E. Gridley, "Images from an Older Kansas," in *The Kansas Art Reader*, ed. Jonathan Wesley Bell. Lawrence, KS: Independent Study, 1976, pp. 25–49.

the letter as one chapter in his geographical treatise *The Central Gold Region*, a title probably designed, as James Malin suggests, to attract public attention so that Gilpin could tell his readers of treasures other than gold that lay in the American interior. The gold was in the mountain West. The notion that there might be gold on the Plains was never seriously entertained once Coronado reported to his king that in 1542 at Quivira the "natives there gave me a piece of copper that an Indian wore suspended from his neck. I am sending it to the viceroy of New Spain, for I have not seen any other metal in this region except this and some copper jingle bells. . . ." Gilpin was but one of several writers who, in the 1850s, were revising the image of the Plains as a desert. But the prophetic tone of Gilpin's language separates him from the more tentative and careful prose of, say, the reports of the topographical engineers. Gilpin opens his letter with a fine declamatory assertion:

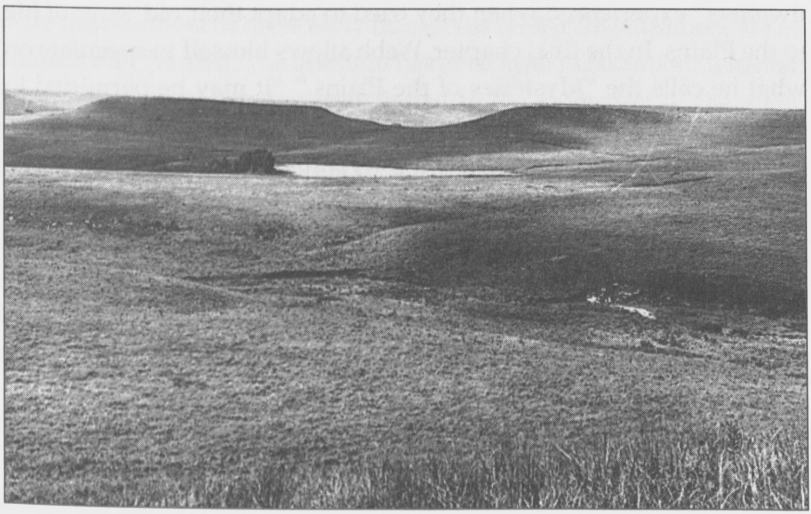
> There is a radical misapprehension in the popular mind as to the true character of the "Great Plains of America," as complete as that which pervaded Europe respecting the Atlantic Ocean during the whole historic period prior to COLUMBUS. These PLAINS are not *deserts*, but the opposite, and are the cardinal basis of the future empire of commerce and industry now erecting itself upon the North American Continent. They are calcareous, and form the PASTORAL GARDEN of the world.

So Gilpin opens his letter. Had not events during the next three or four decades proved him a fairly accurate prophet, he might seem to be using language in a rather magical manner: by calling something by a different name he could change its reality. The Great American Desert did not immediately blossom into "the PASTORAL GARDEN of the world" because of Gilpin's loud words to the New York newspaper. But within three, at most four decades, the "desert" of Kansas had been banished and was replaced with farms and towns. Railways, telephone systems, steam-driven farm machinery, electricity were all there before the century turned. And there were about a million people, just as many as in California.

The "counterfeit geography" that Gilpin and others had to attack so that people could even imagine such rapid settlement and development had been built up during the first half of the nineteenth century. In 1810 Zebulon Montgomery Pike had foreseen that "These vast plains of the western hemisphere may become in time equally cel-

ebrated as the sandy deserts of Africa." The region must of necessity, Pike thought, be left "to the wandering and uncivilized aborigines of the country." A year later, 1811, Henry Brackenridge found in these grasslands a "resemblance to the Steppes of Tartary, or the Saara's of Africa." Stephen Long and Edwin James made the same comparisons in 1823, and James prophesied that "this region may forever remain the unmolested haunt of the native hunter, the bison, and the jackall." By 1832, Washington Irving, with yet livelier imagination foresaw that in this region "may spring up new and mongrel races, like new formations in geology, the amalgamation of the 'debris' and 'abrasions' of former races, civilized and savage. . . ." These were the notions Gilpin challenged. As he comes to the close of his letter of 1857, Gilpin rather surprisingly accepts the comparison to the Old World deserts; but he accepts the comparison only to the extent that the ancient Middle East was the "cradle of civilization." "The atmosphere of the Great Plains," he writes almost lyrically, "is perpetually brilliant with sunshine, tonic, healthy and inspiring to the temper." The region, he says,

> corresponds with and surpasses the historic climate of Syria and Arabia, from whence we inherit all that is ethereal and refined in our system of civilization, our religion, our sciences, our alphabet, our numerals, our written languages, our articles of food, our learning, and our system of social manners.



The vast stretches of prairie were considered the "Great American Desert" by some explorers, the "pastoral garden of the West" by others.

The Territory of Kansas has become in Gilpin's imagination the future seat of a great and refined civilization.

I have lingered over Gilpin's letter because it is a brief and forceful expression of an idea that runs through a lot of Kansas art: the dramatic change of the Great American Desert from a sterile wasteland fit only for the primitive and nomadic savage into a productive agricultural region (a kind of garden), a fertile and healthy home for farmer and townsman alike. The theme receives its fullest expression in those stories and novels in which the homesteaders coming to an empty land do—by hard work and hope—create farms, schools, churches and towns.

More recently the wilderness that was Kansas remains as a useful measure of what man has been able to make out of it. In a land where, in the novelist Wright Morris' phrase, "there is little to see but plenty of room to look."

Before the Spanish came out onto these plains in the sixteenth century, Europeans had not known such extensive grasslands since the end of the last Ice Age when forests invaded the savannas of Europe and drove out the large grazing animals. People long accustomed to living among mountains and forests found the empty rolling grasslands strange and unusual. They still do. The historian Walter Prescott Webb comments on this experience in his *The Great Plains*. Most of Webb's book is an account of the difficulties forest men or "timber-dwellers" experienced when they tried to adapt their old ways of life to the Plains. In the final chapter, Webb allows himself to speculate on what he calls the "Mysteries of the Plains." "It may be permitted to approach," Webb begins cautiously, "the mysterious effect of the Plains on the human mind through an inquiry into the place of man's origin or differentiation." If man's "primal home," he goes on, were the forest then man might upon encountering the Plains feel alien sensations of fear, wonder, awe and surprise so often expressed in Plains writing. But what if "he became *man* on the plains and not the forest?"

> If man did become what he is on the plains, and not in "warm forest-clad land," then perhaps it was natural for him to reenter the old familiar environment with dim stirrings of deeply embedded racial memories; to return with a certain abandon and joy to a closer association with horses and cattle, after an interval of some millions of years in the forests.

All great ideas, we are told, are essentially poetic. The notion of grasslands as the original home for man and of that "home" persisting in racial memory is such an idea. And it is an idea that may find expression in the art of Kansas.

Not even our most imaginative artists, I suppose, would ever claim that human beings first evolved here on our own Prairie-Plains. But artists might find suggestive the thought that the Plains were the *first home for man in the New World.* In 1898 some fossil hunters in a draw above the Smoky Hill in Logan County unearthed the skeleton of an extinct species of bison. Embedded in this fossil was a man-made stone spearhead: clear evidence that human beings were hunting on the Plains of western Kansas when now-extinct animals grazed that land.

Human beings have been making artifacts in Kansas for a long time. That spearhead found in Logan County deserves a place in the minds of people who think about art in Kansas. Numerous later finds of large bison and elephant kills have confirmed that human beings have lived on the Plains for at least ten thousand years. And it is generally assumed that these early hunters, after crossing over the Bering Straits, came directly to the Plains, then dispersed later through the mountain passes to the west, down the streams to the east, or along the mountains into Mexico and eventually into South America. These plains are the original home of man in the New World.

Recently computers have been pressed into service to try to estimate the numbers of these early hunters as well as the numbers of the animals they hunted. The question has even been raised about whether widespread early hunting contributed to the extinction of the giant bison and elephants of the Plains. This question, like the one that asks how much the prairie fires set by early man helped to keep trees out of the grasslands, is extremely speculative. Perhaps they are stuff for artists rather than scientists. How might a Kansas artist use the rich record of human experience found in Waldo Wedel's *Archeology of Kansas* or *Prehistoric Man on the Great Plains*? The only person I know who has quite literally used fossils—shark teeth, vertebra, rib bones and fins—as artistic material is the folk artist Mrs. Earnest Fick of Oakley.

In the early 1800s travellers on the Plains were curious about just where the Indians had originally come from, but these travelers were less certain about the answer than are anthropologists today. In the

1830s the notion was widespread that the Indians were descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel. The painter George Catlin, who had lived among the Plains Indians for nearly a decade, spent many pages of his *Letters and Notes* (1844) comparing the similarities of the Indians to the ancient Hebrews. Catlin, however, eventually rejects the idea and suggests instead that the Indians may have migrated across the Bering Straits. To Francis Parkman in 1846, the idea of ancient Hebrew descent for the Indians is an "absurd notion." Watching a group of Oglala Sioux mourn a member of their band, he comments with light humor:

> . . . the Indians raised in concert their cries of lamentation over the corpse, and among them Shaw clearly distinguished those strange sounds resembling the word "Halleluyah," which, together with some other accidental coincidences, has given rise to the absurd notion that the Indians are descended from the ten lost tribes of Israel.

A part of the general idea was that the North American Indians, who had domesticated no grazing animals, had not only descended from but had degenerated from the Old World herding tradition of Abraham and Isaac. A year after Parkman, Lewis Garrard, watching some Cheyenne take sweat baths near the Arkansas, comments wryly:

> To those fond of speculation on the origin and probability of the North American Indians belonging to the lost tribes of Israel, I would say here that these Indians *purify* themselves before entering upon the performance of their religious duties.

In *Commerce of the Prairies* (1844), Josiah Gregg, an older, better informed and more systematic man than either Parkman or Garrard, declined to enter into such speculations. He did, however, find in the Plains Indians "a strong resemblance to the patriarchs of old" and thought that resemblance some proof of their "Asiatic origin." Gregg, who always felt awkward and uncomfortable when forced to return periodically to "civilization," compared the Indians to the Queen of Sheba's tribe when, in a humorous passage, he expresses his desire

> to spread my bed with mustang and the buffalo, under the broad canopy of heaven,—there to seek to maintain undisturbed my confidence in men, by fraternizing with the little prairie dogs and wild colts, and the still wilder Indians—the *unconquered Sabaeans* of the Great American Desert.

Travellers on the Prairie-Plains before 1800 were not as given to comparing the Indians to more ancient and less civilized peoples of the Old World. (There are lots of comparisons to Tartars, Huns, Mongols in accounts written from, say, 1810 to 1860). In the early Spanish and French accounts life among the primitive peoples of the region is portrayed in fact, quite favorably. Indeed, in some of these accounts there appears to be something like an evocation of the Golden Age, that ideal early world of legend in which all life was innocent, free, prosperous, and pleasant.

The acknowledged father of the Great American Desert is Zebulon Montgomery Pike. His account of his 1806–1807 expedition across present Kansas and eastern Colorado clearly fixed the image of a dry and sterile desert upon the landscape. Yet, read as a whole, his notebooks and his appendix to *An Account* (1810), "Dissertation on Louisiana," reveal rather careful discriminations in his descriptions of the grasslands as he moves from east to west. Coming up the timbered and well-watered Osage River valley, Pike had by early September, 1806, come out onto the grasslands of eastern Kansas. On September 4, on the Marmaton near Fort Scott he made this entry in his notebook:

> We found a most delightful bason of clear water, of 25 paces diameter and about 100 circumference, in which we bathed; found it deep and delightfully pleasant. Nature scarcely ever formed a more beautiful place for a farm. We returned to camp about dusk, when I was informed that some of the Indians had been *dreaming* and wished to return. Killed one deer, one turkey, one racoon. Distance 13 miles.

Pike's notebook style is generally prosaic and factual. The measuring of the "bason" and the listing of the game killed and miles traveled is typical of that style. That his Osage guides had been "dreaming" and wished to return to their villages is, as subsequent entries show, not an exotic primitive phenomenon but a mere inconvenience. But the pleasant bathing in the clear water leads to unexpected dreaming by Pike himself: here nature had formed a "beautiful place for a farm." In his "Dissertation," Pike expanded and elaborated this brief note to describe the general region:

> The country around the Osage Villages, is one of the most beautiful the eye ever beheld. . . . the extensive prairies crowned with rich and luxuriant grass and flowers—gently diversified by the rising swells, and sloping

Zebulon Montgomery Pike. Pike crossed what is now Kansas in his 1806–07 expedition. His descriptions of its "sandy deserts" raised questions about whether these lands were fit for habitation or farming.

> lawns—presenting to the warm imagination the future seats of husbandry, the numerous herds of domestic animals, which are no doubt destined to crown with joy those happy plains. . . . From the Osage towns to the source of the Osage river, there is no difference in the appearance of the country, except that on the south and east, the view of the prairies becomes unbounded, and is only limited by the imbecility of our sight.

Pike moved eastward from the Marmaton, across the Flint Hills, and crossed the Smoky Hill somewhere between Lindsborg and Salina. He then turned northward, spent some rainy days in the "mountainous" terrain along the Saline, then continued through Republic County to meet with the Republican Pawnee in an effort to get them to replace their Spanish flag with an American one. Moving southwesterly from the Pawnee villages, some of his men became temporarily lost in the Cheyenne Bottoms. By the time Pike's party came onto the Arkansas River the aspect of the country had changed. The imagined future farms to the east gave way to the version of primitive life quite similar to that we have seen in earlier Plains writing:

> The borders of the Arkansaw river may be termed the paradise (terrestrial) of our territories, for the *wandering savage*. Of all countries ever visited by the footsteps of civilized man, there never was one probably that produced game in greater abundance. . . .

The future herds of domestic animals Pike had dreamed of on the Marmaton have given way to wild game, the future farmers to the present savage. Farmers, Pike thinks, will never be able to make this land their own. And he believes this land will form a useful barrier to hold back the American pioneers who are too "prone to rambling and extending themselves." From the Great Bend of the Arkansas westward, the September landscape became progressively drier and more akin to the "sandy desarts of Africa."

Pike's "sandy desarts" are, of course, on the upper reaches of the Arkansas, perhaps in southwest Kansas but probably in eastern Colorado. In 1811, the year after Pike's *Account*, George Sibly was on the lower Smoky Hill. Sibly saw something quite different when he came over a rise from the east and looked out over the country around, perhaps, present Chapman or Solomon:

> We overlooked a vast extent of level meadow ground through which were to be traced a great number of rivulets and creeks, glittering in the sunshine and hastening to the main branches of the Konza. Numerous herds of elk and antelope frisked in the gay flowering plain giving life and animation to the charming scene.

The same year, Henry Brackenridge was out on the grasslands. His assessment of the land is quite similar to that of Pike's, especially in his emphasis that the Plains will always form a barrier to farmers. However, he muses, if there are no Indians the country might support some small, widely scattered settlements:

> This country, it is certain, can never become agricultural, but is in many respects highly favorable for the multiplication of flocks and herds. Those delightful spots where the beauty and variety of landscape might challenge the fancy of the poet invite the pastoral life. How admirably suited to that interesting animal, the sheep, are those clean smooth meadows, of surface infinitely varied by hill and dale, covered with a short sweet grass intermixed with thousands of the most beautiful flowers, undeformed by a single weed.

In 1831, Josiah Gregg, a sickly Independence lawyer, made a tour onto the Plains on the advice of his doctors. He joined a Santa Fe caravan, and for over a decade he was engaged in trade between the eastern settlements and Mexico. In 1844 he published *Commerce of the Prairies*. The book is so full of accurate information for travelers and traders, of careful and scientific observation of geography, flora, fauna,

climate, of interviews with Indians and their white captives, of anecdote and humor, that Gregg's book remains the best ever written about the Plains. His description and classification of Indian tribes according to language and custom has not been greatly improved by modern anthropologists. It is a big, rich book; here I can only relate a few specific passages.

On his first journey, Gregg's party was only about a month behind the party of William Sublette and Jedediah Smith. Gregg would not learn that Smith had been killed by Comanche on the Cimarron until he arrived in Santa Fe. But there was great anxiety within his party when they met nearly three thousand Comanche on the Cimarron. They parleyed with some of the chiefs, then moved into encampment; guards were doubled. That evening when some forty Indians approached the camp, Gregg's party made ready to fire; the Indians, however, turned out to be women. They were turned away, but a horse was apparently stolen by them. The next day Gregg's party continued into extremely dry country, south of the Cimarron. The Indians followed at a distance. When the party was rather desperate for water and feeling "lost on that inhospitable desert, which had been the scene of so many former scenes of suffering," a couple of Indians approached. To the surprise and relief of the party, the Indians returned the "lost" horse, then led them into an "elysian vale" where there was water, wood, and grass for the stock. However, Gregg goes on, the traders were not "destined to rest long in peace":

> About midnight we were all aroused by a cry of alarm the like of which had not been heard since the day Don Quixote had his famous adventure with the fulling-mills; and I am not quite sure but some of our party suffered as much from fright as poor Sancho Panza did on that memorable occasion. But Don Quixote and Sancho only heard the thumping of the mills and the roaring of waters; while we heard the thumping of Indian drums, accompanied by occasional yells, which our excited fancies immediately construed into notes of the fearful warsong.

Alarms and guns were raised but nothing happened. The "fearful warsong" had been but a "serenade." During the next several days the horde of Indians crowded into the party's various encampments serenading, trading, raising dust and noise, stealing a little. Soon the fearful three thousand savages had become, in their excessive friend-

liness, a nuisance and annoyance. The party finally stole away early one morning, glad to be rid of the Comanche.

In this incident and others Gregg successfully debunks, with humor and commonsense, the image of the Plains Indian as a dangerous and treacherous savage. He consistently counsels trade and reciprocal gift giving. Toward the end of the book he summarizes this attitude, beginning with a slightly sarcastic allusion to Washington Irving's *A Tour on the Prairies* (1835), which was but one of many books of the period to romantically exploit the dangers of the Plains:

> A "tour of the Prairies" is certainly a *dangerous* experiment for him who would live a quiet contented life at home among his friends and relatives; not so dangerous to life and health, as prejudicial to his domestic habits. Those who have lived pent up in our large cities, know but little of the broad, unembarrassed freedom of the Great Western Prairies. Viewing them from a snug fireside, they seem crowded with dangers, with labors and sufferings; but once upon them, and these appear to vanish—they are soon forgotten.

As well as debunking popular notions about the Plains, this passage also sounds what is a persistent personal theme in the book: Gregg's almost pathological discomfort whenever he is periodically forced to live within "civilized communities." By Gregg's time the Plains have become a place of escape for civilized men, not merely a refuge for degenerate men like James Fenimore Cooper's Ishmael Bush. The Santa Fe trader or the Easterner or European tourist can now participate in the natural freedom previously reserved for the nomadic aborigine. The white man on the Plains

> knows no government—no laws, save those of his own creation and adoption. He lives in no society which he must look up to or propitiate. The exchange of this untrammelled condition—this sovereign independence, for a life of civilization, where both his physical and moral freedom are invaded at every turn, by the complicated machinery of social institutions, is certainly likely to commend itself to but few, —not even to all those who have been educated to find their enjoyments in the arts and elegancies peculiar to civilized society; —as is evinced by the frequent instances of men of letters, of refinement and wealth, voluntarily abandoning society for a life upon the Prairies. . . .

By Gregg's time the wilderness of the Plains has become a place to *escape to*. We all know that use of the natural world. It is a place to

get away from it all. This human impulse is not new or unusual. The pattern is found in all literatures, Greek and Roman classics, Shakespeare's plays, Chinese stories, modern novels. It goes something like this: people get tired and dissatisfied with the complexity and often the corruption of life in the city; they flee to the simplicity and freedom of the natural world. There in "Nature" one has the time and the peace to remember or to learn for the first time the essential simple truths of human life. In the older literature the character will usually return to the city a happier and wiser person. What Gregg learns from the wilderness is the delight of freedom from artificial social codes, and he learns the importance of relying not upon others but upon himself. For Gregg, there can be no willing return to civilization once one has known the Plains. It is rather odd to see a reversal of this pattern in later Kansas literature in which characters feel oppressed and hemmed in by the small farms and towns and escape to the city.

I must linger a bit longer with Gregg. His is a difficult book to leave. Gregg accepts the general notion that "these great Steppes seem only fitted for the haunts of the mustang, the buffalo, the antelope, and their migratory lord, the prairie Indian." Yet during his long experience he has seen changes in the Plains: increased travel, decrease in buffalo, changes in Indian ways. Toward the end of his chapter on the "Geography of the Prairies," Gregg allows himself a moment of visionary speculation about the future of these "Steppes":

> The high plains seem too dry and lifeless to produce timber; yet might not the vicissitudes of nature operate a change likewise upon the seasons? Why may we not suppose that the genial influences of civilization—that extensive cultivation of the earth—might contribute to the multiplication of showers, as it certainly does of fountains? Or that the shady groves, as they advance upon the prairies, may have some effect upon the seasons? . . . Then may we not hope that these sterile regions might yet be thus revived and fertilized, and their surface covered one day by flourishing settlements to the Rocky mountains?

Gregg is one of the first to dream the dream of more trees and rainfall on the High Plains. He seems unaware, though, that a more genial climate, cultivated earth, shady groves and settlements will limit or end the primitive freedom he has elsewhere celebrated.

One of the young men of "refinement" who had abandoned society for a "life upon the Prairies" had a much different vision of the future of the Plains. He was George Catlin, who had spent nearly the whole of the 1830s living among and painting the Plains Indians. In 1844, the same year as Gregg's book, Catlin published his London edition of *Letters and Notes, Customs, and Conditions of North American Indians.* Toward the end of his first volume, Catlin laments the increased slaughter of the buffalo "in those desolate fields of silence"; he knows that once the buffalo is "extinguished" so too will be the "peace and happiness (if not the actual existence)" of the Indians. Catlin then has a "splendid contemplation" about the Plains Indians as he

> imagines them as they *might* in the future be seen, (by some great protecting policy of government) preserved in their pristine beauty and wildness, in a *magnificent park,* where the world could see for ages to come, the native Indian in his classic attire, galloping his wild horse, with sinewy bow, and shield and lance, amid the fleeting herds of elks and buffaloes. What a beautiful and thrilling specimen for America to preserve and hold up to the view of her refined citizens and the world, in future ages! A *nation's Park,* containing man and beast, in all the wild and freshness of their nature's beauty!

By the early 1840s, the "desert" and its primitive peoples are no longer thought to be a barrier to agricultural settlement; in Catlin's mind, at least, the Prairie-Plains were now something to be "preserved" for the future contemplation of America's "refined citizens." The end of the nomadic stage of human life on the Plains was in sight.

One of America's most refined young men, Francis Parkman, visited Catlin's London exhibition of paintings and Indian artifacts in 1844; back in Boston the following year, he made plans for his "tour of amusement and curiosity" on the Plains. By the time he left Boston for Westport in the spring of 1846, he had probably read both Gregg and Catlin. If so, Parkman came to the Plains in full knowledge that this wilderness would soon pass away; he wanted to see it before it was gone.

His *The Oregon Trail* (1849) has become the best-known book about travel on the Prairie-Plains. But the title is misleading, suggesting as it does covered wagons loaded with families making their way to the Pacific coast. Parkman never got to the mountains and almost his entire journey lay within the area that would, in 1854, become the Terri-

tory of Kansas. The book is packed with images of an older Kansas from the minute Parkman leaves the "mudholes of Westport" to ride out onto the "green, ocean-like expanse of prairie, stretching swell beyond swell to the horizon" in present Johnson County. He is lost for several days north of Leavenworth and eaten up by mosquitoes while trying to bathe near, probably, Seneca. Feeling strongly the immense emptiness of the land, he stands late at night on the Little Blue, watching a huge red moon rise and imagining that he is the only being who has "consciousness for many a league around." Near Lakin the party fearfully prepares for a night attack from Comanche or Pawnee, who never show up. There is an especially successful buffalo hunt near Larned; they gather ripe wild grapes and plums on Cow Creek. One member of the party tries, unsuccessfully, to cadge some whiskey off the Missouri Volunteers of Price's regiment on its way to the Mexican War. After months on the Plains, Parkman is delighted with the "forests and meadows of Council Grove . . . ash, oak, elm, maple, and hickory, festooned with enormous grape-vines, purple with fruit." He rides out again "with regret into the broad light of the open prairie."

Of course, we can still experience much of what Parkman did. We can watch the moon, pick wild plums, get soaked by a sudden rainstorm or bitten by mosquitoes. We can hunt deer instead of buffalo. We can even know the fear of attacks at night by savages as the people around Holcomb knew that fear and recorded it in Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*. But the sense of the land being a wilderness is gone. It was already passing when Parkman came to Kansas. That is why he came. But Parkman was unprepared for the suddenness with which the primitive world would be swept away.

The Oregon Trail was published in 1849. Three years later, in 1852, Parkman added a preface to a new edition. In it he laments the loss of the wilderness:

> *This, too, shall pass away*, was the doom long ago pronounced on all that is primitive in life or scenery within the limits of our national domain; but no one could have dreamed that the decree would find so swift an execution. . . .
>
> Primeval barbarism is assailed at last in front and rear, from the Mississippi and from the Pacific; and, thus, brought between two fires, it cannot long sustain itself. With all respect to civilization, I cannot help regretting this final consummation; and such regret will not be misconstrued by anyone who has tried the prairie and mountain life, who has learned to look with affectionate interest on the rifle that was once his companion and

> protector, the belt that sustained his knife and pistol, and the pipe which beguiled the tedious hours of his midnight watch, while men and horses lay sunk in sleep around him.

In another two years, Kansas would become a territory, stretching from Missouri to the Continental Divide. Soon it would be a state crossed by railroads, dotted by farm towns and cattle towns and rapidly filling up with homesteaders.

By 1872, Parkman added a second preface. He now recognizes that his book "reflects the image of an irrevocable past." He complains that "buffalo give way to tame cattle, farm-houses [are] scattered along the water-courses, and wolves, bears, and Indians are numbered among the things of the past." The "disenchanting screech of the locomotive" breaks the earlier silence; and "woman's rights invade the fastnesses of the Arapahoes."

Parkman, we might say, is getting a little crotchety. Twenty years later he becomes downright grouchy about rapid settlement, as he writes yet another preface, this time for the 1892 edition illustrated by Frederic Remington. He describes the change much to the detriment of the new "civilization":

> For Indian teepees, with their trophies of bow, lance, shield, and dangling scalplocks, we have towns and cities, resorts of health and pleasure seekers, with an agreeable society, Paris fashions, the magazines, the latest poem, and the last novel. The sons of civilization, drawn by the fascinations of a fresher and bolder life, thronged the western wilds in multitudes which blighted the charm that had lured them.
>
> The buffalo is gone, and of all his millions nothing is left but bones. Tame cattle and fences of barbed wire have supplanted his vast herds and boundless grazing grounds. . . . the wolves that howled at evening about the traveller's camp-fire have succumbed to arsenic and hushed their savage music. The wild Indian is turned into an ugly caricature of his conqueror; and that which made him romantic, terrible, and hateful, is in large measure scourged out of him. The slow cavalcade of horsemen armed to the teeth has disappeared before parlor cars and the effeminate comforts of modern travel.

Kansas: Some Reflections on Culture Inheritance and Originality

James C. Malin

Kansas as a Geographical Area

Kansas as a geographical area is an accident of politics, or possibly, a consequence of a series of accidents. Its boundaries have not made sense according to any frame of reference based upon tangible facts and logical conclusions drawn from facts. For many reasons the eastern boundary would lie more appropriately about fifty miles east of its historical position, but repeated attempts to effect even modest adjustments were futile. In terms of types of farming, the northern tier of counties has belonged to the Nebraska corn belt. On the other hand, however, serious consideration was given at least twice to proposals for the annexation to Kansas of that part of Nebraska that lies south of the Platte river. Several plausible, if not sound, reasons were advanced for such a change. But many Kansans objected that the area in question contained too many Democrats. The southern boundary line was bungled on account of the slavery prohibition, the Indian

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barrier, and misunderstanding about Indian reservation limits. The territory of Kansas extended to the Rocky Mountains, but for peculiar reasons, when Kansas became a state, Kansans voluntarily restricted themselves to the country east of 102° west longitude. The foregoing citations applied to Kansas limits in relation to other states and territories, but still other boundary schemes referred primarily or only to internal matters. Numerous proposals were made to divide Kansas either into an East and West Kansas, or into a North and South Kansas. But tangible facts and logic made little headway against emotional attachments to the combinations of historical traditions associated with a geographical area and its people.

Subsequent to Lincoln's dictum of 4 July 1861, denying the sacredness of a state, so-called state government in the nation was restricted by successive assumptions of power on the part of the central government until all true self-government disappeared. The vestiges of state structure survived, to be sure, but as little more than administrative agencies of the central authority. Yet, the symbols and legends of state sovereignty survived, so far as they had any meaning, and were filled in by each generation and social group according to the subjective need of the hour. In states other than Kansas, each in its own peculiar character, the people behaved in a similar fashion. Persistent always, however, was an overriding loyalty to the symbols and legends embodied in its traditions. Few, and Kansas was not among them, were willing to discard even their antiquated constitutions.

Kansas in an Ecological Perspective

Plant and animal life of Kansas necessarily is that of midlatitudes regardless of whether or not "native," in the popular pre-Columbian discovery sense, or introduced by recent European man. Thus the species and varieties of life found in the area represent those peculiarly adapted to such a geographical habitat, as well as outliers of those most specifically adapted to the high and low latitudes. In this latter sense, Kansas lies in a transition zone, or a belt of overlapping margins of dispersion patterns occupied by marginal species of life forms. In this belt, the more distinctly northern and southern life forms meet and intermingle.

The Kansas area is transitional also in its east-west variations of both diminishing moisture and rising elevation to the westward. Thus such species as lie in the fringes of optimal environment, both in a north-south and an east-west orientation, represent elements of unusual risk as pertains to survival in relation to the short-term fluctuations of weather and other hazards.

Kansas is situated in the central portion of the North American grassland. In its mid-latitude position, between the Platte river on the north and the Canadian-Arkansas rivers on the south, both the east-west zoning and the north-south zoning of life forms are more sharply differentiated than in any other part of the grassland. This is particularly conspicuous as relates to the east-west orientation. The true forest country lies to the east, and the true moist-desert to the west.

Kansas According to Primitive Peoples

In this area called Kansas the occupancy by primitive peoples who had attained a Folsom type culture dates from about ten thousand years ago. Within some two thousand years of the present, later primitive cultures had invaded the area from the desert southwest, from the forested southeast, and from the woodlands of the continent east of the Mississippi river. Probably these invasions occurred more than once. If so, this central grassland was long a meeting ground where an intermingling of cultures occurred. Individual village sites reveal to the archaeologist successive periods of occupance, in some cases, interrupted by periods of apparent abandonment in which the site was covered by several inches of wind-blown material. Thus the dust-storms of the grass country, and of major proportions, are demonstrated to have occurred long before Europeans appeared on the scene. For several centuries prior to the modern European discovery of the western world, the Great Plains as well as the prairie was occupied by people living in villages and dependent largely upon agriculture for food supply, but supplemented by wild game. These were the peoples who were displaced by European culture within the four centuries usually labeled modern history and documented by written records. In this perspective it would not be unexpected if resemblances occurred in some of the patterns of behavior of European man in America.

European-American Forest Culture in the Grassland

In the process of displacing an occupying Indian population and of resettling the area with men of European-American culture, each of the invading people was a unique individual and new to the area. He brought with him his peculiar personality and his cultural heritage. By the experience of living together, diverse elements were blended into a new culture. Even people coming from the same eastern state brought variants of their unique localities. Differences, not likeness, were the rule. Railroads within land-mass interiors had not exercised extensively their leveling effects until late in the nineteenth century. These points are more than commonplaces and have usually been lost from view. More attractive have been the over-simplified generalizations about Puritan, slaveholder, abolitionist, northerner, southerner, republican, democrat, etc.

The high degree of mobility of population poses problems for the consideration of the historian. To what extent did first comers determine or impose a pattern of culture that would survive in spite of a rapid turnover of population? To be more specific, do the political institutions once established mold the culture regardless of the changing population that implements them? Stated in opposite extremes, did the changing population modify and direct the functional operation of the institutions regardless of their origin and their first institutional form as established in Kansas? If the answer rejects both extremes, may the pragmatic adjustments be determined quantitatively, or only subjectively?

The sources of Kansas population (107,209), according to the federal census of 1860, assigned to states of birth are given on the following page. The first generalization to be made from these figures is both the absolute and relative statistical unimportance of the New England contribution, 3.9% of the whole. The contribution of the strictly northern states' 16% is only slightly larger than the lower south's 13.5%. Clearly, the border states peopled Kansas and most conspicuous as a group were the three Ohio valley states north of the river of that name: Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, totaling 28.8%. A special explanation is in order about that group of states. They had been peopled largely from south of the river and south of the Mason-Dixon line. A conspicuous culture trait is critical to this discussion. Although they were antisla-

Sources of Kansas Population

New England	3.9%	
Northern tier of states west of New England	8.4	
Iowa	3.7	
Total, northern states		16.0%
Lower South		13.5
Border states east of Appalachian Mountains North	6.5	
Border states north of Ohio river	28.8	
Total northern border		35.3
Border states east of Appalachian Mountains South	5.0	
Border states south of Ohio river	8.5	
Total southern border		13.5
Missouri		10.6
Total border states		59.5
Foreign born		11.8

very in sentiment, they were even more pronounced anti-Negro. So far as generalization can be accurate in the matter, they tended to take a position that the only way in which Negroes would be tolerated among them was as slaves—but emphatically, they did not want Negroes, either free or slave. The seeming paradox involved in this situation is that people sometimes found themselves to be antislavery and proslavery at one and the same time. A similar generalization holds largely for the population of all border states, including Missouri, except that possibly after 1850 the balance turned in Ohio. It is only in this context that the position of Missouri can be reinterpreted in accordance with facts. Missouri was not so much interested in slavery as such as in being embarrassed by a large free Negro population. In this context also, Missouri's interest in making Kansas a slave state is intelligible.

The peopling of Kansas by the border states was decisive, therefore, in giving the free white-state point of view an overwhelming majority. In December 1855, in adopting the Topeka state constitution, the freestate party voted separately on the Negro question and

by a vote of three to one decided to exclude free Negroes from the state if admitted under that instrument. The Wyandotte state constitution of 1859 incorporated a modified white-state proviso in restricting participation in political affairs to white men. This position was confirmed by popular vote twice after the Civil War, and Negro suffrage came to Kansas only with the fifteenth amendment to the federal constitution. Racial integration in the public schools of Topeka came only in 1954 in consequence of a ruling of the United States Supreme Court. The basic culture trait had a way of persisting in spite of the legends about John Brown, and the relation of Kansas to the American Civil War and the abolition of slavery.

As a whole, the Wyandotte constitution had been derived primarily from the Ohio constitution of 1850 as a model. The civil code of the territory adopted by the first freestate territorial legislature (1858) and continued thereafter under statehood was based also upon that of Ohio. The criminal code, however, followed a different pattern, being based upon the Missouri code, which in turn reached back to Kentucky and Virginia. In view of the course of Kansas territorial history and the prolonged war on the "Bogus" legislatures of 1855 and 1857 and their laws, this adoption of the Missouri criminal code in 1858 and its continuance was one of the most remarkable occurrences of the territorial controversy.

The foregoing population analyses and interpretations of culture traits and institutions are related to the census of 1860 and state beginnings. Analyses of successive census enumerations of 1870 and later, national and state, reveal a migration pattern that was little different. Thus the original culture traits were reinforced by people similarly oriented. In other words, the original culture pattern as registered in 1860 did not necessarily determine the attitude for the next century. The major additions to the population only continued in the basic pattern. But this whole situation, additions to population—and losses—, requires further consideration in its own right, featuring population structure and the meaning of mobility.

Town Planning

Another approach to the study of Kansas culture is an analysis of town planning. Three types appear: those oriented to river navigation; to the public square; and to main streets. By coincidence, Kansas was being settled during the 1850s when the steam locomotive on rails was challenging the steam boat on rivers and before the outcome of that new technology was fully evident. The lag in culture evaluation of rail innovation was conspicuous, accentuated by the fact that the "old" system itself had been an innovation to the preceding generation. So substantial had been the advantages of steam navigation that it appeared secure. And besides, it was in the age-old tradition of water communication as fundamental to the organization of all society. The novelty of rail communication was thus doubly difficult to appraise. Familiar to all, however, was the orientation of river towns on the levee, just as on the seacoast all towns were oriented on the harbor water front. The street system must serve the river front and the levees. Wholesale and retail business establishments must occupy locations most convenient for unloading and breaking bulk for retail trade. Conversely, collecting and reshipment businesses must find places convenient for their peculiar requirements. Choice residence sites often occupied bluffs overlooking the river upstream from the commercial levee. The Kansas cities, both in Missouri and Kansas at the junction of the Kansas and the Missouri rivers, Leavenworth and Atchison, and lesser rivals on the right bank were all planned as typical river towns. Their immense advantage over inland towns was conspicuous during the first two decades of Kansas history. The coming of the railroad changed all that. Probably most town promoters thought that rails would be important primarily to supplement or complement river navigation. Only a few bold souls, who thought of rails as displacing altogether the river communication system, pointed out that in a railroad oriented culture, a river location might be a handicap—expansion being possible only in one direction. For the towns serving Kansas, on the west bank of the Missouri river, a railroad bridge was imperative, and the town that was first with such a facility might gain the decisive lead over rivals. The City of Kansas, Missouri (the old Westport Landing) dedicated its bridge in July 1869. Leavenworth and Atchison lagged, acquiring railroad bridges in 1872 and 1875 respectively.

Goff, Kansas, railway station. The railroad transformed the self-sufficient character of the small Kansas town by providing easier access to food, building materials, and other goods. Each town competed with its neighbors to win a branch line.

Once the river town acquired its railroad, the next question was the effect of the new technology on the town's orientation. What, if anything, was the railroad equivalent of the levee as a unifying focus of the whole city's activities? In the beginning, each railroad insisted upon serving itself first, and the town might be divided in support of the claims of the several roads. The idea of a jointly owned terminal railroad, switching, and transfer facility was slow in coming. Slow also was the conception of a union passenger station. Leavenworth's internal quarrels and rivalries certainly damaged its competitive strength, and to put the matter in that language may be an understatement.

The town built around a square was in the southern tradition where the county was the minimal unit of local government. This type of town planning had been carried north of the Ohio river along with other traits typical of southern culture. Thus, regardless of whether the immigrants to Kansas were from the southern states directly, or from the border states, they were accustomed to the public square orientation. Inland eastern Kansas towns of the territorial period were mostly built around squares, the so-called pro-slavery towns, and the

towns founded by freestate immigrants from the Ohio river border areas.

The third type of town planning was to build the business houses along a main street: Lawrence, Topeka, and Manhattan being the most notable examples of New England design. Again, note should be taken that the New England type of planning was not conspicuous during the period of territorial beginnings. Circumstances altered cases, however, and the proslavery town of Franklin, about five miles east of Lawrence, was built along the California Road as its main street. The local situation, not imitation of New England, determined the plan.

After the Civil War, when central and western Kansas were settled, both of the latter town plans were used. County seat rivalries fostered the public square type, but often, even success in that enterprise did not always result in the dominance of the Square, as in Hill City, Ness City, Kinsley and Meade. Possibly the public square design was too pretentious. The village or small town could be accommodated in one or two blocks of business houses along a single street.

The railroad had its influence upon all inland towns. From them, unlike river towns, theoretically, railroads might radiate in all directions. In practice, where there was only one railroad, the main street often intersected it at approximately right angles, with the railway station near the point of intersection. Where there were two or more railroads, each tended to maintain its own service facilities regardless of town planning, and often destroying any unity of town orientation that might have been planned. But in these respects, after the Civil War, Kansas was no different from other western states. After World War I, motor highways have introduced a series of further reorientations of town organization, and the end is not yet. Highways might be routed through the town, around the town, or might by-pass it altogether.

Conclusion

The question that emerges from such an analysis as is presented here is not whether Kansas is a child of New England, but takes on a different form: how did New England wield as much influence as it did, and how was the legend about New England parentage and Pu-

ritanism imposed upon the Kansas tradition contrary to so conspicuous a weight of available facts?

The Civil War, the so-called reconstruction issues that came in its wake, the settlement of Kansas by an unusually large proportion of Union soldiers, the dominance of the Republican party, making Kansas virtually a one-party state, all worked to crystallize thinking along a fairly uniform pattern in which no doubt was entertained about the moral imperative—the North won the war, saved the Union, freed the slave, therefore the North was morally right, and the Republican party claimed the credit, virtually equating the Republican party with the North. In terms of the mental conditioning of a whole people, this process was most effectively carried out. The mind of the Kansan, if not committed already to this point of view before coming to Kansas, was thoroughly indoctrinated, not in the facts of this history, but in the legend about history.

In referring to the Union veterans of the Civil War in this connection, it is necessary to differentiate between Union veterans as a whole and the G.A.R. The latter as an organization had only a small membership or scarcely any representation in Kansas until late in the 1880s and 90s. Its influence even at that date lay, not in numbers, but in organization which often arbitrarily assumed the role of speaking and acting for all Union veterans, and the public and historians have tended to accept this generalization without investigation of the facts. Also, action of veterans as such was sometimes, and more often than realized by historians, erroneously attributed to the G.A.R. So far as the Civil War legend was involved, with its moral concerns, the influence that had shaped thought was not New England Puritanism in the direct conventional sense, but rather, patriotism cast in the mold of the moral imperative and associated directly with living issues, the Union and the abolition of slavery. And, parenthetically, emphasis is in order that this moral commitment even about abolition of slavery was largely in consequence of the course taken by the war and postwar retrospect, and should not be confused with the debated issue of the "cause" of the American Civil War. So much that crystallized in people's minds after the event—results—has been read back chronologically into prewar years and attributed to causes.

The complex of attitudes associated with the Civil War tradition—patriotism—attained, almost if not quite, the status of a secular reli-

gion. So far as theology in the conventional sense was concerned, to be sure, Kansans were overwhelmingly Protestant, not Puritan, in any legitimate sense of that much-abused word. And the new scientific and philosophical ideas that were so potent in the nineteenth century in challenging theology came from Europe—Great Britain, Germany, and France. The conclusion seems justified that the challenge to theological orthodoxy by science and the higher criticism met with less intolerance than the challenge to patriotism as a secular orthodoxy.

The subject of education—formal education—would require an essay at least as long as the present paper to present even its minimal outlines—the net conclusion of such a discussion being that education was not administered conspicuously in the proper sense as learning, but illustrated rather the power of indoctrination, confused by a conflict between imitation of Eastern models and pragmatic functionalism, all of which discouraged originality.

At this point the paper is brought to an arbitrary close—time has run out with only a sampling of features of Kansas culture. In dealing with the facts of history as differentiated from the legends about them, the observation has often been made that the legends, even though false, may themselves become causes. In the present connection the argument would run, that although Kansas is not a child of New England, the legend about it being such operated as though the legend was true. From this line of reasoning a paradoxical conclusion might be drawn, that facts of history are false and that the legends, the false, are true, both in the causal sense.

The Depopulation of the Kansa Indians

William E. Unrau

Leslie Fiedler's clever title *The Return of the Vanishing American* is symbolical of ameliorating conditions that have characterized the Native American community in recent years. It cannot be denied, of course, that many of the old problems persist. Abject poverty, lack of jobs, chronic disease, and shockingly short life expectancies are still the destiny of too many American Indians. Nevertheless, the availability of more professional health services, a recognition that traditional cultural practices are worthy of further development, and the enjoyment of an increasing share of the national government's socioeconomic cornucopia, indicate that the lot of the Indian will continue to improve. And that he will be with us in greater numbers seems apparent. Certainly it requires no expert analysis of contemporary population statistics in juxtaposition to those of the nation as a whole to realize that the "vanishing American" trend of the nineteenth century has been radically reversed.

Calculating the trend in Indian demography is a worthwhile endeavor. However, a preoccupation with its implications renders obscure all but the most monumental tragedies of the past. It is doubt-

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ful, for example, that the great smallpox epidemic of the late 1830's, which caused the virtual annihilation of the Mandans, the obliteration of entire Aricharee, Assiniboin, and Crow villages, and the death of two thousand Pawnees in less than a year, will soon be forgotten. Or who can easily ignore the devastating epidemics in sixteenth-century Mexico, or in Canada, New England, and New York during the early years of the French and Indian War? But less spectacular, the more sustained, and, in view of the time spans involved, the more insidious patterns of population decline have too often been ignored. It is instructive to note that two recent and widely read books dealing with the so-called "subjugation" of the plains Indians in the nineteenth century—Ralph Andrist's *The Long Death*, and Dee Brown's *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*—do not even list the word "smallpox" in their respective indexes.

This is not to say that the basic thrust of Indian demography has escaped the attention of competent investigators, for surely the calculations of Angel Rosenblat, A. L. Kroeber, James Mooney, and Henry Dobyns are evidence of significant accomplishment. While they offer a variety of explanations for the substantial reduction of the Indian population in the wake of the white invasion—epidemic disease, ecological imbalance, and so on—their major focus nevertheless is on the quantitative dimension, i.e., *how*, on the basis of historical data, may we calculate the number of people inhabiting the New World on the eve of the white invasion? Dobyns' work is doubtless the most significant and controversial. Building his case on a trenchant analysis of the tendency to underestimate the aboriginal American population, he proposes that,

> Approximately accurate estimates of aboriginal American population may be achieved by comparing the population of a given area at two or more times in order to establish population trends expressed as ratios of the size of the population at 1 time to its size at another. . . . Applying it [postulated depopulation ratios of 20 to 1] to more or less well-established historic nadir populations suggests that the New World was inhabited by approximately 90,000,000 persons immediately prior to discovery.

Responding to the "nadir population" thesis, one critic emphasized the difficulty of defining an Indian, since "the census definition is generally a *cultural* or a *social* one, not a *biological* one, but it is the 'biological Indian' with whom we must be concerned in making esti-

mates." His point is well worth remembering, as anyone will agree who has examined the role of the mixbloods in North American Indian history at the time the alleged nadir population levels were reached. This is only one example of the seemingly endless debate which engages the attention of the estimators, and it prompts one to wonder if ever the aboriginal population of the New World will be known with any degree of precision. Perhaps it does not really matter.

Meanwhile, barring the discovery of new documentary evidence and the construction of an estimative theory that can accommodate all the variables, might not the energies of aspiring ethno-historians and demographers be more productively applied to an appraisal of the evidence at hand, with the thought of determining not only how, but *why* particular groups of Indians at particular times were reduced in number? Given the simple fact that most tribes declined in population following the white invasion, is it not appropriate to inquire if these tragedies were, for the most part, unavoidable consequences of contact between alien cultures? Or, if the invading culture had the means—technical or otherwise—to check depopulation rates, why were these not more widely deployed? When it was apparent that a particular tribe had failed to accept or adjust to the cultural values of the invader, was this the signal for the frustrated "civilizer" to view the tribe's declining population with less concern, and, perhaps, to rationalize it as a normal consequence of indolence and "savagery"?

The tragic experience of the Kansa Indians suggests that tentative answers to some of these questions may be possible. One of the five tribes comprising what ethnologists have designated the Dheghia-Siouan linguistic group, the Kansa began their migration from the lower Ohio valley to present northeastern Kansas no later than the early seventeenth century. Whether they were fleeing in the face of some ominous threat to their survival, and whatever may have been their lot in prehistoric times, there is no doubt that during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, depopulation for them came to be an almost routine part of their existence.

While Marquette's cartographer recorded their residence in the trans-Mississippi West as early as 1673, their first known population count was that of the French colonial official, Pierre Lemoyne Iberville. In an official *mémoire* dated June 20, 1702, Iberville noted that "1,500 familles" of "Les Canses" were living in the lower Mississippi valley.

Utilizing Zebulon Pike's 1806 count of 1.2 children for each adult female as a guide, and assuming that each child had living parents at that time, it is reasonable to calculate the aggregate 1702 population at about 4,800—if, in fact, Iberville's informant, unlike subsequent recorders, counted families and not individuals. Based on the only other reliable account of the eighteenth century, the next half-century was exceedingly tragic. Writing to his superiors on December 12, 1758, Governor Louis Billourat de Kerlerec of French Louisiana reported that the Kansa had once been a "very numerous" people, but "war that they have had with the Pawnees and small-pox have extremely weakened them. There remain today only two hundred and fifty to three hundred men." Again, applying Pike's later ratio between children and living parents, and in view of Perrin du Lac's 1802 count of 450 warriors, even a conservative estimate suggests that the tribe may have been cut in half in less than two generations.

With the nineteenth century came the authority of the United States, a decline in the European fur trade that had dominated the Kansa economy for nearly a century, and more regular population counts. As we have seen, Pike counted 1,465 persons in 1806—465 warriors, 500 women, and 600 children. George C. Sibley, the government factor at Fort Osage, estimated the Kansa population at 1,000 in 1808, and in 1801 John Bradbury reported a total of 1,300. These figures seem conservative, particularly in view of Sibley's revised estimate of 1,600 in 1816. In any case, until the second half of the nineteenth century, when their number declined drastically, the Kansa population remained nearly constant at an average of about 1,600. Isaac McCoy, the Baptist missionary-surveyor, reported 1,500 Kansa Indians in 1831, 1,200 the following year, and 1,750 in 1840. Indian Agent Richard Cummins submitted a figure of 1,602 in 1839, and on January 16, 1843, recorded the most detailed count to that time: 290 males under ten years of age, 346 between ten and forty, and 159 over 40; 288 females under ten, 369 between ten and forty, and 136 over forty, bringing the total to 1,588.

One is tempted to conclude that the consistency of these statistics points to population stability for the first half of the nineteenth century. Nothing could be farther from the truth. In contrast to the turbulent conditions accompanying the international fur trade of the eighteenth century, some natural increase should have taken place as a

result of the Indian Bureau's self-imposed obligation to provide economic assistance and technical instruction for becoming self-sufficient. Yet this probable increase is difficult to measure. A comparison of Cummins' statistics with those of Pike leads to the conclusion that there were approximately 200 more children and adolescents in 1843 than in 1806. On the other hand there is no doubt that the tribe's population was in part sustained by intermarriages with the Osages. White Plume, for example, a prominent Kansa chief in the 1820's, was an Osage by birth. In 1811 Sibley observed that the Kansa had made such "extensive connections with the Osages by intermarriages that it is scarcely probable that any serious differences will occur again between them," and an 1819 report advised that intermarriages were commonplace to the degree that the Kansa's physical features were "more and more approaching those of the Osages." Finally, and no less significant, were the mixblood marriages. As a variable in Kansa demography they are a factor to be reckoned with no later than the 1820's, and during subsequent decades were so consequential that by 1890 the "Half Breed Band" comprises fully forty per cent of the tribe's official BIA total.

It follows that the 1,600 average reported for the first half of the nineteenth century was illusory. By no means did it present a realistic picture of Kansa population, which had the potential for being dynamic. What, then, had kept the population from increasing? Who was responsible?

Conflict with the Otoes and Republican Pawnees resulted in no more than three score Kansa casualties, while the floods of 1827 and 1844 certainly killed fewer than that. Far more disastrous were the consequences of epidemic disease. During the fall of 1827 about 180 Kansa died of smallpox. At least two-thirds of the tribe were afflicted, and of those who survived many were too weak to make the semiannual buffalo hunt that fall, and thus experienced destitute conditions the following winter. Six years later cholera struck with force, and although the mortality rate was not recorded, it could not have been insignificant because of a report that there were "but two at the agency who were not down with the fever." In the summer of 1839 a raging "fever"—either cholera or smallpox, but more likely the latter—took an additional one hundred lives in a very short time. "But few families escaped the disease," reported a Methodist missionary, "and the

number of deaths was great in proportion to the number of sick. The awful cries of the Indians around the dead sounded in our ears nearly every day."

Perhaps these tragedies were the cardinal feature of the Kansa population decline pattern prior to 1850. But there is evidence that chronic destitution and outright starvation also took their toll. In January 1831, for example, Secretary of War John Eaton was told that because of their "remarkable improvidence" the Kansa needed "immediate help." Four years later, upon learning that the tribe's entire food supply was less than twenty bushels of corn, Agent Richard W. Cummins flatly asserted that the Kansa were starving. The "autumnal diseases" he reported a short time later were surely in part the result of malnutrition, while widespread whiskey consumption made possible by lawless dramshop operators along the western Missouri border could only have aggravated the situation. Meanwhile, mounting pressure in Washington for another major land cession, the disastrous flood of 1844, and a stubborn Kansa commitment to the semisedentary life acted as powerful obstacles to any progress in agriculture. On the plains the ever-present Pawnees and the more regular appearance of the Cheyennes and Arapahoes made hunting increasingly more hazardous for the less powerful Kansa Indians. By the fall of 1844 their food supply was virtually exhausted, yet Indian Superintendent Thomas Harvey's incredible request was for "more Christian teaching in organized institutions," not corn. Harvey later admitted an "outright donation" was desirable, but since the tribe remained "terribly destitute" three months later, it is doubtful that any significant assistance was extended.

The new treaty concluded in 1846 authorized a massive land cession in return for a more concentrated reservation in the upper Neosho valley. Here, where they were to make the final transition to settled, agricultural life, the quality of their life was supposed to improve. To the white man the treaty was most attractive, but for the Kansa it was quite unrealistic. In addition to the absurd assumption that a few agents, missionaries, and teachers could bring about a cultural revolution in a few short years, it failed to provide safeguards against the insatiable land hunger of the white land jobbers, whose assault on the remaining Kansa domain was greatly encouraged by the creation of Kansas Territory in 1854. Then, while Territorial officials worked in

concert with Washington bureaucrats and a host of national and local speculators, the tribe was confronted by what proved to be the worst epidemic they had experienced since the middle years of the eighteenth century.

In early May 1855 Neosho Agent Andrew J. Dorn wrote Indian Commissioner George W. Manypenny that a major smallpox epidemic had irrupted in Kansas Territory. One hundred little Osages were dead, more were sick and dying, and on his own authority he (Dorn) had arranged for the vaccination of about two hundred who to that point had escaped the dreaded disease. That Dorn's concern was genuine seems obvious. "All Indians should be vaccinated," he warned, "for the lives of many of our fellow-beings are in imminent danger." But the Kansa were ignored, even though their close proximity to the Santa Fe Trail made them particularly vulnerable to contagious disease. Not surprisingly, then, their ranks were reduced with a vengeance in the middle of June 1855, and before the summer was over, more than four hundred had died. Even more incredible than Superintendent Harvey's earlier preference of Christian teaching over food for a starving people was Kansa Agent John Montgomery's report to Washington that smallpox "has continued fatally with a greater number of them, it seems, to the great satisfaction and admiration of all those who have any acquaintance with [them]."

Subsequent population counts reflect the tragedy of 1855 and its long-range implications. In October 1859 Agent Milton C. Dickey placed the total at 1,037, or "200 less than last year." Gleefully, a local newspaper, which repeatedly extolled Christian virtues and the cause of the white farmers, predicted that "at this rate five years will solve the Kaw [Kansa] question." These turned out to be prophetic words. Two years later the total was down to 802, including 424 males, 379 females, and 63 mixbloods, while a slight increase to 825 by 1868 was accomplished not by a halt in the downward trend, but "by those who had joined them by marriages, such as the Potawatomies and others." Not one Kansa male was over fifty-five years old by 1872, and one year later, after they had been removed to Indian Territory, their estimated population was down to about 700. Not even a change in environment could affect the long-range trend, as can be seen in an 1877 count of 425, an 1890 count of 227 (including 92 mixbloods), and a 1905 figure of 209 (including 92 mixbloods). Finally, a contemporary

report of seventeen living Kansa full bloods confirms the absurdity of applying Professor Dobyns' twenty to one nadir population ratio to the Kansa Indians; it also suggests that the extinction of the tribe defined in aboriginal terms is virtually imminent.

Dobyns, like other anthropologists, regards epidemic disease as the paramount cause of Indian depopulation after European contact. As we have seen, smallpox very likely accounted for more Kansa deaths in historic times than any other condition. However, if we exclude the period prior to widespread contact with the white invader, i.e., the period prior to about 1800, we find that this was not the case. In fact the three major smallpox epidemics in the nineteenth century were responsible for considerably less than fifty per cent of the population decline—perhaps no more than about seven hundred deaths. Was this because of fortuitous circumstances, or was it because of the invader's decision to try to control (and even eradicate) this terrible scourge?

To an assembly of Indian leaders in Washington in 1802 President Jackson described the vaccination technique for smallpox as "that precious donation which the great spirit had lately made to the white man," and he promised "that it would finally extirpate that disease from the face of the earth." However, the public vaccination bill passed in 1813, which provided free vaccine through the postal service, applied to citizens, not Indians, and it was not until two decades later that Congress appropriated $12,000 to begin the fight against smallpox in Indian country. Significantly, actual vaccination expenditures that first year "for smallpox and certain other things" amounted to only $1,786, as opposed to $5,721 for "missionary improvement" and $9,424 for the "civilization of the Indians." One year later, in 1833, actual expenditures were down to $721. Under such conservative administration of the Indian vaccine law it is not surprising that a small tribe such as the Kansa was ignored. Yet the need certainly was there. Isaac McCoy, who probably knew more about conditions in Kansa country in the 1830's than any other person, asked Secretary of War Lewis Cass, on March 23, 1832, if "measures could not speedily be adopted to arrest this destroying plague by vaccination." Because four thousand Pawnee, Omaha, Otoe, Ponca (and Kansa) were already dead from the dreaded plague, "no higher reward [could be enjoyed] than

the satisfaction derived from the circumstance of having rescued thousands of men, and women, and children, from this awful calamity."

But it was not until 1833 that the government made any effort whatsoever to vaccinate the Kansa, and even this proved abortive. In early January 1833 Secretary Cass was informed that Frederick Chouteau, a licensed Kansa trader, had interfered with the government's medical operations. The letter came from Subagent Marston Clark, who demanded that Chouteau's license be suspended, and that he be expelled from Indian country. This Chouteau categorically challenged, with the explanation (submitted by two of his trusted employees) that he had made every effort to detain the Kansa at their villages in anticipation of their prearranged vaccination schedule. When the government physician was "5 or 6 days late," Chouteau felt justified in distributing guns, supplies, and ammunition. Almost immediately the tribe departed on a hunting expedition, and the government doctor was forced to return to Missouri without completing his assignment. The Kansa displayed no fear of the vaccine, emphasized Chouteau, and, in fact, were most cooperative. But because of their "miserable condition" they had no alternative but to accept what he stubbornly viewed as a humane gesture to a starving people.

Faced with conflicting accounts of the affair, Indian Superintendent William Clark in St. Louis took the easy way out by advising Commissioner Elbert Herring "to suspend the execution of his instructions [to revoke Chouteau's license] until further advised by the Department on this subject." There the matter rested, and it was not until 1838 that Dr. A. Chute finally submitted a register of 915 vaccinated Kansa Indians. Even so, because at least one hundred of the tribe were struck down by a "high fever" the following summer, there is reason to wonder if in fact the Kansa had been treated. In any case, the official agency records indicate that no more were vaccinated between 1838 and their removal to Indian Territory in 1873—not even during the tragic epidemic of 1855. Thus the inescapable conclusion is that many Kansa smallpox fatalities were avoidable, and that bureaucratic irresponsibility and/or outright government negligence contributed greatly to the tribe's decline.

Regretfully, the same conclusion may be inferred from an even more significant factor in the Kansa way of death. Whereas smallpox accounted for roughly seven hundred deaths in the three decades af-

ter 1825, the tribe was reduced by over one thousand in the three decades after this disease was no longer a threat. Such maladies as measles and whooping cough presented periodic threats to survival, but in the main it was malnutrition and exposure—conditions that slowly but certainly made the afflicted individuals succumb to the ravages of respiratory and digestive disorders, as well as outright starvation. In the literature of Indian depopulation one encounters a great deal of commentary regarding these causes of depopulation, but little tangible documentation to argue for the real significance of the tragedy. Yet there is an abundance of at least circumstantial evidence for the "slow death," as the following sample from the Kansa documents illustrates:

March, 1824:	*"starving"*
April, 1828:	*"starving condition, truely deplorable"*
January, 1831:	*"remarkable improvidence"*
September, 1838:	*"none of the comforts of neighboring tribes"*
February, 1846:	*"very ill with autumnal diseases"*
February, 1848:	*"terribly destitute"*
August, 1855:	*"have lost all confidence in each other due to destitution"*
October, 1861:	*"many are sick and without clothes"*
April, 1862:	*"completely destitute"*
June, 1862:	*"many deaths for want of medicine"*
January, 1866:	*"completely destitute"*
August, 1866:	*"very destitute condition"*
February, 1868:	*"completely out of blankets and food . . . have disposed of all saleable property and have exhausted their credit"*
February, 1869:	*"We now ask, shall we starve?" (Question posed by nine chiefs and ten warriors.)*
March, 1872:	*"absolutely destitute; are living on a little corn and dead animals they can find lying around"*

Excluding the 1824 reference to starvation, every subsequent report of the tribe's suffering came while they were under treaties with the United States—treaties which promised them at least the minimal means of survival in return for land cessions worth millions of dollars. It was assumed they would be converted to Christianity and then move smoothly along the road toward agrarian self-sufficiency. In the final analysis, however, the government's real commitment was to the interests of white missionaries, traders, farmers, and speculators—not Indians—and the Kansa never were given a chance. Incredible as it may seem, their agent could report as late as 1872 that "after all these [forty-eight] years the Kansas still do not have a physician."

Chronically sick and starving, periodically afflicted by epidemic disease, and hemmed in by a combination of land-hungry white men from the east, and more powerful tribes to the north and west, the Kansa came to be recognized as a hopeless, "beggar" tribe, whose ultimate extinction was virtually unavoidable. It seems reasonable to conclude that while the white man had the means, indeed the obligation, to alter the situation, he pursued a policy of negligence and self-interest, and finally became so accustomed to the Kansa pattern of depopulation that he really did not care.

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Chapter 3

Settlement and Statehood through the 1860s

The period beginning with settlement (1854) through the 1860s is rich in primary and secondary sources. The birth of Kansas, a state which was the focus of national attention at the beginning of a great civil war, has been written about in detail. Chapter 3 examines a few events in this turbulent decade and a half.

Richard B. Sheridan, University of Kansas professor emeritus of economics, describes the flight of black slaves to Kansas, especially to the free-state stronghold of Lawrence. He focuses on the problem of disposing of the contraband slaves who flocked to Union army camps in Missouri. He also discusses the size and geographical distribution of contraband populations in Kansas, their work, education, and social life, as well as the recruitment and deployment of black soldiers from Kansas in the Civil War. Much of Sheridan's evidence regarding the contrabands and black soldiers was generated by the colorful exploits of James Lane, military commander and first United States senator from Kansas.

Robert Stone's brief look at the Wyandotte Constitution focuses primarily on two provisions that made it unique. They both pertain to the protection of women's rights, which were almost nonexistent then. One provision, "Section 6," provides for the protection of the rights of women concerning property and possession of children, while the other, "Section 9" (the homestead exemption), requires joint consent from husband and wife to dispose of a homestead (a maximum of 160

acres of farmland or one acre in the limits of an incorporated town) and exempts it from forced sale under any process of law. This pioneering doctrine, later adopted by the other states, was considered to preserve the family, and thus society, by protecting the home and dignifying the wife as "proprietor in her own right, part owner of her home and queen of her domain."

The Lawrence massacre was the bloody climax of the Kansas-Missouri border conflict and the most atrocious single event of the Civil War. According to Albert Castel, a native Kansan who teaches history at Western Michigan University, it gave William Quantrill a reputation as the bloodiest man in American history. Castel's article briefly summarizes the infamous career of Quantrill, the mysterious and brutal leader of the Missouri bushwhackers, whose bold and murderous raids into Kansas culminated with the August 21, 1863, raid of Lawrence that left more than 150 men dead and most of the town in flames.

Chapter 3 closes with a poignant account of a woman's experiences on the Overland Trail in 1867. Katie Armitage, Lawrence historian, introduces the reader to Elizabeth "Bettie" Duncan and her family through the diary that Bettie kept for the four-month overland journey to California from Lawrence. The diary chronicles Bettie's difficult journey and the tragic loss of her six-year-old daughter, Katie. Her account was similar to experiences of the thousands of travelers who made that difficult journey.

From Slavery in Missouri to Freedom in Kansas: The Influx of Black Fugitives and Contrabands into Kansas, 1854–1865

Richard B. Sheridan

As is well known to students of American history, the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill in 1854 repealed the Missouri compromise of 1820 and built upon the Compromise of 1850. It created two new territories, Nebraska and Kansas, in place of one. It led to the negotiation of cession treaties whereby some Native Americans, or portions thereof, were allowed to remain within Kansas, but the greater number were relocated in territories outside Kansas. Moreover, the principle of squatter sovereignty which had been established by the Compromise of 1850 was extended to both territories, in which the majority of white settlers were authorized to form and regulate their domestic institutions, especially the institution of chattel slavery.

Missourians first pushed across the border to claim choice lands under the terms of the Preemption Act of 1841. Their proslavery lead-

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From Richard B. Sheridan, "From Slavery in Missouri to Freedom in Kansas: The Influx of Black Fugitives and Contrabands into Kansas, 1854–1865," *Kansas History* 12, no. 1 (Spring 1989): 28–47. Reprinted with permission of the Kansas State Historical Society and Richard B. Sheridan.

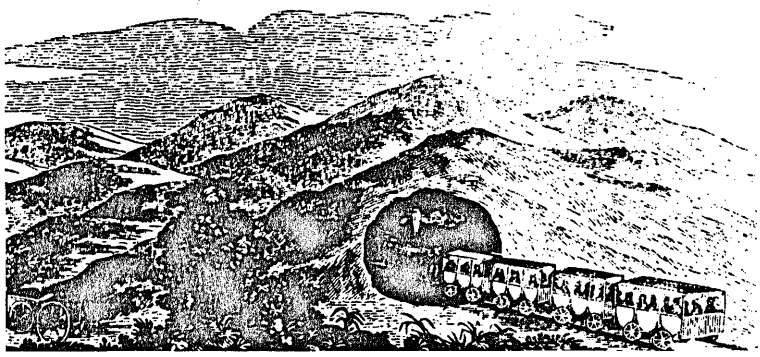
ers perceived the necessity of flooding Kansas with slaves and establishing a slave state. Settlers from New England and the Ohio Valley followed, motivated by the same land hunger as the Missourians but determined to withstand slavery and found a free state. For a time the struggle resulted in victory of proslavery forces who waged guerrilla warfare throughout Kansas Territory and sacked free-soil Lawrence. Reprisals were led by John Brown, James Lane and others, whose forces plundered and killed proslavery settlers, running off their slaves to freedom in Canada. Kansas was born in a struggle for liberty and freedom, a struggle that raised the curtain on the Civil War and sounded the death knell of slavery.

The contest for possession of the Territory of Kansas has been told many times from the standpoint of white Americans who were involved in the struggle. On the other hand, much less is known regarding the black people and their role in overturning slavery, both in the antebellum and Civil War years. This paper, in five parts, is concerned with the blacks of Missouri and Kansas.

I

The slave economy of the western counties of Missouri, which was a small affair in the early decades of the nineteenth century, became of increasing importance in the years leading up to the Civil War. According to John G. Haskell, a resident of Lawrence, Kansas, who had seen military service in Missouri, the early western Missouri slaveholder was a poor man; his wealth at the time of settlement "consisted mainly in one small family of negro slaves, with limited equipment necessary to open up a farm in a new country." Owing to such factors as poor transportation facilities and limited market outlets, the typical farm was small when compared with the cotton plantations of the deep South, agricultural production was diversified, and almost all food, clothing, and shelter was of local production. Slavery in these circumstances was much more a domestic than a commercial institution.

From its near-subsistence stage, the farm economy of western Missouri grew slowly at first, but more rapidly as the Civil War approached. New markets were opened with the growth of steamboat



LIBERTY LINE.

NEW ARRANGEMENT---NIGHT AND DAY.

The improved and splendid Locomotives, Clarkson and Lundy, with their trains fitted up in the best style of accommodation for passengers, will run their regular trips during the present season, between the borders of the Patriarchal Dominion and Libertyville, Upper Canada. Gentlemen and Ladies, who may wish to improve their health or circumstances, by a northern tour, are respectfully invited to give us their patronage.

SEATS FREE, *irrespective of color.*

Necessary Clothing furnished gratuitously to such as have "*fallen among thieves.*"

"Hide the outcasts—let the oppressed go free."--*Bible.*

☞ For seats apply at any of the trap doors, or to the conductor of the train.

J. CROSS, *Proprietor.*

N. B. For the special benefit of Pro-Slavery Police Officers, an extra heavy wagon for Texas, will be furnished, whenever it may be necessary, in which they will be forwarded as dead freight, to the "Valley of Rascals," always at the risk of the owners.

☞ Extra Overcoats provided for such of them as are afflicted with protracted *chilly-phobia.*

Just prior to the Civil War, the Underground Railroad was increasingly active in bringing slaves out of Missouri. "Stations" in Kansas, Iowa, and Illinois moved these former slaves to freedom. This 1844 Chicago Western Citizen *advertisement thinly disguised its purpose by announcing the "Liberty Line" with "regular trips" running "during the present season between the borders of the Patriarchal Dominion and Libertyville, Upper Canada."*

traffic on the Missouri River, the relocation of Indian tribes from east of the Mississippi River to the territory west of Missouri, the establishment of new military posts, railroad construction, and the opening of Kansas to white settlement. Besides a variety of foodstuffs, Missouri farmers supplied these new markets with transport animals—oxen, horses, and mules. Rising farm profits led, in turn, to in-migration, land settlement, and lively markets for farming tools and implements and especially black slaves. By the eve of the Civil War there were a considerable number of medium to large slaveholdings. Hemp, which was used in ropemaking, came to be grown on slave plantations of some size, although its culture was mostly restricted to the Missouri River counties.

The slave population of Missouri increased from 3,011 in 1810, to 9,797 in 1820, and to 25,091 in 1830. It then more than doubled to 57,891 in 1840, grew to 87,422 in 1850, and reached 114,931 in 1860. A disproportionate number of these slaves were concentrated in the Missouri River and western border counties. The total of the Missouri River and western border counties was 54,940 in 1850 and 75,107 in 1860, or 62.8 percent and 65.3 percent, respectively, of all slaves in the state.

Slaves who planned to permanently abscond from their masters in Missouri had several modes and courses of escape. They might be aided by relatives or friends who had successfully escaped from slavery and returned to aid others. They might be aided by white people in Missouri and elsewhere who held strong views against slavery. Free coloreds are reported to have taken fugitives under their protection, written passes, given instructions and directions, and provided temporary board and lodging. The so-called Underground Railroad was a secret system to aid fugitives bent on flight to Canada, by transporting them from station to station along well-defined trails or routes. Some slaves managed successful flight solely by their wits and luck. Slaves escaped as stowaways on steamboats. Others stole small boats or built rafts to speed their flight to freedom. The coming of the railroad furnished a new means of escape. Prior to the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the runaway slaves from Missouri headed for the two contiguous free states of Iowa and Illinois, and thence northward to Canada.

Much greater opportunities for escape came with the filling of Kansas with free-soil settlers. By 1857 the problem was so great that

both the federal and state governments were appealed to for protection of slave property in Missouri. Bills were introduced into the Missouri General Assembly to provide special patrols in the counties on the Illinois, Iowa, and Kansas borders. After the Kansas struggle had resulted in a victory for the antislavery forces, writes Harrison A. Trexler,

> the golden age of slave absconding opened. Escapes apparently increased each year till the Civil War caused a general exodus of slave property from the State. The enterprising abolition fraternity of Kansas—Brown, Lane, Doy, and the rest—seemingly made it their religious duty to reduce the sins of the Missouri slaveholder by relieving him of all the slave property possible.

In 1855 one editorial writer asserted that "ten slaves are now stolen from Missouri to every one that was spirited off before the Douglas bill."

The raids into Missouri to free slaves struck terror into the minds of slaveholders and contributed indirectly to black flight from bondage. John Brown is known to have made several such raids and to have escorted a group of fugitives from Kansas to Canada in 1859. Less well known are the guerrilla chieftains James Montgomery and Dr. Charles R. Jennison, whose bands of "Jayhawkers" terrorized proslavery settlers in southern Kansas and made raids across the border into Missouri. According to George M. Beebe, acting governor of Kansas Territory, it was the purpose of these guerrilla chieftains

> to shelter fugitives owing service to southern states, and to kill any who should assist in attempting to enforce the fugitive-slave law; stating that they acted upon a settled conviction of duty and obedience to God. In short, their professions were the exact counterpart of those of the late notorious John Brown, in conjunction with whom they formerly acted.

In the years immediately preceding the Civil War, the Underground Railroad was increasingly active in helping slaves escape from Missouri. The Rev. Richard Cordley, Congregational minister and historian of Lawrence, Kansas, said that the Underground Railroad line ran directly through Lawrence and Topeka, then on through Nebraska and Iowa. He had been told by people who ought to know "that not less than one hundred thousand dollars' worth of slaves passed through Lawrence on their way to liberty during the territorial pe-

riod." Cordley, himself, together with his wife and members of his congregation, harbored a slave named "Lizzie," about whom he wrote an interesting account of their efforts to secrete her from a federal marshal and his deputies and see her safely on the road to Canada.

James B. Abbott, who was active in the antislavery movement in Kansas, said that fear of being sold to planters in the deep South prompted the slaves of Missouri

> to secure their freedom before the difficulties were increased and the opportunities were gone, and so it is not at all strange that hardly a week passed that some way-worn bondman did not find his way into Lawrence, the best advertised anti-slavery town in the world, and where the slave was sure to receive sympathy and encouragement, and was sent on his way rejoicing either by himself or with others, as the circumstances seemed to suggest was most wise.

Abbott asserted that the slaves across the border were far from the least interested party in the Kansas conflict. Indeed, they were early taught "the places and men to shun, as well as the places and men to trust."

Col. J. Bowles was another Lawrence resident actively engaged in the Underground Railroad. On April 4, 1859, he wrote a long letter to Franklin S. Sanborn, a leading abolitionist at Concord, Massachusetts. Bowles claimed that during the previous four years he personally knew of "nearly three hundred fugitives having passed through and received assistance from the abolitionists here at Lawrence."

The Underground Railroad intensified the Missouri slaveowners' resentment toward the free-state settlers of Kansas. Moreover, it carried a growing number of passengers through Lawrence and other stations in Kansas because of the fears of both masters and slaves. Indeed, it has been asserted by Wilbur H. Siebert "that the Underground Railroad was one of the greatest forces which brought on the Civil War, and thus destroyed slavery."

II

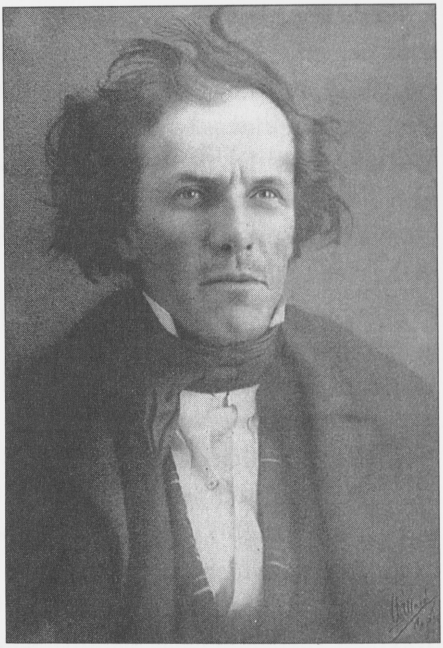
Opportunities for blacks to escape slavery increased during the Civil War as Union armies invaded the South. Although some Union generals returned slaves when they escaped to Union camps, on

grounds that the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 required that the fugitives be returned to their masters, other commanders refused such surrender lest the slave property contribute to the armed rebellion. Declaring the slaves who escaped to his camp contraband and liable to confiscation by the laws of war, Gen. Benjamin F. Butler, whose forces occupied confederate territory in Tidewater Virginia in 1861, established a precedent which was followed by other Union generals as the war expanded into the South. In March 1862 an act of the Union government "declared contraband slaves—those belonging to persons in rebellion—henceforth and forever free," and on January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation, which declared forever free the slaves in the rebellious states.

Blacks who first escaped to the Federal lines were eagerly recruited for a variety of occupations. They built fortifications, served as teamsters, wheelwrights, blacksmiths, hospital attendants, officers' servants, and employees of the commissary and quartermaster departments. Many of those who had skills settled in cities as barbers, draymen, carpenters, blacksmiths, servants, seamstresses, nurses and cooks, of whom a large number conducted businesses of their own. In rural areas they became tenant farmers or were employed as farm laborers and woodchoppers.

The influx of contrabands into Kansas must be seen against the background of the Civil War on the Western Border. In Missouri the question of secession was decided by an elected convention that voted eighty to one against immediate secession. When Gov. Clairborne F. Jackson repudiated President Lincoln's call for troops and intrigued to gain control of the federal arsenal at St. Louis, he and the legislature were ousted and Hamilton F. Gamble, a Lincoln supporter, was elected provisional governor. Meanwhile, Jackson, Sterling Price, another former governor, and other southern loyalists formed a breakaway government. After an ordinance of secession was adopted, the breakaway government was admitted to the Confederate States of America.

In Kansas, after years of political rivalry between proslavery and free-state factions, free-state delegates framed an antislavery constitution at the Wyandotte Convention. It was ratified by a large majority on October 4, 1859. After Lincoln's victory, Kansas entered the Union under the Wyandotte Constitution on January 29, 1861. Charles



James H. Lane's military and political activities helped bring many contraband slaves to Kansas. He recruited some of the men for black Civil War regiments.

Robinson was elected governor, and Martin F. Conway congressman. On April 4 of the same year the Kansas legislature elected Samuel C. Pomeroy and James H. Lane to the U.S. Senate.

James Henry Lane (1814–1866) was a remarkable leader whose actions as a military commander and politician were responsible for the influx of large numbers of slaves into Kansas and their recruitment into black regiments. It is uncertain whether he was born in Kentucky or Indiana, but the latter state is usually given as his birthplace. He studied law and went into politics at an early age. He served as colonel of a regiment in the Mexican War, after which he was elected lieutenant-governor of Indiana and later represented that state in the U.S. Congress. In 1855 he went to Kansas Territory, where he soon became a leading politician and military leader of the free-state forces. Lane was a man of boundless energy, great tenacity of purpose and personal magnetism, and possessed of oratorical powers of a high order. Wendell Holmes Stephenson characterizes Lane as "a radical, an enthusiast, a direct-actionist, who tolerated no halfway measures." Moreover, "he was rash, hot-headed, daring, persistent, subtle, provocative, warm-hearted, magnetic." He was called the "Grim Chief-

tain," a tall, thin, stern-visaged man, who, like Cassius, bore "a lean and hungry look." It was said of Lane that no man ever had firmer friends or more bitter enemies. Lane was an ardent supporter of Abraham Lincoln for the presidency, and, as a U.S. senator, a close personal friend of the wartime President. He took his own life in 1866, in a fit of depression after losing political support in Kansas and being accused of involvement in fraudulent Indian contracts.

Lane was appointed a brigadier general of volunteers by President Lincoln in June 1861. He proceeded from Washington, D.C., to Kansas to raise volunteer regiments under the authority of Congress, at a time when Confederate armies had won several important battles. In Missouri, Gen. Sterling Price and his Missouri National Guard secession army had defeated Gen. Nathaniel Lyon and his Union army at the Battle of Wilson's Creek on August 10, 1861. The Grim Chieftain worked fast to meet the threatened invasion of Kansas by a force some ten thousand strong under General Price. Lane marched with his hastily gathered troops to Fort Scott, Kansas, near the Missouri border, where Price was expected to attack. On September 2, Lane sent twelve hundred mounted men to Dry Wood Creek, twelve miles east of Fort Scott, where a brisk skirmish was fought with Price's advance-guard. Price decided to discontinue his advance into Kansas upon learning that Lane was waiting to give battle, and turned north toward Lexington, Missouri.

"As Lane's 'Kansas brigade' marched through Missouri," writes Stephenson, "a 'black brigade' marched into Kansas." Two of Lane's chaplains wrote long accounts of the slaves who flocked to Lane's brigade and of their march into Kansas. In his *The Gun and the Gospel*, Chaplain Hugh Dunn Fisher tells of the trek of the black brigade. While the Kansas brigade rested at Springfield and on the march to Lamar, Lane's camp was "the center of attraction to multitudes of 'contrabands' and refugees." Lane sent for Fisher the second day out of Springfield, explaining the imminent danger of attack and the helpless condition of the great multitude of blacks. He asked Fisher, "Chaplain, what can we do to relieve the army of these contrabands, without exposing them to their enemies?" Whereupon, Fisher replied that "all the men were in the army, and the women and children in Kansas needed help to save the crop and provide fuel for winter, and I advised to send the negroes to Kansas to help the women and children." Lane's laconic reply was "I'll do it."

When the Grim Chieftain's brigade arrived at Lamar, forty miles southeast of Fort Scott, he directed his three chaplains, Fisher, Moore, and Fish, to take charge of the refugees and escort them to Fort Scott.

> Next morning early there was a stir in the camp. Fourteen men were detailed as an escort to save us from falling into the hands of the guerrillas. We had a wagon load of almost useless guns. I picked out about thirty negroes and armed them, the first negroes armed during the rebellion. We divided this company, and also the white escort, and placed half as an advance guard with orders to "scout well," and the other half as a rear guard with orders to keep well up, and by no means to allow a surprise. Such a caravan had not moved since the days of Moses.

It was a nondescript emigration. They traveled day and night, eating only cold food until they came upon a small herd of cattle, of which three were killed and hastily broiled and eaten.

When they reached Kansas, Fisher halted the caravan and drew the refugees up in a line. He raised himself to his full height on his war horse, "commanded silence, and there under the open heavens, on the sacred soil of freedom, in the name of the Constitution of the United States, the Declaration of Independence, and by the authority of General James H. Lane, I proclaimed that they were 'forever free.'" Immediately the blacks "jumped, cried, sang and laughed for joy." Fisher claimed that they were the first slaves formally set free. He said it occurred in September 1861, long before Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was issued.

After he returned to Washington, Lane told the Senate of the success of his policies and actions in Missouri and Arkansas. In a speech of May 15, 1862, he claimed that 4,000 fugitive slaves from Missouri and Arkansas were then being fed in Kansas, and two months later he said the number had increased to 6,400. In a speech to the New York Emancipation League in June he said that he had himself "aided 2,500 slaves to emigrate" during the year, and a month later he told the Senate that at one time he had 1,200 blacks in his brigade.

Later in the Civil War several groups of contrabands were brought from Arkansas to Leavenworth on steamboats. After the victory of the Federals at Helena, Arkansas, on July 4, 1863, the camps were overrun with blacks seeking freedom. Chaplain Fisher was ordered to take control of large numbers of contrabands, who left that port and neigh-

boring ports in three steamboats, and scatter them "throughout Missouri, Illinois, Iowa and Kansas, sending some of them as far as Ohio." Fisher said he had intended to go in charge of the slaves on the *Sam Gaty*, but at the last minute decided to go by rail instead to prepare for their reception at Leavenworth. Unfortunately, the *Sam Gaty* was captured by a band of guerrillas or bushwhackers at Napoleon, Missouri. Nine black men were killed and seven black women were shot, but none killed. The guerrillas searched the boat for Chaplain Fisher and would not be satisfied that he was not on board until they had killed three white men in his stead. When the *Sam Gaty* arrived at Leavenworth, hundreds of people assembled on the levee to welcome the survivors. Fisher said that the whole party of contrabands was promptly provided with homes in good families. Among other contrabands who arrived by boat, one Lieutenant Colonel Bassett is said to have returned to Kansas from a military campaign in Arkansas with over six hundred black refugees on board four steamboats.

It would be misleading to leave the impression that all of the contrabands entered Kansas under the auspices of Union military units. Many of them, perhaps the greater number, came of their own volition, either crossing along the land border or the approximately seventy-five mile stretch of the Missouri River which separates Missouri from Kansas.

Slaves even walked across the Missouri River to freedom in Kansas when the ice was thick enough to support their weight, as was reported to be the case in February 1863 when contrabands in considerable numbers crossed over on the frozen river and enlisted in the Union army. A few reportedly swam across the river at some peril to their lives, while others came on skiffs and ferries. One group that arrived by ferry at Wyandotte was said to consist of "poor, frightened half-starved negroes . . . men and women with little children clinging to them, and carrying all of their earthly possessions in little bags or bundles, sometimes in red bandana handkerchiefs."

The exodus continued at a rapid pace until the end of hostilities. That the slave population of Missouri was seriously eroded by the flight of blacks during the turmoil and destruction of the Civil War can be demonstrated by population statistics. In fact, only 73,811 slaves remained in the state in 1863, as compared with 114,931 in 1860, or a

decline of thirty-five percent. The loss was probably greater in a qualitative sense than the statistics indicate, since the greater part of the fugitives were reportedly able-bodied males and females capable of performing heavy field labor.

III

The influx of contrabands was significant from the standpoint of the numbers involved and their impact on the economy and society of wartime Kansas. The black population increased from 627 in 1860 to 12,527 in 1865, or from 0.6 percent to 8.8 percent of the Kansas population. The influx may have been as great as 15,000, since many black soldiers from Kansas were out of the state when the census of 1865 was taken. Although blacks came to Kansas in growing numbers after the Civil War, and especially in the late 1870s and early 1880s when the "Exodusters" arrived from the South, the white population increased even more rapidly. Thus, the blacks declined as a percentage of the total population—to 4.7 in 1870, 4.3 in 1880, and 3.5 in both 1890 and 1900. In the twentieth century the black population of Kansas increased from 3.5 percent of the total in 1900 to 5.4 percent in 1980. It is therefore noteworthy that the influx during the Civil War years raised the black population of Kansas to its highest level in relation to whites and Indians.

Not only did the blacks constitute a larger proportion of the total population of Kansas; they were also highly concentrated in certain towns and counties. Eight of the thirty-seven counties that were enumerated in 1865, contained 77.5 percent of the black population, and the three leading counties—Leavenworth, Douglas, and Wyandotte—contained 55.5 percent of the blacks. Although it lacked a town of any consequence, Wyandotte County had the third largest black population in 1865, with nearly half as many blacks as whites.

The "Black Brigade" was brought to Kansas chiefly to supply much needed farm labor. As more and more contrabands arrived in the state, many were dispersed over the countryside and employed as rural wage laborers. After several wagons loaded with contrabands had passed through two of the border towns in January 1862, one editorial writer predicted that the coming crop season would find "Kansas better pro-

vided with free labor than any of the Western States." Another journalist noted that black labor, mostly that of fugitives from Missouri, was largely responsible for producing the bountiful Kansas harvest of 1863. He said that large quantities of labor were needed to harvest the wheat, since very little machinery was used on Kansas farms and the crop needed to be taken off quickly once it had ripened. Even Senator Lane was reported to have used contrabands to build a fence around his Douglas County farm and to experiment with the growing of cotton with free black labor.

Whether or not the contrabands settled on farms or in the towns depended upon several circumstances. Relatively few arrived with sufficient wealth and experience to begin as farmers. The overwhelming majority depended upon wage employment, and as the demand for farm labor was to a large extent seasonal, the contrabands' chances of obtaining work was contingent upon their arrival in Kansas during the crop season. If they arrived in the winter months the towns were most likely to supply the means of subsistence.

The contrabands came to Lawrence by the scores and hundreds, according to Richard Cordley. For a time their numbers and needs threatened to overwhelm the inhabitants. "But they were strong and industrious, and by a little effort work was found for them, and very few, if any of them, became objects of charity," said Cordley.

Recalling her girlhood experiences with the contrabands of Lawrence, Agnes Emery wrote that at the beginning and through the years of the Civil War "a veritable army of slaves drifted into Lawrence as if by instinct, to a sort of haven." She told of the contrabands who worked for the Emery family on their hilltop farm near Lawrence as follows:

> "Old Mary" could get up a breakfast that we did not know was possible. She could cook in such a manner as to make food of many plants that we did not know existed. "George" who lived in our barn was trustworthy and devoted to our interests. We always felt perfectly safe to know that he was near enough [to] protect us if the need arose. . . . Emily Taylor came two days each week, for years and years, to do our laundry. She also helped in sickness and in deaths. I well remember the day she came to tell us of the death of President Lincoln. Everyone in our family was depressed by the news.

Besides helping the contrabands secure a livelihood, Lawrence citizens made a concerted effort to teach the newcomers to read and write. While the children attended the public schools, adults were encouraged to join classes after working hours. S. N. Simpson, who started the first Sunday school in Lawrence in 1855, established a night school for contrabands which met five or six nights a week for two hours in the courthouse. Classes were taught by a corps of volunteer teachers who were described as women and men of culture, character, and consecration. About one hundred adults, entirely ignorant of their letters, applied themselves earnestly to the simple lessons given in the spelling books. Study and recitation were interspersed with the singing of familiar hymns. In the course of a few weeks several of the blacks were able to read with some fluency and were ready to commence with figures.

The contrabands who came to Lawrence were a church-going people. Cordley said that a Sunday school was organized and Sunday evening services were conducted for them at the Congregational Church. They outgrew this facility, and, about one year after their arrival, the new Freedmen's Church was dedicated on September 28, 1862. It was described as "a fine comfortable brick Church," believed to be the first one ever erected in the United States for fugitive slaves. Cordley said the church was "filled with an attentive congregation of 'freedman'—all lately from bondage, and all neatly dressed as a result of their short experience of free labor."

After the difficult period of first arrival when white paternalism was most conspicuous in the adjustment to freedom, the contrabands encountered racial hostility and reacted by drawing on their own latent but slender resources in an effort to build a viable black community. Agnes Emery recalled that the freedmen did their share in becoming good citizens. "They were kind to each other in times of illness and misfortune, their demands were few, they were strong, eager, and willing to work, and soon made themselves useful in the community." After meeting in white churches and then in the inter-denominational Freedmen's Church, the blacks "divided into various ecclesiastical camps" with their own preachers. They met together to celebrate such anniversaries as the Fourth of July, slave emancipation in the British West Indies, and, beginning in 1864, Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. In 1864 the black women of Lawrence organized

the Ladies Refugee Aid Society to collect food, clothing, and money to assist freedmen who had fallen on hard times.

The occupations of 624 blacks in Douglas County are shown in the 1865 census, of which 349 lived in Lawrence and North Lawrence, and 275 in rural parts of the county. Soldiering was the leading occupation of the blacks in Lawrence and North Lawrence, where 95 were so designated. Following behind the soldiers were 85 day laborers. Of the 92 female workers, 49 were domestics, 27 were employed at washing and ironing or as washerwomen, 7 worked as housekeepers, 6 as servants, and 3 as cooks. In all, some 270 blacks or four-fifths of the town total, were unskilled laborers. The other one-fifth consisted of skilled and semiskilled workers. There were 23 teamsters, 8 blacksmiths, 6 porters, 4 barbers, 3 hostlers, 3 woodcutters, 2 stonemasons, 2 draymen, 2 rock quarriers, and one each of distiller, saloonkeeper, miner, harnessmaker, brick moulder, coachman, carpenter, shoemaker, printer, and preacher.

The high ratio of rural to urban black workers, or 44.0 percent of all workers, may possibly be explained by the fact that the census was taken on May 1, 1865, when much farm labor was needed. There were 145 blacks designated as farmers, 59 as laborers or day laborers, and 31 as farm laborers. Although these occupations are not defined clearly, it seems reasonable to assume that almost all of the blacks so designated performed agricultural wage labor. Thirteen other farmers and one other farm laborer were residents in Lawrence and North Lawrence. The remaining rural males consisted of 10 teamsters, 6 soldiers, 4 brickmakers, and one each of porter, blacksmith, and schoolteacher. The rural females consisted of 9 domestics, 5 servants, 1 washerwoman, and 1 employed at washing and ironing.

As the oldest town in Kansas, Leavenworth and the nearby federal fort by the same name was the largest population center in Kansas in 1865. Its growth was largely a result of its steamboat and overland wagon transport facilities and its place as a mobilization and supply center. The towns of Atchison and Leavenworth were first settled primarily by Missourians whose sympathies were proslavery. By 1858, however, Leavenworth had a free-state majority and the town hosted a state convention that adopted a radical antislavery constitution, which, although nominally approved by popular vote, was defeated by the U.S. Congress. Within months of the outbreak of the Civil War, Leavenworth had become a cosmopolitan town with in-

habitants from all quarters of the Union and refugees and fugitives from the rebel states.

Compared with Lawrence, Leavenworth had a more formal and extensive organization to provide for the contrabands' welfare. On February 5, 1862, some of the town's white leaders met with their black counterparts at the First Colored Baptist Church to "take into consideration measures for the amelioration of the condition of the colored people of Kansas."

The Kansas Emancipation League's second meeting was held on February 10, 1862. After the minutes of the preceding meeting and the formal constitution and bylaws were read and approved, Richard Hinton "brought to the attention of the League the constant attempts at kidnapping which occur daily in this city." This matter was taken into consideration by a committee that was directed to work with police and military officials to provide protection to the black residents of Leavenworth and the state of Kansas. The object of the league, it was agreed, should be to "assist all efforts to destroy slavery, but more especially to take supervision and control of the contraband element so freely coming to our State." Furthermore, it was "the object of the League to encourage industry, education and morality among these people, to find them employment and thus make them a benefit and not a burden to the State which shelters them." As superintendent of contrabands, Captain Mathews was instructed "to take charge and provide for their temporary wants and in every way look after their interests."

Beginning on February 13, 1862, and continuing for several months, the *Leavenworth Daily Conservative* ran an advertisement of the Labor Exchange and Intelligence Office established by the Kansas Emancipation League at the drugstore of Dr. R. C. Anderson on Shawnee Street. All persons in need of black workers, including hotel waiters, porters, cooks, and chambermaids were asked to apply at this office. Furthermore, laborers were supplied for such jobs as woodsawing, whitewashing, teaming, etc., at the same office. About a month after the first advertisement was printed the Labor Exchange general agent reported that good work had already been accomplished, and that "over one hundred colored men have been sent from our city to labor on farms and that the demand for this kind of labor is still constant and pressing."

Although the Labor Exchange and Intelligence Office helped to reduce the number of contrabands who were dependent upon the league, it by no means eliminated unemployment since many of the laboring men not only had large families but were unable to work as a result of sickness and exposure.

IV

Soldiering was the chief occupation of able-bodied male contrabands in the war years from 1862 to 1865, and it was General Lane who led the campaign in Kansas to organize black regiments and recruit black soldiers. In a speech at Leavenworth in January 1862, Lane recalled that contrabands who came into his camps in Missouri had played at soldiering after their evening meal; he said they took to military drill as a child takes to its mother's milk. "They soon learn the step, soon learn the position of the soldier and the manual of arms." He urged the government to arm the blacks, citing as precedents the use of black soldiers in the armies of George Washington and Andrew Jackson. At a time when President Lincoln was calling for 300,000 volunteers, Lane was appointed commissioner of recruitment for the Department of Kansas. He was authorized to appoint recruiting officers, arm and equip volunteers, establish camps of instruction, and arrange for the procurement and transportation of supplies. Lane assumed that his recruiting commission, issued by the War Department in July 1862, entitled him to enlist blacks as well as whites.

Arriving at Leavenworth on the third of August, Lane appointed recruiting agents and disposed of related matters. That he took speedy action is indicated by a *Leavenworth Daily Conservative* advertisement that appeared three days later. It announced that all able-bodied colored men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five had an opportunity to serve in the First Kansas Regiment of the "Liberating Army," and said that one thousand such men were wanted. It went on to say that "Ten Dollars Per Month will be paid, and good quarters, rations and clothing provided." A similar advertisement in an Atchison newspaper promised that, in addition to the pay and rations, a certificate of freedom would be issued to each black volunteer, as well as freedom for his mother, wife, and children.

Recruiting and training proceeded at a fast pace in the weeks following Lane's initial appeal for black volunteers. An item in a Leavenworth newspaper on August 28 said the colored regiment had received one hundred recruits within the previous twenty-four hours. At Mound City some one hundred fifty black recruits were drilling daily, and more were reported to be on their way to the camp adjoining that town. North of the Kansas River approximately five hundred blacks had been enlisted within a short time. They were instructed to rendezvous by September 10 at Camp Jim Lane, near Wyandotte bridge. Capt. George J. Martin returned from Wyandotte to Atchison on September 12, and reported the regiment to be six hundred strong, with daily additions from Missouri. "The men learn their duties with great ease and rapidity," he said, "and are delighted with the prospect of fighting for their freedom, and give good earnest of making valiant soldiers." On October 17, 1862, the First Kansas Colored Infantry was organized near Fort Lincoln, in Bourbon County.

There is evidence that not all of the blacks recruited into the regiment entered voluntarily. One Missourian wrote to President Lincoln, complaining that a party of some fifteen Kansans had entered Missouri to "recruit Negroes for General Lane's Negro brigade." They forcibly took possession of some twenty-five blacks and about forty horses. However, a company of militia captured eight of the Jayhawkers and recovered all the blacks and horses.

That the black regiment's fighting qualities brought honor to Afro-Americans in Kansas and elsewhere is well documented. Writing from Fort Africa, Bates County, Missouri, on October 30, 1862, a *Leavenworth Daily Conservative* correspondent told of a campaign against a notorious band of bushwhackers. In a sharp engagement in which some two hundred thirty black troops were pitted against about six hundred bushwhackers, "The men fought like tigers, each and every one of them, and the main difficulty was to hold them well in hand.... We have the guerrillas hemmed in, and will clean them and the county out," said the correspondent. Gen. James G. Blunt wrote an account of the battle of Honey Springs, near Fort Gibson in Indian Territory, on July 25, 1863. Soldiers of the First Colored Regiment "fought like veterans, with a coolness and valor that is unsurpassed," he wrote. "They preserved their line perfect throughout the whole engagement and, although in the hottest of the fight, they never once faltered. Too much

praise can not be awarded them for their gallantry." The general, who was battle-hardened from long campaigns, judged the blacks to be "better soldiers in every respect than any troops I have ever had under my command." General Lane, who continued to support the enlistment of blacks, often paid tribute to their fighting ability.

Beginning in June 1863, a second Kansas black regiment was recruited and molded into an effective fighting unit by Col. Samuel J. Crawford, afterwards governor of Kansas. Besides the Kansas regiments, a black brigade was recruited and sent into action. Altogether, a total of 2,083 black soldiers were recruited, or approximately one-sixth of the black population of Kansas in 1865. Kansas lived up to its radical tradition by recruiting the first black troops to engage in military action against confederate forces.

The black military achievement was even more remarkable when it is considered that the soldiers faced great obstacles in the form of race prejudice and bureaucratic procrastination and delay. General Lane received blacks into the First Kansas Colored Regiment under what he thought was congressional authority, only to be informed that such recruitment had to have presidential authority, which was not forthcoming for several months. As a result, this regiment was not mustered into the service until January 13, 1863. Instead of soldiering, the troops were first put to work building fortifications and in fatigue duty. This led to anger, disillusionment, and, for a time, numerous desertions. Lane had promised his black recruiting officers that they would be commissioned as officers of the companies they recruited, but this was denied and white officers were appointed in their place. Even after the regiment was mustered in, payment of the troops was delayed until June 1863. Furthermore, the Union government defaulted on its pledge to pay black recruits at the same rate as whites—actually three dollars less per month than white soldiers and a deduction of three dollars for clothing. "Not until 1864," writes Dudley Taylor Cornish, "and then only after furious debate in the army, in the press and in congress, did Negro soldiers finally get what amounted to equal pay for equal work." Race prejudice raised its ugly head, as is indicated by the advice given by an editorial writer for the *Fort Scott Bulletin*. He advised that the black regiment be kept away from Kansas troops which were then in the field for "with one exception, there is not a Kansas regiment from which they would not have as much to fear as from the rebels."

While the black soldiers felt insulted and betrayed by the government's delay and discrimination in matters of mustering into service and pay, the dependents they left behind in Kansas suffered real hardships. In Leavenworth, the public was urged to subscribe clothing, food, and money to the wives and children of the men in service. When it was discovered that a group of blacks planned to hold a bazaar to raise money for a charitable cause outside the town, a public meeting of colored citizens was called. It was resolved, that since the great majority of the black population was poor, and that many continued to arrive in Kansas "destitute of money, clothing and bedding," that the blacks should be urged *not* to send money out of town but "to do all within their power to relieve the poor and suffering among us, and urge our friends here and elsewhere to aid us in this good work."

V

Kansas Territory attracted a small group of ardent abolitionists who, with moral and material support from the East, established stations and conducted "passengers" on the Underground Railroad to freedom. When the Civil War commenced, contrabands from Missouri made straight for these stations and other places of refuge and opportunity for employment.

Kansas became more Negrophilic during the Civil War when the contrabands supplied much needed labor to harvest crops and perform a variety of tasks in rural and urban areas. Most importantly, black men volunteered for military service and made a notable contribution. Unfortunately, race prejudice and bureaucratic delay and discrimination brought great hardships to the families of black servicemen and proved to be a serious obstacle to progress on the road toward racial integration.

Before the Civil War had ended, much of the cooperative effort that had characterized the Kansas Emancipation League and other organizations broke down and the black and white communities tended to go their separate ways. In Leavenworth, for example, the black community held public meetings to protest the treatment accorded black soldiers; the Suffrage Club was organized to agitate for

an amendment to the Kansas Constitution which would extend the franchise to black males. Beginning in October 1863, the Kansas State Colored Convention met annually in the leading cities to debate and act upon such issues as equal suffrage, the right to serve in the state militia, the right of trial by a jury of political equals, and the abolition of discriminatory practices by the proprietors of stages, railroad cars, barber shops, hotels, saloons, and other public institutions.

In the face of an overpowering Negrophobic white majority, the blacks of Kansas turned more and more to their own cultural heritage, to their schools, churches, lodges, mutual aid societies, and the celebration of anniversaries that marked their progress from slavery to freedom. One such celebration was the emancipation of the slaves in the British West Indies on August 1, 1834. On August 1, 1864, the black community of Leavenworth and vicinity began their celebration of West Indian emancipation with a procession headed by the Colored Battery of Capt. William D. Mathews, followed by the Sabbath schools, and the Suffrage Club. Not less than two thousand people met at Fackler's Grove where a fine dinner, interesting speeches, and splendid music were enjoyed.

It is ironic that when the U.S. Supreme Court came to consider race discrimination a century after Kansas Territory had been a staging ground for civil war on the issue of chattel slavery, it was a case brought by a black Kansan against the school board in the state's capital city that overturned court-enforced segregation and ushered in the Civil Rights Movement.

Sources of the Kansas Constitution

Robert Stone

When the [Wyandotte constitutional] convention convened one of the first questions which arose was whether or not to use the constitution of some other state or some former draft of the Kansas constitution as a model from which to draw the new document. On the first ballot Ohio received 13 votes; Indiana 12; Kentucky 6; the Leavenworth Constitution 5; the Topeka Constitution 3; Pennsylvania 2; Iowa 2; Wisconsin 2; Massachusetts, Michigan, Maine, Minnesota and Oregon 1 each. On the second ballot Ohio received 25, Indiana 23, and Kentucky 1. The constitution of Ohio, having received the majority, was declared to be the proposed basis for the new document.

The greatest speech of the convention was made by Thacher in opposition to a proposal to exclude free negroes from the state. This speech forever settled the question of absolute freedom of Kansas soil, although the vote upon the proposition when taken stood twenty-one ayes and twenty-six nays.

To us of this day it seems strange that any argument was necessary to defeat the proposition. But the sentiment in favor of it was so strong in the convention that several of the members predicted that the constitution would be defeated unless the provision excluding the

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From Robert Stone, "Sources of the Constitution," *Kansas Constitutional Convention*. Topeka: Kansas State Printer, 1920, pp. 697–700.

free negro from the state should be included in it. Their apprehension proved to be without foundation.

A very interesting discussion arose over the northern boundary of Kansas. Delegates came from Southern Nebraska and petitioned the convention to fix the northern boundary of the state at the Platte River. They argued with great earnestness that the present boundary was an artificial one, while the river was a natural boundary because it could not be forded because of quicksand, could not be bridged because no bottom could be found for the piers, and could not be ferried because there was not enough water to float a boat. That at times it was a raging torrent and at other times a stretch of sand. They offered to give to Kansas a rich area of territory and the democratic members of the convention were unanimously in favor of the tender. But the republicans "feared the Greeks bearing gifts," they suspected the inhabitants of that land were democrats and might either defeat the constitution altogether, or elect democratic United States senators, from the new state, so the boundary line was fixed at the 40th parallel.

Nearly every section can be traced to some provision of some preceding constitution, except perhaps the provision that all bills should originate in the House of Representatives, and this provision was repealed in November, 1864.

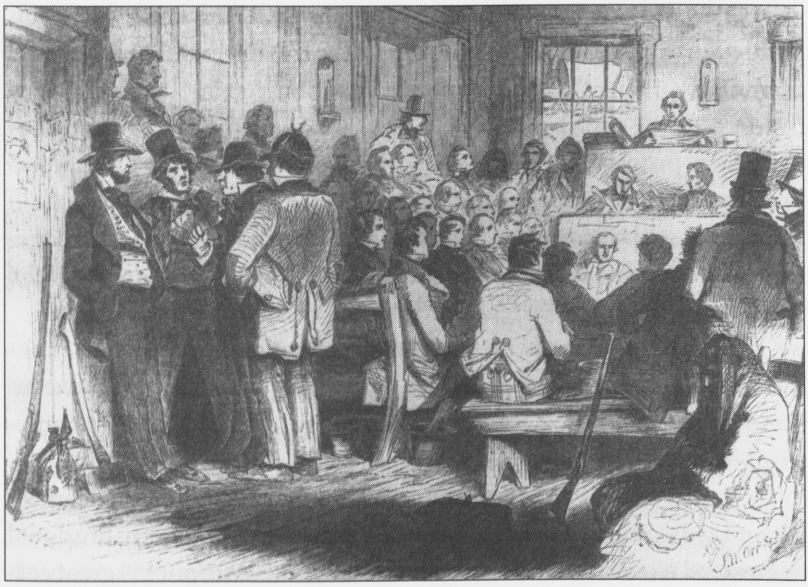
This, however, does not mean that the instrument was not progressive in its character. On the contrary most of the constitutions from which its provisions were taken had been recently adopted by the respective states and from them were gleaned the best and most progressive provisions. The sagacity of the Wyandotte Convention consisted in its selection of these provisions and the amalgamation of them into a consistent and harmonious instrument. Most of the progressive ideas of the decade were incorporated in the instrument. Slavery was prohibited. Free negroes were not excluded. Wild cat banking paper was proscribed. Ample provision was made for common schools and higher education. The rights of women were recognized and advanced and the homestead was guarded against covetous creditors. It is true that some progressive measures were suggested to the convention which were not adopted. John Ritchie offered the following: "That the state of Kansas shall confer power on the legislature to prohibit the introduction, manufacture or sale of spirituous liquor in the state."

The provision was not adopted. But twenty-one years later, in November, 1880, the prohibition amendment was passed.

Mr. Ritchie moved to strike the word "white" from the article establishing the state militia. Only six voted in favor of the motion, but the section was so amended in 1888. Mr. Hutchinson presented a petition of 252 inhabitants of Douglas and Shawnee counties asking that the right of suffrage be extended to women. The petition was not granted, but in 1913 that right was extended to women.

There are two provisions in the Wyandotte Constitution which make it a mile-post in legislation. One is the extension of married women's rights and the other the homestead exemption. These provisions are linked together and touch the social life of the state through the family. The sections are as follows:

> SECTION 6. The Legislature shall provide for the protection of the rights of women, in acquiring and possessing property, real, personal and mixed, separate and apart from the husband; and shall also provide for their equal rights in the possession of their children.



The Free State Constitutional Convention formed a state government and elected Charles Robinson governor in 1855. In this period the traditional Democratic and Republican party labels were abandoned by many. Most people were either antislavery ("free staters") or proslavery.

> SECTION 9. A Homestead to the extent of one hundred and sixty acres of farming land, or of one acre within the limits of an incorporated town or city, occupied as a residence by the family of the owner, together with all the improvements on the same, shall be exempted from forced sale under any process of law, and shall not be alienated without the joint consent of husband and wife when that relation exists; but no property shall be exempt from sale for taxes, or for the payment of obligations contracted for the purchase of said premises, or for the erection of improvements thereon. *Provided*, The provisions of this section shall not apply to any process of law obtained by virtue of a lien given by the consent of both husband and wife.

From early history woman has been little better than a chattel and even under the common law of England a woman upon her marriage surrendered all her right to hold personal or real property to her husband. Not only her individuality became merged in her husband, but he enjoyed the right of possession and disposition of her property. Her goods became liable to seizure and appropriation by his creditors. Through the profligacy or ill-management of the husband a women who was well-to-do in her own right before her marriage might be reduced to poverty after her marriage. Except as modified or repealed by the constitution or statutes the common law of England applied to most of the states, including Kansas. The men of the Wyandotte convention determined that no such injustice would be fastened upon the women of Kansas, and by the section first above quoted they restored for all time to their women the management and control of their own property so far as law can give it to them. By the second provision they fixed for her and her children a homestead which could not be violated or torn from her and them by the malice, ill-management or misfortune of the husband, except by the joint consent of the wife.

Homestead laws are an American institution, unknown in other lands. The first statutory provision exempting the home from execution was enacted by the Republic of Texas in 1839, and the first homestead exemption placed in a constitution was in that of Texas in 1845. In 1859, when the Wyandotte convention assembled, it was a scarcely recognized political doctrine. The leading advocate for a constitutional homestead exemption was Samuel A. Kingman. Without his great earnestness and logical argument it never would have been adopted by the convention, because other men strong in debate, such as Thacher, Ingalls and Stinson, opposed it, claiming that the homestead exemp-

36TH CONGRESS, 1ST SESSION.

H. R. 23.

[Report No. 255.]

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

FEBRUARY 15, 1860.

Read twice, and referred to the Committee on Territories.

MARCH 29, 1860.

Reported back by Mr. GROW without amendment, and ordered to be printed.

Public 6.

Mr. GROW, on leave, introduced the following bill:

An ACT

For the admission of Kansas into the Union.

Whereas the people of the Territory of Kansas, by their representatives in convention assembled, at Wyandott, in said Territory, on the twenty-ninth day of July, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-nine, did form for themselves a constitution and State government, republican in form, which was ratified and adopted by the people at an election held for that purpose, on Tuesday, the fourth day of October, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-nine, and the said convention has, in their name and behalf, asked the Congress of the United States to admit the said Territory into the Union as a State, on an equal footing with the other States: Therefore—

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the State of Kansas shall be, and is hereby declared to

Sections of the act before the United States House of Representatives to admit Kansas into the Union in 1860. The struggles between free-state and proslavery settlers that erupted during the territorial period would not be resolved by statehood; within a year the new state would be deeply involved in civil war on a national scale.

tion would enable men to avoid their just debts and would injure the credit of the state.

That was a novel doctrine then, but since that time every state in the Union, except, we believe, Delaware, Indiana, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island, has, by constitutional or statutory provision, recognized its soundness. It fosters the family as the primal factor of society and thus promotes general welfare. To protect the home is to preserve the family from disintegration. To dignify the wife is to develop citizenry. If the homes are permanent in character the community will build schools, churches, libraries. The spirit of free citizenship and patriotism will thrive, and the state will be healthy and prosperous. The Kansas courts have given liberal construction to the constitutional provision. Early in the history of the state, while Kingman was chief justice, the court declared that the wife's interest in a homestead under this provision was not an inchoate and expectant thing, a mere veto upon the right of the husband to alienate the estate, but that it was a real existing estate under which the occupation and enjoyment thereof is secure to her against any act of her husband or creditors without her consent. If her husband abandon her the use of the homestead remains to her and the family. It is not like dower depending on uncertain events, but fixed and certain without need of any statutory enactment. In later years the same court has declared that the right belongs to the wife alone, independent of any children. The great bereavement of her husband's death would not admit the gaunt grey wolf of debt to ravage the home and turn into mockery the constitutional provision prepared against the days of her adversity. On the contrary, she continues in the enjoyment of precisely the same right of immunity from the loss of her hearthstone by suit of her husband's creditors as before his death. And so the widow is protected as well as the wife. But the court has gone farther still and now holds that while the right of exemption cannot originate without the existence of a family consisting of more than one person, when the homestead character has once attached and the head of the family remains in continuous occupation of the property, though all others may die or forsake him, it is still occupied as a residence by a constituent part of the family and he may hold it sacred from invasion for his sole use and occupation.

By these provisions the wife and mother becomes a proprietor in her own right, part owner of her home and queen of her domain. The husband and father has a castle safe from invasion where he may retreat in time of storm or adversity. Failure cannot affect it, disaster cannot destroy it. Friends may desert him, but his enemies cannot reach him. He and his family are secure. For the present and for the future the permanency of the home is established. His place in the community is fixed and his interests in the state are anchored and strengthened.

No marble column or granite shaft could be so fine a tribute to the memory of the men of the Wyandotte convention as the married women and the homestead exemption provisions of the constitution. These two clauses make every happy family and peaceful home in Kansas a monument to their memory. Succeeding generations of Kansans will hold them in grateful veneration.

The Bloodiest Man in American History

Albert Castel

We like to think of the Civil War as the last romantic war—as a sort of gallant duel between gentlemen. There was a certain aura of "swords and roses" in the East, but west of the Mississippi, that neglected area of Civil War history, quite a different atmosphere prevailed. Here the fighting was grim, relentless, and utterly savage—a "battle to the knife, and the knife to the hilt."

Nowhere was this more true than in the bloody war-within-a-war that raged along the Kansas-Missouri border. There the people did not even wait for the bombardment of Fort Sumter. As early as 1855, armies of proslavery "border ruffians" from Missouri and antislavery Kansas "jayhawkers" clashed in the fierce struggle which determined that Kansas would enter the Union as a free rather than as a slave state.

This prelude to the Civil War engendered a mutual hatred and bitterness which, in 1861, flared into vicious reprisals and counterreprisals. As one Kansan later remarked, "The Devil came to the border, liked it, and decided to stay awhile." Led by Jim Lane, Charles Jennison, and Dan Anthony, Kansan raiders swirled through western Missouri, looting, burning, and killing. Missouri "bushwhackers" in turn made quick, devastating guerrilla forays into Kan-

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sas. Soon a border strip forty miles wide was a no man's land of desolate farmhouses, brush-grown fields, and prowling gangs of marauders.

One man rapidly came to dominate this border war: William Clarke Quantrill, chief of the Missouri bushwhackers. For dashing boldness and murderous ferocity his raids into Kansas had no parallel. In March, 1862, his men sacked the little village of Aubrey; at Olathe in October they captured 125 Kansas militiamen and shot down helpless civilians "like so many hogs"; and a month later they reduced the entire town of Shawnee to ashes. Hundreds of terrified Kansans moved to the interior or fled the state entirely.

This "fiend," as the Kansans called him, was a tall, slender young man with wavy hair and a mild, almost effeminate face. Only his cold blue eyes, half-concealed by thick, drooping lids, bespoke the ruthless killer. Born July 31, 1837, at Canal Dover, Ohio, he had spent most of his adult life in Kansas. As a boy, he is said to have delighted in nailing snakes to trees, torturing dogs and cats, and stabbing cows and horses. He received a good education for his day—his father was a schoolteacher—and for a time followed his father's profession in Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. In the spring of 1857, accompanied by two other men from Canal Dover, Quantrill migrated to Kansas, where he

In this artist's rendition, Missouri ruffians harass Kansas border towns in the decade before Quantrill's raid.

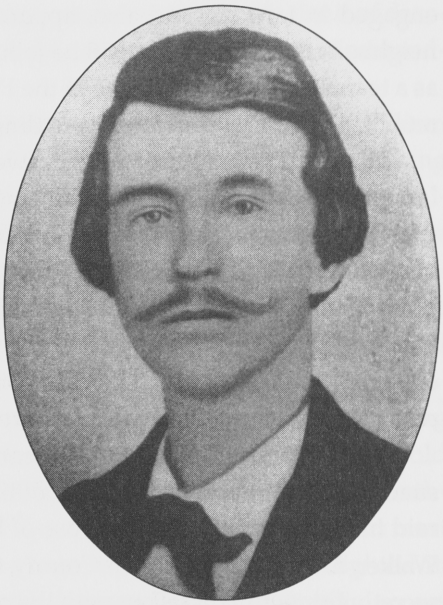
engaged in farming and also, apparently, got into trouble with his neighbors for stealing. In 1858 he joined an army expedition to Utah as a teamster, spent some time in the Pike's Peak gold fields, and then returned to Kansas, eventually settling in Lawrence.

There, for reasons unknown, he went by the name of Charley Hart (an alias he had occasionally used out west) or, sometimes, William Clarke. The townspeople found him somehow strange and suspicious and were inclined to shun him. Once, when out riding with a girl, he pointed to a tree and said that it would be a good place to hang a man. Ultimately he became a member of a gang of Kansas border bandits engaged in stealing Negroes and horses from Missouri; he was arrested once but jumped bail and thereafter managed to evade arrest.

Quantrill's first real notoriety came in December, 1860. He persuaded three Kansas "practical abolitionists" to accompany him on a raid into Missouri for the purpose of liberating the slaves of Morgan Walker, a well-to-do Jackson County farmer. But prior to the raid he secretly forewarned Walker, with the result that the three abolitionists walked into a deadly trap. Quantrill remained in Jackson County the rest of the winter, regaining the sympathy and trust of the Missourians by telling them he had engineered the ambush to revenge the murder of an elder brother by Kansas jayhawkers. It was a lie, but to this day many Missourians firmly believe it.

Following the outbreak of full-scale hostilities along the border, Quantrill joined one of the Missouri bushwhacker bands, then formed his own outfit. His spectacular forays gained him recognition as head of all the guerrillas, and in the summer of 1862 the Confederate Army granted him a captain's commission. Union authorities, however, regarded the bushwhackers as outlaws and treated them accordingly. In retaliation, the latter vowed to show no quarter to Federal prisoners.

Those who knew Quantrill in Lawrence afterward recalled that he did not appear to possess any special ability, and that although "somewhat of a horseman," he was "only a fair shot." But Kansans have tended to underrate him. One of his followers described him as being "a good commander and a brave man," and stated that in combat his men would try to keep him in the rear, not only so he could direct the fighting but also because they "did not want to lose him." Another guerrilla testified that with one or two exceptions Quantrill



William Clarke Quantrill, leader of the Missouri bushwhackers.

was the "fastest draw," best shot, and finest horseman of all the bushwhackers.

Quantrill's band was composed of tough young Missourians with Southern sympathies who resented jayhawker raids, and of border ruffians and outlaws like Quantrill himself. A Confederate general who encountered them in Texas said all of them were killers who "deemed the life of a man less than that of a sheep-killing dog." Some of the more notorious members included "Bloody Bill" Anderson (who bedecked the bridle of his horse with human scalps); the fearless, sadistic George Todd; and three young men serving their apprenticeship in outlawry under Quantrill: Cole Younger and Frank and Jesse James.

Quantrill and his men saw duty with Confederate troops at the battles of Independence and Lone Jack, Missouri, in August, 1862, and at the Battle of Prairie Grove, Arkansas, in December of that year. It was after the Independence clash that Quantrill received his Confederate captain's commission, but he and his men resisted all efforts by the Confederate authorities to have them join the regular forces on a permanent basis. They were more interested in their personal war with the Kansans and with Missouri Unionists than in the Southern cause as such. Confederate generals in the West were quite willing to make

use of the bushwhackers' services, despite the atrocity stories which followed them wherever they went.

The bushwhackers dressed in picturesque guerrilla shirts—loose, gaudily beaded blouses worn over their ordinary clothes and having a low scooped neck and capacious pockets for ammunition. Much of the time, however, they wore captured Federal uniforms. So disguised, they were often able to approach within point-blank range of a Union detachment, then wipe it out. Taken as a whole, they were the most formidable "revolver fighters" the West ever knew.

After each foray across the border the bushwhackers scattered with their loot into the rugged hills of western Missouri. The intensely pro-Southern people of this region regarded them as heroic defenders against the jayhawkers, and so sheltered them and helped them evade the Union pursuit columns.

By the spring of 1863 Quantrill, with several hundred men under his command, was at the peak of his power and confidence. According to one unauthenticated account, he even journeyed to Richmond, Virginia, and had an interview with the Confederate Secretary of War in which he urged that the South wage a "black flag" war and that he be commissioned a colonel of "partisan rangers." In any case, he adopted the title of colonel and on occasion wore a colonel's uniform. And he began laying plans for what was to be his most famous and ambitious undertaking: the raid on Lawrence, Kansas.

For years the people of western Missouri had made no secret of their determination someday to wipe out Lawrence. To them the town was the citadel of Kansas abolitionism, the symbol of all that they hated in Kansas. It had been the "Free-State Fortress" during the fifties, and it was now headquarters for the hated Kansas guerrillas known as the Red Legs. With a population of nearly three thousand, it was also one of the largest and wealthiest towns in Kansas. When Quantrill announced, "Let's go to Lawrence—we can get more revenge, and more money, there than anywhere else," his men required no further urging.

On August 19, 1863, three hundred bushwhackers began marching westward from the Blackwater River in Johnson County, Missouri. Along the way 150 more joined them, bringing their total number up to 450—the largest force of its kind assembled under one command during the Civil War. Late in the afternoon of August 20 they crossed

into Kansas five miles south of Aubrey. Here they were favored by a tragic failure in the Union border defenses. The commander of the Federal post at Aubrey was notified by a scout that a large body of guerrillas was entering the state. But instead of pursuing Quantrill and sending couriers to alert the towns to the west, he merely forwarded the report to the other Union posts along the line and to headquarters at Kansas City.

Throughout the moonless night Quantrill's column moved steadily across the Kansas prairie "like a monstrous snake, creeping upon its prey." Many of the bushwhackers slept as they rode, strapped to their saddles. They made only a few brief halts, to rest the horses or to get a bearing. During one such stop George Todd went to a nearby farmhouse and with a musket stock clubbed to death a Unionist refugee from Missouri, possibly to settle an old personal grudge. The raiders murdered numerous others along the way, including ten different guides they pressed into service. Some carried lists of intended victims with them. Many Kansans saw them as they passed and guessed their identity and destination, but, paralyzed by fear, made no effort to send a warning to Lawrence.

"At the first glimmer of day" on August 21, Lawrence came into sight. Quantrill halted the column on a summit southeast of the town and sent several men ahead to reconnoiter. Some of his followers suggested turning back—surely the inhabitants had been alerted by now and would be waiting for them. "You can do as you please," replied Quantrill. "I am going into Lawrence!" Then, without waiting for his scouts to return, he gave the order to charge.

The first inkling the sleeping townspeople had of the bushwhackers was the rattle of gunfire, the pounding of hoofs, and the agonized screams of the wounded and dying. Witnesses never forgot the sight—hundreds of bearded, long-haired, wild-looking men, in slouch hats and greasy, sweat-stained shirts, yelling, shooting, and riding with reckless skill.

Upon arriving at the Kansas River, which bordered the town on the north, they turned back and surrounded the four-story Eldridge House, Lawrence's central building. They approached cautiously, but the occupants, bewildered by the sudden onslaught, possessed neither the will nor the means to defend the place. One guest, Captain A. R. Banks, waved a white sheet from a window and called for Quantrill.

He rode forward, attired in his elaborately ornamented guerrilla shirt, four pistols in his belt, two more in saddle holsters.

"What is your object in coming to Lawrence?" cried Banks.

"Plunder!" replied Quantrill.

"We are defenseless and at your mercy. The house is surrendered, but we demand protection for the inmates."

Quantrill promised that they would not be harmed if they offered no resistance. He then ordered them to come down to the street, where two bushwhackers relieved them of money and valuables while others pillaged the rooms, then set fire to the hotel.

As the flames shot skyward, Quantrill rose in his stirrups, turned to his men, and shouted: "Kill! Kill! Lawrence must be thoroughly cleansed, and the only way to cleanse it is to kill! Kill!"

With a wild yell the raiders spread out through the town. Some, screaming "Whiskey! Whiskey!" broke into the saloons. Others ransacked the stores and shops. At the Johnson House, bushwhackers lined up all the male residents in an alley and mowed them down with revolvers. Farther up the street they shot and wounded two men, then threw them screaming into the flames of a burning building. And everywhere they plundered and burned private houses, after first slaying every male occupant they discovered. They did not, however, kill or rape any women.

The panic-stricken men of Lawrence endeavored frantically to escape. Many fled to cornfields and woods, or concealed themselves along the riverbank. Others, whose dwellings were surrounded before they could get away, hid in cellars, attics, barns, and gardens, or even disguised themselves as women. Still others sought refuge under the board sidewalks.

Women who talked with the bushwhackers subsequently related that they all asserted they had come to Lawrence to avenge wrongs done to their people in Missouri by jayhawkers and Red Legs. They claimed, too, that they were being more merciful than the Kansans, whom they charged not only with robbery, arson, and murder, but also with molesting women.

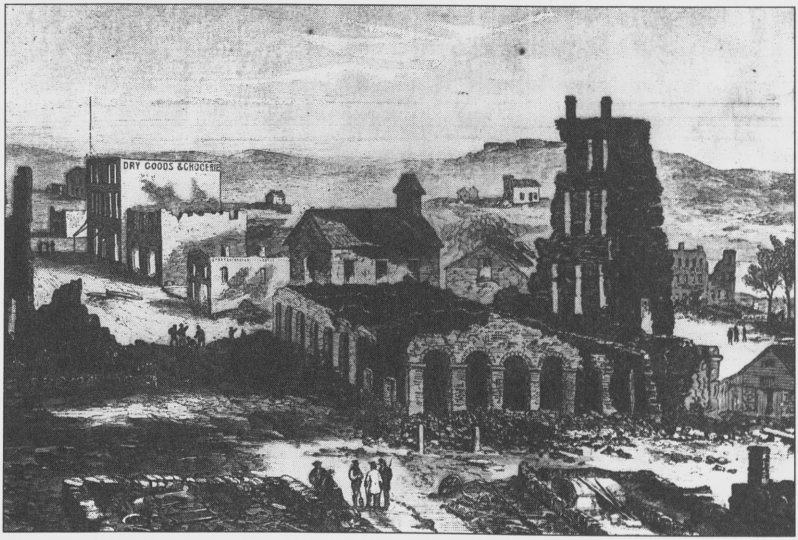
Most of the raiders obtained fresh horses to replace their own jaded mounts or to bear additional plunder. What they could not use or carry, they burned. They proceeded systematically from building to building, setting fire to each one; the smoke swirled straight up into the sky

and "stood like great black columns along the street." Soon an overhanging shroud darkened the entire town.

During the early part of the massacre Quantrill sat in a hotel lobby eating a hearty breakfast and conversing with former acquaintances—many of whom hastened to claim a friendship which under other circumstances they would have denied. Later he took a buggy and drove triumphantly about the burning town. When, at nine o'clock, his lookouts atop a nearby hill reported seeing the dust of approaching Union troops, he ordered his men to form into columns of four, and almost as suddenly as they had come, they were gone.

They left behind almost total devastation. Lawrence's business center was destroyed; one hundred houses had been burned to the ground and another hundred damaged by fire. The dead lay scattered everywhere, "some so charred that they could not be recognized and could scarcely be taken up." Bones were visible among the embers, and the "sickening odor of burning flesh was oppressive." In all, 150 men of Lawrence (and one of Quantrill's raiders) lost their lives; another thirty were wounded.

Quantrill evaded the feeble Union pursuit without difficulty. By the next morning he was well back into Missouri, where his men, as



Aftermath of Quantrill's sacking of Lawrence. Lawrence was the "Free-State Fortress" and the home of the Kansas "jayhawkers."

usual, scattered into the hills. About a dozen of the raiders were caught and killed, but Quantrill and most of the others escaped.

The Lawrence massacre was the bloody climax of the Kansas-Missouri border conflict. It was also the most atrocious single event of the Civil War. For stark, melodramatic horror, nothing else quite matched it. It has given Quantrill a reputation as the bloodiest man in American history, and placed him in the company of Simon Girty and John Wilkes Booth as one of the great national villains.

But he was not through. In October, he and his men headed south to spend the winter in Texas. On the way, near Baxter Springs, Kansas, they came upon Major General James G. Blunt, commander of Union forces in the Indian Territory, accompanied by his personal escort. Quantrill's men were wearing Federal uniforms, and Blunt's soldiers thought they were troops from a garrison at Baxter Springs. Suddenly, at point-blank range, the bushwhackers opened fire. The survivors fled in terror, closely pursued by the exultant guerrillas, who mercilessly killed every man they overtook, including an artist from *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* and the hapless members of Blunt's headquarters band. Blunt himself escaped only because he had a fleet horse. In all, nearly a hundred Union soldiers were slain. Afterward Quantrill, ordinarily a light drinker, got roaring drunk and swaggered about the field bragging of his victory.

The bushwhackers continued on to Texas. In the Indian Territory they captured (according to Quantrill's own report to Confederate General Sterling Price) "150 Federal Indians and Negroes," but brought "none of them through." All told, counting numerous minor raids and skirmishes, Quantrill's raiders probably killed close to a thousand men during 1863.

The Baxter Springs massacre was Quantrill's last major success. In Texas dissension broke out among the guerrillas; many left Quantrill to form a separate band under Anderson, and Todd took over actual leadership of the remainder. Quantrill retained only a nominal overall command. The reason for his sudden eclipse is not clear, but apparently Todd, a man of superlative courage and dash, had become more popular with the rank and file, especially the younger, wilder ones.

During most of 1864 Quantrill hid out in northern Missouri with his mistress, Kate Clarke, who is said to have accompanied him on

some of his raids dressed in men's clothes. (After the war she used money given her by Quantrill to establish a brothel in St. Louis.) That autumn Todd and Anderson, along with many other bushwhackers, were killed while participating in an unsuccessful Confederate invasion of Missouri and Kansas. This debacle, along with the general collapse of the Confederacy, broke the hold of the bushwhackers on Missouri. Early in 1865 Quantrill led a small band out of the state into central Kentucky.

They passed winter and spring there, committing petty depredations and skirmishing with Kentucky Unionist militia. Apparently Quantrill had no real plans, except to continue his freebooting career. On May 10, 1865, the inevitable end came. A party of "Federal guerrillas" surprised his band in a barn near Louisville and severely wounded Quantrill as he attempted to flee. He was taken to Louisville, where, on June 6, he died in a military prison.

"The monster is dead," rejoiced the Kansas press. But in the legends of the Missouri border he lived on. There, the stories of his dashing exploits and hair-breadth escapes were told and retold, becoming more elaborate with each telling. To have been one of his men soon became a mark of honor and distinction; as late as 1929 those of his followers who survived the war, and escaped the fate of Jesse James, held annual reunions at Independence. There are many men still alive in Missouri who recall the thrill they experienced as children when some bearded veteran was pointed out to them and they were told in a hushed voice: "He was one of Quantrill's raiders." And such is the perversity of fame's allure that well into the present century elderly impostors occasionally appeared to lay claim to the dubious honor of having been William Clarke Quantrill himself.

"This Far Off Land": The Overland Diary, 1867, and California Diary, 1868, of Elizabeth "Bettie" Duncan

Katie H. Armitage

Introduction

When the company of thirteen, made up of men, women and children, set out from Lawrence, Kansas, for California on June 24, 1867, the lure of the West had, during the preceding quarter of a century, drawn already more than a quarter of a million people onto the Overland Trail. A leader of the 1867 Lawrence party, Wesley Harvey Duncan, had been part of this earlier migration. During the gold rush to California in the 1850s, Duncan had operated a miner's store for a short time in California. After his first wife died, he returned to Missouri where, in 1854, he married the young Elizabeth Watts. In the next year the family moved to the fledgling city of Lawrence, Kansas.

Although he had established himself as a successful businessman during the tumultuous first decade of Lawrence settlement, Wesley Duncan by the mid-1860s again looked westward for the future. At

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From Katie H. Armitage, "'This Far Off Land': The Overland Diary, June–October, 1867, and California Diary, January–March, 1868, of Elizabeth 'Bettie' Duncan," *Kansas History* 12, no. 1 (Spring 1989): 13–27. Reprinted with permission of the Kansas State Historical Society and Katie H. Armitage.

This photograph of Elizabeth and Wesley Duncan is believed to be their 1854 wedding portrait. In 1867 the Duncan family left a comfortable home in Lawrence, Kansas, for unknown fortunes in California.

the time of the 1867 overland journey the Duncan family included Wesley, age fifty-two; his wife Elizabeth, known as Bettie, age twenty-nine; William T. "Willie" Duncan, the twenty-year-old son of Wesley's first marriage; and two of Wesley and Bettie's children, Katie, who turned six en route, and Cettie, age four.

Bettie Duncan began a travel diary as the Lawrence party left home for the four-month overland journey in the summer of 1867. She also kept a two-month diary while in San Jose, California, in 1868. These two diaries record a period of trail travel that is not as well documented as the earlier years of the overland migration.

In the past decade scholars have reexamined documents and produced new interpretations of the overland experience. Notable among the new studies are John D. Unruh's *The Plains Across: The Overland Emigrants and the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840–1860,* John Mark Faragher's *Women and Men on the Overland Trail,* and Lillian Schlissel's *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey.* Additionally, historians Julie Roy Jeffrey and Sandra L. Myres have made extensive use of women's trail diaries for studies of women in the West.

Despite this renewed historical scrutiny of the trail, a number of primary records have yet to be examined. Among diaries that have not been analyzed are the travel and California diaries of Elizabeth "Bettie" Duncan. This article will follow the 1867 journey of the Lawrence party, compare the experiences of Bettie Duncan with similar experiences of other women on the trail, and assess the impact of the overland journey and California sojourn on the Duncan family, in particular, and on other husbands and wives who made the journey, in general.

Bettie's initial entry in the travel diary indicated that she, as many women facing the hardships and hazards of the two-thousand mile journey, was reluctant to leave home,

> Monday, June 24, 1867.
> The dreaded day has at last come We are now in camp the rest are eating dinner while I write but my heart is to[o] full of thoughts of loved ones that I have now left behind O how strong are the cords of love that bind one to those I leave with such deep feeling but I must and will brace up and fare the best I can

Public notice of the departing party appeared in Lawrence's *Kansas Daily Tribune* on June 25, 1867, in a column on "Local Matters."

> A party of our citizens started yesterday for California, a portion, we believe, for permanent residence, and others with the intention of returning at some future day. The following names comprise the party: Mr. Duncan, wife, son, and two children; G. W. Berry and wife; G. W. McGrew, wife and child; Charles Babcock, Mr. Johnson and Mr. A. A. Thorpe.
>
> They intend going the overland route.

The motivations behind this journey so late in the active years of trail use can only be surmised. The economic or personal reasons for the westward trek by the three families and three single men probably varied. Census records show that Wesley Duncan was the most prosperous member of the party.

Leaving her comfortable home on Massachusetts Street must have been a wrenching experience for Bettie Duncan. Her daily life had followed a regular pattern of work in the house, visits to the homes of neighbors, and worship in the nearby First Methodist Episcopal Church.

The Duncans' life in their earliest years in Lawrence had been more typical of the pioneer experience. They first lived in a log cabin and later above their store. By the time of the California trip their circumstances had materially improved.

The home from which they left was spared the devastation wrought upon much of Lawrence during Quantrill's raid of August 21, 1863. In a publication on the fiftieth anniversary of the raid, Duncan's daughter wrote that the raiders came to her parents' home demanding to be led to the store. Wesley Duncan's life was spared but the store was destroyed.

Whatever the reasons for Duncan to sell his business and home and set out for California, the late 1860s seemed to have been a particularly hazardous time to travel. Indian attacks on parties on the trail escalated as post-Civil War frontier settlements pushed farther into the traditional hunting ground of the Plains Indians and the advance of the Union Pacific Railway brought many more competing hunters and settlers onto the plains. The prospective travelers certainly must have been aware of the dangers, if not of the pressures underlying the Indian attacks. The *Kansas Daily Tribune* of April 7, 1867, editorialized on "Indian Outrages."

> Every mail coach and freighter that comes from the west, reports additional Indian outrages. Not only are single individuals and small parties murdered but entire trains, and companies, and forts, are butchered by the wholesale. One massacre after another follows so closely, that it has become a subject for only passing remark.

The writer concluded, "We don't profess to be of a blood-thirsty disposition, but we do hope that every infernal red-skin of the plains may be sent to eternal happiness before the summer is over." Although the attacks prompting this outburst were at forts north of the Overland Trail route, the Lawrence travelers must have been reminded of the dangers of the journey only two months before they were to leave. However, as historian Schlissel observed of the determination of the emigrants: "Ignorance of the road had not stopped them in the 1840s; cholera had not stopped them in the 1850s, and neither Civil War nor Indians would stop them now."

The Overland Trail; 1867

As Bettie Duncan began her travel diary on the day of departure, neither her possible fears regarding the journey nor preparations for travel were recorded. Many other travel diaries also began at departure, but Bettie Duncan's record is unusual for three reasons: the year in which it was written; the Lawrence origins of the party; and the fact that these emigrants were not seeking new land in the West as most earlier emigrants had been. The lone 1867 diary in Schlissel's study was an account of travel over the southern route, not the Great Platte River route followed by the Duncans and thousands of earlier overlanders. Few diaries of any route were kept after 1867 for as Schlissel observed: "Migration dwindled after 1868. The railroad began to replace the wagon. . . ."

The 1867 Lawrence party was distinct on other accounts. None of the men were farmers. John Mack Faragher found that over half the emigrants he analyzed were farmers and only nine percent were merchants. Faragher also found that over half the overland parties were organized through kinship. Members of the 1867 Lawrence party, although surely well acquainted, were not known to be related by blood or marriage. The Duncan and McGrew homes in Lawrence were two

blocks apart and the Duncans and Berrys were associated with the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Lawrence from its time of organization. In the small city these families must have known each other well.

Despite the atypical composition of the Lawrence party of 1867, Bettie Duncan's experiences on the trail were representative of those of many other women traveling overland. As Lillian Schlissel observed:

> The diaries of the women who went overland in the 1860s show how remarkably little had changed in the life of the road. . . . For most emigrants, life and death still hung in a precarious balance.

For the Duncans the "precarious balance" of life tipped to tragedy when their six-year-old daughter, Katie, died en route and was buried on the trail. Young children on the trail were at considerable risk whenever they traveled.

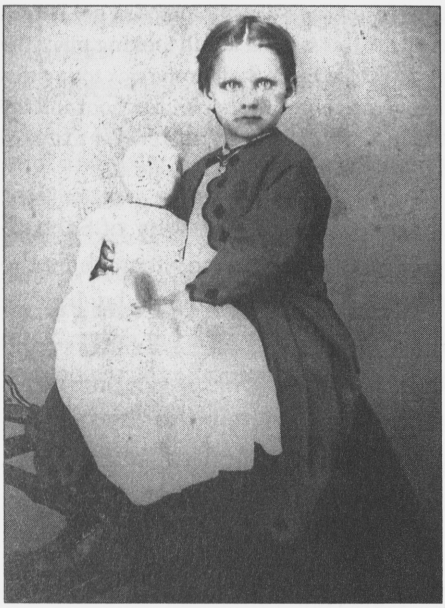
One major difference in life on the trail in the later years, including 1867, was the number of amenities travelers could take advantage of at stops along the way. John D. Unruh emphasized the changing nature of the trail in his study of the early decades.

> Overland travel was radically altered by the Mormon hegira to the Salt Lake Valley, by the advent of profit-seeking merchants and entrepreneurs, and by the gradual extension of government services westward to the Pacific.

Another change in life on the trail for emigrants in the late 1860s was the alteration in the natural landscape caused by the westward thrust of the Union Pacific Railway. The Lawrence party followed the tracks north and west from Topeka all the way across Nebraska (newly admitted to statehood in March 1867). The appearance of occasional trains on those tracks jarred the emigrants' perceptions. Bettie marveled at the scene in her diary entry of July 17, 1867.

> We have seen two trains of cars coming up and one coming down today it hardly seems possible the cars would [be] running up in this wilderness

When these travelers reached the end of the tracks in Julesburg, Colorado, on July 31, Bettie clearly appreciated the promise the railroad afforded for reunion with family and home:



Katie Duncan, age five. This photograph was taken before the Duncan family left Lawrence. Katie died on the Overland Trail.

> they are putting down the ties very fast at 3 miles a day I trust they will hurry on as fast as possible for when it is done I will go back to dear old Lawrence

Bettie's thoughts of friends at home were typical of those of many other women on the trail. "Women's diaries, more than men's, tended to focus on friends at home," stated Julie Roy Jeffrey. "Men did not dwell on absent friends in their journals; women did."

As did many women on the trail, Bettie also lamented the lack of regular worship services. Jeffrey observed:

> Familiar patterns disintegrated under the trip's strain, and even the comforting sense of the flow of time vanished. Most striking was the disappearance of the Sabbath, which had become by mid-century a symbol of women's religious and moral authority.

Bettie carefully noted each Sunday of the four-month journey, even though the Lawrence party traveled on nine of the sixteen Sundays that it was on the trail. After leaving Lawrence on a Monday and traveling six days, the party rested half a day. On Sunday, June 30, 1867, Bettie recorded:

> Camped near Marysville We came from black Vermillion today got here at noon and will remain until tomorrow this is quite a dull looking place the stream which is sky blue is beautiful. I am more than home sick today this is our first Sabbath out O how I miss the church the Sabbath School and the loved ones I have so often met there O for grace faith and prayer to guard me on all my undertakings may the Lord keep and bless us all

The next Sunday, July 7, Bettie recognized the necessity of Sabbath travel as she wrote in her diary, "As we are in the country where the Indians are so bad we have traveled all day today." On Sunday July 28, as the travelers rested for the day, Bettie lamented to her diary, "I am deprived of all church privileges," and on September 8, when they again stopped for the day, she recorded:

> We have been in camp all day trying to keep Sabbath the best we could but find it pretty hard when there is no church to go to no Sabbath class to meet and so little to clear our mind out for good. . . .

Near the end of the four-month journey, on October 18, Bettie recorded a personal milestone, "I am 30 years old today." No celebration marked this occasion. This was in sharp contrast to her birthday observance of 1864 when, despite the war tensions of the time in Lawrence, her nephew and neighbor took her for an outing. She also received presents, though none from her husband, Wesley.

At the time of the 1867 journey, Bettie had been married to Wesley Duncan for twelve years. The union was characterized by tensions accentuated by differences in age, temperament, and interests. Wesley and Bettie operated in different "spheres," as the different worlds of men and women were described at the time. Her life centered in her home and church; his focused largely on business and fraternal affairs.

Bettie's weekly routine and social contacts were significantly disrupted by the overland journey. Though their days on the trail kept them in close contact, the work of husband and wife differed in this environment as it had at home. Most men and women traveling overland followed this pattern. Historian Jeffrey has observed that at the beginning of the trip, men drove wagons, hunted, and stood guard while women cared for children, got the meals, and did the family washing. Bettie continued familiar tasks, such as washing and cooking, in the unfamiliar circumstances of the trail while Wesley hunted and looked out for the safety of the party. This typical division of la-

bor remained operative for the Duncan party during most of the 1867 journey.

Bettie's care of the children seemed to have been such an accepted part of life that she only incidentally referred to the children in the trail diary. On the second day of the journey, she noted that she had to stop writing as "the little ones want to go to bed," and a few days later she recorded in passing, "I have just got my own little ones bathed and in bed." Later in the journey when illness threatened the lives of the children and of Willie Duncan, her stepson, Bettie's concern about their health dominated the diary entries.

Bettie's compatible relations with her stepson on the trail were in sharp contrast to the distress and pain his rebelliousness had caused her in 1864. On the journey Willie joined Bettie in sightseeing in the mountains and in Salt Lake City. Bettie's travel diary mentioned no difficulty with Willie, who had matured during the time that separates the diaries of 1864 and 1867.

Cooking, like daily child care, was also such an unexceptional part of daily life that it was most often mentioned in the trail diary in connection with other chores. Baking, washing, and other maintenance chores were accomplished when the travelers "laid over" for a few days:

> Friday, July 19, 1867
> Left camp at 9 drove up to Cottonwood found it a real pretty little place so clean and neat most all the buildings are made of cedar. There are quite a number of troops there I herd [*sic*] the music and it made me feel like old times. We drove up four miles beyond Cottonwood and camped for the day. I have been very busy washing baking and cooking all the afternoon. I am very tired tonight but still I remember my class that meets tonight at Lawrence and although I am almost 5 hundred miles from there My heart is with them
> Saturday, August 3, 1867
> We left camp at 6 traveled 9 miles and came to Pine Bluff and stoped [*sic*] to wash cook and wait for our team I have washed and baked we got some nice currants for pies this is a beautiful place so romantic beautiful pines and cedars we are all going up the bluff tomorrow

Bettie's husband, referred to as "Mr. Duncan" in the travel diary, as well as in her other diaries, appeared in the trail account frequently. After the Lawrence party joined with other travelers to form a group of seventeen wagons at Fort Kearny, Nebraska, Bettie noted that "our

men organized this noon and elected Mr Duncan captain." He stood guard at night in the area where Indians were perceived to be a threat.

Wesley Duncan frequently fished along the Platte and in mountain streams, he hunted antelope (but no buffalo, which were not mentioned in the 1867 diary), and he searched for stray mules. These active pursuits were typical of many men on the trail. Twice in the diary account Wesley Duncan appeared in an unexpected activity, food preparation. On a cold August morning in the mountains, Wesley and another man "got breakfast" before Bettie and the children arose, and in Salt Lake City, when the women returned to camp after a day of sightseeing, they found "our men had a good dinner or supper which ever it might be called most ready." Bettie continued, "we were very thankful." Such thoughtful aid was not unknown in other instances on the trail but as Julie Jeffrey observed of such occasions, "if men helped with female work from time to time, this did not mean they did it regularly."

Despite ever-present homesickness, Bettie performed traditional female tasks on the trail. She adjusted to the routine and began to enjoy many aspects. After eight days on the trail, she noted on July 2, "I stand the trip so far much better than I expected." After the first month of the journey, Bettie began to accept the challenges of life on the trail and feel comfort in her ability to perform her familiar work at each campsite. She wrote in her diary of July 23, 1867:

> We have been traveling all day in the hot broiling sun through sand and dust the thermometer 106 in the shade. I have been more home sick today. I have thought today that it takes more and still [more] patience to endure all the hardships of camp life but not withstanding there is some thing kinda pleasant in this way of traveling I now begin to feel when we get into camp that I am at home and govern myself accordingly

If the heat, dust, and mosquitoes were a tiresome part of trail life, Bettie also found the trail offered some new delights. Her entry of July 26, 1867, written just west of Julesburg, Colorado, chronicled the river crossing and a swim the women took in the river. Not only was the swim pleasant after dusty days on the road but the social aspect of sharing the experience with the other women and girls was important to Bettie Duncan, to whom friendship meant a great deal. In Lawrence she was often in the company of female friends, and on the trail she re-created that circle of friends. Although Mrs. Berry was mentioned

in Bettie Duncan's 1864 diary, as was a Mrs. Brown, on the trail it was Mrs. McGrew, who also had a child along on the journey, with whom Bettie shared most experiences.

Most of Bettie Duncan's reminders of Lawrence were deeply affectionate and filled with longing, but on a special anniversary she recalled a tragic event in Lawrence history. On August 21, 1867, she wrote, "I have had peculiar feelings today 4 years ago today was the Lawrence raid." This reference to Quantrill's 1863 raid on Lawrence, in which more than one hundred fifty men were killed, is one of the most specific recollections in the travel diary, and as such, served to demonstrate the continuing impact of that terrible event on those who lived through it.

On August 5, after some six weeks on the trail, the journey was going well for the Duncans and other members of the Lawrence party. Bettie noted on that date that the weather was "delightful," that no one in their party had been sick, and "all our stock is looking well." The first half of the journey had proceeded smoothly. Even the Indian threat did not materialize. Early in the journey before the party had left "dear old Kansas," Bettie wrote, "we hear dreadful Indian stories our men keep there [*sic*] guns in there [*sic*] hand all the time," and on July 8 she had observed "we passed several ranches today but all of them are deserted on account of the Indians. We keep continually on the watch but have seen no sign of any yet." At Kearney City, Nebraska, the party "herd [*sic*] some bad Indian reports" and "concluded to wait for more company." During the stay Bettie devoted herself to "baking cooking washing and ironing" and found herself "very tired tonight." For the Lawrence party, as for many others, the fear of Indian attacks elicited more anxiety than proved warranted.

To counter anxiety about attacks, the small Lawrence party, at several junctures, met up with other overland travelers to create strength in numbers. On July 6, Bettie observed that "we were waiting for some teams that was coming up to go with us." At Kearney City, the group that joined the party did not please Bettie. She wrote on Saturday, July 13, "I find that the three teams that came up yesterday are Mormons and O what dirty wretches they are I cant see what such people are allowed to live for." This harsh denunciation was often typical of other women when they encountered Mormons on the trail. Julie Roy Jeffrey has found that

> Women's cultural values were also revealed when they came into contact with Mormons and Indians during the trip. Unable to see Mormons as the persecuted defenders of religious freedom or Indians as either noble savages or the victims of white civilization, women perceived both as threats to domestic culture. Only when the Indian or Mormon seemed to conform to their own standards did the women have anything positive to say. Thus, they admired Salt Lake City, a stopping-off point for California emigrants, for its beautiful plan, its cozy, snug homes, its prosperous and bustling air.

Just before the Lawrence party was to begin the desert crossing west of Salt Lake, Bettie noted the illness of her youngest daughter and lamented not being "where I could have the Dr." Until this point the Lawrence party had enjoyed good health. Bettie Duncan herself had evidenced unusually good spirits as she adjusted to life on the trail despite her initial misgivings. In her earlier diary of 1864, she had often mentioned headaches, anxiety and depression, but during the first half of the overland journey, she did not record these maladies. Everything changed, however, as members of the Duncan family fell ill in mid-September 1867.

Before the Duncans began their desert crossing, Bettie wrote on September 11:

> we are going to stay here until tomorrow at 4 o clock and then start over the Desert how much I do dread it as our darling little Cettie is sick she has not been well for several days and is much worse this evening. O how glad I wo[u]ld be to have her home where I could have the Dr and me take good care of her. I try to trust my God and pray earnestly that he help in this our hour of need

Earlier, while in Wyoming, the Lawrence party had encountered a wagon train in which a sick man had died. Of that incident Bettie wrote that she was awakened by the "moans and screams of the gentleman that was taken sick yesterday." In the next entry she wrote at daybreak, "They came and told us he was dead O how sad it seems to lay him away out here on these dreary mountains not one friend or relative to drop a tear on his grave." The entry continued:

> We buryed [*sic*] as best we could which was well considering the circumstances. We left camp about 2 o clock in the afternoon leaving one behind us and a grave by the road side which on rude board read
>
> In memory of
> John Scott died Aug 13 67

This reporting of the death of a stranger and recording of the legend on the marker was a common phenomenon of women on the trail. As historian Schlissel observed:

> The meticulous care the women gave to recording the death toll of the journey remains one of the major sex-related differences between the diaries of women and men on the overland passage. The fact of death loomed large for the women, and they felt death to be a personal catastrophe. Whereas men in their diaries tended to record the cumulative impact of cholera, the women set themselves to note each and every grave they saw.

Bettie, like other women on the trail, also recorded passing graves. Earlier, on August 8, Bettie remarked on "the grave of a army man that was killed by Indians May 13th 1863."

She experienced growing anxiety as several members of her own family became ill in September. As Schlissel observed, "No one who reads the diaries of women on the Overland Trail can escape feeling the intensity with which the women regarded loss of life." Bettie Duncan became the caretaker of the sick and dying in the Lawrence party of 1867. While she cooked and prepared for the night crossing of the desert on September 12, she worried:

> my little Cettie was able to be up some but about noon was taken much worse it is 3 o clock in one hour we expect to start for going over the desert we will travel all night and noon or after tomorrow. O how I hate to start with my little lamb so sick but all says it will not hurt her and I must yield as I always have to do O that the Lord will guard and protect my little one and soon make her well

This diary entry illustrated Bettie Duncan's feelings of her own powerlessness; in her words, "I must yield." Because the travelers were some distance from Salt Lake City there was little choice except to go on.

After traveling forty-five miles in sixteen hours, the Lawrence party reached "Fish spring campsite," where Bettie wrote that the child had "flux of the worst kind." Another thirty miles at "Deep Creek station" found Bettie lamenting, "I would give anything if I was home where I could have the Dr and take care of her." The next day on Monday the 16th, as the child's dysentery continued, the party stayed in camp trying, as Bettie wrote, "to get our little girl better." By this time Willie Duncan, her grown stepson, and others in the party were also ill, but the travelers moved on. On September 18, Bettie wrote "with a

heart full of anxiety and a boddy [*sic*] almost worn out with fatigue," that her husband was "taken with pluresy very bad." On the next day she recorded the continuing travail:

> We have traveled 23 miles today I hardly know over what kind of country or anything else. My mind has all been taken up with my sick ones. Willie is very bad also little Katie. Mr Thorp[e] and Mr D are some better. My little Cettie we hope is better but is very sick yet. I myself am almost worn out

Dysentery affected almost everyone on the trail but only in severe cases was the dehydration effect of this disorder life threatening. Indeed the youngest Duncan child, Cettie, recovered, but the eldest, six-year-old Katie, who also had become ill, did not.

The Death of Katie Duncan

For eight days after September 20, 1867, Bettie Duncan's diary is blank. When she resumed writing on September 28, she charted the course the party took to "diamond Springs Station" where they camped at the foot of the mountains, "put up our tent took our dear little Katie in made her comfortable as possible but her little spirit was not long for this world." Writing of the death of the child, the mother wrote poignantly, "O the agony of our hearts none can ever know how we felt when we sat in that tent with our little angel and herd [*sic*] the pattering of rain." Bettie continued the account of these sad events and recounted the support and aid rendered by other members of the Lawrence party:

> O that God may give us grace to bear the greatest trial of our lives. On Thursday morning [September 25th] Mr McGrew and Henry went up on the mountain side and found a place where there were 2 other little graves and they dug her little grave. Mr Berry and the Frenchman there made a little pine coffin. Mrs McGrew and Mrs Berry dressed her nice and pretty and at 12 o clock on Thursday we all assembled in and near the tent to listen to Mr McGrew read a chapter and offer a prayer. O how our hearts bled within us. My heart is now to[o] full to write they tell me that it is Gods tender mercy that took my lamb my idol away but I can but feel it is to[o] hard why did he take her here away from home and loved ones there. Friday morning as Mr Duncan and me went to her little grave and there knelt I think if hearts could ever bursted with grief our[s] surely would. O that God will give us some help in this our time of need. O for faith and

> prayer I now feel what little hope I had of being contented in our new home is all gone O for grace and faith

This final sentiment portended the future of the trip and Bettie's response to her California home. A sensitive person who suffered anxiety and depression when she was in her Lawrence home, this tragedy on the trail devastated Bettie Duncan. The death of her eldest child in 1867 also must have recalled her grief at the death of two children ten years before in Lawrence. Death on the trail was terrible for all mothers, who found it hardest of all the trials to bear. Schlissel described this loss as especially traumatic: "Death along the road was a palpable wound, and it scarred the lives of emigrants who had dared to break so completely with home."

Sadness prevailed in the remaining travel diary entries as Bettie charted the last part of the journey. On October 12 she commented on the capital city of Nevada: "Carson is a pretty place with 6 or 7 thousand inhabitants there is a mint being built there now." Crossing into California and approaching the pass in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, Bettie responded to the "grand scenery" and "magnificent great rocks" even as she mourned the loss of the child.

California

As the season approached late fall, the travelers worried about mountain snows. However, as they descended the mountain pass and entered the valley near Volcano, California, they found the weather warm enough on October 19 to have produced "a mess of splendid green beans and some fine tomatoes." Reaching the Stockton area on October 22, Bettie wrote admiringly of the "fine farms and good farm houses."

As the four-month journey neared an end, Bettie Duncan faced with a heavy heart the prospects of a new home. Camped near Stockton, she concluded the diary entry of October 22:

> We are now just 70 miles from San Jose. Mr Duncan thinks if no bad luck happens [to] us we will get there in 3 days but for me I care but little when we get there we have no Katie now. No what do I care for a home with out her so I want my darling Katie. I have never had any comfort without her. O for more grace in my heart

Bettie's final entry of the travel account, Wednesday October 23, told of the Lawrence party's pleasure of boating on a mountain lake. Despite taking part in this activity, her final words were: "What would I not give to be in my beloved Kansas yes my Lawrence home tonight. Why did we ever leave there?" The question remained unanswered.

San Jose, 1868

The Duncans' arrival in San Jose and establishment of a household there were not recorded. On January 1, 1868, two months after the Overland Trail diary had ended abruptly, Bettie began a new diary in this manner:

> God's goodness has spared me to see the light of another new year's day but O what a bitter and sad year this has been to me on June 24 I bade adieu to home and loved one[s] [and] with our little family started for this far off land. On and on we traveled meeting with toil and a[d]versity but on the 25th of September our idol our lovely Katie we saw cold and lifeless before us. O the anguish of our poor hearts. What desolate hearts our[s] are. What or how can we do in this our time of trial. O for grace and faith. Today I have thought so much of home and loved ones there how far are we separated but there God is our God and in him we must put our trust. It has been raining most all day

Bettie Duncan's mood in her new California home reflected the gloomy, wet season of the year as she reestablished a pattern of work at home, worship at church, and visits with neighbors and friends.

As Bettie settled into a routine in San Jose, she experienced the recurrence of symptoms similar to those she had suffered in Lawrence and which she had not alluded to during the time of the trail. In mid-February, as Bettie spent the day at home sewing, she expressed a "deep depression in spirit." Earlier she suffered a "severe chill," "back pain," and "nervousness." Whether Bettie's ill health and unmitigated grief altered her husband's plans for permanent residence in California can only be surmised. All indications had been that the family intended to stay in the Golden State. Bettie wrote on February 21: "our boxes of goods came today what we sent from home. They came all nice and in good order. They were boxed just eight months."

On the next to last entry of the San Jose diary, after five months in California, Bettie expressed her emotional state:

> Sunday, March 1, 1868
> Another sabbath day has come and with it a sadness I can not shake off it is so muddy I could not go to church or Sabbath School.

Return to Lawrence

The final entry of the San Jose diary gives no clue as to why the Duncans returned to Lawrence. What is known is that within ten months of their arrival in California, they were back in Kansas.

Details of Bettie Duncan's life after the return to Lawrence are sketchy. Two more children, a son and daughter, were born to her. She presided over a grand home near Tenth and Emery Road in Lawrence. In 1874 she signed, as Mrs. Wesley Duncan, a temperance petition that was sponsored by many other Lawrence women, including her sister, Mrs. Charles S. Duncan. Five years later, on September 26, 1879, Bettie Duncan died at the age of forty-two. Her obituary appeared in both Lawrence newspapers, the *Lawrence Daily Journal* and the *Lawrence Standard*. In these death notices Mrs. Wesley Duncan was described as "a consistent Christian, a fond wife, a good mother, and a friend to the needy." Both accounts mention the journey to California and the death of the child en route. Lucetta, the child "Cettie" of the diaries, was seventeen and the eldest child in the family at the time of her mother's death. She preserved her mother's diaries.

Epilogue

Five years after Bettie's death, Wesley Duncan married for the third time. Duncan remained a prominent businessman who kept abreast of new developments. In the last years of his life, Wesley Duncan was again drawn to California, the third time he had gone West. His obituary, which appeared in the *Lawrence Daily Journal*, September 22, 1902, stated that in the spring before his death he made California his permanent home. He was described as "one of the best known of Lawrence pioneers."

Clearly, California, as an idea, a dream, a promise played a significant role in the life of Wesley Duncan. He apparently made the decision that the family would journey overland in 1867, but it well may have been that his wife, Bettie Duncan, was most influential in the decision to return to Lawrence. Her difficulty in adjusting to her new home while coping with her grief over the death of the child on the trail, may have been a deciding factor in the family's return in 1868. Both Wesley and Bettie were assuredly marked by the death of this child, as was evidenced in her diary, her obituary, and his biographical sketch published in 1879.

Conclusion

The Duncan family undertook the overland journey late in the years of the trail, they enjoyed greater affluence and conveniences than many others who took the two thousand-mile journey, yet many of their experiences on the trail paralleled those of earlier families. Bettie's trail diary revealed that she, as other women, was ever mindful of family and friends left behind. Even as she adjusted to the demands of life on the trail and reveled in the beauty of mountain scenery, she felt the backward pull. She, like other women, feared Indian attack, but those trepidations for her were not fulfilled. She did find the journey over the mountains and plains perilous, however. Her child's burial, as recorded in Bettie's diary, reverberated with poignant emotions shared by other mothers who lost a child away from home. In California, in retrospect, Bettie remembered only the journey's tragedy, forgetting the pleasure of companionship of other travelers and the shared days with her husband as they met the challenges of daily trail life. In California, Bettie and Wesley resumed their separate spheres; he explored new business opportunities while she focused on her home, where grief overwhelmed her.

The motivations of husband and wife in undertaking the overland journey were different, the events along the way acted upon each dissimilarly, and the establishment of a new home affected each in diverse ways. Wesley Duncan apparently found in California, at various times in his life, adventure, opportunity, and new beginnings. He shared the prevailing American dream of a better life in the new land

that drew so many westward in the nineteenth century. Bettie joined in the overland journey reluctantly. She viewed the railroad tracks on the plains as a means to return to the home of her former life. In California, she sought to re-create the pattern of her life, at home, in church, and with friends. But, in California, she longed to return to Kansas.

The Duncans' experiences, while not typical of many of the thousands of overlanders, were similar enough to those of others to demonstrate how the journey affected the life cycle of men and women in a different manner. For Bettie Duncan the overland journey was a single event in an adult life that centered on the familiar: home, church, children. Wesley Duncan led a more varied life: he had a series of different business partners and several different businesses; he married three times; and he journeyed to California at least three times. During all the many changes in his adult life, the dream California held out to him remained a constant. As historian John Unruh has observed:

> The West, as place, direction, or idea, has fascinated men since time immemorial, men who by their actions have given substance to Henry David Thoreau's poetic phrasing that "Eastward I go only by force, but westward I go free" and that "we go westward as into the future, with a spirit of enterprise and adventure."

In contrast, Bettie Duncan primarily found in California, a "far off land."

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Chapter 4

Expansion and Social Change, 1870s–1890s

The 1870s–1890s was a period of continuing expansion and change in Kansas history. This period saw the development and expansion of railroads, cattle ranches and farms; Indian-white warfare; community settlement; European immigration; racial prejudice; scandal in state government; and the beginning of populist unrest. Chapter 4 focuses on subjects that touch on several of these concerns.

Jeff Sheets, director of the Dickinson County Historical Society in Abilene, provides a brief overview of the beginning of the Cattle Kingdom in "Head 'Em Up, Move 'Em Out: The Legacy of the Chisholm Trail." Originally a trading route, the Chisholm Trail was extended to Abilene by the entrepreneur Joseph G. McCoy to bring large herds of Texas cattle to Kansas railheads.

Norman E. Saul, professor of history at the University of Kansas, explores the concept of myth in history. He examines the story of German-Russian Mennonites bringing sacks of Turkey Red Wheat (hard red winter wheat) to central Kansas in 1874. In his provocative article, Saul assesses how myths develop and are perpetuated; he raises some significant questions about long-held assumptions.

Randall B. Woods, professor of history and associate dean of arts and sciences at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, investigates racial conditions in Kansas from 1878–1900. Woods asserts that Kansas did not develop a rigid system of segregation because blacks did not constitute enough of a political or economic threat to warrant os-

tracism. Although Kansans were willing to allow blacks access to most facilities and institutions considered essential to the individual's health and safety, they were not ready to condone social equality in mixed housing, places of amusement, and fraternal organizations. This principle of parallel development (black advancement without assimilation) was, according to Woods, a "compromise between white Kansas's self-image [frontier hospitality, openness and freedom] and its sublimated prejudices." This compromise "did much to freeze an unjust status quo."

In her article "A Half Century of Struggle: Gaining Woman Suffrage in Kansas," Wilda M. Smith comments that it took more than fifty years for women to win the right to vote. The struggle began in 1861 with the right to vote in school elections. In 1887 women earned the right to vote in municipal elections. Finally, in 1912, the woman suffrage amendment was adopted by Kansas male voters. The indifference and apathy of many women were major handicaps, as were problems of timidity, poor planning, financing, lack of transportation facilities, disagreements among leaders over tactics, and linking woman suffrage with other causes. Smith assesses woman suffrage as a political issue and describes tactics used in suffrage campaigns that antagonized men.

The Legacy of the Chisholm Trail

Jeff Sheets

For 130 years the Chisholm Trail has sparked interest throughout the world. Movies such as John Wayne's Red River and television shows have romanticized the trail, its cowboys and cattle towns, and hundreds of books, mainly western novels, have used the cattle drive as their theme. It is no wonder that Americans have always been interested in this great piece of western heritage. In 1967 Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas formed the Tri-State Centennial Commission to organize a grand celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the Chisholm Trail. Now in 1997 the Kansas Chisholm Trail Celebration Committee has been formed to celebrate the trail's 130th anniversary. On March 4, 1997, Kansas governor Bill Graves signed a proclamation recognizing the year 1997 as the 130th anniversary of the Chisholm Trail in the state of Kansas and urging all citizens to remember the great heritage of Kansas.

The Chisholm Trail has long been a part of our western heritage. It was established in the early 1860s by Jesse Chisholm, who sold trade goods to Indians and used the trail as a trade route from the Canadian River in present-day Oklahoma north to the headwaters of the Little Arkansas River near present-day Wichita. In 1867 Joseph McCoy made the trail famous by extending it to Abilene, Kansas, and attracting the first of the great cattle drives from Texas. During the next eighteen

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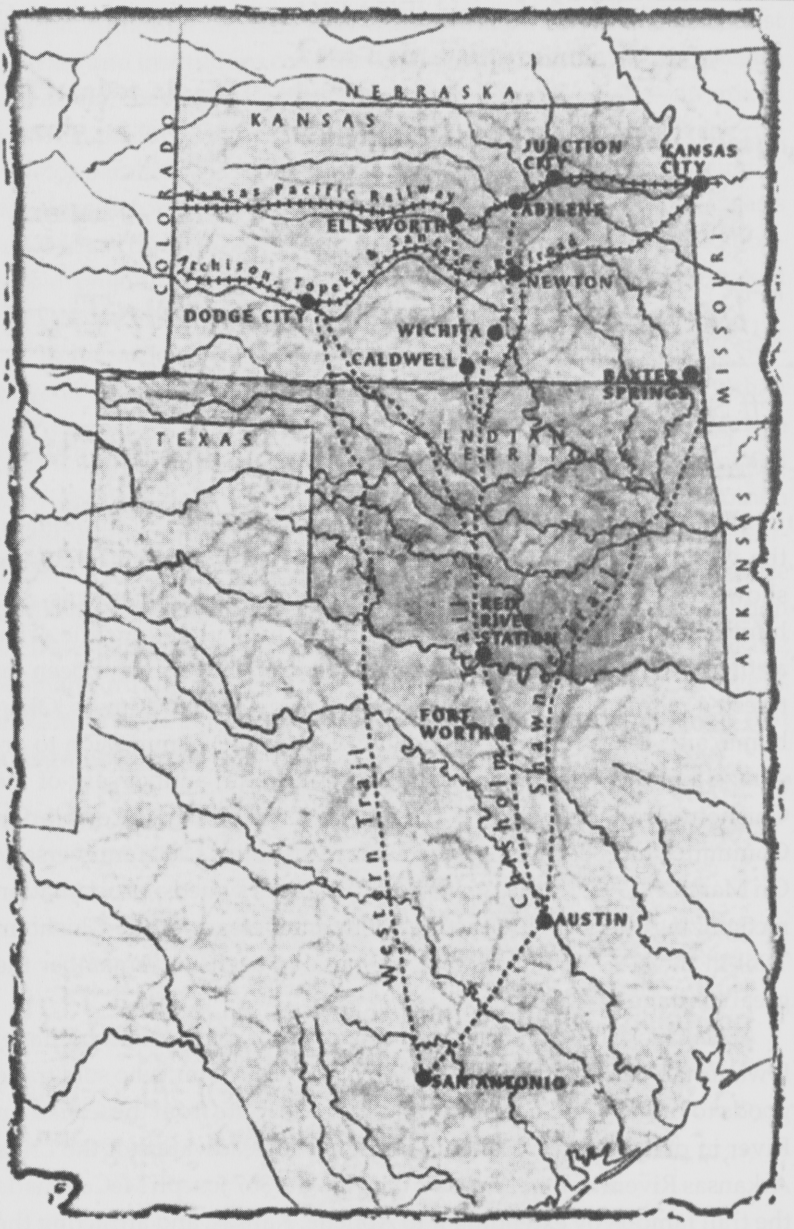
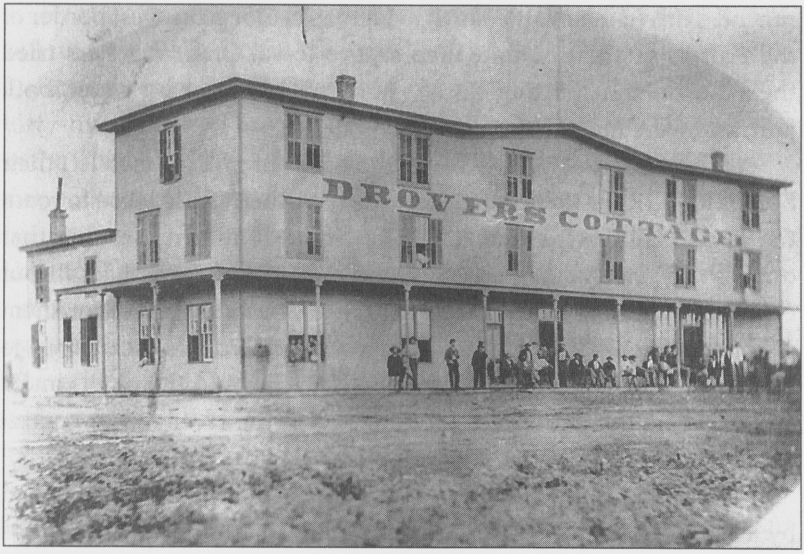
From Jeff Sheets, "The Legacy of the Chisholm Trail," *Kansas Heritage* (Summer 1997), pp. 4–8. Reprinted with permission of the Kansas State Historical Society and Jeff Sheets.



Cattle trails ran north from Texas to Kansas railheads. The towns at the end of the trails became booming cowtowns in the 1870s.



Hotels such as the three-story Drovers Cottage in Ellsworth were built in the 1870s to attract cowboys driving cattle north to Kansas railhead towns.

years several million longhorn cattle would follow the Chisholm Trail to railheads in Kansas. Although cattle drives were not a new idea in 1867, beginning that year Texas cattlemen became linked to the railroad, which offered inexpensive transportation to eastern markets.

But let's back up a few years to see how this Texas-to-Kansas cattle trade began. Before the Civil War many Texas cattlemen drove their animals to Sedalia, Missouri, and some went as far as Chicago. However, problems arose primarily because of splenic fever, better known as Texas fever. This disease was caused by a tick carried by Texas cattle, who were immune to the illness. Cattle in Kansas, Missouri, and other states, however, were not, and many farmers and ranchers lost several hundred head of cattle.

Both Missouri and Kansas passed quarantine laws to limit the flow of Texas cattle across their borders. In Kansas any animals known to be infected with Texas fever could not enter Kansas Territory. Any cattle from Texas, Arkansas, or Indian Territory could not be driven into Bourbon, Linn, Lykins, or Johnson Counties between June and November. In 1861 Kansas passed a stricter quarantine law that forbade any Texas or Indian Territory cattle from entering Kansas between April and November. To bypass the inconvenience many Texas

ranchers drove their cattle north to Nebraska along the west border of the Kansas quarantine line, then east to Iowa. Other ranchers tried their luck at transporting cattle by river. By land or by water, both journeys were long and expensive.

With the advent of the Civil War most young Texas men left their homes to fight for the Confederacy, turning their cattle loose to roam the Texas Plains. After four long years the men returned to find that during the years of neglect the cattle industry of Texas had all but collapsed. Millions of cattle roamed Texas, but the market for them was nonexistent. Many cattlemen tried again to drive their herds to Kansas and Missouri but were met with gunfire and theft by farmers and ranchers protecting their livestock, and the river routes continued to be too expensive.

It was not until 1867 that a solution to the dilemma was proposed by an Illinois gentleman, Joseph G. McCoy. In the livestock business with his brothers, McCoy believed he could create a fair market for Texas cattle. He began by contacting officials from the Union Pacific Railway, Eastern Division, which was laying tracks across Kansas. Because adjoining railroads had not yet been built through Indian Territory and Texas, Kansas railheads would be the closest connecting points to eastern markets. The entrepreneur was met with much skepticism, but after negotiations the Union Pacific agreed to build a twenty-car side track for transporting cattle and offered to pay McCoy a five-dollar commission for each carload of cattle.

McCoy now had to find a suitable location in Kansas to build a stockyard. He traveled by rail to this young state, stopping first to explore possibilities in Junction City. However, the threat of spreading Texas fever was too great to residents there, and they turned down his proposal. Joseph continued west to Salina, where his plans again were rejected, and a similar scenario occurred in Solomon City. Although he was becoming discouraged, McCoy remembered passing through the small community of Abilene and decided to take his chances there. When he deboarded the train in Abilene, he was greeted by the small number of dwellers, and McCoy presented his idea to them. After some discussion, the residents of Abilene agreed to sell him the land to build his dream.

McCoy did not waste any time. He ordered lumber from Lenape, Kansas, to build a stockyard and a three-story hotel, which he named Drover's Cottage. He was in business.

By the time the structures were in place, the cattle season was well underway. To attract business McCoy sent riders to Texas to inform cattlemen of the new facility in Abilene. As a result, in 1867 nearly thirty-five thousand head of Texas longhorn cattle were driven north on the Chisholm Trail and arrived in Abilene. This marked the beginning of the great "long drives" from Texas to Kansas. During the next five years some 1.5 million head of cattle were driven up the trail to Abilene. The sleepy little town that once consisted of a dozen homes, a store, and a tavern, suddenly came to life. Abilene became a boom town with stores, saloons, dance halls, and gambling houses—and became renowned as the wildest and wickedest town west of the Mississippi.

Abilene's success soon was recognized by several communities, especially Junction City, Solomon City, and Salina, which previously had rejected the business. Ellsworth also took notice of and made plans to capture some of the cattle trade. However, Abilene remained the number one cattle shipping point until 1871.

By 1870 many farmers had settled in the Abilene area. Unfortunately, the problem that cattlemen had once feared was becoming a reality. Texas cattle were creating a health problem for livestock owned by local ranchers. In 1871, in an attempt to protect local herds, farmers and ranchers joined together to ban cattle trade from Dickinson County. Their protests began driving Texas business from the area, and in 1872 Ellsworth, some sixty miles southwest of Abilene, became the main shipping point for Texas cattle. Many Abilene businesses also moved west with the cattle trade.

The coming of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad brought its own changes to the trade. Its more southern route through Kansas prompted railheads to form in that area of the state, and in 1871 Newton became a major shipping point. It remained a cattle town until 1874 and also gained a reputation as being "bloody and lawless—the wickedest city in the west." With the coming of the Wichita and Southwestern Railroad to Wichita in 1872, that growing town became the destination point for herds of Texas cattle. Approximately 80,000 longhorns were shipped from Wichita that year. By 1876, when the city's cattle trade era ended due to quarantine restrictions, more than 230,000 cattle had passed through the Wichita stockyards.

Caldwell, a settlement along the trail, was established as a cattle town in 1879. Nicknamed the "Border Queen" by the cowboys coming up the trail, it also developed an infamous reputation: from 1879 to 1885 Caldwell went through sixteen marshals. But its success as a cattle town was apparent. In its seven seasons Caldwell shipped nearly 250,000 head of cattle by rail.

The Chisholm Trail served as the main northern cattle trail for nearly eighteen years, making Joseph McCoy's marketing plan a huge success—in its time several million head of cattle were driven up the trail from Texas to Kansas. In 1885, however, the famous trail was all but closed due to quarantine laws enforced in each successive cattle town. Because it was west of the quarantine line, Dodge City remained the only cattle town in Kansas. However, most drovers followed the new Western Trail to Dodge City. As railroads continued to build into all areas of the country, the need for the long drives to Kansas diminished, and soon the Chisholm Trail was but a reminder of our state's glorious and hard-riding past.

Myth and History: Turkey Red Wheat and the "Kansas Miracle"

Norman E. Saul

In 1897, Henry King wrote an article on Kansas for the popular *Scribner's Monthly* that began:

> There is no more enticing scene than the Kansas prairie in spring. The eye wanders out over gracefully swerving and unmonotonous lines to what seems the very limit of things; you dare not conjecture where the earth ends and the sky begins.

Many today might second that thought after traveling westward on I-70, but perhaps, after three generations, we have lost some appreciation of that landscape. This article will examine the remaking of that landscape's lines by new settlers and conjecture about where myth ends and history begins.

In 1873 and 1874 a number of Mennonite families in southern Russia commenced a long migration by train and steamship to America. There, after considering several possible locations, most of them chose the virgin prairie of Kansas, where railroads like the Santa Fe had many sections of land stretching in a checker-board pattern across the state to sell cheap. The largest group, from the Molochna-Ukrainian village

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of Alexanderwohl, bought sixty-five sections in Marion, McPherson, and Harvey counties from the Santa Fe and homesteaded quite a few more. When these people left Russia, each family (it was later believed) brought a sack or crock of wheat, a hard red winter wheat which made Kansas an economically prosperous agricultural state. The Catholic and Lutheran Volga Germans who came to Ellis, Rush, and Russell counties a couple of years later reinforced and helped spread the adaptation of "their" Russian wheat.

That is the story. It is a nice, neat one. And in 1974 the state celebrated the centennial of this event in grand style; there were parades and celebrations in practically every town; a wheat queen was crowned—Andrea Polansky of Belleville; and Highway 50 was appropriately renamed the "Wheat Centennial Memorial Highway." A U.S. postal stamp commemorated the occasion. A paperback novel was even published with the title *Turkey Red*. Pamphlets, articles, and books recounted the "history" of this famous grain. One of the state's best-known contributions to the bicentennial of the American Declaration of Independence was a liberty bell made of wheat straw. And today a wheat heritage museum in the Mennonite community of Goessel maintains the folk tradition.

The story of Turkey Red wheat is perhaps second only to Dorothy and Toto in making Kansas famous in national as well as local lore. Prominence was given to it in a 1985 article on Kansas in the *National Geographic*, and in March of 1989 it was featured in *The New Yorker* in a three-part series on the Great Plains by Ian Frazier that later became a best-seller in book form. Quoting from the article: "As it turned out, the Russian Mennonites made ideal plains farmers—they had been practicing on the steppes for nearly a hundred years." After relating some nonsense about sod houses (the first Mennonite settlers generally did not bother with them) and an alleged ability to cope with grasshoppers, Frazier stated:

> Most important, the Mennonites knew what to plant. Each Mennonite family had brought a bushel or more of Crimean wheat from Russia. This wheat, a hard, red, short-stemmed variety later called Turkey Red, was resistant to heat, cold, and drought. It was the right crop for the plains, and the Mennonites knew to cultivate it. . . .

And so the myth continues in the popular imagination today, but what does history—the search for and telling of what actually happened—

say about all of this? In short, the story is largely a myth, as the historian James Malin demonstrated in the 1940s, but like all myths it has some factual basis, more perhaps than Malin was willing to grant. The real truth about Turkey Red and the Kansas wheat miracle is more complex to unravel but in its way is as intriguing and exciting as its folk myth.

The situation in Russia in the 1870s must first be examined. Dubbed "Rooshians" when they arrived in Kansas, the Ukrainian Dutch-speaking Mennonites, the Volynian (Polish) Swiss Mennonites, and the Volga German Lutherans and Catholics, who spoke a variety of German dialects, were concentrated, respectively, in substantial and relatively prosperous colonial settlements almost a thousand miles apart where they had settled about a hundred years earlier. Many of them were unhappy and restless because of population growth coupled with restricted opportunities for expansion to new lands, because of increasing Russian nationalist pressures that threatened their cultural identities, and especially because of the liberal reforms of Alexander II's government that threatened the special privileges that had been granted to them when they first moved into Russia. The chief of these was exemption from recruitment into the Russian army. The Mennonites were naturally concerned because of their pacifist religious beliefs, but even the Catholic and Lutheran Germans were afraid that military service would mean conversion to the Russian Orthodox church. Even more, this and other actually progressive steps by the Russian government meant greater interference by the central government in the historic autonomy of these foreign agricultural colonies. "Liberal" reforms—treating everyone equally—were thus a cause of dissent, much as among the Soviet nationalities in recent years.

Also ironic was the fact that significant economic progress in Russia was now bringing these people news of the outside world through the telegraph and newspapers that included advertisements of cheap land in America, and the extension of Russian railroads to their areas provided access to cheap and easy transportation. Other factors prodding movement were religious controversy and growing distinctions between rich and poor in the communities. The Mennonites were, in fact, able to work out with the Russian government a rather progressive system of alternative service and thus avoided military conscription. Yet, quite a few of them did leave Russia, and most of these initial emigrants came to Kansas.

Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad German-language recruitment booklet. C.B. Schmidt and other land agents used advertisements such as this to attract 15,000 Mennonite families to Kansas.

Why Kansas? The land agents of the Kansas Pacific and the Santa Fe, such as C. B. Schmidt, certainly were an influence because of their successful sales pitches. The Mennonites were also guided by co-religionists from Illinois and Indiana (such as the Funks, the Krehbiels, and the Wiebes) who knew good agricultural opportunities when they saw them. And the officials of Kansas, who had seen their state crippled by drought and the worst grasshopper plague in history, bent over backwards to satisfy these new, peaceful, and agriculturally experienced settlers with a flexible conscription law and welcome mats at every depot. The drought and grasshopper devastation also meant that the railroad directors were desperate to sell the land received from Congressional grants in order to meet payrolls and pay back loans obtained to build tracks across a thinly populated state.

Most of these settlers from Russia arrived in July and August and were naturally anxious to get started on their new farms. They were accustomed to growing grain, but never corn, in Russia, so the new settlers planted wheat—probably as much as 50,000 acres in the fall of 1874. One can now see a problem with the story outlined at the beginning of this article. If each family sowed fifty acres that fall and each brought one small sack of wheat—well, it just does not compute.

A number of contemporary descriptions exist of these people getting off trains in Kansas, packed several families to a car. The local newspapers printed detailed accounts of their appearance, even their sounds and smells, and the goods they brought with them: clothing, blankets, pots and pans, and always a tea kettle, perhaps a straw mattress or two, some furniture and small tools, Bibles, but no mention of bags or crocks of wheat, which should have been of interest to Kansans. If Turkey Red came to Kansas in 1874, it was quite successfully smuggled in. The new immigrants brought what they could carry—for 10,000 miles through several stopovers, aboard crowded trains and ships.

Most had one other essential with them—money from the sale of their farms—which they used to great effect by purchasing goods in quantity and through hard bargaining: horses, wagons, cattle, chickens, plows, etc., all reported in detail by happy, economically minded and Kansas-conscious newspapers. Some even contracted with local carpenters to build houses and barns and very quickly had flourishing farms, this too reported glowingly by the press. They brought

flower, melon, and other garden seeds, but not a word can be found about any new variety of wheat. In fact, in some of the surviving diaries of the settlers, it is clearly stated that seed wheat was among the items purchased that first year.

When and how did the story of Mennonites carrying wheat to Kansas gain currency? The first public references to the 1874 Mennonites bringing Turkey Red date to around 1900, especially in a *Saturday Evening Post* article of 1910 by F. D. Coburn, Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture, but confusion and contradiction existed in these accounts. Finally, early in 1927, Bliss Isely, an editor of the Wichita *Beacon*, set out to track the origins of Turkey Red for a Sunday feature article. As recounted several years later, he first wrote to Carl Warkentin, the son of a prominent miller of Ukrainian Mennonite background, but Warkentin proved uncooperative. Isely then enlisted the aid of David Richert, a mathematics professor at Bethel College, who asked his students to enquire in their communities when they went home for the weekend about the origin of Turkey Red wheat.

One of these Bethel undergraduates found an elderly woman living in Hillsboro, Anna Barkman Wohlgemuth, who recalled at age eight obeying her father's instructions back in their Crimean village of Annenfeld (which happens to mean Anna's field), to pick out, quoting Isely, "the best seeds from their bins—ONE GRAIN AT A TIME." Intrigued by her recollection that this amounted to two gallons, Isely then determined that the young Anna had selected exactly 259,862 grains, disregarding the fact that a gallon measurement did not exist in Russia.

The Anna Barkman story thus becomes an important part of the Turkey Red myth. Unfortunately, it is rather unscientifically documented, and Mrs. Wohlgemuth died shortly afterwards without apparently writing anything down. It is weakest in identifying what kind of grain was in that Crimean granary and in relating what actually happened to it in Kansas, if it ever completed the long journey from Odessa, through Breslau, Hamburg, New York, and a lengthy stopover near Elkhart, Indiana. Moreover, characteristic of myths, this story from one family of a particular Mennonite sect in the Crimea was quickly expanded to include every Mennonite family that emigrated from Russia.

A question also arises over what kind of grain was likely to be in a Crimean Mennonite granary in 1874, since in that year four times as much rye as wheat was produced in Russia, oats yields doubled those of wheat, and barley, millet, buckwheat, and other grains nearly equalled wheat. All kinds of wheat represented only twelve percent of total Russian grain production in 1870. Russia, like Kansas, was simply not a major wheat area in 1874. Mennonite agriculture in Russia was also quite diversified with emphasis upon dairying and sheep raising as much as grain production.

The Southern Russian steppe, where the Molochna and Crimean Mennonites lived, however, was the only subregion of Russia where the production of wheat exceeded rye, barley, and other grains, and reliable contemporary evidence supports the recent development there of a hard, red winter wheat, called *arnautka,* which was rising in importance for export to Southern Europe.

But even if we admit that these two gallons and perhaps a few other sacks or crocks of Russian wheat came to Kansas with these Krimmer Mennonites who settled Gnadenau, just south of Hillsboro, in August 1874, problems still exist: were these grains actually planted? And, if so, how was this variety—or these varieties—kept separate and distinct from the great many other acres of wheat planted by the Mennonite immigrants that fall? Or did the "gallons" end up as chickenfeed or the first loaf of bread?

The answers, unfortunately, are elusive, but during the first couple of years, Gnadenau and other Mennonite settlements attracted many visitors and press reports. Nothing can be found in them about any new wheat. From the newspapers it appears that the Santa Fe Railroad, anxious that all their Mennonite customers get off to a successful start, provided discounted seed wheat from local stocks. Most likely it was Early Red May, a soft red spring wheat best adapted to surviving a winter in south central Kansas, though several other varieties—Lancaster, Gypsey, and White Gennesee—were grown in Marion County that fall, while next door in Harvey County, White Walker and Gold Drop were popular.

We need to ask two more questions: When does Turkey Red actually come into the picture? And what actually were the contributions of these German-speaking immigrants from Russia? The answers can be found in the time and complexities involved in the triumph of win-

ter wheat over spring wheat, of hard wheat over soft, and of wheat over corn.

In 1873, before the Mennonites arrived, Kansas was primarily a corn state and most of the wheat was planted in the spring. But a few farmers had followed an earlier Indian practice—around Shawnee Mission—of planting wheat in the fall. In fact, one of the first documented commercial fields of wheat in Kansas, that on Judge Spicer's farm four miles west of Lawrence, was sown in the fall of 1856. What these fall sowings suffered in the way of winter kill was often made up by better yields in a dry summer than that planted in the spring, as the winter wheat would benefit more from early spring moisture and escape summer rust damage. The main obstacles were the absence of a local market for wheat and of cheap transportation to distant markets, wheat being deemed unsatisfactory for feeding livestock and horses, and the prevalence of corn, which was usually harvested too late to allow for fall wheat planting in those fields. Winter wheat, moreover, was vulnerable to the winter and spring cattle drives coming up from Texas and Oklahoma, but once these were better controlled and fenced off, it had greater possibilities on the plains.

Then, after the Civil War came the railroads, and they brought more settlers—and distant market possibilities. Finally, T. C. Henry, an ambitious real estate agent and promoter, planted about 500 acres of wheat in a field just east of Abilene in the fall of 1873 and expanded it to 1,200 acres the following year. He used six oxen teams pulling Moline gang plows on a stretch along the railroad three miles long. Everyone travelling the Kansas Pacific (now the Union Pacific) marvelled at the scene, especially when his Marsh cutters and steam threshers produced golden piles of grain while the still immature spring wheat and corn were being devastated by drought and grasshoppers in 1874. The lesson was learned, and Henry made much of the publicity and his recommendation of Early Red May (the soft spring wheat which he considered most suitable for fall sowing). In 1875, Kansas farmers, including the new Mennonite immigrants from Russia, increased their wheat sowings substantially to 750,000 acres, two thirds of it in winter wheat.

The acreage of spring wheat continued to decline in proportion, especially when more dry land prairie was brought under cultivation. The Catholic and Lutheran Volga German immigrants coming

into Ellis, Rush, and Russell counties in 1876 and after made quite an impact, quickly changing this Kansas landscape from cattle ranching to farming. This land was similar to the Volga region, but in Kansas the immigrants had the advantage of a milder winter and the possibility, which never existed in Russia, of planting in the fall to take best advantage of the snow melt and spring rains. In Russia they always had planted spring wheat, generally a hard-grained variety known as White Turkey (beloturka), a durum-type wheat, because the severity of the winter there was similar to Canada or North Dakota.

So the settlers from Russia adapted to Kansas and shifted from spring to fall and to initially soft wheat. A Hays City newspaper reported in 1883, "Our Russian friends are on the high road to fortune, raising wheat against all odds[!] is making them rich." But ample proof exists of the endurance of spring wheat and corn: in 1884 over in Russell County Christian Anschutz, the Volga-German Lutheran founder of a Kansas family that was later to achieve economic prominence, cultivated 70 acres of winter wheat, 60 acres of spring wheat, and 50 acres of corn, along with smaller fields of barley, oats, potatoes, and tobacco. No doubt a major reason for this was the necessity for family farmers, unlike Henry, to be diversified.

In fact, in these years, after the Volga Germans arrived, one third of the cultivated land in Ellis County was in corn. Clearly, that crop was by no means beaten in Kansas and could still in a good summer grow as high as an elephant's eye. The Topeka *Daily Commonwealth* reported in October 1879, "Corn is king in Kansas, so far as space is concerned. They plant it by the square mile." Even the Mennonites around Newton and Marion grew this farm staple too—and still do. They also experimented with cotton, tobacco, flax, and even rice in their quest to find the best return. The Winfield *Courier* noted (March 23, 1876) that for the year after the great grasshopper plague, "Kansas produced more corn to the acre . . . than any other state in the union." It would still be many years before Kansas would become *the* wheat state.

When did "Red Turkey," as it was called in Russia because the grains were "redder" than other wheat (and to distinguish it from White Turkey) and was thought to have come from the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire, or "Turkey Red," as it was called in Kansas, perhaps to avoid confusion with a bird or a brand of whiskey, actually come into

the picture? While most farmers simply planted what they had grown, the search for better varieties of grain had been going on for many years in both Russia and the United States, the two primary grain-exporting countries.

As early as 1862 the Department of Agriculture was seeking wheat samples from Russia as well as other countries, and a hard spring wheat, Scotch Fife, spread rapidly from Canada into Minnesota in the 1870s. A variety of hard red wheat called Ostery, brought from Russia in 1877, produced impressive results for the Missouri Agricultural College in 1882. But even earlier, by 1881, a hard red winter wheat from Russia was definitely established in Kansas, though probably not from Anna Barkman's two gallons, as something called "Turkish" was listed as a local variety and as hard wheat in the Kansas City market reports. It had reached Ellis County the next year, according to the Hays City *Star-Sentinel* (July 13, 1882): "The turkey-beard wheat proved itself a valuable quality beyond expectation. People who attended the fair last season will remember the sample of seed exhibited." This report also provides a clue for how it spread. In 1883, the Marion *Record* compared the color of "Turkey" to Red May and concluded, "But then the contrast will disappear when the Russian wheat entirely supersedes the softer varieties, as it seems destined to do." But it would still take time.

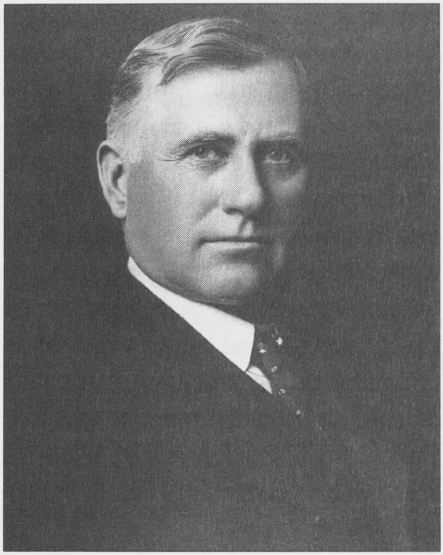
The wheat experiments in Kansas were promoted by large farm entrepreneurs such as Henry, by the millers, exporters, and railroads, by state officials, and by cereal grain specialists. By 1887 the Kansas Agricultural College's experimental farm was testing 51 distinct varieties under the supervision of Edward Mason Shelton, who, interestingly, was originally from England. Though some of these were hard wheats with Russian, Turkish, and Bulgarian labels, Shelton still recommended Early Red May or Zimmerman, both soft wheats, for Kansas, but he noted that a Turkey wheat, which he referred to as "amber" in color, was being grown successfully in McPherson County—that is, in Mennonite territory.

Shelton also reported that the advantages of some of these new varieties of wheat were greater hardiness, and therefore less winter kill, and, for at least one Turkish variety, resistance to black rust, which was a special problem encountered by all summer varieties that ripened late in the season. But a big disadvantage remained—milling—

although this is a kind of chicken-and-egg problem; which comes first, the mill or the wheat? These hard varieties were generally classified at the time as "macaroni" wheats, and indeed the primary stimulus for growing hard wheat in southern Russia was for export to Italy and other parts of the Mediterranean. One other important advantage of hard wheat was that it is richer in gluten (protein) and would produce more flour (and thus more bread) per bushel. In the United States, there was less demand for this kind of flour and consequently a lack of milling facilities that could handle hard wheat. But the spread of hard spring wheat in Minnesota led to the establishment of new milling processes in Minneapolis, using steel rollers instead of millstones and an air-forced middling process to separate the bran.

Also, a vastly increased immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe to American urban areas soon changed the American flour market. By the mid-1880s, some of this new demand was met by a Newton miller of Ukrainian Mennonite origin (though converted to Presbyterian through marriage)—Bernhard Warkentin. He, in fact, made two trips back to Russia, where his father was still in the milling business, in 1885 and 1886 in quest of wheat varieties. In the Crimea and in the Berdiansk (Sea of Azov) exporting area, with which he was most familiar, was grown a general class of hard, red spring wheat known as *arnautka*, strains of which had localized names such as *Krimka a turka* and *Krasnaia turka*, or Red Turkey. He brought back a carload of *arnautka*—which means "Albanian" in Russian—and pioneered the further testing of samples in Kansas with the help of Shelton and his successor, Mark Carleton.

Warkentin was also important for his adaptation of milling machinery in Kansas to steel rollers of the Minneapolis kind that could grind the hard wheat more effectively. In 1886 he bought the Monarch Steam Mill in Newton and modernized and expanded it the following year as the Newton Milling Company. Soon his "Cream of Kansas" flour was being produced by several mills and sold nationally. By 1888 he had broken into the European market. That year Jannsens and Company of Antwerp (Belgium) informed Warkentin that "Kansas flour of Turkey wheat is always welcome in this country. It is the only flour that answers well the purpose." That fall acreage devoted to hard winter wheat in Kansas and surrounding states soared.



Bernard Warkentin, a Newton miller of Ukrainian Mennonite ancestry, pioneered testing of Turkey Red wheat and adapted milling machinery to grind the hard wheat more effectively.

It is important to note that other modern steel roller milling operations employing a new "middling," or recirculating grinding process, spread across the state at that very time. In McPherson the Queen Bee Mill was remodeled and refitted in 1894 and produced flour that competed well with Pillsbury of Minneapolis. The Pearl Milling Company also commenced operations there in 1894, while nearby the Smoky Valley Roller Mills in Lindsborg, now a museum (as is Warkentin's Newton mill), began producing its hard wheat "Golden Patent" flour in 1888. Responding to the market demand, the Inman mill began operation in 1892 and was subsequently expanded into one of the area's largest and longest lasting mills. These wheat-processing mills that soon replaced stockyards as the economic backbones of small-town Kansas had advantages over the larger centralized flour mills in controlling quality of supply and having cheaper transportation costs.

So, perhaps in 1990 the true centennial of Turkey Red should be celebrated. This approximate date is supported by a Russian agricultural dictionary, published in 1895, which, in its detailed definition of wheat, noted that *arnautka* "is called red turkey in America and is grown as a winter wheat." Certainly the dramatic expansion of Kansas agriculture and ranching was attracting world attention by then. Henry King quipped in 1897, "It has been asserted that the Kansan

would not care to go to heaven unless he could be guaranteed an ample range to the west of it."

But that is not the end of the story, and a true centennial is further obscured by historical complexities. Wheat in the 1890s was still secondary to corn in Kansas, partly because of its vulnerability to winter kill, disease, and the Hessian fly, and to market uncertainties and milling problems, but also because of the coincidence of increasing demand for feed grain to fatten cattle and pigs for the growing urban market. Moreover, the wheat that Warkentin ground into flour at this time was listed in the market reports as No. 2 Red, which was probably a "Turkish" or *arnautka* variety but may not have been the classic Turkey Red that made Kansas famous. Warkentin himself recommended and planted "Oregon May" on his farm near Halstead in the fall of 1888. The search was not over.

Several more years of testing followed. In 1898, as an "agricultural explorer" for the Department of Agriculture, Carleton toured Russia extensively and brought back a very hard durum wheat from the Volga region called "Kubanka," which was initially tried in Kansas. Two years later, Warkentin and Carleton visited South Russia together on behalf of the Kansas Millers' Association and pinpointed a Mennonite village in the Crimea which had been practicing advanced seed selection. Warkentin apparently bought the crop, for the next year 15,000 bushels were shipped from Odessa to Kansas City (like carrying coal to Newcastle) and from there by carload lot to various points in Kansas. This was no doubt Turkey Red, but if its reign had finally begun, it was a short one. Another variety of hard red wheat, closely resembling Turkey, but labelled "Kharkov" to distinguish it, arrived in Kansas about the same time.

The Kansas Agricultural College finally realized the importance of having an experimental farm in prime wheat country and started one near Hays in 1902. Thanks to the success there of Kharkov and subsequent agricultural extension promotion, by 1909 it had swept Kansas and moved corn definitely and permanently into second rank. The Wichita *Eagle* reported in 1909 that wheat growers were highly interested in Kharkov wheat, and the next year the *Kansas Farmer* praised hard wheat of the "Turkish type" and advised all wheat growers to obtain good seed of "hard red winter wheat of the 'Turkey type', preferably Kharkov or Turkey," as if this were the first time it had

made such a recommendation. Perhaps, then, 1910 marks the achievement of the Kansas miracle.

Then from one mutant head of Turkey Red came what was first known as "Crimean wheat pedigree number 76." More familiarly known as "Kanred," it was for many years the major competitor of Kharkov, followed by other more improved varieties—Tenmarq, Kanvale, Pawnee Blackhull, and others—through the great expansion of wheat acreage during and following World War I, when grain exports from Russia were cut off by war, revolution, and civil war, and Kansas farmers (and Eastern speculators) responded to a government patriotic drive to raise wheat production.

With the state's wheat yields doubling between 1915 and 1925, by 1924 the Kansas governor could confidently claim that "Kansas grows the best wheat in the world" and about ninety percent of it was Turkey. The following year Kansas crowned its first "wheat girl," Vada Watson—perhaps a clear sign that something major was happening—and it was reported proudly that she drew the biggest crowd of the year at the state capitol.

In the ten-year period from 1917 to 1927, Kansas produced, on average, 14.7%, one seventh, of the whole world's production of wheat. But between 1919 and 1954, Turkey wheat varieties dominated the American market, accounting for twice as much acreage as the next highest wheat classification. About 1927, therefore, the time of Bliss Isley's revealing of the Anna Barkman story, we can probably conclude that the Kansas miracle had occurred, and myth had caught up with history. If so, it was soon to be tarnished by Depression and dirtied by the Dust Bowl, which the massive conversion of rangeland to wheat helped create.

While Kansans adhere to the idea of Turkey Red arriving in the baggage of Mennonites in 1874 as part of the lore of the state, "academics" such as Malin, arguing on the basis of logic and evidence, gave the major credit to millers and agronomists (Warkentin and Carleton) and a long period of scientific experimentation. Turkey Red may, in fact, have been planted in the Barkman backyard in the fall of 1874, but it was certainly unrecognized and without effect on the state's agriculture for several more years. By 1880, earlier than scholars of the subject have allowed, a hard red winter wheat of Russian origin, perhaps first brought by new Mennonite settlers or those visiting their

Ukrainian homeland, and at least akin to Turkey Red, was well-established in Kansas in Mennonite areas. It soon spread to other quarters but did not become dominant for many years because of milling, storage, and shipping problems. The success of Turkey Red and hard wheat generally was clearly dependent on milling technology and market expansion.

This miracle of Kansas wheat achievement, and it certainly can still be called one, is thus a combination of things: determined, hard-working immigrants arriving from areas of Europe where corn was unknown; ambitious land promotion by people like Henry and Schmidt; cheap and convenient railroad and homesteading land; the drought and grasshoppers wiping out spring wheat and corn in 1874; experimenting and searching over a number of decades by millers and agricultural specialists such as Warkentin, Shelton, and Carleton for the best wheat to plant; the industrial revolution that perfected milling and transportation technology while also packing cities with people hungry for spaghetti and macaroni and good, cheap bread; and perhaps, but not yet based on historical fact, that week or so of painstaking seed picking by Anna Barkman that provided a convenient but suitable folk image for agricultural change; but above all, the soil and climate conditions and the social, economic, and political environment of a unique part of the world.

Integration, Exclusion, or Segregation? The "Color Line" in Kansas, 1878–1900

Randall B. Woods

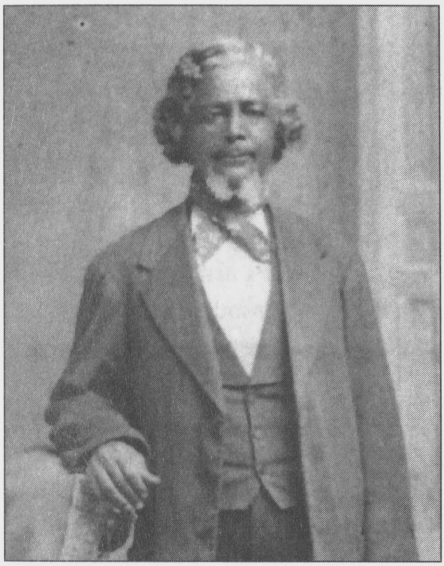
Black Americans everywhere anticipated that the Civil War would bring in its wake unparalleled opportunities for their race. Had not the slavemasters been driven from the field of battle in ignominious defeat? Afro-Americans of all conditions, classes, and sections looked forward eagerly to the fruits of full citizenship. Rather quickly Negroes realized that the North's commitment to equal rights was transitory and that the South was merely biding time, waiting for the chance to exclude the freedman from participation in the political process and relegate him to a servile status in the region's economic system. By 1876 North and South were ready to make their peace. Northern businessmen, a dominant element in the Republican party, were anxious to finance the industrialization of the South and were more than willing to abandon the Negro in return for that privilege. Believing the campaign for black suffrage and equal rights to be a threat to "orderly economic development" and to the survival of the Republi-

From Randall B. Woods, "Integration, Exclusion, or Segregation? The 'Color Line' in Kansas, 1878–1900," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 14 (April 1983): 181–98. Reprinted with permission of the *Western Historical Quarterly* and Randall B. Woods.

can party in the South, northern business leaders announced that the racial question was now passé and urged the nation to move on to the more pressing problems of industrialization and commerce. Thus, reconciliation and nationalism became the order of the day, but they were accomplished at the expense of the Afro-American. Following the Compromise of 1877, the black man's condition deteriorated not only in Dixie but throughout the country. The Negrophobia that began building with the fall of Radical Reconstruction culminated in the late 1880s and 1890s. Various southern states incorporated disenfranchisement provisions into their constitutions and mandated racial separation on railroads. School segregation and the convict lease system became widespread throughout the South. Lynchings reached an all-time high in 1892. The situation was better for blacks in the North, but even there they increasingly encountered extralegal discrimination and segregation. Their economic situation became ever more precarious as competition from millions of European immigrants forced blacks out of even menial jobs.

But what of blacks living in the American West during the last quarter of the nineteenth century? Was Jim Crow—that is, institutionalized discrimination and segregation—as pervasive for them as for their brethren east of the Mississippi? Or did the frontier environment, with its alleged emphasis on rugged individualism, enterprise, and pragmatism, allow human beings to work out their destinies regardless of race? Insofar as one western state, Kansas, is concerned, the answer lies somewhere in between.

In April 1879 the *New West Monthly* promised blacks intent upon immigrating to the Sunflower State that they could expect to find "a school for every child;—a field to labor;/ respect that sees in every man a neighbor; the richest soil a farmer ever saw/ and equal rights to all before the law." The *New West*'s portrait of Kansas was overdrawn. Black Kansans encountered discrimination in public services and in the administration of justice; segregation in hotels, restaurants, and theaters; and exclusion from white hospitals, churches, and neighborhoods. And yet, during the same period there were integrated schools at one level or another in all regions of Kansas; public facilities were open to Negroes on both an integrated and segregated basis; and all the major and minor political parties actively courted the black vote. Except in public schools in the larger cities and in the state mili-



Benjamin "Pap" Singleton, a former slave, returned to Tennessee to urge blacks to settle in Kansas. The "Exodusters" established colonies in several Kansas counties in the 1870s.

tia for a period, legally mandated segregation and exclusion were nonexistent. While Kansans were willing, for the most part, to allow blacks access to facilities and institutions considered essential to the individual's health and safety—on an integrated basis if necessary—they were not willing to condone "social equality," i.e., racial mixing in neighborhoods, places of amusement, churches, and fraternal societies. In short, they were committed to what George Fredrickson has called the doctrine of parallel development. According to this white view of racial uplift, blacks would be accorded equal protection under the law and equal opportunity in the marketplace. If the proper genes and moral fiber were present, blacks would progress simultaneously, though separately, with whites.

The black community in Kansas actually began taking shape between 1860 and 1870 when several thousand newly emancipated slaves moved to the state. They were joined by a smaller number of free blacks from the North who perceived Kansas to be a land of political and especially economic opportunity. This influx was a mere prelude, however, to the in-migration of tens of thousands of oppressed blacks from the South that occurred from 1879 to 1881. The Great Exodus, as this extraordinary population movement came to be known, actually began in the late 1870s when at the urging of two ex-slaves—Benjamin "Pap" Singleton of Tennessee and Henry Adams of Georgia—several

hundred downtrodden Negroes left the South and established colonies in Kansas. Among the best known were Dunlap Colony, established in 1878 in Morris County in eastern Kansas; Morton City, founded in 1877 in Hodgeman County in the west-central part of the state; and Nicodemus, established in 1877 in Graham County in western Kansas. Then, in early 1879, boatloads of indigent blacks began arriving in St. Louis from Louisiana, Texas, and Mississippi. By the end of the month, anywhere from 60 to 500 were arriving daily. From St. Louis the exodusters moved on via the Missouri River to Wyandotte and the "promised land" beyond. A large number spread out and settled in the larger towns of eastern Kansas—Lawrence, Topeka, Atchison, Kansas City, and Leavenworth—where most found jobs as laborers. In October and November 1879 a group of exodusters, primarily from Texas, settled in Labette County in southeast Kansas, most of them in the towns of Chetopa, Oswego, and Parsons. Intent on becoming independent landowners, a small number of the more ambitious immigrants moved on to Nicodemus or founded new rural colonies in Coffey and Chautauqua counties. The number of blacks who arrived in Kansas during this period is difficult to calculate with any precision. Although some estimates are as large as 80,000, most sources state that between 40,000 and 60,000 made the trek.

The 1870–1882 migration of blacks to Kansas, particularly the much-publicized post-1878 phase of the movement, was the product primarily of the deteriorating racial climate in the South following the collapse of Reconstruction. It was a series of specific events in the late 1870s, however, that crystallized black dissatisfaction and served as a catalyst for the Great Exodus. Among the most important was an 1878 crop failure, which caused widespread suffering and intense economic frustration among black sharecroppers. In addition to the economic factor, blacks in the South, particularly in Louisiana, believed that constitutional proscription was imminent and that they had best leave while they still had the freedom to do so. Still another spur to migration was the pressure exerted by special interests—land companies and railroads, for example—that would profit from rapid population of the West. No less significant was Kansas's historical appeal as the home of John Brown. The state had never permitted slavery and had consistently voted for Lincoln's party. And finally, there was what Nell Painter has dubbed the Kansas Fever idea. According to Painter, south-

ern blacks responded to the racial violence, proscription, and economic exploitation that was their lot in the 1870s by developing and proclaiming the Kansas Fever myth, in which the federal government promised all black people who wanted to go to Kansas free transportation, free land, and free supplies and subsistence for the first year.

By 1882 the Great Exodus was over. Even before its end, however, black and white had set about working out a permanent *modus vivendi*. Black Kansans probably fared better at the hands of whites in politics than in any other field. The word *white* appeared in three places in Kansas's first constitution adopted at Wyandotte in 1859, the first time in a clause barring blacks from voting. Article V extended the franchise to every white male person of twenty-one years and upward. In 1867 Kansans reaffirmed their racism, defeating by nearly a two-to-one vote a constitutional amendment striking the word *white* from the suffrage clause. Indeed, Kansas voters did not actually amend the constitution to provide for adult male suffrage until 1918. Nevertheless, blacks were effectively enfranchised in 1870 when Kansans ratified the Fifteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. Although there were innumerable attempts by both Democrats and Republicans to purchase black votes, there was no concentrated effort during the late nineteenth century to disfranchise Negroes. And although they comprised no more than 6 percent of the population, black Kansans cast from 15 to 20 percent of the votes; during any given year between 1878 and 1900, blacks played no small part in the political history of the state.

The political clout of the black population was enhanced by the fact that it was concentrated in the state's populous, eastern counties. In 1880 one out of every six persons in greater Topeka and one out of every five in Kansas City, Kansas, was a Negro. A decade later almost two-thirds (31,633) of the state's black population lived in ten counties, and a majority (28,170) lived in cities of over 2,500. Kansas Republicans in particular could ill afford to ignore black voters and politicians. By 1880 there were 43,000 Negroes in the state, and the vast majority consistently cast their lot with the GOP. The revival of the Democratic party in the mid-1880s and the emergence of the Populists in the early 1890s served to enhance the importance of the black vote in the eyes of the GOP leaders, particularly given the fact that the Democrats and Populists actively competed for the black vote and

Kansas refugees receiving relief at the temporary barrack, West Topeka, 1880. Governor John P. St. John organized the Freedman's Relief Association to help the black immigrants settle in their new homes.

nominated blacks for city, county, and state office. Negroes took advantage of the situation to secure a disproportionate number of appointive positions and nominations and to compel the GOP to consult blacks in formulating policy.

The constitutional convention that met at Wyandotte not only barred blacks from voting but also excluded them from serving in the state militia. Anticipating that they eventually would be able to compel the legislature to integrate the national guard, blacks during the 1880s proceeded to organize "independent" militia units—the Lawrence Guards and the Garfield Rifles of Leavenworth, for example. And in fact, in 1888, following a concerted campaign of protest and lobbying, they persuaded the legislature to strike the word *white* from the militia clause in the constitution. Nonetheless, black units had to wait until the political turmoil of the 1890s made it possible for them to be officially incorporated into the Kansas National Guard. Governor John W. Leedy, a Populist elected in 1896 on a fusion ticket of Democrats and Populists, was subsequently unable to hold his political coalition together. Alarmed by McKinley's victory in 1896 and facing reelection in 1898, Leedy actively courted the black vote. As a result, when the Spanish-American war erupted and black Kansans clamored for an all-black volunteer outfit, Leedy accepted a Negro regi-

ment as part of the state's quota and agreed to appoint only Negro officers to command.

The framers of the 1859 constitution did not exclude Negroes from public schools as they had from the polls and the militia, but they did provide for the establishment of separate systems. In fact, the 1867 session of the state legislature enacted a law stipulating that tax monies collected for school purposes be kept separate and that each race was to benefit from only those facilities and instructors for which they could pay directly. The Kansas legislature ratifying the Fourteenth Amendment in 1868 did not believe the amendment applied to public education and made no attempt to alter the state's legally mandated system of segregation. In 1874, however, Kansas solons passed a civil rights measure making it a crime for the regents or trustees of any state university, college, or other school of public instruction to "make any distinction on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." When in 1878 the legislature passed and the people ratified an amendment to the constitution striking the word *white* from the educational clause, it seemed that legalized Jim Crow in Kansas schools was at an end. The very next year, 1879, however, Kansas lawmakers once again reversed themselves when a Republican legislature decided that cities of the first class (10,000 population or more) had the authority to establish separate primary schools for white and black. This was the *de jure* situation as of 1879, but Kansas school districts did not always follow the letter of the law.

Cities of the first class did generally provide separate schools for blacks. In Leavenworth, for example, black children of elementary school age were educated either in the North Leavenworth or South Leavenworth Colored School. The building in the northern part of the city was evidently quite inferior to those structures reserved for whites; one observer described it as a "hut" situated in a "low, dirty-looking hollow close to a stinking old muddy creek, with a railroad running almost directly over the building." In 1865 Topeka city officials rented a small frame building to be used as a primary school; blacks were taught in the attic while whites learned their ABCs in the lower rooms. Although the system had expanded by the 1881–1882 school year to include fourteen elementary schools, segregation still ruled supreme: two of the facilities were all black and twelve were all white. Wichita and Lawrence in the 1880s and 1890s and Atchison in the 1890s were

the only three Kansas cities of the first class that boasted mixed elementary schools.

Cities of the second class, such as Ft. Scott, were divided into wards. Each ward had its own elementary school, and since blacks were concentrated in one or two areas of the city, de facto segregation was the result. Grade schools in some of the state's smaller towns, such as Hiawatha and Emporia, were fully integrated, but faculties in these mixed institutions were usually white. In a few communities the white backlash that followed the exodus of 1879 led to segregation where integration had previously existed. In Olathe, for example, whites and blacks attended the same school in the 1870s, but following an influx into the community of several hundred Negroes from 1879 to 1881, the school board decided it would be better if blacks had their own school with their own teachers. As was the case in cities of the first class, separate facilities in the smaller towns were grossly inferior.

Rural counties were divided into school districts, each having a country schoolhouse with all elementary grades taught in one room. These schools were generally mixed; it must be noted, however, that outside the all-black colonies of Nicodemus and Dunlap, the number of blacks living in outlying areas was relatively small.

High schools in the larger cities and some Kansas colleges were integrated. Indeed, in cities of the first class the black community graduated proportionately only slightly fewer children from high school than did whites. Ironically, it was more difficult for blacks to gain admittance to secondary schools in towns of the second and third class than in those of the first. Wathena admitted colored students to its high school for the first time in 1895, and even then integration was temporary. After a number of white parents strenuously objected, the school board ordered the black scholars expelled. In Jefferson County the superintendent made certain that the high school remained all white by requiring black applicants to take a special examination. At the college level, Washburn College and the Emporia State Normal School both admitted Negroes, while the state university at Lawrence admitted and graduated blacks on a regular basis. The medical school during this period, however, drew a rigid color line.

There were definite disadvantages to attending a mixed school. One white school teacher in Lawrence discriminated in the manner

and degree of punishment he administered; he whipped white transgressors with a switch and black with a cowhide. Others made derogatory statements about Negroes in class and graded discriminatorily.

Blacks seeking access to public facilities encountered exclusion, segregation, and integration. Those establishments applying the color line perhaps most frequently were hotels. When the Shawnee County delegation to the Republican congressional convention (called to elect Republican nominees for the forthcoming senate and house races) sought lodging at the Coolidge Hotel in Topeka, they were turned away because three of their number were colored. That same year no less a figure than ex-state auditor Edward P. McCabe was denied lodgings at the Blossom House Hotel in Kansas City because he was black (although he could have passed for white had he chosen to do so). In 1888 a white innkeeper in Leavenworth turned away the illustrious Frederick Douglass. The Tennessee Jubilee Singers, while touring the state in 1896, were refused accommodations by three different hotels in Wichita. In addition, a majority of Kansas restaurants either excluded or segregated blacks. One of the famous 1883 Civil Rights cases involved a Negro, Bird Gee, who was physically ejected from the City Hotel Restaurant in Hiawatha. Restaurants in Coffeyville, Lawrence, Topeka, and Leavenworth also refused to admit Negroes. Segregation was apparently less frequent in restaurants than exclusion, but there were Jim Crow sections in some establishments.

And yet segregation and exclusion were by no means universal in hotels and restaurants. Refused accommodations in Leavenworth, Douglass moved on to Topeka, where he was received and feted at one of the largest hotels in the city. Rebuffed by the Coolidge Hotel in Emporia, the Shawnee County Republican delegation was welcomed at the nearby Merchants Hotel. In 1878 the Topeka *Colored Citizen* praised the Taft House Hotel and adjoining restaurant as establishments that "never discriminate as to color." Even in Leavenworth—headquarters of the proslavery element in Kansas prior to the Civil War and a hotbed of Democracy in the late nineteenth century—there were hotels and restaurants open to blacks on an integrated basis.

In transportation, blacks could ride street cars without having to worry about being relegated to a designated section. The first separate coach did not appear on a Kansas railroad until 1892.

Black urban dwellers in Kansas, no less than their brethren in Illinois, Michigan, and New York, had to put up with residential segregation and discrimination in public services. Blacks who came to Kansas in the 1860s and 1870s and purchased homes in Topeka, Wyandotte, Leavenworth, Atchison, Lawrence, or some other eastern town tended to cluster, but they were not excluded from all-white neighborhoods. Apparently the thousands of blacks who poured into the state during the exodus heightened the white community's desire to see blacks restricted to a certain section of a particular city and led to the creation of what could accurately be called ghettos—"Mississippi Town," "Juniper Bottoms," and "Rattlebone Hollow" in Kansas City, and "Redmondsville" and "Tennesseetown" in Topeka. It is unclear just what the exact tipping point—that is, the percentage of blacks in each given community necessary to trigger segregation—was for each Kansas town. What is clear is that in each town whose black population totalled 7 percent or more, residential segregation existed. Apparently, in Kansas, just as in other areas, residential segregation was the product primarily of white hostility rather than black clannishness. "To people living outside of Kansas this may seem strange but it is nevertheless true," reported the editor of the *American Citizen* in 1889. "There are houses and lots and additions in and near this city [Topeka] where no negro can rent or buy at any price, let him be ever so talented, cultured or refined, and there are others where if he rents or buys, his life and property are in danger." John R. Davis, a black minister living in Topeka, who was warned via a note on his door to leave the white suburb of Oakland or suffer irreparable damage to his health, complained that many of Topeka's finest white citizens—teachers, lawyers, doctors—moved into the worst white slums rather than live by a Negro. Those whites who dared to stand up for the black man's right to live where he wanted were denounced and ostracized.

Blacks in Leavenworth, Lawrence, Topeka, and Kansas City not only had to live in designated areas, but they had to endure discrimination in public services as well. Streets in Tennesseetown or Mudville were either riddled with potholes or went unpaved completely; sidewalks were often nonexistent; and white fire departments frequently took two to three times as long to answer a call in black sections as they did to respond to an alarm in white areas.

Black Kansans applying for jobs in the public sector, such as firemen, policemen, janitors, and sanitary workers, and those seeking admittance to state institutions encountered some discrimination, but it was the exception rather than the rule. In every Kansas town of the first class and in some of the second, the police force was integrated. The city marshal of Lawrence as of 1880 was a Negro. Some of the urban fire departments were integrated, and Kansas City could boast an all-black fire company. In Topeka alone in 1889 there were thirteen black policemen and nine black firemen. Apparently all of the "charitable institutions" of Kansas, such as the State Insane Asylum, School for the Blind, and Asylum for Imbecilic and Idiotic youth, were open to blacks. These institutions were extremely crowded, however—waiting lists usually ranged from 50 to 200—and not only blacks but whites without political influence found it difficult to gain admission. There was some segregation within these institutions, but not on a systematic basis.

Equality under the law and due process were realities only for black Kansans of property and influence. The poor and undereducated—that is, the vast majority of Negroes in the state—encountered discrimination at virtually every stage of the legal process. Negroes were more likely to be lynched than whites, although the lynching of whites was by no means uncommon in frontier Kansas. In 1879 the residents of Ft. Scott hung and then burned the body of one Bill Howard, an alleged black outlaw. In 1887 Richard Woods, a colored youth accused of assaulting and raping a fifteen-year-old white girl in Leavenworth, was taken from the county jail by a mob of white men who tied him by the neck to the pommel of a saddle and dragged him for more than a mile. Blacks accused of raping white women were lynched near Hiawatha in 1889 and Larned in 1892. And yet lynchings in Kansas were rare in comparison to the southern states, and the number per annum declined steadily from 1870 through 1900. A disproportionate number of inmates at the state prison at Lansing—approximately 25 percent of the prison population throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century—were black. This imbalance was in part due to the fact that the crime rate among urban-dwelling blacks was higher than that among whites. It must be noted, however, that blacks were more likely than whites to be arrested as suspects, they were more likely to be convicted, and they were almost certain to re-

ceive longer sentences. There was some discrimination in jury selection, but blacks served on state district court juries throughout the late nineteenth century, even in cases involving two whites. The determining factors in the selection process seem to have been economic and social standing rather than color. Black lawyers were admitted to practice in all areas of the state where there were sizable black communities, and for several years the city attorney of Kansas City was a black man, B. S. Smith.

In social organizations and institutions regarded as nonessential to the individual's health and safety, white Kansans tended to draw the color line rigidly. Virtually all white churches in the state and several YMCA chapters excluded blacks. Theater and opera house owners generally insisted on segregating their audiences except when their facility was being used for a political gathering. Black individuals and organizations were often excluded from public functions and celebrations. In 1890 the GAR prevented a detachment of colored veterans from attending the unveiling of a monument to Ulysses S. Grant in Leavenworth. In 1889 the Topeka colored fire company was turned away from a picnic given in gratitude by a citizen whose house had been saved by local fire fighters.

Although Kansas blacks were generally excluded from white-collar jobs, virtually all types of skilled and unskilled labor were open to them. Railroads hired blacks as porters, construction workers, and brakemen. The meat-packing houses in Topeka and Kansas City were important sources of employment. The Armour facility at one time employed several hundred Negroes. Blacks also found work as hod carriers, carpenters, waiters, and stone masons. The coal mines around Pittsburg, Leavenworth, and Oswego were major employers of Negroes. One Riverside Coal Company mine near Leavenworth was worked by 126 blacks and 4 whites. The 4 whites, to be sure, were the check-weighman, engineer, pit boss, and top foreman.

While Negroes suffered from discrimination and sometimes exclusion at the hands of management, the chief hindrance to their efforts to find a secure means of livelihood was the hostility of white labor. In 1880 one C. H. Peck, who was in the process of building a meat-packing house at Atchison, hired a number of laborers at $1.25 per day rather than at the usual $1.50. Among the new employees were three blacks. White workers blamed the Negroes for their cut in

wages, an angry mob formed, and the three blacks fled. The enraged workers did not stop there, but proceeded to Seip and Company Brick Yard and compelled more than a dozen black employees to run for their lives. In 1894 in Leavenworth the management of the electric streetcar system promoted James Brown, colored, from shop foreman to motorman. A majority of the white employees voted to strike, but changed their minds when management expressed indifference and publicized the fact that the waiting list for positions within the municipal transit system numbered more than 200. With the exception of the Knights of Labor and one or two other organizations, unions in Kansas excluded blacks from membership or compelled them to form separate chapters. Not surprisingly, white working-class hostility produced in Negro leaders a rather deep-seated conservatism. "It is a well-known fact," editor George A. Dudley wrote in the *American Citizen* in 1894, "that the opposition to and oppression of the Negro in this country do not come from the wealthy and intelligent classes but from the laboring and less intelligent masses."

There were no antimiscegenation laws on the books in Kansas. Newspapers around the state contained numerous accounts of mixed marriages, most of which were tolerated. Editorial and private comments indicate that the lack of violent reaction to these cases was due to the fact that whites believe these relationships were aberrations limited to the dregs of society rather than the product of a commitment to racial amalgamation.

The mixed racial situation in late nineteenth-century Kansas—segregated housing, integrated police forces, segregated and integrated schools in the same community, exclusion and segregation in "nonessential" social institutions and public facilities, integrated politics—was a function primarily of white attitudes. True, blacks were hardly passive and in many instances acted collectively to determine their own fate. On a number of occasions armed Negroes intervened to prevent lynchings. Black leaders used their political clout to blunt various racist initiatives by white supremacists and to have the word *white* removed from the state constitution. Yet, in a state where the black population amounted to no more than 6 percent at any given time, it is reasonable to assume that the attitudes of the white majority constituted the determining factor in race relations.

There were in Kansas, of course, a group of extreme Negrophobes, ex-Confederates, Irish immigrants, and blue-collar workers who feared job and welfare competition from blacks. To one degree or another, the social status of these individuals as perceived by them depended upon the maintenance of an ironclad caste system. The extreme Negrophobes constituted a minority of the general population, however, and an even smaller minority of those who controlled the economic and political life of the state. Racial prejudice in Kansas peaked during the height of the exodus when whites—fearful that the influx of blacks would bring in its wake job competition, increased taxation, contagious disease, and a crime wave—resurrected a number of ugly stereotypes in their efforts to halt the flood. Once it became clear that the migration was temporary and that Negroes would continue to constitute only a small minority of the population, most whites ceased to feel threatened. A number of factors militated thereafter against the emergence of extreme racism. Among the more important was the state's historical background. There had never been, save perhaps briefly during the 1879–1881 period, any genuine fear of black political and economic domination. Kansas had not experienced the "trauma" of Reconstruction; there was no debt to settle with Negroes, carpetbaggers, and scalawags. For the most part, those whites who controlled Kansas and thus who were in a position to determine racial policies, both *de jure* and de facto, were old Free-Soilers and members of the GAR. Eugene Berwanger points out that most Free-Soilers in Kansas and throughout the West were urban immigrants from the East or non-slaveholding southerners who hated slavery and Negroes equally. This may have been true, but following the Civil War this group was locked into a Republican party that came under repeated and sometimes successful challenge from Democrats and Populists. Prejudiced though they were, many Free-Soilers realized that one way to retain power in Kansas was to make use of the black vote. Once committed to voting rights for blacks, this element found it difficult to oppose the Negro's civil rights in other areas. Joining the old Free-Soilers in supporting civil and political rights for blacks were the Quakers, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists who had moved to Kansas after the war and were imbued with a sense of mission toward the Negro.

Moreover, Kansans in general were self-consciously western, convinced that they had a reputation to maintain for frontier hospitality, openness, and freedom. Kansas should be to the freedman of the South what America was to the European immigrant—a refuge from tyranny and oppression, a land where due process and equality before the law were the inalienable rights of all citizens. In addition, as Kenneth Wiggins Porter has pointed out, the fluidity and individuality of the frontier made it possible for the Negro to be seen, within limits, as a distinct personality rather than a preconceived stereotype. "If a man, white or black, is decent, respectful, and respectable," insisted a prominent white newspaper editor and Union veteran, "he should be treated in a decent and respectful manner." Finally, the extreme prejudice against the Indian that prevailed in Kansas during the last quarter of the century may also have worked to the black man's advantage. At least Negroes were capable of farming and laboring; at least they had sense enough to try and learn the white man's ways and to want to become assimilated.

For most white Kansans, then, a rigid system of Jim Crow was unnecessary. Blacks did not constitute enough of a political or economic threat to warrant total ostracism. Whites were certainly anxious to control the black population, but exclusion or pervasive segregation seemed unsuited to the state's particular history and circumstances. The doctrine of parallel development did. According to this approach to race relations, the Negro was not genetically inferior. He possessed the capacity for intellectual development, moral growth, and material advancement common to all human beings. Whites had an obligation to provide their black brethren with an education and moral guidance, but once these services were rendered, it was the white man's duty to leave the Negro alone to pull himself up by the bootstraps. "The black man has now in his hands in this country all the resources of progress and future power," editorialized the Kansas City *Star*. "If he chooses to remain ignorant, he will be cheated and despoiled . . . but if he chooses to walk up the ascending way . . . then he sees into the high atmosphere of freedom and enlightenment." There was a fine line between justice and charity that if crossed would destroy the individual initiative of the Negro and negate any real chance he had for independence and self-reliance. Moreover, Negro advancement did not require assimilation. "Social equality," defined by white

Kansans as racial mixing in areas considered nonessential to the individual's health and safety—i.e., neighborhoods, places of amusement, churches, and fraternal societies—was irrelevant to attainment of the American Dream. Those who advocated integration in these situations ignored the obvious natural differences between the two races.

The principal of parallel development that underlay race relations, and in fact largely determined racial conditions in late nineteenth-century Kansas, was a compromise between white Kansas's self-image and its sublimated prejudices; in practice, it did much to freeze an unjust status quo. The idea that equal rights led to equal opportunities was based on the assumption that all competitors started at approximately the same place. Whites, who controlled at least 90 percent of the property in Kansas, had not had to deal with slavery, the share-crop/crop-lien system, and pervasive racial prejudice. In brief, the theory and practice of parallel development produced a racial climate in which blacks enjoyed a relatively high degree of physical and psychological freedom, but which was hardly egalitarian.

A Half Century of Struggle: Gaining Woman Suffrage in Kansas

Wilda M. Smith

Introduction

Ever since the Kansas legislature ratified the Equal Rights amendment in 1972, the antiequal rights forces have tried unsuccessfully to gain repeal of that ratification. They argue that the legislature acted with indecent haste and insist that the question should be reconsidered with time for debate. The speed with which the legislative body acted in this case does indeed stand in sharp contrast to the rate at which women of the state were granted equal suffrage rights.

Most Kansans of today do not realize what a controversial subject woman suffrage was from 1859 when Clarina I. H. Nichols and others sat in the Wyandotte constitutional convention, unelected and uninvited, with their knitting in their hands, hoping to influence the delegates to leave the word "male" out of the franchise clause, to 1912 when the woman suffrage amendment was adopted by male voters of the state. Women have been voting in this state for more than 65 years, but a majority of our citizens regard woman suffrage as some-

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From Wilda M. Smith, "A Half Century of Struggle: Gaining Woman Suffrage in Kansas," *Kansas History* 4, no. 2 (Summer 1981), 74–95. Reprinted with permission of the Kansas State Historical Society and Wilda M. Smith.

thing we have always had. However, so many obstacles had to be overcome by the workers in the movement that it seems almost miraculous that the reform was ever gained. These obstacles included the indifference of some women, disagreements among the leaders of the movement concerning the tactics which should be employed to further their efforts, linking the suffrage fight with other unpopular reform movements, problems of finance, difficulties of transportation, etc.

While some writers on the subject have exclaimed over the fact that it took more than 50 years to gain woman suffrage in Kansas, after considering the handicaps of the movement, one might more appropriately express astonishment over the fact that it took only a little over 50 years to succeed in Kansas. In the course of that half century, the legislature granted women the right to vote in school elections in 1861 and in municipal elections in 1887, but three major campaigns (1867, 1894, and 1911–1912) were required before a woman suffrage amendment was added to the state constitution. Even so, it was accomplished eight years before the national amendment was adopted.

The Problem of Women's Indifference

One of the chief handicaps to the suffrage movement was the indifference and apathy of many women. It was often difficult to persuade them to work for the cause; in fact, it was impossible to get some to as much as sign their names to a petition or an enrollment book. The suffrage enrollment books of the Topeka society are remarkable for the few signatures which they contain. Many claimed to favor woman suffrage and said they felt it was a right, but when asked to take some part in the campaign, they excused themselves on the grounds of its being unladylike to do so. Cora M. Downs expressed the hope that women would not petition for their rights. She felt that the system of coeducation, the avenues of labor opened up to women, their advancement in the arts and sciences, and their influence over sons and brothers who represented them in the use of the ballot would serve as lever which would gradually bring the right to vote. Her attitude seemed to be that, since suffrage was a right of women, if they

just wait long enough, men would recognize it and extend it of their own free will.

Some women refused to sign petitions because they objected to the wording. For example, there were objections to the word "earnestly," by some women who were willing to ask for suffrage but not too insistently. Others claimed they did not care for the vote for themselves but would sign to help those who did, if the word would be stricken from the petition. Still others favored a policy of education and preparation for the ballot so that when men finally granted them the right to vote they would be ready to use that right intelligently. Of course, they expected the suffrage associations to continue working for the cause until it was successful.

These attitudes infuriated leaders of the movement and did a great deal to hamper their efforts. In the eyes of the truly dedicated women who realized that the right to vote would never be granted if women themselves did not ask for it, these indifferent and complacent women were traitors to their own sex. Too often women in positions of leadership hurt the cause by letting their tempers flare, saying things which antagonized other women. A speech or an article or a letter would accuse women who did not take part in the campaign of being lazy or of being selfish in their indifference, or would complain that the greatest difficulty in the way of woman's legal status was her own ignorance of the law. Although probably true, such statements did little to attract indifferent women to the movement. There are undoubtedly lessons here for the present leaders of the women's movement.

It was disheartening to the leaders of the movement to be told by men that the right to vote would be extended to women when a majority of them expressed a desire for it, not before. When only a small minority of the women in a community were willing to speak out, the local politicians pointed to the lack of apparent interest as proof of their contention that a majority of the women did not really want the right to vote and said that they did not believe in complying with the wishes of the minority to force something upon the majority which they did not want.

Women of Kansas were accused of being too apathetic to exercise the many civil rights granted to them by the state s constitution and legislature. Many men felt that the same thing could be said of the women's exercise of further political rights. Although suffrage work-

ers in the later campaigns liked to refer to their step-by-step advance toward full suffrage, too often less than half of the qualified women in a community took the time to make use of even their limited suffrage. The opposition cited this as proof that only a few women wanted to vote. T. A. McNeal, a newspaper editor, in a speech to the suffrage association in Topeka in 1909, chided women for not working harder and told them it was the fault of women, not men, that women had not succeeded in this effort. Since only 40 people were in attendance at this meeting, his charge seemed substantiated. Sen. John J. Ingalls, refusing to commit himself on woman suffrage as a national issue in 1886, wrote, "In my judgment the principal obstacle to the cause which you represent will ultimately be found to exist rather in the indifference of women than in the hostility of men." Lesser politicians were quick to use the ideas of the senator for their own purposes.

Problems of Timidity and Poor Planning

Among those who were active workers there were also women who lost their nerve at the last minute. The suffrage associations had some difficulty in keeping a full slate of officers for this reason. The minutes of their meetings reveal how often it was necessary for the association to turn its attention to the election of officers to replace those who declined the honor or who had accepted the honor and then resigned, thus declining the responsibility it placed upon them. In one instance, out of four suffrage meetings held in 1868, the main business of three was the election of officers. On February 28 "Miss E. Morris was elected President for the unexpired term." On November 18 the president and vice-president refused to serve, Miss Morris was elected president pro tem, and D. H. Johnston was chosen for that office, but he refused to serve. The association voted again and elected Miss Morris. She apparently did not consider her office to be a great honor, since she was absent when the next meeting was held on November 27, and it again became necessary to choose a president pro tem.

Many times this need to elect new officers arose because of the lack of planning before the election. It was the usual practice to choose as officers women from the more prominent families in the city or

community. This was an advantage if those in charge remembered to approach the prospective officer before the election to see if she would be interested in working with the organization. It could be disastrous if they failed to get her consent beforehand, because on occasion a woman had declined publicly, perhaps by way of the newspaper, and hurt the cause by denouncing woman suffrage and saying she would have no part of such a movement. Such public statements often hindered their organization because women who were social climbers and wished to be considered a part of the elite of the city were likely to follow the woman's example and refuse to have any part of the association or its work. Also, the politicians could point to her as a shining example of womanhood and say that she was a true lady who recognized the women's sphere of activities.

The Problem of Finance

A major problem of the suffrage movement was that of financing. The most common methods of advertising the cause were not usually free: special suffrage meetings needed not only a speaker but also suffrage literature for distribution, newspaper items and special suffrage columns sometimes had to be paid for, and money was also needed to cover expenses of workers.

For the campaign of 1867, most of the money came from voluntary contributions from men as well as women along with small amounts supplied by the national suffrage association and the associations of the other states. Many speakers and other workers gave their time freely without any thought of reimbursement but women without funds could not take an active part unless someone else paid their expenses. For most of them even a small contribution required a great deal of extra effort; for others it was impossible. A married woman usually had to have her husband's approval of the cause before she could make even a small donation, while a single woman was rarely in a financial position to give anything but her time. Therefore, women were forced to ask the group which had kept them from voting for money to be used for the purpose of securing woman suffrage. Although many were undoubtedly aware of the irony of the situation, as one writer put it, "The big public is much like the Lord, who helps those who help themselves."

Although much of the suffrage literature was printed by the national association and donated to the individual states, there was still the problem of distributing it over the state. Sometimes friendly congressmen used their franking privilege to distribute suffrage tracts containing quotations from famous people, excerpts from speeches, and articles written by suffrage workers. Editors friendly to the cause also helped by giving the women free printing as well as free space in their newspapers for advertising.

For the first campaign, local suffrage associations looked to the state Impartial Suffrage Association for financial assistance to cover expenses of special speakers. It seemed to be impossible to get enough in a small community to keep the movement going. Numerous letters were written to state headquarters in Topeka inquiring if there was any money in the treasury. They had offers from speakers or writers to work for the cause, but these, unfortunately, expected to be paid for their services.

Between campaigns, it was often difficult to keep alive an interest in woman suffrage, but the state association continued its work chiefly through literature sent over the state. Anna C. Wait of Lincoln believed that the inaction of women resulted not so much from apathy and indifference as from a lack of means and opportunity. She wrote, in 1885, that she knew of just one woman of leisure—one who did not have to make a personal sacrifice of some kind every time she paid a dollar into the treasury.

In the minutes of suffrage meetings there was evidence that lack of money was felt even in Topeka, which had the strongest local suffrage association in the state. For example, at one meeting it was recorded that there was a gain of nine members to the organization, but only five paid their dues at the time. More proof of their problem was found in the records of a discussion centered around the search for a meeting place, limited by the available funds. It was reported that the "Music Hall could be secured for $5.00," but that was considered to be too much. "A committee was appointed to secure [the] G.A.R. Hall or some other suitable place . . . provided the expense does not exceed 2 dollars." In the minutes for the next meeting was the information that the treasury then contained $3.25 and that the Lincoln Post hall had been rented for $2.00 and perhaps could be obtained cheaper for subsequent meetings.

Lilla Day Monroe, president of the Kansas Equal Suffrage Association in 1908. Suffrage campaigns relied heavily on donations of time and money. The long and arduous struggle to win the vote for women required overcoming the hostility of many men and the indifference of women.

The Lincoln Suffrage Association was quite active in money-raising activities to cover not only its own expenses but also to donate to the state organization. In 1885 they held a fair for the benefit of the state association. In 1892 the Kansas Equal Suffrage Association, perhaps following the earlier example, held a three-day fair in Topeka. Women were urged by the president of the association to bring not only fancy work but any other article that would prove that voting in municipal elections had not unsexed them and that they could do those substantial things considered a part of the proper occupation of the woman.

The campaign of 1894 was not as difficult to finance as that of 1867, partly because the suffrage workers were better organized and had learned from experience. Also, there were more women in a position to give financial aid to the cause. The few who had entered the various professions were now able to make donations. In addition, there were more who held property in their own names who did not have to ask a husband, father, or brother for money. Even so, the problem of financing the movement was not an easy one to solve, and in 1894 Laura Johns attended the National Suffrage Convention in Washington and made an appeal for assistance in the way of speakers and funds, both of which were promised.

In the years between the campaigns of 1894 and 1912, women of the state showed further ingenuity. Helen Kimber, president of the state association in 1900, was successful in obtaining donations for the national bazaar including two sizable contributions, a carload of flour from the Kansas Millers' Association and 200 pounds of butter from the Continental Creamery Company of Topeka. When she could not obtain funds for the organization from others, she advanced her own money. Laura Johns made a specific reference to this in a letter written in 1903, adding that she had advanced hundreds of dollars, but she was more able to do so because she had a husband to back her. However, in her opinion, this was not the proper basis for the finances, because it was not fair for the few to sacrifice "to help women to get into the kingdom who are too lazy or too selfish, or both, to help themselves."

A common method of obtaining funds was taking collections at suffrage meetings. A lecturer from Chicago gave Kansas women a valuable tip on how to get a crowd for such a meeting. She warned them not to advertise it as a suffrage rally, but as something else. Since everyone was interested in traveling, she advised them to announce that she would lecture on the Grand Canyon, one of her best lectures. At the close, before the audience had a chance to realize that the lecture was over, she would say that she had been requested to give her views on suffrage. She would then give a brief suffrage talk, followed by the leading local suffrage speakers and perhaps the taking up of a collection for the cause. In this, too, women learned by experience and became quite sly at keeping the tin cups concealed until just the right moment for their use. The value of their strategy was shown in the sizable collections they sometimes made after a particularly good speaker had concluded her remarks.

In the final campaign, there was a wide variety of ways of financing the cause. As entertainment for which they could charge admission, women presented theatrical performances and minstrel shows, popular at that time. The best-received suffrage play was entitled "How the Vote Was Won," which was presented in numerous communities. Films on woman suffrage were also available for use throughout the state. The film "Votes for Women" could be secured from the Western Film Exchange in Kansas City, Mo.

As proof of their womanliness, women not only held bazaars, food sales, and fancy goods sales, but also arranged booths and furnished meals for such gatherings as fairs and picnics. Those who were from the upper economic groups sometimes justified their contributions by doing their own housework, thus saving servants' hire. The less affluent made money by making dresses or putting up fruit for their neighbors and themselves. Others reported that they were gardening and selling the vegetables to themselves at market price for home use. They undoubtedly had their husbands' permission for such activities.

Combining profit with advertising, postal cards of Kansas scenes and of people as well as suffrage balloons and pennants were sold. To cut down on the cost of speakers, the officers of the Kansas Equal Suffrage Association asked public speakers for other associations to put in a good word for woman suffrage. If a speaker could be persuaded to do this small favor, it meant free advertising for the suffragists, as well as making it possible to keep the subject alive to a wider audience. Women sometimes took advantage of their position on a particular program. For example, Anna C. Wait and three other women of Lincoln secured permission to take part in the celebration of July 4, 1880. Mrs. Wait was to read the Declaration of Independence, and in her own words "embraced the opportunity of interspersing a few remarks not found in that honored document, to the delight of our friends and the disgust of our foes."

Because of a wider variety of money-raising projects used, the campaign of 1912 was more easily financed than earlier attempts had been. By this time, many women were substantial property holders as a result of favorable property rights granted to them. Also, more unmarried women were able to make contributions because they were now self-supporting as a result of new laws and attitudes which permitted them to enter various fields of work. The fact that they were permitted to work with men but were paid less also served as an incentive for laboring women to donate to the cause with the hope that they could change the unfair wage situation by use of the ballot. Because of their better financial position, suffrage associations were able to pay speakers to spend all their time traveling over the state in behalf of the cause. In addition, they paid a full-time secretary, headquartered in Topeka.

Private contributions were sometimes secured by using flattery and playing on a woman's desire for social prestige. It was fortunate for the cause that Gov. W. R. Stubbs' wife favored the movement, since some wealthy women became suffragists because they were influenced by those in a high position. A woman from Harper wrote about a woman in her community who owned 20 quarters of wheat land. She thought they might be able to "put the bite on her." Another suffrage worker wrote of a woman in Anthony who had pledged 50 cents per month. This was to be only the beginning for her, and Lucy Johnston was advised to try a letter from Mrs. Stubbs to secure a more generous donation. It was suggested that they "pat her on the shoulder and ask her for $200."

Lack of Transportation Facilities

The difficulties of transportation were closely related to the problems of finance, particularly in the last campaign. In both 1867 and 1894, the horse and buggy and the railroad were the chief means of transportation. Some of the suffrage leaders from the East even persuaded railroad companies to give them free passes. The fact that most railroads ran east and west necessitated the securing of some other conveyance for transportation north and south between railroads. When speakers were sent to help, some leaders of the community were asked to convey them from place to place for their engagements. In some instances, headquarters at Topeka were informed that the only type of transportation available was an open, plain spring wagon.

Transportation difficulties were made even worse by poor planning on the part of those in charge of the campaign, evidenced in their scheduling of meetings for a speaker at points too far apart to be reached by the appointed time, so some engagements had to be omitted, leading to disappointment of assembled crowds and sometimes, even, as a result, a loss of interest in the movement. Some of these errors in scheduling may have occurred because those planning a tour were in the eastern part of the state and did not realize the difficulties of transportation in the western part, where roads were many times nothing more than trails.

In the successful campaign to win the vote for women in 1911–12, suffragettes used the automobile to reach farms and communities without rail facilities. Other factors in this victory included increased education of women, experience in fighting political battles, and better financing than in previous campaigns.

The campaign of 1911–1912 showed a marked change for the better. The automobile was now in use; and the problem, instead of being one concerning the meeting of a schedule, was one of securing the support of those who owned the automobiles. This was sometimes solved by persuading a dealer to lend an automobile for a county tour. Obliging dealers obviously felt that it was good advertising for business since it was impossible to miss the suffrage group as it arrived in a car decorated with signs, bunting, and flags.

Some state officials, such as Governor Stubbs, donated the use of their automobiles because their wives were interested in the suffrage movement. Auto tours were arranged in many cities and counties. In Hays, a house-to-house canvass was conducted in automobiles decorated with balloons. The driver stopped in front of a house, tooted the horn, and when the occupants came out to see what was going on, suffrage workers handed out their literature. Mrs. H. P. Pomeroy planned an auto tour every Saturday to different towns in Phillips

county. About 15 decorated autos were in line at these outdoor meetings at which Rev. H. M. Hunter of Phillipsburg was speaker. In the eastern part of the state, a car decorated with balloons went from Topeka to Kansas City, stopping at every house so that literature could be handed out. In addition, a suffrage flyer and a copy of a prosuffrage congressional speech were placed in each mail box between Lawrence and Topeka.

A proposed whirlwind tour of a special boosters' train to take place in October of 1912 failed to materialize, probably because of lack of money, and another attempt to get aid from railroads for the campaign met with no success. A Chicago woman went to the Santa Fe railroad office where she "was greeted by a very gracious gentleman who listened politely to what I had to say, but assured me it was out of the question to expect either transportation or other aid from the Co. Such arrangements are a thing of the past."

Some women were willing to use any means of transportation to carry on their work. Helen B. Owens, one of the most tireless workers of the movement, went by freight from Greensburg to Liberal. But many of the workers of the last campaign were either more particular or made of less sturdy stuff than their predecessors who had undergone the hardships of the early campaign, considering themselves lucky if horse and buggy were available.

Disagreements Among Leaders Concerning Tactics

There were sometimes serious disagreements among leaders of the suffrage movement, both men and women, concerning tactics and methods of campaigning. Some arguments were results of personal jealousies while others were basic differences of opinion. Both were poor advertising for the movement.

There were also rivalries among women's clubs as to their chief objectives. Even on the national level, the suffrage forces were split. To remedy this situation, at the National Council of Women in 1887, it was suggested that an international association of women's clubs be formed under the auspices of the suffragists. Nothing came of the suggestion since many women in cultural clubs were not interested in the right to vote. As the suffragists saw it, these women were interested

only in their own leadership in their own clubs. Gradually the clubs with a definite purpose outnumbered the merely cultural ones, probably because by then most young women had gone to high school, some to college, and they wanted to take part in affairs of the nation rather than just study about them.

During the campaign of 1894, some of the leading suffrage workers were accused of working in the interests of the Republican party, while others worked openly for the Populist party. Laura Johns, president of the Equal Suffrage Association and also president of the Woman's Republican Club of Kansas was accused of entering into an agreement with the Republican politicians whereby the prohibition question was not to be mentioned in the suffrage campaign throughout the state. Mrs. Johns supposedly would keep prohibition speakers off the suffrage platform as her part of the bargain. Some critics went so far as to accuse Mrs. Johns of spending suffrage money in the interest of the Republican party, but this was probably untrue, since Annie L. Diggs, a staunch Populist, came to her defense and denied the truth of such a claim.

Following the defeat of the suffrage amendment in 1894, women seemed to concentrate on quarrels over leadership in the state organization and the meeting places of suffrage conventions. Much of the criticism of Mrs. Johns had come from Topeka. Therefore, when it was time for the annual meeting in 1894, she used her influence to prevent the meeting's being held there. Her stated objection to Topeka as a meeting place was the friction and squabbling among Topeka women. She was very outspoken in the criticism of her opponents, going so far as to say that she really thought that Dr. Eva Harding was not well-balanced or even quite sane! Mrs. Johns had heard that the Topeka women planned to put Mrs. [Mary E.?] Lease in as state president. She swore she did not want to be president, but said she would accept the office rather than see Mrs. Lease take over.

The following year, Mrs. Johns again expressed the wish to retire from the presidency, but again she feared that the wrong woman would succeed her. The woman being considered for the position was a Populist who had proposed that the state suffrage association pledge its support to the People's party for two years in exchange for their pledge to enfranchise women. Naturally, Mrs. Johns, a faithful Republican, objected to such a proposal.

In preparing for the final campaign, suffrage leaders looked back to the earlier attempts to try to discover the mistakes made, hoping to avoid them. Since some men had voiced an objection to out-of-state speakers, Kansas women were determined to run things themselves. They had encouragement for this plan from women in Western states who had gained suffrage. Laura Johns, who had moved to California, warned against letting the national association dominate the campaign, because she felt that was what had defeated the Kansas forces in 1894. The same advice came from a Washington woman who gave her formula for winning. She said that the Washington association had withdrawn from the national, had none of their lecturers, none of their organizers, and only literature they could not get from the states that had already won. Their idea was to take advice from the states where women voted, believing that women who had waged a successful battle knew more of effectual methods than those who had never won a victory. She emphasized the fact that women had been far more successful in the West than in the East in the matter of equal suffrage.

The women of Kansas followed the Washington advice, withdrawing from the national association and asking national headquarters not to send any workers unless they were requested. One of the Kansas leaders wrote at great length to Anna Shaw, national president, explaining why Kansas wanted only outside speakers of its own choosing. She had heard some men say that they objected to having help brought in from outside to coerce them into giving women the ballot. She also pointed out that speakers from other states had no way of knowing local political conditions and often offended the men whose support they needed. She said that such an incident had just occurred and requested that the woman be recalled from Kansas. In later reference to this letter, Anna Shaw stated that the national association had no intention of interfering with the Kansas work and that its leaders had not begun making suggestions until they were asked for. She expressed her willingness to overlook the letter as a part of the antagonist forces and the work of unprincipled people, urging the Kansas workers to call upon the national association for any help they needed.

In her letters she warned that if Kansas failed to accept the amendment, it would be the fault of the Kansas women themselves and a blow to suffrage over the whole United States. She made the gloomy prophecy that "It looks very much as if Kansas is going to act as South

Dakota did, spend the first year in quarrelling for the glory and the last year in finding there was no glory to quarrel over." She felt that if, after having granted municipal suffrage in 1887 the men of Kansas now voted down full suffrage, it would be a national calamity and reflection upon Kansas women. In her opinion, if Kansas women were not willing to forget their differences and work for the measure in a wholehearted way, they should not have persuaded the legislature to pass the measure.

The squabble among workers of the movement was not confined to the state, but reached to the national association as well. Helen Kimber, one of the Kansas delegates to the national convention in 1900, wrote of disagreements among national leaders:

> I am glad Mrs. Johns did not come. This will surprise you. Yes, but the truth is Miss Anthony, Mrs. Avery and Miss Shaw are fighting Mrs. Catt just as they fought Mrs. Johns and they are still fighting me because of what I said in '94. If you hear of the East and the West knocking at each other's heads you just know that I have taken all I can or will take. Lucy Anthony, Anna Shaw's private Sec'y, it seems is only waiting to annihilate me. Well, there will be a grease spot when she is through. I shall be on my good behavior for Kansas' sake and for Mrs. Catt but let me get some of those women off and I'll quietly and deliberately tell them the whole truth. I'll even tell them that D. R. Anthony said in my presence, "Susan you're a damn fool—go home, etc." . . .
>
> This fight makes me want to be President of Kan's E.S.A. If I once get into that National Executive Committee I bet you I'll sit on Anna Shaw until she won't want to be ressurrected. . . . Lucy Anthony, Mrs. Avery and Mrs. H. T. Upton also Mrs. Ida Husted Harper are laying for me. You watch in the paper for four bloody nosed women!!! I am in this fight to stay. . . .

The women also disagreed on methods of publicity. Some favored more newspaper advertising as the chief means of keeping the question before the men. One woman in this group made slighting remarks about the ineffectiveness of "pink teas." Others made wide use of suffrage teas to which they invited the women of prestige, calling for them in carriages and returning them to their homes after the meeting. In their opinion, this was the best way to keep the question before the people in a position to help the movement. In many communities, women attempted to secure at least one day of the chautauqua for the suffrage cause. On occasion they were given permission to send speakers but were not permitted to charge admission. This method of ad-

vertising was sometimes a failure if the purpose was announced ahead of time: in fact, workers were warned that to advertise a suffrage day was a good way to keep people away from the chautauqua.

With all of its internal disagreements and bickering among the workers, the suffrage movement was no different from other reform movements. In any undertaking of that size, it was inevitable that, although the workers agreed on their ultimate objective, they did not always agree on how to achieve their goal.

Workers Who Hindered the Cause

As in any great movement, there were people who were often more of a hindrance than a help. Such people could be divided into three categories: those who took part for selfish reasons, those who were well-meaning but not responsible, and those who belonged to the "lunatic fringe." With some, it was difficult to decide into what category they should be placed.

Men sometimes took part because they hoped to make a profit for themselves. A newspaper editor from Ottawa asked the suffrage organization for money because he was in financial difficulty. He was careful to remind them that his paper had been a staunch advocate of woman suffrage since it had been started 11 years before. Although he assured them that it would continue to support them, there was a possibility that he would not be able to without their help.

Although most of the women workers gave their time freely, there were also women who attached themselves to the movement for their own gains. The secretary of the National Women's Trade Union League of America wrote that she could provide a lecturer to speak on the subject of the working women in America. The charge was $25 for each lecture, which obviously provided for more than expenses.

In the opinion of some of the Kansas suffragists, insufficient checking sometimes resulted in placing in positions of leadership women who hurt their cause. Complaining about the choice for district president, a critic from Pittsburg wrote that the woman, Mrs. M. B. Munsoll, was an egoist who had no diplomacy or common sense, and was as unpopular with men as she was with women. According to the report, merchants complained of her threatening them if they did not

contribute, and others wondered how their women could be expected to follow the lead of a woman who had so much trouble with her own husband.

The field secretary of the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association warned the Kansas association against Anna Laskey, who was supposed to come to help. She stated that if they needed someone to do petition work, Mrs. Laskey would be all right, but she would not do for any other work, because "she is illiterate, tactless and tremendously ambitious" and needed constant watching, since she had been a loan shark in Oklahoma City.

Even more damaging to the cause they purported to help were those people like George Francis Train, who belonged to the lunatic fringe. Notorious for his clowning, his attacks on the Republican party, and the constant use of his own name, Train was a Democrat, campaigning for the Presidency in 1867. One newspaper reported that he "occasionally touched upon the question of female suffrage, just enough to convince Miss Anthony that he had not forgotten the subject."

Linking Woman Suffrage with Other Causes

During their long struggle, the suffragists also unwittingly delayed the achievement of their goal by linking their interests with other unpopular reforms, such as Negro suffrage and prohibition.

In the first campaign for the woman suffrage amendment to the state constitution there was also an amendment proposed to enfranchise the Negro. This amendment was looked upon by some Republicans as the natural result of the Civil War, and although they could see the need of extending equal political rights regardless of race, they could not see any reason for extending those rights to the opposite sex. Men who favored both woman suffrage and Negro suffrage also objected to the linking of the two reforms.

The fact that the suffrage workers did not agree even among themselves to work wholeheartedly for both proposals tended to weaken the movement since both were being considered at once by the voters. The attempt to get the two proposed changes in the constitution adopted in the same election ended in total defeat. The final vote was

a total of 10,483 for Negro suffrage, 19,421 against, and 9,070 for woman suffrage, 19,857 against, which did not prove that one cause hurt the other. But the results were humiliating to the women who had worked so hard for their cause while Negroes had done very little to gain the suffrage.

The Kansas W.C.T.U., one of the first women's organizations in the state, both helped and hindered the suffrage cause. In the first place, it served as a training school in the methods of organizing and working for a definite purpose. Also, many of the women who were members of temperance clubs were also members of suffrage organizations, making it possible for them to work for both reforms in two different capacities. It was easily recognized that women could do more to control the use of alcoholic beverages if they had the right to vote. As early as 1859, the territorial legislature passed a dram shop law which, if enforced, gave the women some control over drinking husbands. It also showed that Kansas had some temperance followers in the lawmaking body. Section 6 of the law stated:

> . . . it shall be unlawful for any person or persons, by agent or otherwise, to sell intoxicating liquors to persons intoxicated or who are in the habit of getting intoxicated, or any married man, against the known wishes of his wife.

In 1867 the state legislature passed a temperance law which should have given women even more control over the sale of liquor, requiring dealers to get the signature of one half of the women, as well as the men, to their petitions before the authorities could grant them licenses. Such laws undoubtedly were the reason for the liquor interests opposition to woman suffrage.

As early as 1884, the W.C.T.U. of Kansas had adopted a strong suffrage resolution. Therefore, it was not surprising that they cooperated with the suffrage association during the 1886 campaign for the municipal suffrage law. At Susan B. Anthony's request, they temporarily gave up their plan of asking for an amendment, hoping to secure the same results with the right to vote in city elections. Later, a bill was proposed in the legislature to take away the right, but it was not reported from the committee, possibly because so many letters of protest had been written by women, a great many of whom were members of the state W.C.T.U. It would certainly have been a blow to the

suffrage movement if women had lost a part of what they had gained at that point.

At their convention in 1910, the W.C.T.U. voted to make equal suffrage the principal work of the entire organization until it should be won in Kansas. But during the campaign of 1911–1912, some members of the temperance organization felt that they should not be too prominent in suffrage work, possibly thinking that it would detract from their own cause. It had been suggested that the Kansas Equal Suffrage Association and the Kansas W.C.T.U. be joined for the campaign, but some who were members of both organizations felt that they should remain separate, since the W.C.T.U. had a suffrage department of its own. Even though the W.C.T.U. remained apart from the suffrage organization, it cooperated in the sending of over 100 petitions with a total of 25,000 names to the legislature in 1911.

The chief disadvantage to the cooperation of the W.C.T.U. was the opposition it brought from the liquor interests. Liquor dealers and their customers could see the handwriting on the wall, taking it for granted that many women who voted would be against them. The liquor interests, therefore, apparently placed large sums of money at the disposal of the antisuffrage workers. For example, it was claimed that the National Brewers Association had appropriated $1,000,000 for an antisuffrage campaign in Kansas. The woman who reported this felt sure that some of it was being used to subsidize newspapers in Crawford county. She felt that the W.C.T.U. could do little to help the cause of suffrage in Crawford and Cherokee counties, because they were antitemperance in belief as a result of the majority of foreign voters. Her advice was to keep out temperance speakers for fear they would hurt the cause in that section of the state.

From other sections of the state came reports that the liquor interests were at work. Ella Wilson reported that the opposition was well supplied with funds from some outside source, since she knew that the men involved could not put up any great amount of money individually.

In the last month of the campaign of 1911–1912, the Kansas women were warned that the state would be flooded with antisuffrage literature during the last days before the election. It was reportedly to be sent out by the liquor interests under the misleading titles of the Merchants' and Manufacturers' League, State Business Men's League, and Progressive Protective League, to name a few. In an attempt to coun-

teract the effect of this literature, the suffrage association requested the cooperation of the newspapers of the state in printing a letter exposing the scheme.

In a report on the successful campaign of 1911–1912, Lucy Johnston stated that one thing that entered more largely than any other into the success was the fact that Kansas had been a prohibition state for 32 years. In her opinion, having no saloons, the liquor interests were deprived of centers where they could congregate their forces for action. Although they didn't give up at this, the men and women of Kansas, having had so many years' experience in keeping the hirelings of the brewers and distillers out of the state, knew how to meet them and circumvent their activities.

But it was impossible to determine whether the cooperation of the W.C.T.U. did more to help or to hinder the cause of woman suffrage. Its help came chiefly in the form of keeping the subject before the public, while it possibly hindered in some areas by aligning all those opposed to temperance against the cause.

Woman Suffrage as a Political Issue

The attempt on the part of some suffragists to make woman suffrage a political issue also proved to be a mistake. Major political parties usually tried to avoid getting involved with unpopular causes, for their own protection. Thus, the Republicans in Kansas refused to give full support to the woman suffrage movement from the beginning. They adopted Negro suffrage as a party issue in the campaign of 1867 as being simply related to the reconstruction program after the Civil War. But women could not get the same endorsement for their cause. Although the amendment had been proposed by a Republican legislature, as the election drew near, political leaders who had been relied upon as friends of the cause were silent; others were active in their opposition. In fact, the enemies of Impartial Suffrage accused the men and women in the movement of trying to split the Republican party.

In 1874 the Prohibition party came out in favor of woman suffrage, but it gave the cause little help to have the support of a minor party of the state.

The Democratic party was the first in Kansas to nominate a woman for a state office, when they selected Sarah A. Brown of Douglas county as their candidate for superintendent of public instruction in 1880. Unfortunately, Miss Brown was defeated more resoundingly than the rest of the regular Democratic ticket, which did not do anything to encourage the party to put forth women candidates in the future.

In the state conventions of 1882, the Greenback party supported woman suffrage by stating,

> We are opposed to all monopolies, and in favor of equal rights, equal burdens, equal taxation, and equal benefits for all, with special privileges to none; and we hold that it is the best government wherein an injury to one is the concern of all.

The Republican party hedged, saying it was "resolved to ask the next legislature to submit an amendment to the constitution in favor of woman suffrage." The Democrats flatly opposed woman suffrage at this time.

By 1884 the Republicans withdrew their lukewarm support of woman suffrage and ignored the question at their convention. The Greenback party remained faithful and demanded that woman be given equal pay for equal work, equal laws with man to secure her equal rights, and the right to vote. In its state convention the Prohibition party endorsed the Greenback party's nominee for state superintendent of public instruction, Fannie Randolph of Emporia.

In 1891 the Populist party gained control of the house of representatives. Annie L. Diggs, a suffragist, had been appointed by the Farmers' Alliance on their state legislative committee, and she began a vigorous campaign to secure suffrage for women by statutory enactment. But much to the disappointment of Susan B. Anthony, Mrs. Diggs campaigned as a Populist in 1892 and did not insist on the suffrage plank.

The state suffrage organization, in order to preserve the nonpartisan attitude of the organization, selected the Populist Mrs. Diggs as vice-president and the Republican Laura Johns as president.

Again making a bid for political support, the women asked the parties at their state conventions in 1894 to adopt a suffrage plank. In reply to this request, the Democrats adopted a resolution saying they opposed woman suffrage "as tending to destroy the home and family. . . . The Republicans did not take a definite stand against the reform, but they did refuse to endorse it as a party measure. The Prohi-

bition party followed its usual policy of endorsement; and the Populists, who had become quite strong in Kansas, adopted a suffrage plank.

Since most of the leaders in the suffrage movement were not Populists and hoped for votes from other parties, the Kansas Equal Suffrage Association decided to run an independent, nonpartisan campaign. If any suffrage speakers made political speeches, they were instructed to make them under the auspices and by arrangement of the state central committee of their respective parties.

But it was too late for a nonpartisan campaign. The woman's cause was already linked to the Populist party in the eyes of the Kansas voter, and the success of the amendment depended on the fortunes of that party. The Republican women formed a Republican club and seemed to be more interested in their party than in their demand for woman suffrage.

On several occasions, suffrage workers injured their cause by political squabbles. In one case, a July 4 celebration was arranged by all parties in 1893 at Kingman. The women were told they could talk all the suffrage they wanted to, but no politics. Laura Johns followed the instructions of the Republican chairman of the celebration, but Annie Diggs made a Populist speech, and Mrs. Johns had to listen to it, much to her disgust. According to Mrs. Johns, Mrs. Diggs was not to blame, because she had been kept at a Populist's house until time for the meeting and had not been properly instructed. However, Mrs. Diggs's political speech aroused considerable resentment among the Republicans, and Mrs. Johns felt the Populists were attempting to carry the amendment and claim all the credit. This would have been distasteful to such a strong Republican as she, even one who was working for woman suffrage and who should have been thankful for any support.

On the other hand, the Populist women of Topeka informed Mrs. Johns that there was a great deal of resentment against her political attitudes and activity for the Republicans. Although she did not find any antagonism when among the Populists, she did agree to put more Populist women in the field to speak for the cause. While Annie Diggs felt that very few Republicans would vote against woman suffrage because it was endorsed by the Populists, too many voted against it for some reason, and the amendment was defeated. Many women felt that having their cause identified with the Populists had definitely been detrimental to them, and after the state had gone strongly Republican in the election of 1900, Mrs. Diggs resigned as president of

the state suffrage association, since she did not wish to be responsible for any opposition to their cause.

The women's cause was helped by the progressive wave of the early 1900's, demanding changes in the laws and the federal constitution. Jane Addams, a Progressive party supporter who spoke at a convention in Topeka in 1912, felt that women needed the ballot in order to carry on humanitarian work. Possibly as a result of her stand as a Progressive, the National Woman Suffrage Association decided to allow its members to take part in partisan politics, and some Kansas women worked for the Progressive party. But this decision was opposed by some of the Kansas leaders, who believed that women should have the right to vote before they pushed any particular party.

To maintain a nonpartisan stand, women were obliged to balance support by one party with corresponding testimonial from the others. No party wanted a rival to have the monopoly of women's gratitude if and when the amendment went through. For this reason, in the campaign of 1911–1912, political parties of Kansas were getting on the band wagon and insisting they had always been for woman suffrage.

The editor of *The Coming Nation,* a Socialist newspaper at Girard, claimed that his party had been making a fight for it long before any other party had heard of woman suffrage. In fact, he stated that "a Socialist who would not vote for Woman Suffrage would be practically a political impossibility." Some Republicans accused the Socialists of using the suffrage cause to further their own ambitions, but a Gove countian replied that the Socialists voted for woman suffrage because they believed in it, not because they expected to gain favor.

But most of the women felt that it was risky to become linked with the Socialists' cause, because they were only a minor party in Kansas. A worker in the 1894 campaign who had moved to California hesitated to return to help in the 1912 campaign because she had become a strong Socialist and felt she would not be welcome; and a suffrage leader from Pittsburg wrote that she was almost afraid to get in touch with suffragists by correspondence because in one instance she discovered the woman contacted to be a Socialist in a community very strong in their opposition to the Socialists. Realizing the threat to the movement, she went to other leading women in the community and persuaded them to take all of the offices to prevent the Socialist woman from taking an active part. To avoid any hitch, she also primed other

women to nominate the chosen few for their offices. Women were finally catching on to some of the tactics used in machine politics.

Although the Democratic party's attitude ranged from lukewarm support to open opposition in earlier campaigns, it had been of little importance because that party was a minority one in Kansas politics. Even so, in the final campaign, at Democratic rallies that party's members were favorable and in some instances went to great lengths to explain why they had formerly been against equal suffrage. As they put it, they were not personally against equal suffrage but had all sorts of other good reasons for their opposition to it. One suffrage worker felt that the politicians could see what was coming and wanted their past sins forgiven.

The most definite evidence that no political party deserves either the blame or the credit for the fate of the suffrage amendment in any of the campaigns lies in the fact that the majority party had never taken a stand against it in Kansas. Although their support had often been lukewarm and they sometimes simply ignored the question in their platform, the Republicans at least had never had a plank against it. In the earliest campaign it had been a party measure not supported by party members, because with the majority the Republicans had at that time, they could have carried it in the election if all members had been favorable. Therefore, it seemed that the women were successful in 1912, not simply because all the parties endorsed the measure, but because the voters had either been convinced of the justness of it as a part of the progressive reform sweeping the nation or they realized the granting of suffrage was the least the women would settle for.

Tactics that Antagonized Men

One final factor which undoubtedly played a part in delaying woman suffrage in Kansas was that women sometimes forgot that only men could grant them the right to vote and so seemed to be starting a battle of the sexes by their belligerent attitude. Setting the stage for the struggle, the following warning was issued to young women:

> We would point for them the moral of our experiences: that woman must lead the way to her own enfranchisement, and work out her own salvation with a hopeful courage and determination that knows no fear nor

> trembling. She must not put her trust in man in this transition period, since, while regarded as his subject, his inferior, his slave, their interests must be antagonistic.

In the campaign of 1867, a Kansas politician had observed to Susan Anthony that every woman should be married, implying that if she were, she would not be taking part in crusades. Miss Anthony retorted that to do so, it was essential to find some decent man, and one could not be found among the Kansas politicians who had forsaken woman's cause. This response may have given vent to the steam of her feelings, but it could not have persuaded any Kansas voter to favor her cause.

Some suffragists made the mistake of antagonizing newspaper editors. In one such instance, a group of women selected as their target for ridicule an editor who was an outspoken opponent of the suffrage movement. At one of their suffrage meetings, they commented on the errors in the newspaper, a total of 147 misspelled words, mistakes in grammatical construction, punctuation, etc. A resolution was made to present him with a copy of some standard English spelling book and English language lessons for his special use, and he was informed of their decision by letter. Needless to say, the following week he published a diatribe consisting, in their opinion, of brazen falsehoods. They should have followed Abraham Lincoln's example and not mailed the letter after it had served its purpose of permitting them to release their feelings; they should have realized that he was in a position to have the last word in his newspaper about the matter.

In 1880 George W. Anderson, an antisuffragist, announced himself as a candidate for the legislature. The suffrage society of his community adopted a resolution to do everything possible to defeat him. They were not successful, and their opposition to his election added one more legislator in a position to help them who would never be persuaded to do so.

Women could have profited from a bit of advice printed in the *Ottawa Journal and Triumph* (Topeka edition), which suggested that the way for them to gain suffrage was to use tact and kindness to their husbands, not go over the past nor treat them with abuse. But as late as the campaign of 1911–1912, some women failed to heed the warning and hindered the cause they professed to help by their thoughtless statements. Elizabeth N. Barr, in her suffrage publication, called

some newspapermen "grafters," a poor policy considering that they could do so much either to help or to hinder the women's cause.

Fortunately, most of the leaders of the suffrage movement in the final campaign had learned from experience and determined to avoid tactics which were antagonistic. Part of their success lay in their decision to run the campaign without interference from the national association. Kansas men seemed to take criticism from Kansas women with less resentment than that from outsiders. A woman who had taken part in the successful campaign for suffrage in Washington warned the women of Kansas,

> Do not allow any woman speaker to abuse any man, even if he is the veriest blackguard in existence. You are asking something of them, and while I know it is gall and wormwood to be compelled to ask some of the specimens whose only claim to manhood is that they wear trousers, yet remember always, that they have the vote.

After becoming irritated by her experience at an earlier meeting, Anna Howard Shaw made some unfortunate remarks in her address at Winfield; and after the meeting a prominent man who was in favor of suffrage said the women should consider themselves fortunate that the weather had prevented a larger audience. The woman reporting the incident was of the opinion that speakers should be women with a sense of humor, but logical and reasonable, since they had to please the voters who did not want to be found fault with or reminded of their shortcomings. "We must have speakers to plead our cause, and not make a demand for justice. Men will grant us anything as a favor if its justice has been proven, but they will not be commanded to do even justice."

Another bit of valuable advice from a woman who had taken part in the campaign in Washington was to avoid such topics as temperance and the eight-hour day for women. She described their method in the following words:

> We did not argue with men in conversation—we waited till we got on the platform where they could not "sass back." We were never spectacular—never spoke on the street corner—never had a parade. All of these things tended to arouse our enemies. We tried to put our enemies to sleep and arouse our friends to action. . . . We did *not fight* for suffrage, we *worked* for it. Therein lies a great secret.

Final proof that women had learned that it did not pay to antagonize men was found in a letter to Lucy Johnston, president of the Equal Suffrage Association during the final campaign. The writer, in telling of the district convention to be held in Wichita, stated that they intended to ask the men to help with the meeting because they realized they needed their votes. She requested that Mrs. Johnston and Mrs. Stubbs, the governor's wife, come to the convention because their presence would undoubtedly increase the attendance at the meeting. She further asked Mrs. Johnston to have her stenographer write an "advertisement" of the two women, telling how good looking they were, so people would come out to see them. As much as they might have resented having to do it, the leaders of the suffrage movement had learned some important lessons about how to conduct a successful campaign.

Although so far the Kansas legislature has not proposed a state equal rights amendment, it has done its part in taking the final step toward full equality for women by ratifying the national Equal Rights amendment. The rights of women in this state have been gained little by little, with much debate and discussion involved. To maintain that the final step was taken with indecent haste is to reveal ignorance of the long struggle for women's rights which began in 1859.

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Chapter 5

Political Unrest and Modernization, 1890s–1920s

Populism, Progressivism, the Spanish-American War, the airplane, the automobile, the Great War, the Ku Klux Klan, women's suffrage, and public health reform were important issues in the decades 1890–1920. Political unrest and modernization were hallmarks of these decades. Chapter 5 focuses on the state's political, cultural, and spiritual environment.

Thomas Fox Averill, professor of English at Washburn University, provides a brief overview of early twentieth-century Kansas. William Allen White, Dr. Samuel J. Crumbine, John Steuart Curry, the Menningers, Carry A. Nation, and Dr. J. R. Brinkley are among the individuals who shaped this period.

O. Gene Clanton, professor of history at Washington State University, explains that the Gilded Age set the stage for the unrest that culminated in the rise of the Populist party in Kansas in the 1890s. Disenchanted farmers and townspeople organized for political action under the battle cry of reform. This new people's party (later called the Populist party) would challenge the Kansas governmental establishment in the interest of the working classes of farm and factory.

Ann Schofield, professor of history and women's studies at the University of Kansas, examines the "Little Balkans," an ethnic, socialist enclave in the southeast corner of an otherwise conservative

agricultural state. In 1921, 2,000 to 3,000 wives, daughters, mothers, sisters, and sweethearts of striking miners marched on the Kansas coal fields for three days to support their striking men by singing, shouting, talking, and allegedly committing acts of violence to stop work that was breaking the strike. Schofield's article is a case study of the issues of politics, class, community, and feminism in the 1920s. She analyzes an early labor movement in one of the most unlikely places in the nation.

William M. Tuttle, Jr. history professor at the University of Kansas and Deborah L. Dandridge, archivist at the University's Kansas Collection, originally wrote "Against the Odds: A History of African Americans in Kansas" for the *Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History.* These authors argue that for African Americans, Kansans represented both the romanticized notion of the promised land of freedom and equality and the harsh reality of the unrelenting color line.

Images of Twentieth-Century Kansas

Thomas Fox Averill

The striking dual image of Kansas in the nineteenth century—the desert vs. the garden—continues into the images of Kansas in the twentieth century. But instead of referring to the land, the twentieth-century image refers to the culture, the spiritual environment of Kansas. On the one hand, for example, are William Allen White in the forefront of Progressive Republicanism, Dr. Samuel J. Crumbine in the forefront of public health reform, and the Menningers in the forefront of mental health. On the other are "goat-gland doctor" J. R. Brinkley, hatchet-swinging Carry A. Nation, and anti-cigarette conservative Lizzie Wooster. Though each person (or persons) just named sought reform, those who created the image of Kansas as a garden for reform tried to bring it about through education and a lifting of restrictions on people's behaviors. Those who helped create the sterile, desert, "Bible Belt" image for Kansas sought reform through restriction. As always, Kansas is a land of contrasts, and in this historical portrait you'll get a sense of some of the people and events that have shaped Kansas in the past eighty years.

Kansas and Kansans, particularly William Allen White, were proudly participating in the reforms brought by Progressive Republi-

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From Thomas Fox Averill, "Images of Twentieth-Century Kansas," *Kansas Literature* (study guide for ENGL 570c). Lawrence, KS: Independent Study, University of Kansas Division of Continuing Education, 1979, pp. 45–50.

Dr. Samuel Crumbine, a physician, became secretary of the Kansas State Board of Health in 1904. He organized campaigns to improve public health conditions and to control diseases such as typhoid and tuberculosis.

canism. White, suddenly more expansive and moderate than in his "What's the Matter with Kansas?" days, became a nationally known supporter of Theodore Roosevelt and a national speaker for reasonable government and personal liberty. He fought against restricted expression in 1922 when Governor Henry J. Allen issued an order forbidding Kansas merchants to display placards in their shop windows supporting a railroad worker's strike. His editorial "To An Anxious Friend," which began "You tell me that law is above freedom of utterance," won the Pulitzer Prize in 1922. Just two years later White ran for political office for the first and only time, filing as an independent for the governorship in a well-publicized anti-Ku Klux Klan gesture. In declaring his candidacy he said, "the thought that Kansas should have a government beholden to this hooded gang of masked fanatics, ignorant and tyrannical . . . calls me out into this disgraceful but necessary task." White did not win, but his constant ridicule of what had become a politically influential Ku Klux Klan helped break the back of its power in Kansas government. White continued to write and speak for Kansas through the 1930s and up until his death on Kansas Day (January 29) 1944.

Samuel Crumbine dramatized the need for germ control in his campaigns against public drinking cups, unscreened windows, exposed roller towels, and public spitting.

Another spokesperson for common sense who highly influenced the way Kansans (even Americans) think was Dr. Samuel J. Crumbine, who in 1901 became secretary of the Kansas State Board of Health. Crumbine constantly promoted public health, concentrating on reform measures that would prevent disease. His first campaign was against the housefly, for which he coined the phrase "Swat the Fly." At that time, there were no fly swatters, but they were invented shortly thereafter, in 1903, by Kansan Frank Rose. In addition, Rose's Weir City boy scout troop lobbied the city council until it passed the first anti-fly ordinance in the United States. Some of Crumbine's later campaigns were against the rat ("Bat the Rat"); against the public drinking cup (before his crusade each public water fountain had a communal cup from which everyone—including tuberculars—would drink); against roller towels; against tuberculosis, which was sometimes spread by spitting (a Topeka brickmaker manufactured thousands of "Don't Spit on the Sidewalk" bricks); and finally against venereal disease, which was spreading so rapidly during World War I that Crumbine threatened to quarantine Kansas City, Missouri, unless the city cooperated with his program to arrest and quarantine infected Missouri prostitutes. When he tried to educate Kansans about VD between 1920 and

1923, he was removed from his post and went to New York, never to return to Kansas. The conservative, small-minded attack on Crumbine was reminiscent of one that had occurred ten years earlier, and about which William Allen White had written: "No matter how highly a man may distinguish himself for efficiency and devotion to public service, he must expect attacks from pinhead politicians who want to attract a little attention. Crumbine has done more for the good fame of Kansas than all the one-horse politicians the state ever grew."

A decade later another prominent Kansan, artist John Steuart Curry, left the state never to return. Although his stature as a regionalist artist was as great as Iowa's Grant Wood and Missouri's Thomas Hart Benton, Curry had never been able to get support to be an artist-in-residence at any of the Kansas universities. In 1937, however, he was commissioned to paint murals in the Kansas state capitol. Though marvelously executed, his work was not well accepted. Curry painted a personal vision of Kansas, including a wild-eyed, flowing-bearded, rifle-waving John Brown backed by a Kansas tornado and prairie fire. People who were more concerned with their own image than with art were upset by Curry's vision of Kansas and criticism of his work was harsh. Some even said that Curry was unqualified because the tails on his pigs curled the wrong way. Curry packed up and left the murals incomplete.

But while Crumbine and Curry were leaving, taking their prominence with them, Kansas and Kansans were gaining prominence in a new industry: aviation. Early recognized for its excellent year-round flying weather, central location and good transportation facilities, Wichita has grown from modest beginnings to the "Air Capital of the World." Kansans began experimenting with aviation in 1911 when three Topekans—A. K. and E. J. Longren, with William Janicke—built and flew a biplane for six miles, the first such sustained flight in Kansas. In 1919 the Wichita Airplane Corporation began production, and in 1925 Walter H. Beech and Clyde V. Cessna formed another airplane company at Wichita. Now, with Beechcraft, Cessna, Gates Learjet and Boeing Aircraft companies, almost fifty percent of the nation's utility aircraft and sixty-five percent of all light commercial planes produced in the world are manufactured in Wichita. Air travel records were set through the 1920s and '30s, many of them by Kansan Amelia Earhart, who was born in Atchison in 1897. In 1928, she was the first woman to

fly across the Atlantic Ocean. In 1932, she made another flight across the Atlantic Ocean, this time solo, setting another record for a woman pilot. In 1935, she was the first person to fly between Honolulu and California. Two years later, she disappeared somewhere between New Guinea and Howland Island while attempting a trans-world flight.

Kansas has also gained prominence in the mental health field. In 1925, the Menningers of Topeka started a sanatorium for "the care and treatment of persons suffering from illness, disease or infirmity, and particularly those afflicted with nervous and mental disorders." The sanatorium grew with the addition of a clinic, and in 1945 became the thriving Menninger Foundation, one of the nation's leading centers for treatment of mental illness and for the training of psychiatrists, social workers, nurses, occupational therapists, and clinical psychologists. The Menningers pioneered mental health as vigorously as Dr. Samuel J. Crumbine pioneered public health, and as courageously as Amelia Earhart pioneered the air. Such efforts to pioneer new areas are part of Kansas' twentieth century as much as the effort to pioneer the Kansas land is a part of the nineteenth century. There is a similar spirit, a similar reward of success.

There were also pioneers, crusaders, who gave Kansas a different image in the twentieth century. In 1900, Carrie Nation smashed her first saloon. Three years and many saloons later, she changed her name to Carry A. Nation, hoping to do just that for prohibition. Kansas, of course, had voted in total prohibition in 1881. Carry A. Nation's crusading came as a response to weak enforcement of the law as well as a hope that prohibition would become a national reform. Nineteen years after she smashed her first saloon, the National Prohibition Amendment (the eighteenth) was passed. The "great experiment" lasted until 1933, when the states ratified the twenty-first amendment, which repealed prohibition. But that amendment still allowed local option, and Kansas stayed dry until 1949, when state-regulated stores began the sale of liquor in bottles. Kansas still does not allow sale of liquor by the drink [1979] and thus retains an image of conservatism about alcohol. This image is fostered by such antics as an attorney general's attempt to outlaw the sale of alcoholic drinks in airliners while they are passing over Kansas.

Along with other reforms passed after the First World War, Kansas banned the sale of cigarettes. Although it was not illegal to smoke cigarettes, the state superintendent of public instruction, Lizzie

Wooster, announced in 1919 that "schools and colleges that permit the use of tobacco in any form by administrative heads, instructors or pupils cannot remain on the accredited list." She also tried to use her office to remove the school superintendent of Cimarron because he smoked, and several Cimarron women teachers because they danced. Her attempts were thwarted by an attorney general's ruling, but Wooster's moralistic spirit and her attempt to restrict behavior show a sort of dark counterpart to the judicious morality and fights for nonrestriction of someone like William Allen White.

Perhaps one of the most colorful Kansans of the twentieth century was John Richard Romulus Brinkley, M.D., Ph.D., M.C., D.P.H., Sc.D. Between 1918 and 1930, he performed as many as sixteen goat-gland transplants a day at his clinic at Milford. The fifteen-minute operation, which cost a minimum of $750 and involved the transplantation of a reproductive gland from the Arkansas Toggenberg goat into a human male, was guaranteed to bring about the "resumption of man's God-given role on this beautiful earth."

Born in North Carolina, Brinkley traveled west, settling for a time in Kansas City, where he received a degree from the Eclectic Medical University of Kansas City, later declared a diploma mill. His surgical experience came from his one-month employment as plant surgeon for Swift and Company. Shortly thereafter he performed his first goat-gland operation, and in 1917 he moved to Milford. In the 1920s he built a two-and-a-half-story hospital, began operating Kansas' first radio station—the 1,000-watt KFKB, "Kansas First, Kansas Best"—and started broadcasting medical advice and prescriptions over the air. By the late 1920s Brinkley was receiving almost 3,000 letters a day asking about his sexual rejuvenation operation; by 1930 he was raking in $55,000 a week selling prescriptions over the radio. He owned a Lockheed Orion airplane, at least twelve Cadillacs, and on occasion wore $100,000 worth of diamonds.

In April 1930, the *Kansas City Star* reported on his activities, calling him a "super Quack." At the same time, the Kansas chapter of the American Medical Association filed a complaint against him with the State Board of Medical Registration, and the Federal Radio Commission began to move against his KFKB radio station. Brinkley packed a July 15, 1930, medical hearing in Topeka with satisfied patients, among them octogenarian fathers, and invited the medical board to witness an operation at his hospital in Milford. They did, and in September

they revoked his medical license. In May 1931, his radio license was suspended. But Brinkley remained undaunted, hiring a certified M.D. to run his clinic and moving his radio station to Mexico, where he built a huge transmitting tower and continued to blast away at Kansas. Also, forty-two days before the 1930 state elections, he filed as an independent write-in candidate for governor. He promised to do away with "unnecessary boards and investigative bodies," to build a lake in every county and to pave Kansas roads. Brinkley campaigned throughout the state in his airplane with an entourage that included a Methodist preacher, gospel singers, and his own cheerleaders, who taught people how to write his name on the ballot (state law required that people write in his name exactly as he'd filed, and he was afraid many of his votes would be disqualified due to misspelling). One of his campaign slogans was "Let's Pasture Goats on the Statehouse Lawn."

Brinkley polled 239,000 votes, but 50,000 were voided by election officials and thrown out, leaving him with 183,278. In fact, bales of Brinkley ballots were said to have been seen floating down the Kansas River. Democrat Harry H. Woodring polled 217,171 votes, and Republican Frank "Chief" Haucke, 216,914, a difference of only 257 votes. Because of the troublesome Brinkley ballots, Haucke didn't dare call for a recount. Even a Democrat was better than a "goat-gland doctor."

Brinkley ran for governor again in 1932, but without enthusiasm, and soon after his second defeat he moved to Texas. He died there of a heart attack in 1942. Many regulations covering medical licensing and advertising and a number of Federal Communications Commission agreements with foreign countries about radio broadcasting are the results of attempts to thwart Brinkley. His antics certainly gave Kansas an odd political image, which perhaps went along with the image of Kansas as a depression state affected by drought and dust and looking for help from every quarter.

Clifford R. Hope, Sr., United States Representative from Kansas between 1925 and 1957, wrote: "The great depression . . . affected Kansas just as it did every other part of the country, but on top of it there was superimposed almost a decade of drought and duststorms. . . . Kansas and the neighboring Great Plains states got a double dose of misery and calamity." The dust didn't stop blowing until 1937, by

which time thousands of people had left the state. Those who stayed showed a one hundred percent increase in lung infections during the 1930s.

Kansas received attention during the depression when Republican Alfred M. Landon, governor from 1933–37, ran for president in 1936. Landon gained national prominence because he was the only Republican governor reelected in the 1934 elections and because in a time of severe economic depression he had managed to balance Kansas' budget (though his detractors claimed he had done so with the help of federal funds). Though he lost miserably, with even Kansas voting for President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Landon remained an active, moderate voice in the Republican Party and was well respected nationally.

Another politician, who was first a general, won national fame in the twentieth century. After returning from World War II in 1945, General Dwight David Eisenhower pronounced: "the proudest thing I can claim is that I'm from Abilene." In some sense, the Eisenhower image of Kansas still persists. Kansans are seen as moderate to conservative in their politics, friendly, but perhaps a little bland.

This, then, is a sketchy backdrop to understanding turn-of-the-century Kansas. All of these issues and individuals are a part of Kansas as well as American history over the last eighty years.

Kansas Populism

O. Gene Clanton

The Gilded-Age Background

As the last decade of the nineteenth century opened, vast numbers of Kansans would probably have been amused to learn that they were participants in an era later to be called the "Gay Nineties." Gaiety was in short supply. But whatever else it promised to be, the new decade gave every indication of being anything but dull. Kansas was in great ferment. Disenchanted farmers and townspeople were organizing for political action throughout the state. Undeniably, the masses were agitated in an unprecedented manner. The battle cry was reform; reform, they insisted, in the interest of the working classes of farm and factory. By June, 1890, this ferment in Kansas had produced a new political organization called the People's party (soon to be known more popularly as the Populist party), which would challenge the Kansas governmental establishment as it had never been challenged before.

Naturally, individuals who were fiercely attached to this establishment were alarmed by the ominous signs of impending storm. Some, of course, launched a bitter counterattack, utilizing the formidable antireform rationale of the Gilded Age. On May 14, 1890, the Topeka *Advocate*, then emerging as the leading journalistic voice of

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Kansas Populism, published a letter of one of those individuals. Using the pseudonym Justicus, the correspondent minced no words in appraising the reform movement and American society. "Hayseed and manual labor," the writer averred, "has been compelled to step down and out to make room for those who by birth and education and wealth are fitted to guide this nation onward and upward. This inexorable law of the survival of the fittest is fully exemplified in the position occupied to-day by the various classes; it is a natural result, and all your labor organizations and gas cannot alter it." The writer went on to assert that the laboring man's problems were not caused by any injustice on the part of "the ruling class," but were "directly traceable to the socialists and many reformers whom no condition could satisfy, but are ever seeking to stir up the common people, who otherwise would be content in the comfortable position they now occupy." Turning to the demands of the new movement, the writer then stated: "The mad projects now talked of by these self-styled reformers would be enough to drive a Plato mad with envy; government ownership of railroads; government warehouses, for the farmers to stow away their crop of pumpkins; government loaning money to the laboring men; now that is rich. . . . these things will never be." The real punch line of the letter was: "Because you have not the brains to get rich, you raise a hue and cry that those who are rich made it at your expense, when it was the natural result of their energy and superiority."

The history of Kansas during the Gilded Age was more than just a pale reflection of the frenetic activities that affected the nation at large. In a sense, the state served as a stage upon which the rest of the nation acted out its antagonisms, hopes, and frustrations. Enactment of the Kansas-Nebraska Act had focused the sectional conflict on the territory, stimulating a movement of as determined and self-righteous a group of people to the area as existed in the nation. The resultant struggle that occurred there was never merely the product of opposing views on slavery. The conflict between the two great sections was of course never that simple, and the people, representing both North and South, who rushed to that frontier territory carried with them all the divergent views motivating those on both sides of the Mason-Dixon line. As it turned out, the entrance of Kansas into the Union as a Free State was as much a victory for railroad promoters, political speculators, and land sharks as it was a victory for Free-Soilers and antislaveryites.

Destined to remain an agricultural area far into the future, Kansas was ushered onto the national stage in 1861 as a junior partner of the rapidly industrializing North in her war to save the Union from the machinations of a slave-holding, agrarian South. But if ambitions provide any guidelines Kansas was never just a junior partner. The struggle from 1854 to 1865 served to identify the state solidly with the Republican party, the Union cause, and the wave of the future—business enterprise.

The key to the growth of industry and commercial agriculture in Kansas was clearly the development of railroad transportation. Kansans in all walks of life recognized this, and practically everybody became, in one way or another, railroad promoters. The need being immense and the recognition of that need being all but universal, it was hardly surprising that railroad builders found fertile ground upon which to operate. Even before the territorial period had drawn to a close, fifty-four incorporation charters had been granted by the legislature. Most of these early projects never got beyond the charter stage. The dream of making Kansas the commercial hub of the nation was deferred for a time as the great energies of the state and nation were absorbed by four years of Civil War. The year the war ended Kansans could boast of only seventy-one miles of single track. This was quickly remedied. Five years later they could speak of almost 1,234 miles of track; the next ten years saw this figure more than doubled to 3,104 miles. By 1890 Kansas was ranked second in the nation with 8,797 miles of track. The pace of railroad construction actually reached its height in the late eighties, and the twenty-year period following 1890 would result in only about a hundred added miles of track within the state, while in the same period the national expansion of railroads continued at an accelerated rate.

The speed with which the Kansas prairies were bedecked with rails was matched by remarkable expansion in other ways. In 1860 the population of the state was just over 100,000; by 1870 it had surpassed the 360,000 mark; by 1880, over 990,000; and by 1890 the Kansas populace had increased to more than 1,420,000. As in the case of railroad expansion, a population plateau was reached in the late eighties, as the population of Kansas remained virtually stationary through the last decade of the century. The greatest increase came in the seventies when over 630,000 people were added to the census rolls. The period

from 1870 to 1890 represented an impressive increase of more than 1,060,000. The overwhelming majority of these newcomers were natives of the states carved from the Northwest Territory, although Iowa and Missouri also contributed their share to this movement of humanity between 1860 and 1890.

Most of these settlers were lured out to the Kansas plains to take advantage of her highly publicized resources. For the majority this meant agricultural pursuits. Those who survived the periodic droughts and grasshopper plagues and who managed to make the necessary adjustment for farming the plains soon created an abundant agriculture in Kansas. Wheat and corn were the principal crops. In 1878 the State Board of Agriculture reported that Kansas had advanced from twenty-fourth to nearly first in the production of wheat and from twenty-fifth to fourth in the production of corn since 1866. Other crops were grown with some success, and stock raising flourished on an excellently suited terrain; but these could not compete with corn and wheat as Kansas farmers rushed headlong into business agriculture.

As the westward-moving migrants spread out over the prairies, preceding or following the rapid extension of the railroads, and began to farm her virgin soils, they were also faced with the task of creating all the other accessories of organized society. Riding the wave of spirited optimism characteristic of the Gilded Age, these matters were dealt with in short order. By 1870 sixty-one counties were established in Kansas. The next eighteen years saw this number swell to 106. Towns sprang up all over the state. Municipal, township, and county governments were set in motion. In short, these pioneers, with the assistance of Eastern capital, converted a barren territory into a thriving state with such rapidity that many were awed by the accomplishment.

Throughout the period of great expansion from 1870–1887 there were those who continually advised circumspection and who insisted that all was not right with the world, but the great majority of Kansans who surveyed the scene, particularly in the early 1880s, were convinced that the work was good. Politically, all this "good work" was credited to the Republican party. Nationally the party may not have been as dominant as it was once thought, but in Kansas the Republican party was supreme. Kansans voted just as they had shot in the Civil War. Party regularity was a matter of great pride throughout most of the period. In the nine state elections from 1862 through 1880,

Republican gubernatorial candidates carried ninety percent of the counties. The year 1882 saw the election of the first and only Democratic governor until 1912. The anomaly of the 1882 election—largely a result of a serious split in Republican ranks—was redeemed in 1884, and the next three gubernatorial contests saw the party recapture its former supremacy. The three contests from 1884 through 1888 saw Republican gubernatorial candidates carry ninety-four percent of the counties.

Although the era from 1862 to 1890 was a period of Republican dominance in Kansas politics, it should be noted that it was also an era of steady decline in Republican strength generally. This was evident in the percentage of the vote cast for Republican presidential candidates in the state from 1864 to 1888. Beginning with just over seventy-eight percent of the popular vote in 1864, the party saw its strength diminished gradually to just over fifty-five percent in 1888.

The margin of victory had decreased over the years, but it was still substantial. Throughout the period Kansans were led, through the mechanism of the Republican organization, by a group of men who were by residence, occupation, and background closely associated with business enterprise. Of the eleven elected governors between 1862 and 1893, all save one were Republicans. Most had served in the Union Army. All were residents of the eastern third of the state. Eight of the eleven actually came from residences no farther west than Lawrence or Garnett, both towns less than forty miles from the eastern boundary. Occupationally, six lawyers, two editors, one merchant, one physician, and one surveyor-farmer provided the nominal leadership for this young but ambitious agrarian state. In addition, every United States senator from 1861 to 1891 was a Republican. Eight men represented Kansas in the senate during the period; six of the eight were residents of Lawrence, Leavenworth, or Atchison. All were intimately associated with the Kansas business community. It had been their task to promote the economic growth of the state, and by close attention to the construction of railroad transportation, more than anything else, they had assisted in the creation of an economic boom.

Numerous Kansans, and probably the Republican leadership to a man, recognized the importance of the railroad to their state and to the West in general. Unquestionably, settlement of the West was expedited by the rapid extension of the rails, but the acceleration process

Mr. and Mrs. Brew Bernett weighing Jack Bernett, Horton, Kansas, 1915. The turn of the century marked rapid changes in the lives of Kansans. The automobile brought greater mobility and access to goods. Families had more time to spend together in leisure and celebration. Photo by Jules A. Bourquin.

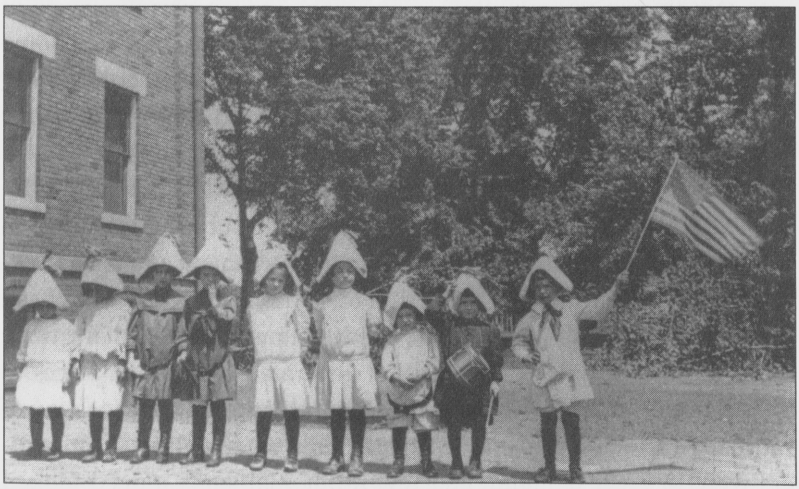
was not an unmixed blessing. Civilization carried forward in great haste led quite naturally to great waste, and, as this wave of settlement into an agricultural domain was spearheaded by the railroads (the earliest and more obvious representative of the modern corporation), the ingredients were there to produce a serious reappraisal of the course American society had taken since the inauguration of the age of enterprise. Edwin L. Godkin, the famous New York editor, noted contemporaneously that devotion to material pursuits became "absorbing in a country like the West, by the richness of the prizes which are offered to shrewd speculation and successful industry. Where possible or even probable gains are so great, the whole community gives itself up to the chase of them with an eagerness which is not democratic, but human." By bringing out the worst in the system, then, as well as by bringing an older agrarian world and the new industrial world into sharp relief, the West could indeed become a crucible of

contention and reexamination. This reappraisal could even assume the shape of a full-scale political revolt if the forward progress of the nation, or even a segment of the nation, were seriously checked.

As long as the prospect for advancement remained real or seemed realizable, however, momentary economic setbacks, challenges to democratic institutions, and even revelations of political corruption could be overlooked or minimized. If worst were to come to worst, moreover, there was always that useful social-Darwinian rationale to supply the badly needed touch of innocence to society's bold new course.

Kansas was served a rather large portion of the problems that afflicted the era. The hustling, bustling, scheming, frantic, heartbreaking, and hopeful years from 1870 to 1890 were years of great vitality, years that were characterized more by their dynamism than by their ethics. Most of the participants were just too busy to view closely what was taking place. As one student of the era so aptly put it, "Greedy manipulators, routine politicians, conscientious Kansas leaders, and possibly a statesman or two are all found there—but one searches a long time to locate any of the latter."

The great speed with which local government was fashioned throughout the state was adequate tribute to the acceleration process, although not always complimentary. The difficulties inherent in rapid



Decoration Day, kindergarten class in front of First Ward School, Horton, Kansas, 1911. Photo by Jules A. Bourquin.

state-building, demonstrated with emphasis in the first sixteen years of Kansas' experience, were reemphasized in the eighteen years following 1870 in the central and western thirds of the state as her political borders were filled in with an additional forty-five counties. Every new county went through, to a greater or lesser degree, the usual building and growing pains associated with new communities struggling to create at least a semblance of organized society. Most were successful and managed to establish viable communities; some encountered extraordinary difficulties and began under serious handicaps.

Occasionally, eager promoters of local government, at times out-and-out swindlers, took advantage of Kansas settlement to line their pockets. Officials of Barber County issued over $200,000 in warrants and bonds for the construction of a courthouse, bridges, and a railroad that were never built. In 1873 six men from Topeka concocted a scheme and netted $72,000 by traveling to what was to become Comanche County, copying names from a Missouri city directory, holding a "special election," and voting a bond issue to that amount. The state legislature, ever alert not to "scare away capital," later upheld the bond issue as having been legally issued by a *de facto* government. The purchasers of the securities subsequently sued for payment, and the legally organized county of Comanche was held accountable for the debt.

Fraudulent activity of this kind was by no means the rule, but it was repeated in various parts of the state and on various levels of government. There were those, too, who managed to reap handsome profits by staying within the letter of a system of laws that quite clearly lagged behind accumulating and unprecedented opportunities for money-making.

Problems of this sort were not restricted to the local scene, for the state administration, from the beginning, had trouble maintaining an unblemished reputation. To shape a state government against a background of civil strife, civil war, and reconstruction would have been difficult enough, but the men who guided Kansas politics in the early years did so amid fierce competition generated by the rich prizes to be had in connection with the distribution of lands and the location of railroads and state institutions. It was a time when politician-promoters were in great demand, and few influential souls indeed looked

with disfavor upon those who used their position or wealth to enlarge their fortune or to influence a decision.

The corrupt and ambitious intrigues of Senator James H. Lane and his rivalry with Kansas' first governor, Charles Robinson, attracted greatest attention in the early years. Rancorous intraparty struggles revolving around one political leader or another continued to plague the Republican party, and charges of malfeasance—many of which were politically inspired—were standard political fare as the warring factions competed for favors, position, or monetary rewards. They accomplished much, for themselves and for the state in the process; their actions also contributed to the creation of an image of corruption and political intrigue—real and imagined—which would subsequently provide substance to the wrath of a perturbed populace.

Certainly the record of men representing Kansas in the United States senate in the early period fell short of being illustrious. Senator Lane ended his stormy career in 1866 by committing suicide. After Senator Edmund G. Ross was denied reelection in 1871 (chiefly because of his vote for President Andrew Johnson's acquittal), he was replaced in the senate by Alexander Caldwell, who had spent $60,000 to obtain the seat. Senator Caldwell resigned following an investigation by the United States senate and the Kansas legislature. Shortly thereafter Samuel C. Pomeroy, United States senator from 1861 to 1873, with a long history of questionable deals behind him, was charged with bribery and denied a third term by the Kansas legislature.

The Pomeroy episode earned for itself a place in Mark Twain's and Charles Dudley Warner's *The Gilded Age*, but there were other occurrences that attracted less attention. In 1872 the state auditor stole $4,550 in addition to registering bonds for three nonexistent cities. In 1874 the state treasurer resigned in the face of impeachment proceedings. In 1876 the holder of that office, one Samuel Lappin by name, took flight to South America, after a series of actions that saw him resigning, breaking jail, and hiding in Chicago, rather than confront charges involving the issuance of bogus school bonds in four Kansas counties.

Who could become alarmed over such occurrences? or why should one be alarmed? Kansas was booming and the future appeared unlimited. Throughout the 1870s and well into the 1880s Kansas settlement and economic expansion were carried forward on an ever-grow-

ing wave of optimism. After a brief slump in the early seventies, the price of wheat rose steadily, reaching its high point for the period in 1881–1882; and just as the price of wheat began a steady decline, not to be checked until well into the next decade, increasing prices for meat products created a greater demand for corn, taking up some of the slack temporarily. The population of the state was increasing at a truly remarkable rate. Railroad lines had fanned out all over the state. The majority of Kansans could appreciate the crude poetry of the editor of the Pittsburg *Kansan* when he wrote:

> Come millionaires and scholars,
> Bring your wisdom and your dollars,
> To Pittsburg, Crawford county, State of
> Kansas, U.S.A.
>
> Bring your money bags and learning,
> Your translucent, deep discerning,
> And when you plant your shinners, we
> will label U.O.K.

If all that glittered was not gold, who would or could dispel the illusion? The visible signs of a marked advance were irrefutable facts. That the advance had come at a high price, and was dependent largely upon factors beyond the control of the Kansas citizen, was scarcely considered. The important thing was that the myth of the Great American Desert had been laid to rest, and in its place had been raised the vision of limitless agricultural and industrial progress. Kansas, as advertised by railroad agents, Eastern moneylenders, and Kansans in all walks of life, was the land of milk and honey.

Not all Kansans were so complacent. There were those of course who refused to acquiesce, individuals who were usually identified in contemporary literature as croakers, failures, demagogues, anarchists, or communists; or at times the label Democrat by itself was deemed sufficient to cover their alleged iniquities. The course and character of Kansas growth created a number of issues that readily lent themselves to exploitation by dissatisfied elements. Such issues as currency contraction, unequal distribution of the tax burden, political corruption, distribution of public lands to the railroads, and the insecurity of settlers on the public lands, not to mention the difficulties experienced by Kansas farmers resulting from the whims of nature, the rise and fall of the market, mounting surpluses, and their utter dependence on

railroad transportation, and more, virtually assured the rise of parties seeking immediate relief.

Significant reform agitation in Kansas began with the 1872 election, when a faction of reform-minded Republicans joined with Democrats to present a Liberal-Republican slate. Defeat—measured simply in terms of offices won or lost—was the fate of the 1872 Liberal Republican-Democratic effort, as was the case of the national movement of which it was a part, but reform agitation continued without cessation and with similar results. Between 1872 and 1890 Kansas had a multiplicity of reform parties. The rise and fall of these organizations was adequate testimony to the complexity of the situation confronting those who actively sought political change in the period. The Independent Reform party followed the Liberal Republican-Democratic coalition and waged two campaigns before it went out of existence, challenging the Republicans in 1874 and both major parties in 1876. The Greenback party entered the contest in 1878 to battle the Democrats and the Republicans. In the three contests between 1880 and 1884, the Greenback-Labor party carried the reform banner. In 1886 the Prohibition party continued the agitation, and it was joined by the Union-Labor party in 1888. There were, in addition, a number of splinter groups active in several of the campaigns.

With few exceptions, all post-Civil War reform proposals in Kansas politics were introduced by the third parties rather than the two major parties. These reforms embraced a wide variety of changes involving economic, political, and social life. In fact, practically all the demands of the 1890 Populist platform had been called for by earlier third-party movements. Occasionally, one of these proposals found its way into the platforms of one major party or the other, and, even more rarely, an occasional demand was enacted into law. Much of the reform legislation demanded by the third parties and by the two major parties, however, required support and action by the national government, and on that level the matter was even further beyond the control of Kansas parties.

Reform politics was not the great concern of the vast majority of Kansas citizens. Actually, the advocates of reform came as close to victory in the 1874 election as they would in any contest up to 1890. Even with the support of the Democratic party in that election, the Independent Reform party was able to muster only about forty per-

cent of the vote for its gubernatorial candidate—more than thirteen thousand votes short of victory. After 1874 farmers recovered from the relatively dismal years of the first half of the decade, and the state entered into a truly spectacular period of boom settlement; in the process, political dissent became an unpatriotic profession, as the majority of Kansans busily concerned themselves with other matters. It was this trend that pulled the rug from under the Greenback party.

Like their contemporaries throughout the nation, many Kansans gambled heavily on the future. The land, they assumed, was there to be conquered, and the earlier the conquest could be completed the better. Whatever assisted in accomplishing that end was adjudged wise and good and right; whatever stood in the way was considered an obstacle to progress. Railroads received the blessing from the beginning. Kansans beckoned and they came—at times it was the railroads that did the beckoning. The roads were financed largely by grants of aid from the nation and state, and from the county, township, and municipality through which they passed. The national government gave land grants in the state, which at the average sale price of $3.50 an acre gave to the railroads well over $32,000,000. Between 1870 and 1890 municipalities contributed over $16,500,000, of which over $8,500,000 were given in 1887–88. The state contributed 500,000 acres of its internal-improvement lands, and underwrote the payment of mortgage bonds of over $27,000,000. Altogether, assistance to the railroads came to about $85,000,000, or approximately $10,000 per mile, which should have satisfied a significant portion of the real costs of building the rickety roads on the Kansas prairie. In total acreage, including about two million acres of Indian land, the railroads came into possession of over ten million acres of Kansas soil, or about one-fifth of the total acreage of the state.

Railroad expansion proceeded simultaneously with municipal, township, and county improvements of all kinds. Bond issues came in excess. At the same time, the Kansas farmer made the necessary but expensive adjustment required for the mechanized and extensive agriculture of the plains. Debts were piled on top of debts with reckless abandon.

In the 1880s the public debt of all Kansas governmental units rose from $15,000,000 to $41,000,000, which was the largest increase of any state, and with the exception of four slightly populated states in the far West, was the largest per capita public debt.

Private indebtedness, especially among farmers, increased markedly at the height of the boom between 1883 and 1887. By 1890 over sixty percent of the taxable acres of the state were burdened with mortgage, a figure exceeded by no other state. According to Raymond Miller, "There was one mortgage for every two adults, which means more than one for every family; and the per capita private debt, counting adults alone, was over $347, about four times that of the Union as a whole. Mortgages on lands equalled more than one-fourth of the actual value of the real estate of Kansas."

Before the boom collapsed in 1887–1888, land values soared to unbelievable heights. In some cases the increase amounted to as much as four hundred percent above the original purchase price. The timing of the boom and collapse was such, moreover, that the distribution of gains and losses was clearly sectional within Kansas. The older settled counties of northeastern Kansas, in particular, and to a lesser degree the counties of eastern Kansas, generally, within a zone extending west approximately sixty miles, were in the enviable position. Eastern Kansans not only arrived early enough to reap some of the profits of the great expansion, they were, by early arrival, better able to survive the collapse. The majority of farms in the area had been purchased prior to the advance in price, and the subsequent decline in values affected the owners, for the most part, only to the extent it affected their plans for resale. Existing mortgages on eastern Kansas farms, moreover, having been contracted at an earlier date, were, by 1890 at least, only small remainders of the original sum. Once Kansas discontent was translated into political revolt, this area became the citadel of antireform politics.

It was in the middle counties of Kansas, from Marshall to Phillips in the north, and from Chautauqua to Comanche in the south, that the boom attained its most reckless proportions. Between 1881 and 1887 more than 220,000 people settled in the area, approximately 100,000 of these between 1885 and 1887. In this area mortgages were the rule. There were counties in 1890 with three-fourths of the farms encumbered, and practically all counties had more than sixty percent of their farms mortgaged. These settlers came as land values were rising and paid higher prices for their lands than had earlier settlers. In addition, municipal improvements and railroad projects tended to soak up whatever excess capital existed locally, and many of these newcomers were therefore forced to pay more dearly for the loans they obtained.

These middle counties, plus several extreme southeastern Kansas counties, provided the Populist party the bulk of its rank and file.

That portion of the state lying west of the one-hundredth meridian, roughly the western third of the state, felt the tragic impact of the collapse first. This, the more arid part of the state, was the least suitable for small-scale farming. Most of the inhabitants had just arrived on the eve of the boom's abrupt end. Many were forced immediately to vacate the land, leaving the section to those who resided there before the inflation, and to those few who were able to make the difficult adjustment. Such laconic phrases as "In God We Trusted, in Kansas We Busted" were common parting words as the discontented were swept away. With the important exception of seven counties in the extreme northwest corner, which were settled at about the same time as the middle counties, the Populist party subsequently drew little support from the area.

This boom-and-bust cycle that affected extensive areas of the West as well as Kansas has too often been written off, almost entirely, as the product of the shortsightedness of the people who participated in the westward movement. Westerners and Kansans shared the same hopes and aspirations of Americans generally. By the same token they shared the same limitations. What happened in Kansas in the 1880s was not unrelated to the great industrial changes that came over the United States in the period. Newspapers, railroads, local bond-assistance projects, or even the unlimited wealth of Kansas enthusiasm could not have produced the boom unassisted. Eastern capital flowed to the state in a steady stream, providing the means whereby the inflation could be maintained. The picture is not completed either by emphasizing the revolutionary changes in an agrarian way-of-life. Indeed there were changes, and few farmers were able to comprehend fully the significance these changes held for them. As a result, their reaction to hard times was occasionally irrational. It must be emphasized that the circumstances were unique. The farmer's middle-class, city cousin in the West and in the East was likewise befuddled by the great changes accompanying the industrial advance.

Kansans, like Americans generally, had placed the leadership of their state into the hands of men who viewed government primarily as an instrument of material progress, men who were effective spokesmen of business enterprise but who were unable to guide and promote Kansas growth while at the same time checking abuses and of-

fering constructive proposals to solve the unique problems confronting an agrarian state operating within a rapidly industrializing system. These men could no more escape a share in the responsibility for the course of Kansas development than could the mass of her citizens who acquiesced as long as the future appeared bright. For years the Kansan had been taught that Kansas was the land of beauty and unexcelled opportunities, and when his world came tumbling down upon him it was difficult to swallow the argument that his woes were the *sole* result of his own stupidity or the whims of nature.

The disillusioned were more inclined to remember they had paid too much heed to Civil War-inspired oratory. The "bloody shirt" all of a sudden seemed quite moot. They recalled they had not taken a very lively interest in politics, but they did remember the regularity with which they had cast a Republican ballot. They vaguely remember too the more sensational revelations of political corruption within and without the state. Most had quite real reminders of the high rate of interest they were required to pay on the public and private debt they had contracted. They were reminded of the taxes they were required to pay also. The tax on land seemed somewhat out of proportion. All of a sudden they were convinced railroads were evading their share of the tax load. This seemed less than fair, considering the generosity that had been shown the railroads by all governmental units. They remembered too that the railroads had been rather demanding in their rates. The state had finally created a Board of Railroad Commissioners in 1883 but they now saw this as a façade, for its powers were generally advisory. After all, the representatives of railroad interests occupied seats close to the power center of the state.

All the fuss that had been made over the tariff suddenly appeared quite silly, if not misleading, to many farmers who were having a difficult time making ends meet. It became clear that they bought their goods in a protected market and sold their crops in an unprotected market. At the same time, the farmer became aware as never before that the very fact of his isolation made his bargaining position frightfully impotent, and although few were clear as to why, they were convinced something was radically wrong with the credit and money system of the nation. Somehow the system needed to be more flexible.

Although it was by no means the only consideration, there can be little doubt that it was mainly economic discontent that provided the

decisive stimulant that agitated Kansas citizens and spurred them on to the formation of a political party that would seriously challenge the normal pattern of Kansas politics. It was the disillusionment of shattered dreams that caused them to view society as they had never viewed it before. A good many of those, perhaps even a majority, who sang "Good-Bye, My Party, Good-Bye" between 1889 and 1890 as they gathered under the banner of the people's party, were committed to the reform cause in no greater depth than the mortgage that hung over their heads. Much of their criticism of the existing system was exaggerated and unfair and occasionally irrational—especially true considering they had shared in the responsibility for what had happened to them. In spite of all that, the reappraisal of American society made possible by that wave of discontent was no less meaningful and instructive.

The superficial commitment of much of the rank and file of the reform cause was to prove a real handicap to the fortunes of the Populist party; a brighter future could deplete the ranks almost as quickly as a dismal one could fill them. The realization that the actions of many of the rank and file were not founded upon a profound understanding of what was happening to their world, however, should come as a shock to no one. When or where has this not been the case of any large political movement? It has not been recognized to the extent that it should, on the other hand, that the leadership of the Populist party in Kansas was provided by a group of individuals the majority of whom had been committed to reform long before the Kansas boom collapsed. Their reasons for dissent were varied: most were progressive, some were retrogressive, and some were contradictory, but they were seldom superficial.

On the whole, Populism in Kansas, especially as revealed in the thought and actions of the individuals who led the movement, was a constructive response to the technological achievements that had revolutionized agriculture and industry over the course of the nineteenth century, a response which was called forth prematurely by agriculture's peculiar position in the 1880s and 1890s. It was premature in the sense that prevailing American thought was not ready to accord its spokesmen a fair hearing. Rising as they did on this wave of agrarian discontent, they were all stigmatized by the association. The brave new world of the future, revolutionized or not, was industrial, not agricultural.

Kansas Populist Leadership

The Kansas Republican press throughout the 1890s constantly labeled the leaders of the Populist party as "anarchists," "communists," "misfits," "loafers," "cranks," and "demagogues." In its efforts to down the party, this opposition repeatedly invoked the rags-to-riches or self-made-man myth, at times even the opposing yet parallel myth of rural virtue. Invariably, Populist leaders were caricatured, verbally and pictorially, in a manner suggesting that they represented the missing link in the evolutionary chain. All the intellectual equipment of social Darwinism was brought to bear in the assault on the party. The usual caricature that emerged in the period—especially in Eastern papers—pictured a weather-beaten old man with distorted features; a dilapidated hat perched atop a head that was ornamented with a long but mangy-looking beard; between a set of irregular teeth dangled a stalk of straw; and a bony frame, after a fashion, was covered with a tattered set of bib overalls, from which emerged inevitably a pair of oversized boots recognizable as "clodhoppers."

The facts of the case have been as obscure as the picture was distorted. In order to clarify the matter, biographical material was obtained on eighty-nine individuals who made up the major leadership of the party in Kansas. Included here were all elected administrative officials, congressmen, prominent leaders in the state legislature, party officials, prominent lecturers and party workers, and writers and editors of leading Populist papers. The composite picture that resulted from this analysis revealed that the Kansas Populist leader was forty-six years old in 1890; he was most likely born in Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, or Iowa, and moved to Kansas in 1871; he was, more often than not, a lawyer, but a number combined the occupation of farming or stock raising with that of teacher or editor. Only one in five was engaged strictly in agricultural pursuits, and many of those had been lawyers, or teachers, or merchants before becoming farmers.

It should be noted that forty-six was the median age for seventy-six out of eighty-nine for whom ages could be determined. The average age was just over forty-four (44.3) and forty-one was the age of greatest frequency, seven individuals having fallen in that category. Twenty-five of these Populist leaders (33.8 percent) were fifty or older,

and eight (10.5 percent) were thirty or less. Actually, forty-one out of seventy-three (56.1 percent) were natives of Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, or Iowa. The states of Indiana, Kentucky, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin accounted for another fifteen (20.5 percent), and the remainder were divided among nine other states and Canada. Information as to when these individuals came to Kansas was obtained in seventy-two of eighty-nine cases. Twenty-eight (38.8 percent) came before 1870 and only fourteen (19.4 percent) came in 1880 or later. Occupational analysis, based on findings in seventy-nine of eighty-nine cases, revealed that thirty-one (39.2 percent) had been admitted to the practice of law; twenty-three (26.4 percent) were teachers by profession or had taught school at some point in their lives; and seventeen (21.5 percent) were engaged exclusively in farming.

This leadership was, in other words, a middle-class leadership—rural middle-class, perhaps, but middle class nonetheless. More than half had graduated from one or more colleges, and counting those who had some college education, one arrives at the impressive discovery that almost two out of three had had some contact with the college environment. Actually, information revealing the educational background of this leadership group was available in sixty out of the eighty-nine cases. Thirty-one of these leaders (51.6 percent) had graduated from one or more colleges; another eight (13.3 percent) had attended college for varying periods of time; another seven (11.6 percent) had an academy or high school education, and fourteen (23.3 percent) were the recipients of only a common-school education. Even if the twenty-seven for whom no information was found were all placed in the common-school category, the percentage of college graduates would remain unusually high for the nineteenth century—thirty-one of eighty-nine, or 34.8 percent. As might be expected, the college environment that these people came out of was primarily that of the Middle West; but Eastern colleges were well represented, and three of the group were graduates of Harvard, Stanford, and Oxford universities.

The composite Kansas Populist leader had also been active in reform for some time before 1890. The information pertaining to previous party affiliation, available for fifty-four of the group, revealed that thirty-two (59.4 percent) of these Populist leaders were active in the third-party reform movement before 1890. The usual route traveled

had carried them from the Republican party to the Greenback party, then to the Prohibition party or the Union-Labor party, and then into the Populist party.

The rhetoric of Kansas Populist leaders was highly moral. Indeed their approach to reform was such that moral and political considerations were virtually one and the same. Christian ethics underlay their appraisal of society, and they were often ready with an apt Biblical allusion in appropriate situations. But contrary to what might be supposed, they were not religious fundamentalists. Of the twenty-two Populists out of eighty-nine whose biographies indicated a religious affiliation, five were Methodists, three were Unitarians, three were Quakers, and three were Congregationalists. The Baptist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Christian Churches contributed one each. Included among these were two Spiritualists and two Agnostics.

There was, among these leaders, general agreement and recognition of the social derivation of evil, a conviction that the conditions of their world had pitted brother against brother and man against immoral society in a contest with the cards stacked devastatingly against society's disadvantaged legions. For this reason, in religious matters a good many Populist leaders could agree with Samuel Wood, one of their number, when he wrote that

> God should be spelled with two o's (Good); devil without a d(evil). In fact, I reject all the dogmas of the church. My religion is a sincere desire to do right—to do the most possible good in this world. I believe sincerely in the "Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man."

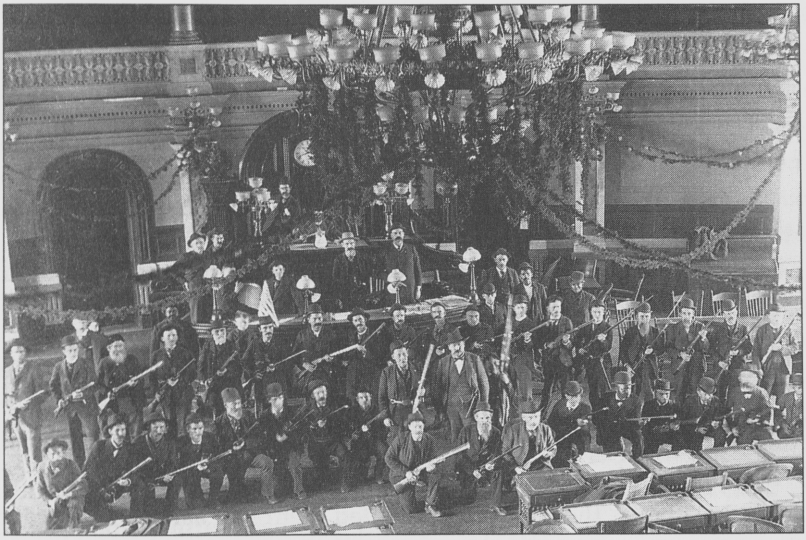
Or with Mary Elizabeth Lease when she informed religious-minded defenders of the status quo that "it was not christianity but churchanity that she assailed. . . ." Or with Kansas Populist Congressman John Grant Otis when he declared, "Our civilization demands the recognition of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, not upon Sunday only, but upon seven days in the week, and fifty-two weeks in the year." Some no doubt would have agreed with the message of John M. Dunsmore, speaker of the Populist house of representatives in 1893, which he left to be read at his funeral. Dunsmore's "Message of Love," as he called it, stated that he "came into being with a mind so constituted that blind faith in any creed or dogma could never satisfy . . . [his] desire for knowledge concerning the mysteries of life and being." He followed this with the statement: "I have never been able

to accept as true the dogmas and creeds of the so-called Christian system." Religion was to him, quoting an authority with whom he was familiar, "'The outcome of our ideas about the universe, our response to all that we know, consciously or unconsciously, of cosmic law.'" If any hint of a fundamentalist strain still remained, Dunsmore took care of that by stating: "As an evolutionist, I looked upon the story of the fall of man as a myth handed down from dead and forgotten ages, and consequently, the dogma of the atonement to be both illogical and unnecessary." But an atheist John Dunsmore was not, and he demonstrated this by quoting another authority, with whom he also agreed, who had written that "'while sin remains in the universe, God is defeated: and that everlasting punishment involves an everlasting failure; that sin never injured God, except through man. That it is the God within who is injured, rather than the God without.'"

Apparently, quite a few of these leaders were alienated from the churches, but Christian precepts maintained a strong hold on their minds. The safest and perhaps the most accurate generalization that can be made about them is this: if the Populist leadership shared a common theological outlook it would have to be ethical humanitarianism which served as a yardstick by which they judged their world.

Undoubtedly this element of humanism conditioned their reaction to the problems they recognized were being created by an industrialized society—or was it the other way around? Either way, it is certain that both were an influence in making these leaders of Kansas Populism critical of the Gospel of Wealth. To their way of thinking the popularity of the Gospel of Wealth was merely a measure of the perversion of Christian doctrine to a selfish and ruthless industrial system. At one point Senator William Peffer stated the leadership's attitude toward the doctrine rather well: in responding to the attack of a minister who considered the Populists anarchists Peffer stated that the minister

> is not crazy, nor is he ignorant, nor do I believe he is a bad man. On the other hand, I believe he averages high with the modern Christian, that he will average well with the modern preacher, whose philosophy comes to him from the Middle Ages, and whose ideas of finance come to him through the newspapers which are edited in the business offices.



Armed militia gathered in the Kansas House of Representatives during the Populist-Republican legislative war in February 1893.

A number of the Kansas Populists, moreover, like the popular lady-orator and editor Annie Diggs, were in complete harmony with the Social-Gospel movement; and some, like Kansas Congressman Jerry Botkin, boldly and defiantly proclaimed themselves Christian socialists.

By implication of argument or by direct refutation, Kansas Populist leaders rejected, as well, the so-called philosophy of social Darwinism. The evidence demonstrating their rejection of the social-Darwinian point of view is overwhelming, although it has been largely ignored in the past. Dr. Stephen McLallin, by means of *The Advocate*, repeatedly assailed Herbert Spencer's doctrine. In 1891 McLallin published a letter that fairly represented the attitude of the leadership on this matter which states:

> There never was, nor can there be, a more brutal, utterly selfish and despicable doctrine than the Darwinian "struggle for existence," when applied to the social relations of man. It justifies oppression, the aggregation of wealth in the hands of those able to grasp it, the occupation of everything the "fittest" are able to gain and keep.

The letter then pointed up, by inference, the tie between the Gospel of Wealth and social Darwinism by indicating that religion had until recently mitigated the influence of the Spencerian rationale, but

> Now this sacred ground is invaded. The pulpit is infected with the theories of material science, infected with the crude matter of materialism, which stops short of the halfway boundary between matter and spirit, and sees in man only an objectless animal.

Kansas Populists were among the first to admit that abilities among men were not equally distributed. They were willing to concede, as did future Populist Congressman William D. Vincent on the eve of the party's formation, "that some men will grow rich faster than other men under a perfect system of law." The more industrious man, said Vincent, should receive a larger share than his "indolent neighbor." But what about "the sharp unprincipled men?" he asked. To Vincent and fellow Populists, it was clear that strong men needed no special assistance to augment their natural advantages. "They need no special legislation in their behalf," said Vincent. "The object of law is supposed to be protection of the weak against the oppressions of the strong."

Over and over again Populist leaders stressed this view. To accomplish this purpose they unequivocally supported positive action by state and national government. In taking this position they were ridiculed repeatedly as paternalists, but they were scarcely bothered by the argument. In fact they countered with the argument that the country had had paternalistic government for years. As one unidentified Populist put it, "paternalism for the benefit of the few and powerful at the expense of the masses." Said he, "Every trust and combine, and every corporation is paternalism for the benefit of a class." Another, also unidentified, declared that those who were horrified by the paternalistic specter of government ownership of railroads, telegraph, and telephones had

> no fears of the centralization of power in the hands of a few irresponsible men resulting from corporate control of the same franchises, and the absorption of more than one half of the aggregate wealth of the entire country by less than 50,000 people.

Which was more dangerous to American liberty, he asked, "this latter paternalism or the paternalism of all the people?"

As a group, Kansas Populists gloried in attacking the conventional wisdom—probably because it was employed with such devastating effect against them. Judge Frank Doster, who was the intellectual giant of Kansas Populism, more than any other figure delighted in shocking his more complacent contemporaries. This character trait earned for Doster quite a reputation in Kansas politics by 1896, and in that year his fame crossed over state boundaries, as he was the man the Populists had nominated for chief justice, the "shabby, wild-eyed, rattle-brained fanatic" of William Allen White's nationally acclaimed editorial entitled "What's the Matter with Kansas?" Doster won that race, and many a conservative reporter clamored at his heels, attempting, by rather pointed questioning, to gauge the reign of terror they were sure was close at hand. The reign of terror was not forthcoming, but Doster gave some brash young reporters some pungent copy. In 1897, shortly after assuming office, the judge stated that he did not "believe in hell fire, nor human slavery, nor high tariff, nor the gold standard, nor in millionaires, nor in the wage system." Just as quickly he added:

> I do believe in the Ten Commandments and in the Golden Rule, in the initiative and referendum, and evolution and woman suffrage, and I am edging toward theosophy and Christian science, and open to conviction in favor of any vagrant fad that nobody will admit believing in until enough do to make it respectable.

On another occasion Doster told a reporter: "I have been an adherent of socialism all my life. Socialism is coming about through the socialization of what we call the public utilities. . . ." It was his contention that as quickly as matters

> become of sufficient public concern, either nationally or locally, they will pass into the hands of the general or local public, and some fine morning, if you live to a good old age, you will wake up to find yourself living in an almost communistic society, having gotten there by transitions so easy and natural you didn't realize their occurrence until the job was done.

G. C. Clemens exceeded Frank Doster in the severity of his attack on the folklore of his times. In 1894 Clemens wrote that government, as viewed by those who controlled it, was

> an ancient hand-organ, into which its ante-diluvian manufacturers put certain tunes which must never be changed. It ceaselessly grinds out the Tariff schottische, the Gold-Silver-and-Parity Waltz, the Revenue polka, the exhilerating [*sic*] gallop—"Our Foreign Relations," and the soothing measures of "After Us the Deluge."

Prior to the Populist movement, continued Clemens, political campaigns had been fought over one all-important issue, "'Who shall turn the crank?'" At any time in the past when the people had grown weary of the "endless monotony" and had "demanded a change of program," the disenchanted

> have been assured the trouble was with the unskilled or negligent wretch who was grinding the machine; but no matter how often the operator has been changed, suffering humanity's ears have still been greeted with the same old tunes which were doubtless popular with their progenitors some centuries before the flood.

Finally, wrote Clemens,

> a party has arisen to demand a more radical change; which says to the people, "let us remodel the old organ somewhat, so as to adapt it to modern music, and put into it an entirely new set of tunes. Let us substitute for this antiquated noise the beautiful strains of "The Earth was Made for All," and "All Men are Brothers Now," and . . . "Poverty is No More." But the champions of prehistoric melody exclaim in horror, "The impious innovators are going to change our consecrated tunes and even overhaul the sacred machine! Let us redeem the holy noise-box from the blasphemous wretches."

G. C. Clemens, as previously indicated, was later carried by the logic of his reasoning into the socialist camp. A number of the leaders of Kansas Populism identified themselves as advocates of a moderate or evolutionary socialism, and a portion of that group chose the same course as Clemens after 1898, but they were not all convinced that governmental machinery needed as drastic an overhaul as Clemens desired. Piecemeal change was unquestionably the design of the great majority.

The *dominant* segment of the Populist leadership in Kansas reasoned, as did Dr. Stephen McLallin, that "Competition, except in the ranks of labor, in the production of farm products, and in the retail of certain lines of merchandise," was a thing of the past. This element readily admitted the efficacy of cooperation and combination. They were willing to accept the organization of industry on a large and sys-

tematic scale. They agreed that measures were necessary so that large-scale enterprise could be made to better serve the public interest. They differed on how this was to be accomplished. One element of this group which felt that competition was no longer a practical regulator of industrial enterprise reasoned that the solution was public ownership of those enterprises that were national in scope and clearly affected with the public interest. For many of these individuals, however, as Chester M. Destler has noted, collectivist methods were simply a legitimate means of restoring free enterprise and small competitive capitalism; in particular, they felt government owned and operated railroads would contribute to that end.

Another element of that dominant segment was reluctant to support the solution of government ownership from the beginning—or in certain cases came to that position because of pragmatic politics—and placed their faith in government regulation of large-scale enterprise. The response of this latter group would later be seen more clearly in Theodore Roosevelt's New Nationalism and in the second phase of Woodrow Wilson's New Freedom.

Another faction, whose ideas represented a minority view among the leaders but may have appealed to a significant portion of the rank and file, reasoned that large-scale enterprise in the form of monopolies should be abolished so that competition would serve as an effective regulator. Those who took this position would not admit, as many of their colleagues did, that the trust was the logical product of the principle of competition in industry. The conventional wisdom was not easily evaded. Kansas Populist William Marshall must have struck some responsive chords when he pleaded with his fellow reformers to declare:

> Natural laws are good enough for us. Competition will do. The provision which God has created cannot be improved upon; neither can it be violated without injury to ourselves . . .; consequently we will suppress that instrument of artificialism and oppression, the combine, and restore to its full function and force the natural law of competition.

The approach of this faction would subsequently find an influential representation in the first phase of Woodrow Wilson's New Freedom.

Besides these fundamental differences, party leaders were to be plagued and torn by numerous problems that can only be understood by studying the history of the party itself in its logical context—from

that first whirligig campaign of 1890 to the denouement of the 1896 silver crusade and after. For the moment, suffice it to say that the leaders of Kansas Populism were by no means clodhoppers in the usual sense of that word; they were, on the whole, an extraordinary group of individuals, iconoclastic in their appraisal of society, bold and at times radical in their solutions. Their great problem derived from the fact that they were critics of an emerging industrial order whose strength and opportunity for criticism were largely the result of a wave of discontent made possible by the frustrations and misfortunes of an agrarian order functioning within a rapidly industrializing society that paid little heed to the farmer's plight.

The Women's March: Miners, Family, and Community in Pittsburg, Kansas, 1921–1922

Ann Schofield

Upon opening their morning newspapers on December 12, 1921, Kansans were shocked to learn that an "army of Amazons"—two to three thousand wives, daughters, mothers, sisters, and sweethearts of radical striking miners—had invaded the southeastern Kansas coal fields. Citizens were shocked, perhaps, but not surprised, since the southeastern corner of Kansas had long been known as the "Little Balkans," an ethnic, socialist enclave set in the midst of a conservative agricultural state. Kansans were accustomed to turmoil in the Balkans, but the large-scale involvement of women set this demonstration apart from the labor unrest that often disturbed the area. Their participation also linked the Kansas march to a time-honored tradition of women who marched bearing banners of religion or reform or shouting demands for bread. Despite the ubiquity of these incidents, however, historians have only recently begun to analyze the collective behavior of women. Social historians, perpetually eclectic in their meth-

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From Ann Schofield, "The Women's March: Miners, Family and Community in Pittsburg, Kansas, 1921–1922," *Kansas History* 7 (Summer 1984): 159–68. Reprinted with permission of the Kansas State Historical Society and Ann Schofield.

odologies, have taken a lead from anthropologists in seeking clues in collective behavior about the political awareness, class consciousness, community activism, and potential feminism of working-class women as reflected in such disparate events as kosher meat boycotts, bread riots, and mining strikes.

In the following case study of the Kansas march, these issues of politics and class, community, and feminism are approached by examining three related areas of interest: 1) the conventional wisdom concerning miners and mining communities; 2) the role of the working-class wife in industrial society; and 3) the concept of work culture. The interplay of community, family, and a unique work culture likely determined the historical activity and political perspective of the female soldiers in the "Amazon army."

Labor history projects vivid images of the mining community and its inhabitants. Mining communities, whether in Europe, Pennsylvania, or Colorado, are seen as isolated company towns set apart from civilized society and marked by poverty and high fertility rates. They are customarily envisioned as collections of rough shacks dominated by brooding mine tipples. Miners are portrayed as hard-drinking individualists with proclivities toward violence, men who share the risks and the dangers of underground work exclusively with men.

Miners' wives reflect the stereotype of working-class wives who neither work for wages nor participate in production and thus have little sympathy for strikes or labor activity which might threaten their meager family incomes. Ignorant of the male-dominated world of work, they act as a conservative force in any given labor dispute. In mining towns their role evokes figures wrapped in shawls standing at the mine entrances following an accident. They wait for history to act upon them.

While the bleak image of the mining community is an accurate one, the recent work of historians such as Joan Scott, Louise Tilly, and Meredith Tax has done much to modify the simplistic conception of the working-class wife. We now know that while industrialism created an almost impassable void between the spheres of women and men in the middle-class family, the divisions between work and home were far more permeable for the working class. Indeed, the economic demands of working-class households continued across time and necessitated the ongoing contributions of all members. The family wage

economy, as characterized by Scott and Tilly, included women as well as children who worked in factories, did seasonal work, and took in boarders or laundry to sustain the household. Working-class women directly involved in the economic welfare of the family obviously perceived class and politics differently from middle-class housewives who enjoyed more leisured lives.

The miners' wives seem to fall outside the distinctive working-class family pattern analyzed by Scott and Tilly, since a limited occupational structure and the physical isolation of the mining areas offered little opportunity for women to engage in wage labor of any kind. In the mining camps surrounding Pittsburg, Kansas, for example, census records reflect an overwhelming majority of nuclear-family households, few boarders, and a minuscule number of working wives. But in more than one instance, women of American mining communities became public activists by marching to support striking male family members. In Maryland in 1894, on the Mesabi Iron Range in 1916, and in Colorado in 1927, as well as in Kansas in 1921, women expressed community solidarity in addition to the domestic concerns of consumers. These marches indicate the potential commonalities in the relationship of women to the productive process, the impact of the household on the world of work, and the values and political consciousness within the community.

Similarly, the actions of Kansas women seem prompted by several interrelated factors. First, there was the nature of the mining community itself. Small, isolated, and highly homogeneous, it formed an unusually cohesive social unit in twentieth-century America. In many respects, its cohesion resembled that of the preindustrial village more than that of the modern town. The community was also characterized by the active participation of all members in a distinctive work culture. For men, this work culture consisted of obvious elements: a dangerous occupation in an underground work environment, coupled with the power to effect an immediate work stoppage; a shared heritage of myths, songs, and superstitions; and a focal institution, the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). Women's involvement in this culture was less clear, but nonetheless important. The stark figures of women at the mine entrances conveyed the immediacy of numerous mine accidents for miners' families, accentuated in an age which had few benefits for survivors. On a daily basis, miners' wives

were responsible for having food, clean clothing, and hot baths ready for their husbands when they returned weary and encrusted with filth from the mines. Wives shopped in company stores, lived in company houses, and participated in the few social events that were sponsored by the union. Thus, although there was a strict sexual division of labor in the mining towns, the work culture of the mines permeated the community and involved both men and women.

Towns with populations ranging from one hundred to one thousand made up the coal mining area of southeastern Kansas. Centered primarily in Crawford and Cherokee counties, the region consisted of some twenty small mining camps located from two to fifteen miles from the city of Pittsburg. Strip coal mining began in Crawford County in 1850, and the first shaft mine was sunk in 1874. By 1898 fifty-three deep pit mines were operating in Crawford County, the leading coal producing area of the state. Production of coal increased in the county from 221,741 tons in 1885 to 4,508,747 tons in 1920, the year in which production began to decline. The market for Kansas coal included both domestic and railroad use and was dominated by seven to ten large companies.

Coal miners at a deep-shaft mine near Pittsburg, Kansas, at the turn of the century.

As Kansas coal mines expanded in the late nineteenth century, the demand for labor intensified. Between 1877 and 1879, Welsh coal miners migrated from the coal fields of Pennsylvania to Kansas. Following that date until 1898, the need for workers was so great that coal companies sent agents to Illinois and Pennsylvania coal fields as well as to the port of New York to recruit miners. Agents met immigrants at the pier and promised them transportation to the Kansas coal fields if they had been miners in Europe. Miners also came to Kansas from Indian Territory (later Oklahoma) during labor disputes in that area from 1882 to 1895. Once immigrants established themselves in Kansas, they soon sent for family, friends, and countrymen to join them. By the turn of the century, southeastern Kansas was a polyglot area peopled by Italians, Germans, French, Belgians, and a variety of ethnic groups from the British Isles and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Male immigrants worked almost exclusively in the mines, while female immigrants rarely worked for wages (those who had had some form of employment in the Old Country were almost all Italian women who had worked on their fathers' farms). In 1908, 98.4 percent of all foreign-born women were found at home, as compared to 82.5 percent of American-born women. This situation had changed little by 1925. The contrast between the ethnic population of the mining camps and the surrounding environment caused one observer to note in 1911, "At no place west of the Mississippi is there a similar large group of industrial immigrants living in the very midst of a flourishing rural community."

Unlike eastern urban areas, though, work rather than ethnicity determined community in southeastern Kansas. With the exception of the Italians, immigrants did not cluster together into residential patterns, and they formed fewer distinctively ethnic organizations. The Catholic church, for example, did not send priests to minister to one particular ethnic group, and it encouraged the foreign-born to Americanize as quickly as possible. Immigrants frequently married across ethnic lines, and a large number of ethnic men married American-born women.

Certain groups can be identified with particular trends, however. Ethnicity showed some correlation with household size, at least in 1908. The U.S. Immigration Commission found that although the average household size was 4.92 people for a foreign-born family, it was

5.79 for the Irish and 5.10 for the Slovaks. The Irish and the Slovaks also were less likely to keep boarders. The Welsh and the Irish had the highest proportion of children employed in the mines: the Italians tended to own their own homes, rather than rent. The union, the mine, and the company, though, shaped the community, particularly by the early twentieth century, to a far greater extent than did church or ethnic traditions.

The coal companies and the mines themselves dominated life in the mining camps. Coal companies built these camps—Franklin, Arma, Mulberry, Camp 50, Chicopee, and a host of others—to house workers as close as possible to the shaft mines. As one geographer explained this pattern of settlement, "There is thus created near the openings of the mines a sort of artificial city, with houses exactly alike which are the 'result' and the necessary 'sign' of the work underground." Many of these houses, or more appropriately shacks, were owned by the mining companies, as were the company stores where miners and their wives bought groceries in exchange for scrip. Some camps boasted churches, schools, and dance halls, while others were simply dreary rows of three-room shacks. There was a higher incidence of smallpox, measles, scarlet fever, typhoid, malarial fever, pneumonia, and other respiratory illnesses in the camps than in the surrounding area. Nutritional standards also were lower; stews and soups rather than meat provided the main protein source for families' diets. In a poignant testament to this fact, a Dunkirk schoolchild once began an essay on cows with the sentence: "The meat of a cow is called soup-bone." Thus, despite their proximity to a substantially sized city like Pittsburg, peoples' lives in these communities were circumscribed by a uniform poverty and insecurity.

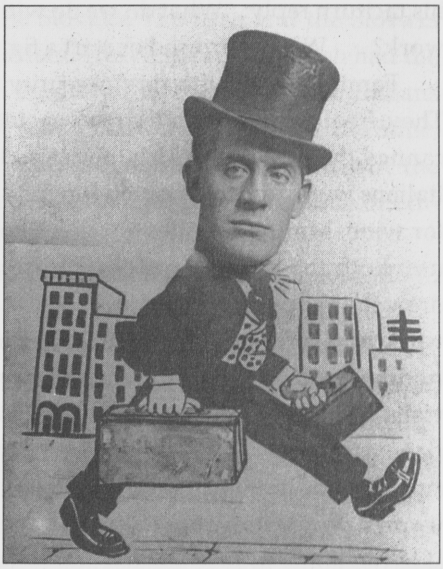
The mine dictated the rhythms of life not only for the miners but for the entire community. Kansas was no exception to the universal statement that mining is a high-risk occupation. In 1920, for example, there were 21 fatal and 1,011 non-fatal accidents in Crawford County mines. The 7,562 men who were employed in the mines worked an average of 181 days for an average wage of three dollars a day. Therefore, they were idle one-third of the year. When asked by a reporter how miners amused themselves when out of work, one miner testified to the economic and psychic instability of the miner's family with

his taciturn reply: "What do we do with ourselves when we are out of work? . . . Why sit around or start a fight. There is nothing else to do."

Families dealt with this insecurity in a number of different ways. They frequently planted large vegetable gardens and preserved or canned the produce, which they stored in cellars behind their shacks. Italians were especially noted for growing herbs, fig trees, and grapes for wine. Mining families also kept hogs and chickens for their own use. Both the sameness of their existence and the shared insecurity drew the people of the camps into tight community networks. Unions, work, and sport bound men together, and women were connected by trading products of home manufacture and through the midwives' visits from house to house. A woman may have worked before marriage as a "hired girl," but the occupational structure of the camps and the traditional domestic obligations precluded wage work for women. When one miner's widow was asked if she had worked outside the home to help make ends meet, she answered incredulously, "of course not, no one did—who would take care of the children?"

The politics of southeastern Kansas were painted with broad, red strokes. Girard, the county seat of Crawford County, a familiar name to students of American socialism, was the site of a press which published a number of socialist periodicals including the national socialist weekly, the *Appeal to Reason*. Eugene Debs lived in Girard for a number of years and Kate Richards O'Hare, Mother Jones, and other socialist luminaries frequently visited and lectured in the area. "Mother" especially was well known to the members and leaders of UMWA District 14. The Socialist party had an active following and many camps had several elected Socialist officials: Arma, for example, had all Socialist officials in 1911, and Dunkirk had an entire Socialist school board in that same year. The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) added to the radical activity in southeastern Kansas, although it organized primarily in the oil fields of Butler County and among migratory wheat harvest workers. By 1920, activities of the Kansas Communist party attracted the attention of the state attorney general's office to Kansas' "red sector."

The Republican citizens of Crawford County were clearly distressed by this radical and foreign element in their midst. Their fear of the "enemy within" was heightened by the area's involvement in the bitter 1919–20 coal strike, as well as by the post-war "Red scare." Be-



Alexander Howat was the controversial president of District 14 of the United Mine Workers of America. When Howat ordered 300 miners to strike in 1921, he was sentenced to six months in prison for violating the industrial court act.

fore the 1919 strike ended, mine operators used the National Guard and college boys as strikebreakers. The strike engendered such anti-union feelings among Kansans that in 1920 the Kansas legislature passed the Court of Industrial Relations Act, which outlawed strikes and subjected all labor disputes to arbitration by the Kansas Court of Industrial Relations.

In 1921, Alexander Howat, the colorful and controversial president of District 14, ran afoul of both the industrial court and the United Mine Workers of America. In the fall of 1921, Howat ordered a work stoppage of three hundred miners over a wage dispute involving a young worker. Howat was tried for violating the industrial court act, convicted, and sentenced to six months in prison. On the day in September that he began serving his sentence, the miners of District 14 walked off their jobs in protest. John L. Lewis, the international president of the UMWA, condemned this action as a violation of contract and ordered the miners back to work. He suspended the district and installed a provisional president for the region, Van A. Bittner. The miners stayed out on strike without benefits from the national union. Miners' locals in Illinois, in a show of solidarity, hastened to aid the Kansas strikers and sent money as well as beans, flour, bacon, and coffee to help Kansas mining families. By mid-November, however,

some miners began going back to work, and the mines were soon operating at about one-half of their capacity. The stage was then set for the women's march. Sixty years later, Anna Okorn shook her head when she recalled women's responses to the strikebreakers. "People were starving," she said, "and Mr. Howat was in jail and the women felt it wasn't fair."

On Sunday, December 11, five hundred women from the various mining camps that surrounded Pittsburg crowded into a church hall at Franklin. They issued a statement in the name of "the wives of the loyal union men of Kansas" in which they condemned both the "Alien Industrial Slavery Law" and the international union. Proudly they proclaimed "it is our duty to stand shoulder to shoulder with our husbands in this struggle." Finally, they defined their struggle as "the fight for our democracy that we was [*sic*] to receive after the World War." Their words echoed feelings of solidarity with male members of the mining community and rhetorically linked the miners' struggle to American democratic ideals. In so doing, the women identified with ideals of justice and democracy which they felt should have been defended by the international union and, in a larger sense, by the American government. Undoubtedly, they considered their cause one of conserving values, rather than one of revolt.

At 4:00 a.m. the following morning, between two and three thousand women assembled at Franklin and began marching to the mines. During the next three days, militant crowds of singing, shouting women marched from mine to mine, frequently separating into smaller columns. They talked to and reasoned with workers and sometimes, when reason failed, resorted to more violent injunctions. Their mission was to stop the work that was breaking the strike. Despite the straightforward nature of the event, contemporary accounts constructed the narrative of the march in strikingly different ways, reflecting the political tensions between labor and capital. On the one hand, the *New York Times*, the *Topeka State Journal*, and the *Pittsburg Daily Headlight*, all "establishment" papers, stressed that the march was a male-directed "army of Amazons" (no notice given to the contradiction) which consisted of foreigners acting as a violent mob. On the other hand, the *Workers Chronicle*, *Il Lavatore Italiano*, and the socialist *Appeal to Reason* emphasized the spontaneous, moral, and peaceful nature of the demonstration.

The *Topeka State Journal* evoked a military tone as it described the first day of the march:

> Headed by the girl's band of Arma, playing martial music, "General" Annie Stovich, the Joan Arc [*sic*] of the "Amazon army" led her invading hosts, already weary and footsore, into the enemy country, this afternoon.

The article went on to describe the "pent-up fury of the women" and claimed that "men viewed the situation with alarm, for it was believed that even bayonets will not deter the strong, highly temperamental foreign women. . . . The *New York Times* explicitly characterized the marchers as both foreign and unwomanly. In an editorial entitled "Extending the Sphere of Women," it condemned the Amazon warriors from the "Red sector" of Kansas, for "what they did was less a demonstration of courage than a willingness to capitalize and exploit the weakness that is ascribed to them."

The question of violence during the march sharply divided contemporary journalists—were the women acting out of an appropriate family ethic or brazenly displaying unfeminine qualities? The socialist *Appeal to Reason* asserted:

> The whole episode of the marching women was remarkably peaceful. . . . conducted with . . . admirable restraint. The demonstration throughout was more moral than physical in its nature. The wives of the strikers wished to shame the men who had returned to work—to enforce upon their consciousness the fact that they had deserted their comrades in a righteous struggle.

The *New York Times*, however, described a different scene when women arrived at one of the mines on December 13:

> The workers' dinner buckets were taken and a bombardment of bread, butter, bacon, jelly, eggs and other food was begun. The buckets, as fast as they were emptied, were smashed by the rioters. Coffee compartments were opened and the working miners as well as the Sheriff were showered with the drink intended for their lunch. Only two or three of the men resisted the women.

Stories of violence continued after the march. Richard J. Hopkins, the attorney general of Kansas, complained of the difficulty of finding prosecution witnesses. One potential witness was driving to one of the mines to work. "He was stopped and badly beaten by several of the women and refused to file a complaint altho he knew and recog-

On December 12, 1921, 2,000–3,000 women assembled at the Franklin mine and prepared to march in support of Alexander Howat and the striking miners. This photograph appeared in the Topeka Daily Capital *December 20.*

nized more than one of his assailants. . . ." The fear of community sanctions seems to have superseded legal or police pressure. In another explicitly identified incident, Mrs. Nick Bossetti and Mrs. Walter Carbaugh were arrested following the march and accused of assaulting Walter Madden at Central Mine 49. They supposedly dragged him out of the mine office, beating him and tearing his clothing.

As with the issue of violence, contemporaries were divided on the leadership and the initiation of the women's march. Officials tried to make a case that a few militants coerced many women into participating in the march, thus downplaying the significance of the size and the duration of the three-day disturbance. To this end they found several women, including one schoolteacher from Ringo, who repudiated their participation in the march and identified the speakers at the December 11 organizational meeting as Mary Skubitz, a socialist activist, a Mrs. Wilson, and a Dr. P. L. Howe.

Another effort to discredit the march, at least as an autonomous activity of working-class women, was made by the *New York Times*, which claimed that "the Howat forces sent their women into the fight. . . ." And journalist Henry J. Haskell wrote in *Outlook* that "radical Howat followers undertook a policy of terrorism. Women were incited to lead mobs and threaten miners who stood by the International organization." In a similar vein, Van Bittner, the provisional president of District 14, censured cowardly men who sent their mothers, wives, and sisters out to riot.

In contrast to this stream of condemnation, the *Appeal to Reason* stated that the idea of marching was entirely spontaneous with the women. None of the Howat leaders advised this tactic, and Howat, from his jail cell, expressed his regret that the violence had occurred. Another labor paper, the *Workers Chronicle*, noted that men were barred from the organizational meeting Sunday night. Finally, Fannie Wimler, an active participant in the march, responded to Bittner's charges in a letter to the *Pittsburg Daily Headlight*:

> Husbands, sons, and brothers aren't cowards and haven't anything to do with our affairs. We are doing this on our own accord, and what we mean is business. . . . If you don't think us responsible, we'll just have to put the responsibility on you, for you are the one who is driving us to this. . . . We don't want any blood shed here in Kansas like there was in the Ludlow strike, and in Alabama and Mingo County, W. Va. What we want is our industrial freedom and liberty and we want our men to be good, true, loyal union men and 100 percent American citizens, not like you and your dirty bunch of strike breakers. In the World War we bought liberty bonds. . . .

In addition to its proclamation of autonomy, Wimler's letter struck the patriotic tune of the marchers' original statement. It reflected also a class-conscious mentality linking their actions to labor struggles elsewhere as well as a conception that their cause was truly American.

The patriotic theme was further expressed by the way in which the marchers carried an American flag during the march and sometimes stretched it across mine entrances to prevent miners from entering. In several instances they forced miners to kneel and kiss the flag. Apparently, the marchers desperately sought to identify themselves as Americans, particularly in light of such statements as Gov. Henry Allen's proclamation that "the Kansas government does not intend to surrender to foreigners and their female relatives."

Nor did Pittsburg plan to hang out the white flag as rumors spread that the city would be the next target of the marching Amazons. Following the December 13 march, the Crawford County sheriff (who one informant claimed was thrown into a pool of water by the women) requested a deputized force of one thousand to deal with the emergency. Veterans were recruited to defend the city, and rifles and shotguns were stockpiled in the Stillwell Hotel for their use. Local law enforcement efforts, however, did not dampen the enthusiasm of the women's army. On December 15, three days after the disturbances began, three troops of Kansas National Guard cavalry arrived at Pittsburg and were subsequently stationed at Ringo, Mulberry, and Franklin; Lawrence later sent a machine gun detachment.

Following the march, sheriff's deputies arrested forty-nine women on charges of unlawful assembly, assault, and disturbing the peace. They were held in bond of $750, rather than the customary $200. The harsh legal reprisals reflected middle-class fears and hostility, while the arrest lists testified to the mixed ethnic character and socialist influence of the event. Italians, French, Slovaks, Americans, and others had joined forces to express shared community and family concerns which superseded ethnic differences. Their leaders included Mary Skubitz and her mother Julia Youvain, socialists and miners' wives; Phil Callery, another local socialist, served as the marchers' defense attorney.

Just as journalists couched the march in terms of gender, Callery based his case on the defendants' maternal responsibilities. His defense for the women who were arraigned on charges of unlawful assembly, assault, and disturbing the peace was one of "mass Psychology," which he claimed frequently led people to do things in time of labor unrest that they would not do individually. Finally, he cautioned that "the trial of the cases at this time would tend to again stir the passions of the community." In so many words, Callery defined the collective, community-inspired, and gender-specific nature of the march. The court too seemed to understand, for the women pleaded guilty and were fined from one dollar to two hundred dollars, paroled, and ordered to pay court costs.

This spirited chapter in American labor history unfortunately must be closed on a negative note. On January 13, defeated both by local opposition and the international union, Howat ordered all striking

miners back to work. The UMWA gave each local sole power to accept or reject applicants for membership in newly established locals. Each returning miner would have to pay a ten-dollar initiation fee and would be a silent, dues-paying member with no voice or vote in the union.

Following the march, Kansas authorities tightened their control of the turbulent Balkans with antilabor measures such as laws passed by Girard, Cherokee, Arma, and Mulberry, under pressure of the Kansas attorney general, which made it illegal for men to refuse to work when there was work available in the area. The penalty for noncompliance was ten to thirty days at hard labor.

The march also fanned the paranoia of local and state officials about subversive female aliens and underscored the distance that loomed between most Kansans and the mining camps. To give two examples, A. J. Curran, judge of the district court of Pittsburg, wrote to Mrs. John Tracy, chairman of the Americanization Committee of the Pittsburg Women's Auxiliary, about the law whereby naturalization of a male alien gave citizenship to his wife, a sensitive issue in light of the political rights and privileges conferred on women by the recently passed Nineteenth Amendment. "It is a known fact that there are anarchists, communists and bolsheviki among the alien women in this community," Curran stated. "As you know it was the lawlessness of the women in this community a few months ago which made necessary the stationing of the state militia in our county for two months to preserve law and order." In another pronouncement, Al F. Williams, the U.S. District Attorney, threatened to deport the "worst radicals" for he claimed that "when a situation like the present arises they all flock and act together like so many sheep." Faced with such sentiments, many marchers fled the area; authorities searched in vain for these women when warrants were issued for their arrest.

Despite its dismal ending, the women's march holds several important lessons for one interested in questions about American culture and women's history. As social scientists suggest, in episodes of collective behavior, ideologies and myths which lie beneath the surface of a society emerge. Thus the march discloses information about the roles, values, and political consciousness of women in this working-class community. The march itself tells in its own "language" how work, class, and politics shaped the subculture of a community while

acknowledging hegemonic pressure from the surrounding district and dominant culture. The way in which contemporary observers structured the narrative of the event, evoking images of "Amazons" and foreign hordes, shows that the women's march represented a clear and distinct challenge to a social order based upon separate social roles of men and women as well as upon docile and subservient foreign workers. The women marchers symbolically used the traditional American flag to invoke a heritage of American democracy and show that they were entitled to the rights of citizens. They went to their kitchens for their weapon of red pepper, and by emptying dinner buckets they conveyed the message that they were now violently taking away the food that as nurturing women they had always given.

Finally, the actions of the women defy the interpretation of conventional labor historiography which characterizes wives of workers and strikers as conservative and frequently antiunion and antistrike. The indirect relationship of women to means of production might support this theory. The Kansas women, as indicated earlier, however, were not alone in their public expression of community solidarity. In a number of instances in industrializing America, women marched to support the strikes of male family members. The common occurrence of women's strikes in mining communities seems to imply that the size, isolation, and high occupational health hazards created a sense of shared community involvement in the work culture of the mines. This involvement was unequaled in other industrial settings where the public and the private spheres of life were less integrated and where the lines between the middle and the working classes were less sharply drawn. In addition, the single employment character of the communities and the fact that supplementary income and consumable items were produced in the domestic sphere increased the unity of the community.

Several issues about such demonstrations remain problematic, however. The first is the political consciousness of the marching women. In the case of the Kansas march, it is clear that miners who returned to work posed a political threat to mining-camp communities. They shattered the cohesiveness of the working-class communities and broke the balance of cooperation that sustained these communities in tension with the world around them. Women who marched certainly could have perceived the political dimensions of their ac-

tions or, like Mrs. Okorn, they could have been motivated simply by the fact that "people were starving and it wasn't fair."

It is tantalizing as well to speculate about the intrafamily dynamics which existed in the mining camps. Studies of the Great Depression and family life indicate that cycles of poverty and unemployment alter the decision-making process, roles, and authority relationships in the working-class family. Clearly, the organization and results of the women's march, as well as the march itself, reflected the strength and initiative of women in the mining community within their households. As the historian Meredith Tax reminds us when writing of the collective behavior of mining women, "These women had their own reasons for wanting to fight. In the company towns and migrant labor camps of the West, people were oppressed as members of family units rather than as individuals." Thus it would seem that much of the answer to the original question of why women marched lies within the structure of the community as well as within the working-class family itself.

The massive social changes wrought by industrialization altered the work women and men did and changed the family itself as well. These changes, whether in work, gender roles, or the family, cannot be studied outside of the community context in which they operated, for the community at many levels provided reasons for their existence and a framework in which they functioned. It is good to remember also, in light of the preceding discussion, that women's activities cannot be placed in neat historical categories labeled "gender" without considering class. Historians of American women must be consistently aware of the very permeable membrane between the public and the private spheres of life for working-class women. They must understand that when women marched they marched for bread . . . and sometimes for roses, too.

Against the Odds: A History of African Americans in Kansas

Deborah L. Dandridge and William M. Tuttle, Jr.

For African Americans, the state of Kansas has functioned on two levels, one symbolic and romanticized, the other harshly real. As the place where John Brown waged guerrilla warfare against chattel slavery, Kansas represented the "promised land" of freedom and equality to African Americans. Yet in Kansas, too, African Americans encountered the unrelenting force of the color line. "I kem *[sic]* to Kansas to live in a free state," explained a free-soil clergyman in 1856, "and I don't want niggers a-tramping over my grave."

The first documented African Americans in Kansas arrived in the 1820s. Some were free and others purchased their freedom, but most were enslaved and in the service of Army officers, fur traders, missionaries, and Native Americans. With the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, the territory became "Bleeding Kansas," the nation's battleground over slavery. While violence erupted between proslavery and antislavery forces, increasing numbers of African Americans sought refuge in Kansas from bondage. It was "not at all strange," wrote a local abolitionist, "that hardly a week passed that some way-

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worn bondsman did not find his way into Lawrence, the best-advertised anti-slavery town in the world. . . . " In 1860, when Kansas adopted a constitution that prohibited slavery, African Americans in neighboring slave states immediately fled to Kansas to work as free people. "I didn't worry," explained Robert Skeggs, a blacksmith. "I knew if I could make a living for myself and him [the slaveholder], too, I could get along some way with him left off." The census reflected this influx; the African-American free population jumped from 192 in 1855 to 625 in 1860. In 1861 Kansas entered the union as a free state; it had been a turbulent era. "Kansas was born in a struggle for liberty and freedom," historian Richard B. Sheridan writes, "a struggle that raised the curtain on the Civil War and sounded the death knell of slavery."

Kansas remained a major destination of African American migration for the next two decades. During the Civil War, several thousand reached the state by braving the Missouri River; some came on skiffs, some swam, and still others walked across the ice in winter. By 1865, Kansas's black population had increased to 12,527. Many newcomers found work as farm laborers while others became domestic servants, but in Lawrence and other towns the leading occupation for African Americans was soldiering. Indeed, during the war, about one of every six African Americans in Kansas was serving in the Union Army. In 1862 in Missouri, black troops from Kansas were the first African American soldiers to engage the enemy in military action, as members of the First Regiment of Kansas Colored Volunteers.

African Americans continued to come to Kansas after the Civil War, and in 1877 a second great wave of black migration began. Over the next four years, between 40,000 and 70,000 African Americans migrated to the state. Some moved on, but most stayed. Various factors coalesced to trigger the exodus: Reconstruction had ended and, with it, all hope for racial equality in the South. Both political repression and poverty were widespread, and with white supremacy entrenched in the South, blacks feared that slavery might be reestablished. They needed to act, and Kansas stood in the mind of Exodusters in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Tennessee as both a beacon of freedom and a place where they could own their farms. A few hundred migrants came in 1877 and established several all-black communities, the best known of which was Nicodemus in western Kansas, but what

started slowly in 1877 became a mass movement in 1879. Railroads and speculators advertised Kansas as peaceful and idyllic, filled with free land. "Kansas Exodus Fever" spread, and thousands of families decided to make the move; by 1880 Kansas's African American population exceeded 48,000.

With the end of the exodus, Kansas's black population grew slowly. It stood at 52,000 in 1900; 58,000 in 1920; and 65,000 in 1940. These were years of community building. From the beginning African Americans had established their own institutions. Excluded from white churches, blacks in 1859 established their own churches in Kansas City, Leavenworth, and other towns. They also founded mutual aid and benevolent societies such as the Ladies' Refugee Aid Society, established in Lawrence in 1864, and they asserted their political rights. The first of the annual Kansas State Colored Conventions, for example, met in 1863 to demand political equality and an end to racial discrimination. African Americans established not only more churches in the coming years, but also masonic lodges, women's clubs, and schools. Furthermore, to provide needed professional training and services in Kansas City, blacks founded both a college (Western University in 1881) and a hospital (Douglass Hospital in 1899). Blacks in Topeka established the Kansas Industrial and Educational Institute, which aspired to become the "Tuskegee of the Midwest" in 1895. During these years, too, the all-black cavalry units, popularly known as the Buffalo soldiers, were stationed in the state. In various ways African Americans

Established in 1878, Nicodemus is the oldest and only remaining all African American town west of the Mississippi River.

in the state made productive economic lives for themselves; in addition to farming, some blacks became teachers, coal miners, and police officers, while others worked on the railroads and in the meat-packing houses.

African Americans in Kansas established their own newspapers and engaged in electoral politics. Whereas three black newspapers were established in the 1870s, thirteen new papers appeared in the 1880s, twenty eight in the 1890s, and ten more between 1900 and 1920. Some of these newspapers were Democratic and some Populist, but most were Republican. Indeed, black voters, who were courted by the other parties, were very important to the Republicans. Kansas's first African American state legislator, Alfred Fairfax, a Republican, was elected in 1889, and three years later, Edward P. McCabe, a Republican lawyer and landowner in Nicodemus, was elected to statewide office as the state auditor.

African Americans established a variety of businesses in Kansas, partly in recognition of the racial segregation or outright exclusion practiced, for example, by hotels and restaurants in the state. Racial discrimination was also widespread in the schools. While many Kansas communities, especially in rural areas, had mixed schools, others did not. In 1879 the Kansas Legislature gave "first-class cities" with populations above 10,000 the authority to establish racially separate grade schools, and Leavenworth and Topeka did so. High schools in Kansas were generally mixed until 1905, when the legislature granted Kansas City, Kan., the authority to establish a separate secondary school, Sumner High School, a first-rate institution which graduated several generations of college-bound men and women until its close in 1978. Indeed, African American children generally received good educations in Kansas whether in integrated or all-black schools. Access to quality schools was a primary motivation for southern migration to Kansas, and the illiteracy rate for African Americans in the state dropped from 32.8 percent in 1890 to 8.8 percent in 1920.

African Americans in Kansas could matriculate in the state's public colleges and universities; and since neighboring state universities, such as those in Missouri and Oklahoma, excluded African Americans, black high school graduates from these states also enrolled at the University of Kansas and other colleges in the state. Still, admission to these institutions did not mean that black students would share

Langston Hughes, well-known poet and novelist, grew up in Lawrence and became a key figure in the Harlem Renaissance.

equally in the benefits of campus life. At the University of Kansas in the 1920s, the union cafeteria was segregated, as were cultural events and even some classrooms, with blacks seated alphabetically in the back row. The university waived its swimming requirement for black students in order to keep them out of the pool. Therefore, while black students at all levels took advantage of educational opportunities in Kansas, they usually did so as second-class citizens.

Economic opportunities for blacks in white-collar jobs and the professions were sorely limited in Kansas. As a result, many of the state's best and brightest left the state upon graduation from high school or college. George Washington Carver, whose research into the uses of the peanut earned worldwide acclaim, was a graduate of high school in Minneapolis, Kans. George Nash Walker left Lawrence for vaudeville and achieved success as a comedian with his partner, Bert Williams. Oscar De Priest, a young man from Salina, moved to Chicago and, in 1928, became the first African American elected to Congress in the twentieth century. Raised in Lawrence, Langston Hughes, the poet, gained fame in Harlem in the 1920s. Throughout the twentieth century, Kansas has been an exporter of black minds and talent, and blacks from Kansas have made distinguished contributions to American life.

In art, the African-inspired drawings of Aaron Douglas from Topeka decorated Alain Locke's *The New Negro* (1925); Douglas became a professor at Fisk University in Tennessee. In music, Eva Jessye, a native of Coffeyville, composed oratorios and was the original choral director of George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* (1935). More recently, one Gordon Parks from Fort Scott—not the Gordon Parks, Sr. or Jr., discussed in other articles—has become famous not only for his photographs, but also for his writings, compositions, and films. John Slaughter from Topeka helped shape federal policy as the director of the National Science Foundation and has served as the president of Occidental College. Also from Topeka, Franklin E. Peterson, a pilot who, during the Vietnam War, was the first African American to command a squadron in the U.S. Navy or Marine Corps, became the first black marine general. Another distinguished Kansan is Delano Lewis. Born in Arkansas City, Kans., Lewis became the president of National Public Radio in 1994.

Since 1940, a substantial number of blacks have migrated to Kansas. Indeed, the third great wave of African-American migration began in that year. Stimulated by job opportunities in the state's defense industries, Kansas's black population has more than doubled, from 65,138 in 1940 to 143,076 in 1990. With population growth came renewed civil rights activism, particularly in towns with branches of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). A case against the segregated schools of Topeka brought on behalf of Linda Brown, an elementary school student in that city, reached the U. S. Supreme Court as *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954). The Court's landmark decision found that segregated education is unconstitutional. The first post-*Brown* Sit-In occurred in Wichita in 1958, when eight black high school and college students took their places at the lunch counter of the Dockum Drug Store and asked for service. They were spat upon and verbally abused, but the eight returned every day for the next week, at the end of which the drugstore capitulated and racial barriers tumbled throughout the city.

Beginning in the 1960s, black political representation increased substantially in Kansas. Augmenting the burgeoning black population in Kansas cities and towns was legislative reapportionment, which had been ordered by the Supreme Court in 1962. This decision *(Baker vs. Carr)* effectively shifted legislative seats from rural to urban areas.

In 1956, for example, one African American sat in the Kansas legislature; twenty years later, six blacks were serving in the House and Senate. Moreover, in the 1980s African Americans were elected mayors of a number of smaller cities, including Abilene, Coffeyville, and Leavenworth. Meanwhile, the civil rights and black power movements have produced lasting institutions, such as the University of Kansas's Department of African and African-American Studies, established in 1970 and recognized by the federal government as a national resource center in 1994. In recent years, too, the black middle class has swelled in Kansas. In 1950, only 4 percent of African Americans in Kansas earned their living in professional jobs; by 1970, however, that figure had risen to 9 percent, and by 1990 it reached 16 percent.

Despite such political and economic progress, equality has remained elusive in other areas, such as education. The road from *Brown* to meaningful school desegregation has been strewn with obstacles, including gerrymandered school districts. The struggle for equality has continued, however. In 1979 black parents in Topeka showed that the city's schools were still segregated and revived the Brown case. And in 1994, a full forty years after the Brown decision, a federal judge began hearing plans to eliminate all vestiges of school segregation in Topeka.

Much has changed for African Americans in Kansas; but much remains the same. For this reason, the long-ago uttered words of a Kansas black newspaper seem surprisingly up-to-date. Over one hundred years ago—on August 21, 1891—the Kansas City *American Citizen* called for the day:

> When Negroes' rights are granted,
> When all the Race is free.
> When blacks and whites are all alike
> And no differences we see. . . .

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Chapter 6

Depression and Recovery, 1930s–1940s

The problems of the Great Depression and World War II were not, of course, unique to Kansas. The accompanying Dust Bowl years, however, created extremely difficult times in Kansas during the 1930s. Chapter Six examines the Great Depression in Southwest Kansas, the 1932 Kansas gubernatorial race, and the home front during World War II.

In "Hard Times-Hungry Years: Failure of the Poor Relief in Southwestern Kansas, 1930–1933" Pamela Riney-Kehrberg, an assistant professor of history at Illinois State University at Normal, describes the devastating dimensions of poverty that resulted from the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl. In southwestern Kansas in the 1930s the small towns were dependent on farm income. County governments in this region did not have the resources and structure to cope with environmental and economic disaster. Riney-Kehrberg's case studies of Kansas communities in the Great Depression illustrate the abject failure of local relief. Large-scale federal relief, begun in 1933, would be necessary to relieve the area's plight.

Donald R. McCoy, professor of history at the University of Kansas, provides an in-depth look at the Great Depression's influence on the 1932 gubernatorial election in Kansas. The 1930 gubernatorial election witnessed two rare events in Kansas history: the strong showing of a last minute write-in candidate, the infamous Dr. John R. Brinkley (for a discussion of Brinkley's candidacy see also the article "Images of Twentieth-Century Kansas" in Chapter 5), and the election of a

The economic depression of the 1930s was compounded by drought and dust storms in Kansas. Dust storms ravaged western Kansas in dry years when rangeland was converted to wheat fields, and some "suitcase farmers" and tenants did not practice soil conservation.

Democratic governor. In 1932 Dr. Brinkley again ran for governor (this time his name was on the ballot), along with the incumbent Democratic governor, Harry Woodring, and a progressive Republican, Alfred M. Landon. The election occurred in one of the most dismal years in the nation's history, and Kansans felt the full brunt of falling wheat prices and record unemployment. The Republican party was downhearted after losing to Woodring and George McGill (United States senator) in 1930. Republican President Hoover was widely blamed for the depression. That blame was spread to other Republicans. Professor McCoy reviews this election and the lessons it taught.

Patrick G. O'Brien, professor of history at Emporia State University, describes the seismic changes the war years brought to Kansas in "Kansas at War: The Home Front, 1941–1945." At the beginning of the war the horse-mounted Second Cavalry Division was stationed at Fort Riley, the chief military installation in the state. By 1945 Wichita was manufacturing the revolutionary B-29 bomber and the crew was trained in Salina. O'Brien also describes how average Kansans responded to the challenges of this war, from producing and conserving food supplies to participating in air raid drills and practice blackouts. His article looks at women, minorities, children, service groups, religious organizations, and other groups affected by World War II.

Hard Times, Hungry Years: Failure of the Poor Relief in Southwestern Kansas, 1930–1933

Pamela Riney-Kehrberg

For millions of Americans, the decade of the 1930s meant hard times. A massive economic downturn brought unemployment, underemployment, and general belt-tightening to most American families. In Kansas, and indeed, most of the Great Plains, those years also brought a severe drought. The people of southwestern Kansas were particularly hard hit, suffering blinding dirt storms in addition to eight years of abnormally dry conditions. Many farmers harvested a bumper crop of wheat in 1931, only to find that terribly depressed prices had rendered it hardly worth the cost of cutting. Throughout the remainder of the decade, area farmers produced crops that ranged from disappointing to disastrous.

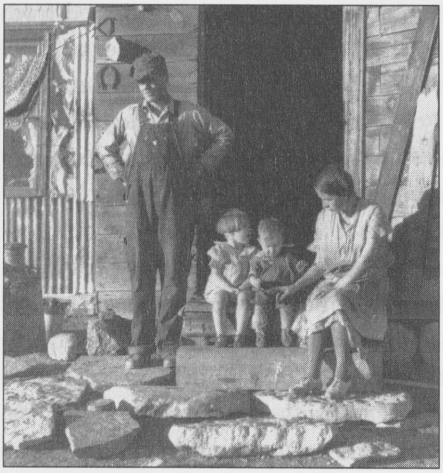
What resulted was widespread poverty and hopelessness that drained the area of one quarter of its population between 1931 and 1940.

From Pamela Riney-Kehrberg, "Hard Times, Hungry Years: Failure of the Poor Relief in Southwestern Kansas, 1930–1933," *Kansas History* 15, no. 3 (Autumn 1978), 155–76. Reprinted with permission of the Kansas State Historical Society and Pamela Riney-Kehrberg.

The lack of organized welfare administration in most rural Kansas communities compounded this poverty and hopelessness. At the onset of the Great Depression, southwestern Kansas was an accumulation of towns of small to moderate size with their rural hinterlands, and a population almost entirely dependent upon farm income for its livelihood. These were also relatively new and prosperous communities, largely peopled in the boom years of the early twentieth century. Their residents had little experience of widespread hardship, other than that attendant to pioneering, and their county governments had virtually no structures designed to cope with the conditions created by a serious depression and drought. As a result, local relief efforts, both public and private, crumbled in the face of the disasters of the 1930s.

Between the onset of the Great Depression and the early months of 1933, most of the burden of providing relief fell upon the unready shoulders of local government officials. They faced problems of staggering dimensions. By early 1931, many southwestern Kansans were barely surviving. The wheat price crash devastated the area's economy, and then the drought set in. Officials of local governments were entirely unprepared to administer relief on a large scale. Traditionally, county commissioners had provided what little aid they dispensed on a haphazard, case-by-case basis. In January of 1930, for example, the Haskell County commissioners presided over a welfare program that consisted of only a few dollars that they allowed for rent on one woman's home. By July of 1931, their disbursals had risen to only $3.57, allocated for supplies for the poor. Not until December of 1931 did the commissioners create a Poor Fund, and then they allocated only $23.97 in aid of two families.

Once commissioners recognized the need for welfare programs and created poor funds, they were still unsure how to manage the day to day business of providing relief. Only after local grocers began handling relief cases did Stevens County commissioners realize that they had to limit allowed food aid to a few staple goods. Instead of allowing clients to purchase anything that they wanted, the board limited them to basic items such as flour, salt meat, beans, rice, coffee, lard, sugar, and potatoes. In Stanton County, officials found it impossible to keep up with the expense of grocery orders, and instead created a storeroom in the basement of the courthouse, hoping to reduce costs



Counties in southwestern Kansas lacked the resources to aid their own people in the early years of the Great Depression. Meager funds to help the poor were quickly exhausted, and area residents made do on virtually nothing. The availability of federal relief funds, beginning in 1933, eased a difficult situation.

through bulk buying. While they experimented with ways of providing necessities to their constituents, most counties still relied on a cumbersome investigation procedure that required the commissioners, meeting in full session, to vote on each case. They had yet to discover the virtues of, or feel the necessity for, full-time case workers.

Most of these counties lacked even the traditional, if unpleasant, means of caring for their indigent citizens, the county poor farm. A survey undertaken by the Kansas Emergency Relief Committee, a state welfare agency, revealed that only three of the sixteen counties in the southwestern corner of the state operated poor farms. Wichita County housed less than ten inmates, Ford County between ten and twenty, and Finney County fewer than thirty. Finney County's commissioners lamented these inadequate facilities because the lack of beds forced the county to pay more than $125 a month in rent for families unable to pay for their own housing. The commissioners made plans, never carried out, to shelter their relief families. Only the advent of federally funded housing programs forestalled disaster.

Inexperience, the growing number of jobless workers, and worsening drought conditions soon bankrupted most local governments in southwestern Kansas. By mid-1932 and early 1933, county commissioners throughout the area presided over empty Poor Funds. Suffering this affliction, Hamilton County's Board of Commissioners issued the following statement, effectively abandoning its relief program: "Whereas the Poor Fund of Hamilton County has long since been ex-

hausted, further pauper aid must of necessity be discontinued from and after this date." This situation still existed in the summer of 1933, when the board informed the township trustees that it would endorse orders against the Poor Fund "only in extreme emergency." Empty coffers such as those of Hamilton County were common to most local governments throughout southwestern Kansas.

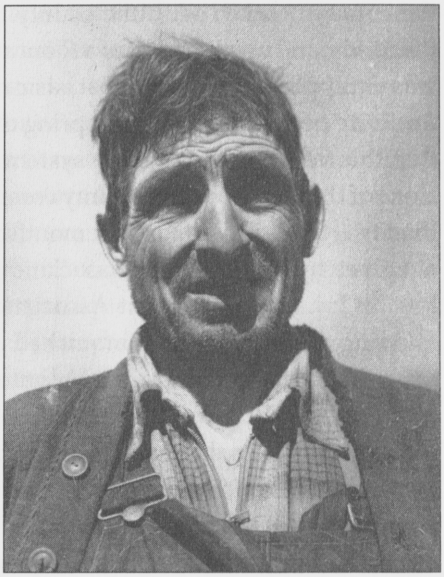
These illustrations highlight the problems that county government officials faced during the 1930s. The case of Finney County provides a particularly clear example of the inadequacy of county-based efforts to meet effectively the challenge of providing consistent and adequate relief to impoverished residents before the advent of large-scale federal relief in 1933. In 1930, Finney County was one of the most "urban" counties in southwestern Kansas. Over ten thousand people lived in Finney County in 1930, and more than six thousand of them resided in Garden City. Nevertheless, the economy of Finney County, like the economies of all southwestern Kansas counties, rested on an agricultural base. Even the county's major industry, the Garden City Company's sugar plant, grew out of the production of sugar beets in irrigated fields along the Arkansas River.

If greater size had meant greater preparedness and resources, local government officials in Finney County would have managed the drought and economic downturn better than their contemporaries in other southwestern Kansas counties, such as Grant, Morton, or Seward counties. Finney County's struggles with problems of relief administration, however, were a larger, and perhaps more confused, version of the problems that plagued county commissioners all across the region. Every community's resources were limited and becoming less adequate with each passing month, and Finney County's greater population also meant a larger burden in relief payments. The problems that administrators in Finney County confronted occurred on a similar or smaller scale throughout southwestern Kansas between 1930 and 1933.

Finney County began the 1930s with a minimal, rudimentary relief system. The county commissioners distributed aid on an individual basis. They provided mothers' pensions to a few widows, and old age pensions to a few of their indigent elderly, but they operated no formal welfare system. In 1930, members of the Provident Association, a private organization coordinating all of the charitable associations in

the county, worked with the county to supply food and clothing to the needy, and operated out of a room at the old courthouse. The county was equipped to meet the most basic needs of only a small number of destitute people. By the early spring of 1931, it was becoming evident that this very limited welfare system was inadequate to the dimensions of the situation. The county commissioners were spending more than two thousand dollars per month on poor relief, not including the aid given by the Provident Association, and their funds were running low. In June, the Provident Association was no longer able to meet growing demands, and relinquished its responsibility for local relief to a national organization, the Volunteers of America. With a regional office in Denver, the Volunteers operated much like the Salvation Army, offering the needy shelter, food, and guidance based on Christian principles. Workers drew no salary from the organization and lived on donations. The Volunteers were to cooperate with the Red Cross and Salvation Army as well as the county commissioners. Despite the adoption of this new and fairly inexpensive expedient, the members of the Finney County Board of Commissioners were none too sure of their ability to continue to care for the poor. They had more than exhausted the allowable levy for the poor fund, and there were still more demands to meet.

The commissioners attempted to explain their way out of their predicament, searching for individuals and groups upon whom they could place the blame for the county's bankruptcy. Bootleggers and their families drew the commissioners' ire. Jailing violators of the Volstead Act and feeding their indigent families while they were incarcerated was an expensive proposition. Officials began to wonder if they should enforce liquor laws in the county. The people of Finney County approved of prohibition, but "what the commission would like is for Mr. Volstead [to] arrange to take care of the families while the violator is serving his sentence." The Mexican population of Finney County, drawn to the area by jobs with the railroads and in the sugar beet fields, also received a good deal of criticism. An editor for the local newspaper commented, "they cannot be deported, it is said, and the only thing for the county to do is support them or let them starve." Whatever the degree of justice in these accusations, the commissioners saw a large part of their problem stemming from the needs of these marginalized members of the community, and although they thought



Throughout the Great Depression, southwest Kansas residents faced hard times and hungry years. Farm Security Administration photographers documented this era in Kansas and throughout the nation.

they understood the source of the county's problems, they were at a loss for a cure. The board meeting of July 7, 1931, went on for more than a day and ended without the commissioners formulating any new plans.

Despite these troubles, relief administered through the combined efforts of private agencies and the local government allowed the people of Finney County to limp along for the next eleven months. The Volunteers of America took over an increasing share of welfare work in the community, with a portion of their funds provided by the local government, in addition to donations. Between July and October of 1931, the Volunteers gave out 2,864 free meals, 444 nights lodging, aided nearly 400 families with grocery purchases, gave out 700 pieces of clothing, and found jobs for nearly 400 people, both men and women. When hungry people came begging for food at homes and businesses, the Volunteers asked that they not be fed, but sent to their headquarters.

Other local organizations also helped to shoulder the relief burden. Members of the Finney County Junior Red Cross collected empty jars, cans, fruit, and vegetables for a canning project, and girls in the public school's home economics classes did the work. Through this joint effort they donated ninety quarts of food to the local relief com-

mittee. Boy and Girl Scouts sold tickets for a movie showing at the State Theater to benefit the Volunteers. The Elks cooperated with the Volunteers in distributing Christmas baskets to the needy.

County efforts, however, garnered less praise and seemed to work less smoothly than private relief measures. In June of 1932, more than one hundred residents came to the county courthouse to protest the county's handling of poor relief. They criticized how the commission was handling the situation and suggested "that the county officers contribute ten per cent [*sic*] of their monthly wages to the county poor fund." The final outcome of the meeting was an attempt to move relief further into the private sector by forming a committee of church and civic leaders to raise funds for relief. County officials were increasingly uneasy about their ability to continue providing publicly funded aid to the poor.

Four days later, the county commissioners gave up. During their meeting of June 7 and 8, 1932, they conceded the bankruptcy of the poor relief fund and resolved to let someone else deal with the situation:

> Ways and means were discussed as to the handling of the poor situation, and it was decided that the county could not support the poor any longer as the funds were far overdrawn, and that it would be compelled to let the community handle the poor for the balance of the current year.

The county poor relief budget had accumulated an overdraft of more than nine thousand dollars, and the Board of County Commissioners was no longer willing, or able, to release more funds. Garden City and Finney County were entirely without a public relief program.

In response, a group of civic minded individuals created a new relief agency, christened the Emergency Relief Committee, to work under the board of directors of the old Provident Association. The members of this committee planned to carry on relief work in the county, in conjunction with the Volunteers of America. The Volunteers were to take care of emergency cases and transients, while the committee undertook the distribution of general relief.

The largest problem facing the members of the newly formed committee was fund-raising. They called for all salaried workers and professionals in Garden City to contribute 3 percent of their incomes to the relief fund. They asked retired farmers and businessmen to contribute an unspecified lump sum. To stretch these funds further and

build public confidence, the committee pledged to distribute its money only to "bona fide relief organizations," and to require those organizations to screen applicants very carefully:

> The applicant must sign that he fully acknowledges his obligation both moral and financial and agrees to tender a first lien on any and all property owned by himself, as security for the payment of the funds expended on his behalf. He further pledges that he is willing to perform such labor as the committee may prescribe at such rates of pay as prescribed by them.

The Volunteers also established more stringent rules for aid recipients. Captain Boone, head of Garden City operations, explained that the Volunteers would require transients who were physically able to work two hours for supper, lodging, and breakfast, and to work eight hours to receive a second day's aid. To encourage contributions, the committee promised that "there will be no aid for the drone or the family which is not worthy," and that the committee, composed of "eleven Garden City business men," would keep a close eye on the funds and the storeroom from which supplies would be issued. Hoping that these measures would encourage charitable giving, the Emergency Relief Committee began operations in the summer of 1932.

The committee's members carried out the relief obligations of Finney County on a small scale through the summer and fall of 1932. By August, they had collected more than $400, and out of that, passed $150 on to the Volunteers. An agreement with area grocery stores allowed the committee to purchase food at reduced prices and stretched charity dollars further. In September, the committee aided thirty-three families and eighty-six individuals. In October, the committee reported that it had received enough contributions for the time being but that the funds on hand would probably be inadequate for the winter months. Whether aid came through private or public organizations, the cold winter months posed special problems in relief distribution because of increased food, clothing, and fuel needs.

In the fall of 1932, city and county government officials, as well as members of the local relief committee, began to explore the possibility of the county obtaining federal relief funds. In July, President Hoover had signed into law the Relief and Construction Act which allowed the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) to loan money to states for public works projects. The state of Kansas had secured $2,750,000 in RFC funds, and local government officials, including

Mayor Fred Evans and relief committee chairman R. N. Downie, immediately went to work to secure for Finney County its fair share. In anticipation of the plan's approval, the city clerk began registering the unemployed for relief work. Everyone rejoiced when the state awarded Finney County $3,456. According to plan, county officials used the money to widen a storm sewer in a Garden City park and eventually hired about sixty men to work on the project. This money, however, was only a drop in the bucket; nearly two hundred men applied for the jobs. Finney County, along with the rest of the country, faced a grim season.

Either through apathy or hopelessness, it appeared that the people of Finney County were willing to let the Emergency Relief Committee die in the winter of 1932–1933. Following a "poorly attended and disapproving meeting" in early December, R. N. Downie, chairman of the committee, announced that it would be suspending operations:

> It appeared that people were not interested enough to attend the meeting to express a willingness that the organization continue with its work or even ask it to cease, and that the committee was not going to force itself upon the people unless it was really desired.

The announcement precipitated an appeal from the editor of the *Garden City Daily Telegram*. He placed no blame for the collapse of the program with the Emergency Relief Committee. The committee had done good work. The fault instead lay with the people of Garden City and Finney County. The county government was still very low on funds and the best way to continue to provide relief to the needy was through private, community-wide effort. "The time for action has arrived," the editor proclaimed. Most Finney County residents saw little option but to push for the continuation of privately sponsored relief; the county poor fund was overdrawn by more than ten thousand dollars.

By the beginning of January, the Emergency Relief Committee was back in business but still operating on the most minimal of funding. The *Garden City Daily Telegram* published a pledge form in the paper so that "everyone [would] have a chance to aid in furnishing funds to take care of the needy." The committee had already mailed the forms to some local firms and individuals and was desperate for funds. Although the RFC loan still provided workers with jobs, the unemployed outnumbered the jobs, and cold weather limited the feasible amount of outdoor relief work. The county commissioners responded by cut-

ting relief wages from twenty-five cents an hour to fifteen cents an hour to employ more men, and the Emergency Relief Committee contemplated a house-to-house canvas for subscriptions. The committee, with the few dollars collected early in its existence, could not bear the weight of a growing number of very poor people.

In response to this growing burden, the committee voted to create a subcommittee to present the names of nonresident families that had applied to the Finney County attorney for relief. They requested that these newcomers "be sent back where they came from according to state law." Neither the members of the Emergency Relief Committee nor the members of the county government wanted to be responsible for incoming, indigent outsiders. To further discourage this migration, they voted to reduce the rations for the transients at the Volunteers' mission to Mulligan Stew and coffee. Relief officials in Finney County had little to offer to their own people, and even less for migrants and transients.

By the winter of 1933, the situation in Finney County, and across the entire nation, had become grim. The level of funding provided under the RFC was relatively low, the state had scanty provisions for the poor, the county budget was clearly inadequate, and the Emergency Relief Committee could do very little relying on voluntary contributions in a time of great scarcity. One indicator of the severity of the situation was that the commissioners were even refusing to allow mothers' pensions, or as they put it, "Mothers Aid." In March, they tabled two requests for mothers' pensions "due to the fact that the poor fund was far overdrawn, but suggested that if necessary, help in the way of food and clothing would be provided." Clearly, they hoped that such aid would prove unnecessary.

Fortunately for the people of Garden City and Finney County, lawmakers in Washington were beginning a massive response to the problems of unemployment and poverty. Franklin Delano Roosevelt's inauguration in March of 1933 marked the beginning of a flurry of legislative action. In his first one hundred days in office, Roosevelt signed into law a number of measures providing aid to city and county alike. When these federal relief funds became available to Finney County in the summer and fall of 1933, the members of the committee breathed a sigh of relief and ceased operations. As the drought worsened in 1934 and 1935, the needs of the county increased, and the county's

dependence upon federal relief increased likewise. By the summer of 1934, ten people per day were making applications for funding through the county. Many of these people received relief only because the federal government had largely taken over the burden of funding welfare. In September, officials in Finney County distributed $14,252.44 in aid, of which $12,143.48 was federal money allocated by the Kansas Emergency Relief Committee. Try as they might, the people of Finney County lacked the resources to fight this battle by themselves.

Many of the residents of Finney County, like the residents of all southwestern Kansas counties, came to rely on the federal government for the maintenance of their families, homes, and communities. It was a reliance that showed no sign of diminishing well into 1940. County officials allocated more money for relief in that year than they had in any year previously.

What happened to the people of Finney County was repeated all across the southwestern corner of the state. Evidence of southwestern Kansas' failure to recover from the early shocks of the depression, as well as the onset of the drought, was the repeated budget slashing by county officials, their continual inability to collect more than a small portion of outstanding taxes, and persistent attempts to secure permission from the state tax commission to issue more poor relief bonds. Most budget cuts came early in the decade and resulted in significantly lower wages for all county employees from laborers on road crews, to teachers, to the county engineer. For example, Finney County's employees faced a 20 percent cut in wages in 1931, as did Stanton County's employees in 1932. Stevens County's board of commissioners laid off all 124 of its employees working on the county roads for an indefinite period in 1932. Schools often absorbed the brunt of budget cuts, suffering enormous reductions in funding. School districts cutting funding by 50 percent or more in 1932 and 1933 included those in Grant, Morton, Stevens, and Seward counties. Teachers faced pay cuts of up to 25 percent. Worried administrators trimmed to the bone any expenditures that were not absolutely necessary.

Budget cuts, however, had only a limited impact on the financial crisis because county officials had little or no ability to collect taxes. Citizens left their tax bills unpaid for years at a time, and property assessments for tax purposes fell precipitously. Between 1933 and 1938, county officials took little action to recover lost revenue, knowing that

few local taxpayers had the money to pay. A disastrous drought, lasting from 1931 to 1939, devastated local farmers, and their problems were compounded by terrible dust storms that reduced their fields and hopes to ashes. At the height of the Dust Bowl, confiscating homes, land, and businesses for back taxes would have been futile since real estate was virtually worthless due to drought conditions and the resulting depopulation. Only in 1938 and 1939 did county officers again start to enforce the tax laws.

In a desperate effort to stay afloat, county officials repeatedly appealed to the Kansas State Tax Commission for permission to increase the levy for the poor fund, and to issue emergency warrants and additional bonds for poor relief. During 1939, Morton County's commissioners asked that the state of Kansas pay 30 percent of the approved social welfare budget of the county. The drought had produced particularly devastating effects in that county, driving away almost 50 percent of the population and leaving the county's major town, Elkhart, a ghost of its former self. Although Morton County's case was extreme, similar problems on a lesser scale plagued the entire area.

Counties clearly lacked the resources to aid their own people, yet their people could not be allowed to starve. Federal aid was the answer to many families' needs. Much of the relief federal officials distributed in 1933 and 1934 to people throughout southwestern Kansas came from funds provided by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), as administered by the Kansas Emergency Relief Commission (KERC). The state of Kansas provided very little of the relief money allocated within its borders. Nearly three-quarters of all relief money originated with the federal government, while just over a quarter of the money came from local governments; the state provided less than 1 percent of relief dollars spent.

Relief money made southwestern Kansas livable into 1940. The Great Depression and the Dust Bowl caught the area's people unprepared; their county governments were entirely unable to shoulder the dual burdens of economic and environmental disaster. Because of the drought and dust storms, the people of southwestern Kansas did not experience the slight economic recovery the rest of the nation enjoyed between 1933 and 1937. Southwestern Kansas rested upon an agricultural base, and the yearly failure of the wheat crop between 1932 and

1939 ensured that the area farmers would not benefit from improved wheat prices after 1933. Without a yearly infusion of federal funds, life itself would have become impossible for the struggling population of southwestern Kansas.

Although communities experimented with a variety of public and private relief measures, the continuing lack of funds limited their effectiveness. The conditions of the decade conspired to rob area residents of their independence and to lose much control of their county governments. As much as they would have preferred to help themselves, the residents of Finney County, and all of southwestern Kansas, came to rely on the federal government for the maintenance of their families and communities for the duration of hard times. As one Wichita County wag wrote in 1936:

> But as it is
> It's lots of fun—
> Everything comes
> From Washington.

The Politics of Kansas in 1932

Donald R. McCoy

In 1932, the nation suffered one of the most dismal years in its history. Kansas provides a good example of how bad things were. Employment was approaching its rock-bottom low. Per capita income had dropped from $535 in 1929 to $268. Farmers often failed to earn their cost of production, with wheat prices averaging thirty-three cents a bushel and corn twenty-seven cents. Almost everyone was scrambling to keep sources of income from disappearing or, if they had vanished, to find new ones. It was a time of tremendous enterprise, but also it was a time of dismay as effort and innovation frequently failed to preserve one's economic assets.

Complaints were common, but accompanying them were signs that Kansans had abandoned neither their fortitude nor their sense of concern. Publisher Rolla A. Clymer had lamented in his El Dorado *Times* the demise of the old-fashioned pant hanger. An Iola storekeeper sent him two of the hangers in January 1932, observing that

> the demand has decreased, due to the fact, that while there are still as many men, the men have fewer pants. . . . If you are fortunate enough to have more than two pair of pants let me know and I'll send more hangers. Thanks to Mr. Hoover, I only have one pair, and they are getting thin in places.

From Donald R. McCoy, "Fifty Years On: The Politics of Kansas in 1932," *Kansas History* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1983): 3–28. Reprinted with permission of the Kansas State Historical Society and Donald R. McCoy.

A publisher wrote Clymer in April, commenting that people had told him how much grief he had avoided by selling his newspaper.

> They were right for the most part. The only thing I have to worry about now is to avoid starving. The property for which I traded my paper has turned out to be more of a liability than an asset, and I can't sell it.

He was looking for work, and all he asked was "mere living expenses." Then there were those who were looking for jobs for others. L. N. Flint of the University of Kansas Department of Journalism wrote of his seniors, "Just what our boys are going to do for a living, I don't know. The same question hangs over the head of every University graduate this year." There was also the brief rage for Grohoma, a hybrid sorghum which supposedly would grow bountifully even under drought conditions. One of the sellers of its seed in Kansas complained to U. S. Sen. Arthur Capper that the Department of Agriculture was fighting this miracle crop and wanted to know why. The answer, well documented, was that Grohoma had proved a bit inferior in tests to many other sorghums. More important was that its seed price was vastly inflated, running fifty cents a pound compared to two or three cents for other sorghum seed.

Some of the bad news took the form of exchanges. One Republican worthy wrote Clymer that he could not attend his party's national convention because "[I] am harder up than I have been for twenty years." Clymer replied, "I, too, am lower than I have been for many years in a financial way, and the heck of it is that things are getting no better fast." The Sage of Emporia, William Allen White, conveyed his hope to Clymer "that business isn't as bad with you as it is with me." It is not surprising that White had written Senator Capper, "We are faced with a condition of starvation, not with a theory of economics. And it is a matter now of weeks or at the most of months until starvation will begin to emotionalize our politics, and hell will be popping before frost." In pressing for work for the unemployed, White warned that matters were "going to reach a breaking point . . . when the hungry and cold call in the armed gangsters and are directed by the ruthless Communists."

What was the state of politics in Kansas in 1932, given these conditions and apprehensions? For one thing, Republican leaders were often downhearted and Democratic leaders optimistic about their elec-

tion chances in November. The Democrats had won the governorship with banker Harry H. Woodring and a United States senatorship with attorney George McGill in 1930. The nation's economy had deteriorated badly since then, and Pres. Herbert Hoover was being widely blamed for it, a blame that was spreading to most Republicans. William Allen White believed that Hoover would be a great handicap for whichever Kansas Republican ran for the Senate. "The President is being unjustly blamed for an economic subsidence that is world wide, cataclysmic and inevitable," but blamed he was, and one would do well not to share it with him. A great deal of criticism was aimed at Congress, and not without reason. As Republican Arthur Capper conceded in a radio speech in February, "There is a lot of confusion here in Congress. There is a lot of confusion over the country. There is a lot of tumult; a lot of shouting." Collector of Internal Revenue H. H. Motter of Wichita reported to Republican Cong. Clifford R. Hope in June that "in the main Congress is not in the best standing among the common people." Hope replied, "It is certainly sad but true," adding that congressmen know they "are in a bad situation and are trying to figure some way out and, incidentally, some way out for themselves politically."

Republicans in Congress often saw themselves being burdened politically by the Hoover administration even though the Democrats had organized the House of Representatives. It was the Republicans, in control of the executive branch and, barely, of the Senate, who were being blamed for America's economic tailspin.

The idea of Alfred Landon for governor started to appear in the state's newspapers as early as April 1931. By September the former Republican state chairman began publicly discussing the problem of wheat farmers—a sure sign of impending candidacy in Kansas. Soon Landon announced his candidacy for the Republican gubernatorial nomination. His major opponent in the primary election was Lacey Simpson, a farmer who had spent eight years in the state legislature. Although Simpson had supported progressive Republican Gov. Clyde Reed for renomination in 1930, he was now the candidate of the conservative Republicans who had defeated Reed and his manager, Landon, in a bitterly fought primary election. In 1932 both Landon and Simpson would adopt the theme of party harmony.

Democratic Governor Woodring seemed a natural candidate for renomination. Yet he headed the state's executive branch in increasingly hard times, and his party was far from united. Woodring had to cope with rumors, for example, that he was at odds with Senator McGill. When one of the senator's enemies approached Woodring with this, he denied it strongly, writing,

> Your assumption is incorrect—the news or press reports are not based on any facts—news stories that is all. There is no discord—nor change of close personal & political friendship.

McGill would have been surprised by the governor's view of the cordiality of their relationship. Another problem was that Woodring had early endorsed Franklin D. Roosevelt's campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination. This flew in the face of the sentiment of many Kansas Democrats. As Senator McGill's ally, Richard Long, wrote in May, "The average Kansan is prejudiced against a New Yorker and then there are the Tammany scandals." Indeed, former Kansas Cong. Jouett Shouse, who was chairman of the Democratic National Executive Committee, was aligned with Roosevelt's opponents. Woodring not only fought hard for Roosevelt's nomination in June, but he carried most of the Kansas delegates in voting for Roosevelt's choice for permanent chairman of the Democratic National Convention, Sen. Thomas Walsh of Montana, against Shouse for the job. This infuriated many Democrats. One Kansas newspaper, the Lyons *News*, predicted that Woodring "will not be elected again, for Kansas will not forgive him for his treatment of a man who had labored for twenty years for the success of the party."

Most of Woodring's conservative Democratic foes rallied behind state Rep. Donald Muir during the gubernatorial primary election. Muir campaigned vigorously against Woodring, but he was unable to stir up much interest. The governor largely contented himself with tending to state business and offering a radio program which daily indicated that Kansas was in good and frugal hands with Woodring. This conserved the governor's resources for the general election, although it might have kept him less visible early in the 1932 campaign than he should have been. In any case, Woodring's efforts were enough to win the nomination in August over Muir, 91,037 to 42,786.

Landon's job was tougher, for Simpson also ran as a harmony candidate for the Republican gubernatorial nomination. It was not so much a case of the issues or even Woodring dividing them. All were for federal oil restriction, assistance to farmers and the unemployed, industrial development, governmental economy, and lower taxes. The challenge was to convince the voters that one could achieve these promises. Simpson tried to discredit Landon by portraying him as the candidate of William Allen White, monied interests, and those of questionable party loyalty. Few took the issue of money seriously. Simpson had a point on party loyalty, however, given White and Landon's involvement with the Progressive party in 1912 and 1914 and the Emporia publisher's independent candidacy for governor in 1924, backed by Landon. Simpson's problem was that the more he stressed this in his campaign, the less he seemed to be a harmony candidate. Landon did not make this mistake by attacking Simpson's conservative supporters. During his campaign Landon was able to make good the Garden City *Telegram*'s description of him as "a plain, everyday citizen with a lot of ability, a lot of stick-to-itiveness and a vast capacity for

Alfred M. Landon, Independence oil man, sought to unite the Republican party and campaigned for government economy in the 1932 Kansas gubernatorial contest.

making and holding friends by his earnestness and sincerity." Also attractive was his emphasis on "building up the state instead of tearing it down" at a time when many candidates were critical of everything that they did not espouse. Moreover, his energy in campaigning was impressive. In a year when candidates did an extraordinary amount of traveling, Landon outdid everyone, making as many as ten stops a day. It helped, too, that just before the primary election a daughter, Nancy Jo, was born to the Landons, and that on the way home for this happy event Landon stopped to help carry furniture out of a burning farm house. Whatever the reasons, Landon won the nomination, polling 160,345 votes to 101,019 for Simpson.

Then there was Dr. John R. Brinkley, the state's controversial, self-proclaimed rejuvenator of male potency. In 1930, after having had his medical license revoked for fraudulent practice, he had run a powerful write-in campaign for governor against the political establishment which he blamed for his troubles. He had finished a strong third, prob-

Dr. John R. Brinkley, famous for his sexual rejuvenation operation, was an independent write-in candidate for governor in 1930. Brinkley used his own radio station to advertise his "goat-gland" transplants and prescriptions and to promote his campaign. He also used other new forms of technology—including a 16-cylinder Cadillac and an airplane—to reach voters. When he ran again in 1932, however, his star was already on the wane. He finished third behind Landon and Woodring.

ably higher had not so many of his votes been discarded as invalid, and he had contributed to Woodring's election over the Republican nominee, Frank Haucke. Stories soon swept Kansas that Brinkley would try again in 1932, this time on the ballot as an independent candidate. By 1931 the goat-gland doctor had sold his Kansas radio station and developed a powerful new station, XER, in Mexico; he only administered his Milford hospital. He was open to the idea of running again for governor, however, as many Kansans and astrologers advised him to do. Many Democratic and Republican leaders were concerned since the 1932 elections could be close; Brinkley might even win this time. By January 1932 he indicated he would run, and until the general elections in November he was very much on the minds of Kansans. Republican State Committee Chairman John D. M. Hamilton was worried by April about reports of Brinkley's rising strength and the pessimism of some GOP leaders about beating him for governor. By June Brinkley had stepped up his political efforts and issued a platform crammed full of populist-style promises. There were rumors that Brinkley's supporters, not having to nominate him by ballot, might be organized to defeat Landon and Woodring in the Republican and Democratic primary contests. There is no evidence that this was tried significantly, but it was unclear what the impact of Brinkley's candidacy would be by November. As Rolla Clymer wrote to a friend, "My reason tells me that Brinkley is a fearsome factor; my instinct leads me to believe . . . that surely the star of such a charlatan must be on the wane." Clymer should have trusted his reason, as events would prove.

The Republicans began bucking each other up soon after the August primary results were in. Congressman Hope told a Republican county leader "that there are a lot of people who will abuse Hoover right up to the last minute, and then go in and vote for him." Not long afterward he advised the head of the Republican National Committee's speakers committee that Republicans must "make a most intensive campaign." Hope reported that the state and congressional scene in Kansas was in "fair shape" but "it is going to take a tremendous amount of work to carry the state for the national ticket." Rolla Clymer thought that Alf Landon's primary triumph was impressive. He wrote the Republican gubernatorial nominee, "I think your own personality has done much toward wiping out the old bitterness. Please God, we may all forget the past—and go on to victory. . . . [I am] for you with both feet and both barrels."

Of course, John R. Brinkley's candidacy for governor complicated everything. The Hays *Daily News* declared after the primary elections that Landon and Woodring "may now sit back and breathe a spell while forming plans to see what can be done about the Brinkley matter in the general election. . . ." Even Senator McGill's backers worried about Brinkley. One of them wrote that the senator could lose votes because of the goat-gland doctor, and there was no way to cope with him because McGill could not afford to fight him or to join with him. The only answer was to be very careful. It is no surprise that Governor Woodring concentrated on beating Brinkley, whose forces had long been campaigning, largely through his official newspaper, *Publicity*, over the radio, and through popular rallies. And Brinkley had drawing power. As Clifford Stratton wrote in his column in the Topeka *Capital* in August

> The Milford doctor, with his airplanes, his 16-cylinder car, his loudspeakers, his minister of the gospel to open all political meetings with prayer, his crown of martyrdom and his perfect radio voice, is regarded as a formidable independent candidate for governor this year.

Not everybody was afraid of Brinkley. Will J. French, the Republican state auditor, wrote, "Some say we have Brinkley to beat, but I say we have Harry Woodring to defeat." No doubt French was right, but Brinkley seemed the spoiler to most Republicans as well as Democrats. One reason for this was the appealing nature of Brinkley's platform, which he issued in June. This document promised among other things pensions for the aged, a lake in every county, free medical care for the needy, governmental economy, reduction of automobile tag fees to three dollars, free school textbooks, and industrial development. The Milford doctor perhaps made a mistake in announcing his platform early, however, for it gave the Democrats and Republicans ample time to formulate answers to it.

Meeting in their state council on August 30, the Democrats indicated that they would carry Kansas in November by as much as one hundred thousand votes. They stressed governmental economy, standing on Governor Woodring's accomplishments in this respect in contrast to Brinkley's mere promise of economy. The Democratic platform promised cheap textbooks, industrial development, better utility and industrial regulation, reasonable lowering of automobile li-

cense fees, improved workmen's compensation, unemployment relief, and better taxation of banks. Clearly, the Democrats were picking up the populist elements in Brinkley's platform, but were couching them more reasonably as well as appealing to labor, especially, and farmers. The Democrats also endorsed state constitutional amendments to authorize an income tax and to limit local property taxes, amendments which Brinkley opposed.

The Republican State Council also met on August 30. As Woodring and his political manager, Highway Department Director Guy T. Helvering, dominated the Democratic State Council, so Landon and his campaign manager, the new Republican State Chairman Frank Carlson, dominated the sessions of its GOP counterpart. The Republicans proposed a graduated automobile tag fee starting at sixty cents; the income tax amendment; local tax limitation, by legislation instead of amendment; government economy and reorganization; cheaper textbooks; industrial development; utility and other business regulation; better workmen's compensation; and an investigation of the state Highway Department. As the Democrats intruded an irrelevant issue, low tariffs, in their state platform, so the Republicans opposed the repeal of national prohibition. The Republicans vouchsafed their concern for agriculture, especially, and labor. Plainly, the prime gubernatorial campaign issues would become credibility and responsibility.

The campaigns of Brinkley, Landon, and Woodring were hard fought. Brinkley's strategy was to promise the most and to damn the major party nominees. Landon's was to emphasize his responsibility and occasionally to attack his opponents. And Woodring's was to stand on his record and to condemn Brinkley more than Landon. At the formal opening of his campaign on September 16 in Abilene, Landon declared that the three main issues were taxes, political scandals in the Highway Department, and prohibition. He would lower the first, investigate and remedy the second, and uphold the third. He brushed Brinkley aside as being "responsible to no organization." Woodring answered Landon's attack by saying that the political funds collected from state employees by the Highway Department reflected forty years of practice in Kansas; he suggested that was a better way to finance campaigns than accepting corporate contributions. The Brinkley campaign exploited the issue by running advertisements condemning the

corruption of "the old parties that the people are sick and tired of." Kansans were informed that Brinkley would not be a party to a sell-out.

The gubernatorial campaign was well under way and attracting a great deal of attention by late September. At least one observer, Clifford Stratton of the Topeka *Capital*, could see absurdities in the campaign. He pointed out that Brinkley was ahead of Landon in one respect: Landon was going to reduce expenditures $5 million by lowering automobile license fees, while Brinkley "is going to have free textbooks, free clinics, lakes in every county—and reduce taxes anyway." As the campaign developed it became evident that the three candidates had distinctive approaches. The diamond-studded Brinkley would arrive in an airplane or a limousine. After entertainers had provided music and a preacher had introduced him, he would tell of the trickery of the two old parties, of his persecution for pursuing medical "truth," of his vision of a Kansas wonderland under his administration. He then departed hastily with scarcely a farewell. Woodring would arrive, nattily dressed, in his official limousine. He would saunter down the main street, patting people on the back and exchanging words in a hearty manner. Then the governor would expound on his administration's record of economy, the promise of his "second" term, and the weaknesses of his opponents. Often dressed in rumpled clothes, Landon would arrive in a 1928 car. He would accost friends and strangers, hear them out, tell them an appropriate campaign idea, and perhaps cadge a cigarette. At a meeting, he would talk sometimes stumblingly, but always bluntly about tax relief and efficient government. All three struck the public as being unusually well motivated, and with good reason. Brinkley might pull off the political coup of 1932 by being elected. Woodring could pull off his own coup by being the first Democratic governor to be reelected in Kansas. Landon could be a rarity, a Republican elected to a governorship at the depth of the depression.

This suggested how the political wind was blowing in Kansas. As William Allen White reported to one of President Hoover's aides in September, "It is blowing a pretty stiff gale and it is all against the government. I cannot see how Hoover can carry anything between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains" unless farm prices rise. Democrats did not see things much differently. Senator McGill

reported to Sen. Claude A. Swanson, the chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, that "prospects for Democratic victory in Kansas are more evident than at any time in my recollection." This he ascribed to the people believing that Republican policies "have brought ruin and disaster to every line of endeavor." This was confirmed by E. J. Smiley, the secretary-treasurer of the Kansas Grain Dealers Association, who wrote Congressman Hope about what he had observed in western Kansas.

> I found that a goodly number of farmers and business men were not favorable to the Administration. After talking to farmers, and knowing the conditions in the S.W. part of the state, it make[s] my heart ache to know that these people were unable to procure relief, from any source. The country is in a deplorable condition and I am afraid of the outcome.

September 14 was a great day for Kansas Democrats and a depressing one for Republicans. The Democratic presidential nominee, Franklin D. Roosevelt, spoke in Topeka to a crowd of some ten thousand people and many thousands more over the radio. He called for "national planning in agriculture" and charged that President Hoover had "failed utterly" on farm relief. Roosevelt later briefly visited Colby and Goodland to point up his concern for agriculture, although the main beneficiary of these stops was Democratic congressional nominee Kathryn O'Loughlin, who introduced him. His was an effective appeal to the farmers and the women of Kansas. Even the Topeka *Capital*, Senator Capper's newspaper, conceded that the New York governor had made a good impression. By October most Democrats and many Republicans probably agreed with William Allen White that the Democratic presidential nominee was forging ahead of Hoover because "Roosevelt will represent protest."

White's views did not stop most Kansas Republicans from working for Hoover, partly to help Charles Curtis (the Kansan serving as vice-president), partly out of hope and habit, and partly out of the conviction that by supporting the national ticket they would strengthen the appeal of their state and local candidates. Senator Capper told a Republican rally in Topeka in late September, "I feel sure the crisis has passed. But we are still in a precarious situation and one false step may bring on a relapse that could plunge us into chaos." It was clear to him that Americans must solve their problems "in a safe and sane way" by electing the westerner, Hoover, who had held things together.

Many of the state's newspapers took a similar line. The Salina *Journal*, for example, saw the president in early October as the "firm hand in control," the man who offered "safety and security." The newspaper declared that "sentiment was rapidly changing" in Hoover's favor. Yet Republicans were privately far from optimistic. Landon saw Hoover being hurt badly by the continued decline in farm prices, although this did not stop the gubernatorial nominee from seeking a presidential visit to Kansas. Rolla Clymer wrote of Hoover to a friend, "I am afraid that the great national bellyache may defeat him in the nation, and then God help us for four years." At the end of October one county judge wrote, "I believe Hoover is climbing fast, but still I presume his final success is too much to be expected by one who does not believe very much in miracles. However here's hoping."

The presidential campaign went into a grand windup. Kansas Democratic candidates tied themselves securely to Roosevelt's coattails and plumped hard for his election. The flamboyant Louisiana senator, Huey Long, came into Kansas to speak for him and McGill, appealing to the populist elements in the state. The Curtis clan returned to the state, too. The vice-president's energetic sister, Dolly Gann, stumped the state for Hoover and Curtis. And Curtis, after speaking in twenty-four states, finished his campaign in Kansas. He blamed the depression on World War I, and he chided the Democrats for excelling themselves in lying. The Topeka *State Journal* made good use of his presence on the Republican national ticket, declaring that a vote for Roosevelt was a vote against the state's darling, Curtis. Not surprisingly, both Democrats and Republicans claimed victory for their presidential tickets in Kansas the day before election.

Clearly, the biggest political question in Kansas in 1932 concerned the outcome of the gubernatorial election. The basic outlines of the contest seemed to have been set by September in terms of substantive issues. Moreover, there were Landon's emphasis on organizing Republicans along harmony lines; Brinkley's use of unusual campaign techniques; and Woodring's standing on his record as governor. All three candidates campaigned hard, but by October Landon seemed ubiquitous, making as many campaign appearances as his two opponents put together. The Republican also had more newspaper support and advertising than either Woodring or Brinkley. As the campaign went on, there was an increasing focus on Brinkley. It was not

just a question of whether the Milford doctor could throw the election to Woodring or Landon, but the possibility that he could be elected governor. A Whitewater banker feared Brinkley because he believed him to be "a man lacking all sense of honor although extremely cunning." Another Kansan, referring to the flamboyant gubernatorial candidates to the south, declared, "What a combination. Murr[a]y, Ma Ferguson & Brinkley would make if they should all become Governors. It would set Okla, Tex & Kans back 40 years."

These fears of Brinkley had their effect. On September 20 the Republican state publicity director, W. G. West, mailed a form letter to GOP leaders, indicating that "the Independent candidate for Governor should not be overlooked. You likely know how best to treat the Brinkley stuff in your locality." Woodring declared all-out war on the goat-gland doctor. The governor's initial tactic was to attack utility magnate Henry L. Doherty, who seemed to be Brinkley's chief financial backer. On September 16, Woodring called the attention of Kansans and specifically state Attorney General Boynton to alleged violations of corporation laws by Doherty's gas companies. Three days later a gubernatorial spokesman charged that Doherty was financing the Milford doctor; Brinkley responded by declaring that Woodring was the creature of the out-of-state Kansas City *Star*. Backed by Republican purses, Topeka's pen for hire, Charles H. Trapp, spared neither imagination nor fact in attacking Brinkley in his weekly newspaper, the *Pink Rag*. For example, on September 23 Trapp informed his readers that Brinkley was a millionaire, paid no taxes, was a Klansman, had been a drunkard, is slipping politically, and had twice been divorced (although the fine print indicated that it was a case of his first wife divorcing him and he in turn divorcing her). On top of it all, Trapp asserted, "Doc is all bluff and bluster." Woodring continued his campaign against Brinkley to the end, pounding home the point that Doherty's immense wealth and allegedly shady interests were behind the doctor. The governor added that Brinkley was "the billboard man," calling attention to his large amount of outdoor advertising, and he called the doctor's well-staged campaign meetings "Punch and Judy shows." The Wichita *Eagle* in supporting Woodring played up the supposed connection between Brinkley and odiferous Wall Street interests.

There was more to Woodring's campaign, of course, than attacks on Brinkley. Among other things, Woodring promised to reduce telephone rates as well as taxes. The Democratic governor often referred to his record, especially the fact that he had slashed the state budget by $4 million below the figure set by the Republican legislature. Moreover, Kansas had surfaced more roads during the past year than any other state in the nation. His administration, he declared, was one of which Kansans could be proud. As Woodring emphasized in his advertisements, "He Does What Others Promise to Do." He talked "FACTS; NOT RADIO 'HOOEY.'"

Brinkley generally contented himself with his radio, billboard, and medicine-show approach to the public's heart. His campaign appearances drew huge audiences. People came to see the show the doctor and his supporting cast put on and to be beguiled by his promises of a utopia in Kansas, of a state government that would oust those who had persecuted him and denigrated his supporters. As for Woodring's charges that Doherty backed him, Brinkley snorted, "That's about as wild a jackass story as I ever heard of." He endorsed Landon's charges of corruption in the Highway Department. Indeed, he turned them against his Republican opponent by declaring that Landon, too, had assessed state employees for political contributions when he had been the GOP state chairman. It was all part of Brinkley's repeated charge that the two old parties of wealth and corruption were up to their old tricks and would stop at nothing to prevent the voters from electing a government for the people.

While Woodring and Brinkley concentrated on attacking each other and trumpeting their virtues, Landon stressed telling what he could do. His chief issue was governmental economy, which he indicated would be impossible with Brinkley and had left much to be desired under Woodring. Wearing often rumpled clothes and driving around in an old car, he made the point that he practiced what he preached. As he said, "If you don't need it, don't buy it; if you can't afford it, don't buy it; if you do buy it, get your money's worth." He usually left attacks on Woodring and Brinkley to others until toward the end of the campaign. Republican State Chairman Frank Carlson accused Woodring of being against prohibition and with wasting state revenues in the administration of the Highway Department; Brinkley had no practical program. Chairman Jess Greenleaf of the Public Service

Commission added that the governor was bungling utility rate reductions. Landon's campaign forces emphasized that no Democrat had ever been reelected governor in Kansas; that Woodring was with the "ins" and thus was responsible for the state's problems; and that there was a rising tide of voters for Landon. Plainly, the objective was to scare independents from Woodring to Landon in order to beat Brinkley.

The last two weeks of the gubernatorial campaign became a free-for-all. The Landon campaign was spurred to greater efforts by reports that the Republican nominee's election was in doubt. Landon began paying more attention to his opponents, calling Brinkley the "great promiser" and Woodring "the greatest little claimer Kansas has had in a long time." Moreover, Landon charged that under Woodring state tax reductions had been negligible, the number of public employees had increased, and the governor had indulged in personalities in his feud with Brinkley. There were also surprise developments. The Kansas City *Star* endorsed Woodring; former Democratic Gov. Jonathan Davis announced for Brinkley; and former Republican Gov. Clyde Reed refused to come out for Landon. This did not stop Landon's advertisements from declaring that the election was a choice between "LANDON or BRINKLEY" because the "Republican party is the dominant party in Kansas this year—a United party. . . . The way to beat Brinkley is vote for Landon." William Allen White backed this up with his widely reprinted statement that "every patriotic voter who fears the domination of Brinkleyism must play safe, cast his vote in the largest pile and vote for Landon." White conceded that Woodring had been a "good governor," but he asserted that "every vote for Harry Woodring exposes Kansas to the menace of John R. Brinkley as governor of Kansas." It was an effective combination of the bandwagon and bogeyman appeals.

Brinkley hewed to his line of marvelous promises, and he usually refused to be put on the defensive. The Democrats took on Landon, however, and continued as well to attack Brinkley and Doherty. Woodring accused Landon of spreading "half-truths and distortions" on tax figures, but the Republicans pressed the issue that the governor was unfairly taking credit for county and local tax reductions. The governor's late campaign advertisements declared that "IT'S A LANDSLIDE TO WOODRING! . . . IT'S NEITHER BRINKLEY NOR LANDON. KANSAS WILL WIN WITH WOODRING!" Word circu-

lated that Landon was supporting Woodring in order to defeat Brinkley, that Brinkley would be counted out by election judges, and that anti-Woodring Democrats were backing Brinkley, as supporters of each of the three candidates tried to create psychological backfires that would benefit them at the ballot box. The press, radio, and billboards were cluttered with appeals for or against Brinkley, Landon, or Woodring as everyone involved seemed to get increasingly desperate during the week before election. As A. L. "Dutch" Schultz observed in his newspaper column,

> Everyone has in the back of his mind the feeling that someone is about to do the Cause some Great Dirt. So the various party bombing squads are out for reprisals and no one knows whose shanty is going to be dynamited before sundown.

Coming down to the finish line, predictions of the election results varied. A Democratic State Committee official told the chairman of Senator McGill's campaign that "things generally look very good and I feel confident of victory for the Democratic ticket from the top to the bottom." Republican State Committee Chairman Frank Carlson predicted a 6,500-vote plurality for Landon and victory for the Hoover-Curtis ticket. Clifford Stratton of the Topeka *Capital* wrote that Brinkley, Landon, and Woodring were so close together that each had a chance for victory. The gubernatorial candidates apparently agreed with Stratton, for their campaigns continued unabated right down to election day.

The November election results showed conflicting patterns, indicating that ticket splitting was widespread. Franklin D. Roosevelt's appeal was transcendent as the Democratic presidential ticket defeated Hoover and Curtis by 424,204 to 349,498 votes. The gubernatorial campaign was as close as Stratton predicted. In a record turnout of Kansas voters, Landon won with 278,581 votes to 272,944 for Woodring and 244,607 for Brinkley.

How did leaders of sentiment view the election results? The Wichita *Eagle* declared that Herbert Hoover "was in 1928 the chief recipient of a rich materialistic harvest; so in 1932 he became the victim of its inevitable counter-balancing dearth." The Salina *Journal* contented itself with saying "the voters wanted a change." It did, however, have the grace to congratulate Kathryn O'Loughlin on her election, which it thought fairly won. The Topeka *State Journal* opined that

there were many causes for the Democratic victories, chief among them "the resentment against hard times." William Allen White wrote Henry J. Allen, "Aren't you glad you were not carrying the banner. . . . the state was dead set and sour on the national Republican party. . . . Alf won because state issues were distinct and the fear of Brinkley was in the hearts of Republicans." White thought it possible that the party would not recover in his lifetime, in which prediction he was correct. Rolla Clymer asserted that "the Republican party in Kansas should take its licking much in the same fashion that an ailing man takes castor oil. We have been riding for a fall as a party, not only in Kansas but in the nation." As for the country's problems, the El Dorado publisher believed that miracles were needed, but he doubted that they would be found. Senator Capper announced to a radio audience that "With all of us it should be country above party. And I trust that Republicans and Democrats alike, in congress . . . , will lay aside their partisanship and all work together for the common good. . . . I am not so much concerned about who gets credit; what I want is results." Congressman Hope agreed, writing to a supporter that Roosevelt was entitled to everybody's help, that there must be a cooperative spirit in this crisis. Yet this did not mean that many Kansas Republicans had given up hope for their party's future, however glum things looked. Hope told another backer that "we ought to start right in and re-build from the ground up."

In a sense, this process had already begun in Kansas. Landon's harmony campaign had brought the state's Republican leaders together as perhaps never before, and the threat of Brinkleyism had gotten them to work with unusual zeal. They would not forget the need for unity and hard work during Landon's governorship. Moreover, the death of National Republican Committeeman David Mulvane the day after the election symbolized the passing of the old guard and led to Landon's selection of John Hamilton to replace him. Hamilton was quite as conservative as Mulvane, but he was young, energetic, and better aware of the need for party harmony. He had worked hard for his erstwhile foe, Landon, and he asked the governor-elect to repay him by not acting factionally in his management of the state and the party. "Let your policies and your patronage be directed with a broader vision." On this basis, the party could reelect Landon "and even send you further." Landon had laid a good foundation for following

Hamilton's advice. As a Topeka publisher's representative wrote in November, he had opposed Landon in the 1932 primary election because he believed him to be a factional candidate. "How stupid I was. . . . I didn't recognize his initiative, his independence, his courage or his party loyalty. . . . Through him and his efforts we now have a party of solidarity so far as Kansas matters. . . ."

Landon would build on the accomplishment of 1932. He distributed his patronage broadly. He was evenhanded in dealing with factions in the legislature and in state, county, and local governments; he even got along reasonably well with many Democrats. He had shifted from being a progressive Republican to being a moderate, and the change paid off for him and his party. It would lead Landon to reelection in 1934 and to the Republican presidential nomination in 1936. Although the Republicans would lose control of the governorship in the Democratic tidal wave of 1936, the bases were there for them to reclaim the office in 1938 and to retain it until 1956, when it became subject to two-party contests. Only rarely after 1936 would the Republicans lose control of other state offices, the legislature, or seats in the national House of Representatives, and never a U. S. senatorship. Of course, there were other people like Clifford Hope who contributed to this and who rebuilt in their own constituencies, and like Arthur Capper and Frank Carlson, who moderated between the extreme wings of their party.

What of the Democrats? Woodring used his high standing with Roosevelt to become assistant secretary of war and later secretary of war. Neither he nor Walter Huxman, who was elected governor in 1936, was able, however, to develop his party so that it could replace the Republicans as the major party in Kansas. None of the Democratic congressmen elected from Kansas during the 1930s survived beyond 1942. Later neither the times nor the leadership emerged that could bring about a repetition of the level of Democratic success of the 1930s. When Democrats did succeed it was usually when they convinced the voters that they could run Republicanism right, as Gov. George Docking did during the late 1950s. Of course, there was a great deal more involved in terms of issues, personalities, and campaign resources. But one factor that should not be overlooked was the great lesson of 1932; a candidate could do better the broader one's appeal to party

elements and the public and the closer in touch one was with currents of opinion among constituents.

Yet there was another lesson. The Republicans had been preponderant in Kansas politics from the beginning of statehood. This was a traditional edge that paid off for them even in the 1930s when the Democrats could, despite depression and Brinkleyism, do no better than temporarily achieve equal footing. When or whether the Democrats will tip the balance in their favor depends on so many things—not least of all the ability of their own and Republican leadership—that only a fool or a charlatan would make a prediction. Let the historian stick to the past and be content to say that 1932 was an exciting year for politics, a depressing year for economics, and finally a year that was an overture to our times, even though the politicians and the people knew not what lay ahead of them. The changes would be painful for some, though less dire than many anticipated. Whatever happened, the politics of 1932 confirmed much about the traditional relationships between Republicans and Democrats in Kansas.

Kansas at War: The Home Front, 1941–1945

Patrick G. O'Brien

On December 7, 1941, many Kansans instantaneously knew "the world would never be the same again." Not even the most farsighted Kansans, however, could have imagined the momentous influence of World War II on their state. When war erupted, the horse-mounted Second Cavalry Division was stationed at Fort Riley, the chief military installation in Kansas. By 1945 the war effort focused on Wichita, where the revolutionary B-29 bomber was manufactured, and on the Smoky Hill Army Air Corps Base outside Salina, which trained the crews. This shift from horse cavalry to B-29 symbolized the seismic change wrought on Kansas.

In the interval between the eruption of hostilities on the European continent in 1939 and American entry two years later, the war transfixed Kansans. From the outset, Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt and the U.S. Congress provided first moral support and then concrete assistance to the nations fighting Nazi Germany. Although strongly anti-Nazi, Kansans almost unanimously balked at what they deemed reckless Rooseveltian policies. Believing military intervention unwarranted, Kansans enthusiastically supported the antiwar stance of the state's delegation in Congress and favorites like Alfred M. Landon, ex-governor and 1936 Republican presidential candidate.

From Patrick G. O'Brien, "Kansas at War: The Home Front, 1941–1945," *Kansas History* 17, no. 1 (Spring 1994), 6–25. Reprinted with permission of the Kansas State Historical Society and Patrick G. O'Brien.

After the 1940 Nazi blitzkrieg and occupation of the European continent, however, a deep split occurred within the state on the best strategy to avert war. Convinced aid was necessary for Allied survival, some Kansans supported that illegal and risky policy as the one that afforded America the best chance to skirt war. Perceiving FDR as eager for a pointless war with Germany, however, the majority favored staying aloof and tending to the country's own defenses. The lend-lease controversy both reflected and intensified the split.

In early 1941 FDR pledged that America would become the "arsenal of democracy," and that up to 60 percent of the nation's industrial capacity would be devoted to war production within the next year. Roosevelt requested legislation granting broad authority to lend and lease—in reality to give—materials, supplies, and equipment to any country whose defense was judged vital to the security of the United States. Sen. Arthur Capper and Emporia editor William Allen White exemplified the division between Kansans. The former vehemently rejected the bill, and the latter served as chairman of the influential Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies to ensure its passage. As on nearly every war issue since 1939, Capper lost.

The dangerous state of the world had left the United States no realistic choice except to prepare its own defenses. Although the first steps were reluctant, few and short, Congress voted a larger military budget in 1941 than in the previous twenty years combined, and a million and a half men were in army uniforms by the middle of the year.

The U.S. military, however, was unprepared to wage full-scale war, and the country unwilling to let it. Ammunition shortages at Fort Riley, for example, required cavalry troops to substitute eggs for hand grenades in training exercises. Although the army was nowhere in combat before Pearl Harbor, navy destroyers protecting foreign ship convoys bound for Allied ports with lend-lease supplies fought German submarines in the North Atlantic. Despite the fact that the United States was a limited if unofficial belligerent, public opinion polls showed that Americans desperately wanted peace. Many feared widening war was inevitable, but clearly they hoped to be wrong.

Circumstances, however, had already altered the texture of Kansas. Reflecting the sharp escalation of government spending as America became the arsenal of democracy and began building its own defenses,

Kansas newspapers in 1941 reported the "greatest pre-Christmas boom in years." Fifty million Americans were employed, which exceeded the previous peak year of 1929 by five million. Many were Kansans with new jobs in the expanding defense industries and at military installations. Agricultural prices also had rebounded from the nadir of the Great Depression. With wheat at ninety-eight cents and corn at sixty-eight cents per bushel, the highest levels in a generation, Kansas farmers thrived.

Intractably against war, Kansas nevertheless enjoyed the economic balm from defense spending. Although suffering the handicap of a Republican state dealing with a Democratic administration, Kansas received a surprisingly generous share. Its advantages in the scramble for government money included ambitious and adroit entrepreneurs, educated and mechanically adept workers, geographic invulnerability for a burgeoning defense industry, and politicians who unabashedly aided businesses in the contract thicket.

State officials and the Kansas congressional delegation displayed singular aggressiveness in seeking defense contracts. With key figures like Senator Capper and Rep. Clifford Hope prying open doors, Gov. Payne H. Ratner was in Washington "chasing from one defense official to another." Kansas was awash in contracts. Wichita had the

By the end of World War II, more than 10,000 Stearman trainers had been constructed in Wichita. The city's aircraft production capacity and location in the middle of the country made Wichita an ideal site for military contracts.

highest per capita war contract volume of any American city, and many towns and smaller cities shared the economic largess.

Snaring defense business nearly eliminated any traces of the Great Depression, but it was also responsible for strains of urban overcrowding, inadequate facilities in military towns, and serious labor shortages. Many of the dislocations associated with the war years actually occurred earlier in Kansas. Hired hands left farms in alarming numbers, cowboys defected from the range for defense plants, and teachers abandoned one-room schools in droves leaving the Kansas Board of Education no alternative in 1941 except to lower requirements to teach.

Enjoying high wages and strong crop prices, eager Kansas 1941 Christmas shoppers found bargains in profusion and credit easy. Stores advertised men's suits at $16.50, women's cotton dresses at $1.00, and fur coats for fashion-conscious women at $99.50. Among the popular children's gifts were fully dressed eighteen-inch dolls for $1.98, and the All Wheels Ball Bearing Velocipede (tricycle) with "all the little extras children adore" sold for a mere $9.90. Whereas the living standard normally declines in warring nations, the Christmas boom forecast its rise in America.

On Sunday, December 7, 1941, Kansans awoke to sunshine and unseasonably mild weather. High temperatures reached near sixty degrees that day. Aware that they could be pulled into the vortex of war anytime, Kansans still went about Sunday preparations without particular foreboding. If war preparations had modified some Kansas features, others were largely unaffected. A still predominantly rural state, many farmers and ranchers had chores before they could look forward to church and rest. Milking, feeding stock, and the other routine farm jobs were done that morning largely as they had been for generations—tediously and by hand. Electricity and mechanization had not yet eased the monotony, grueling toil, and long hours for many farm families.

Kansas towns and cities enjoyed a life made easier with conveniences unavailable in the country. Although about two-fifths of the state's population was designated as urban in 1940, the statistic obscures the fact that most people lived in small towns. Ranked sixty-ninth among American cities, Kansas City was the most populous urban enclave. Whereas Hutchinson and Salina, for example, quali-

fied as cities by Kansas standards, the rest of the nation probably regarded these entities with limited populations and small-town atmospheres as little more than overgrown settlements. Kansans, urban and rural, shared many old-fashioned experiences and beliefs.

Many diligent churchgoers resided in Kansas in 1941; on December 7 many persons picked up a newspaper or turned on the radio after services while waiting for Sunday dinner. At Pearl Harbor in the Hawaiian Islands seven thousand miles away, early risers were considering breakfast, and American military forces were at a high-level alert. Shattering the deceptive calm at 7:55 a.m., Japanese aircraft roared in to strafe and bomb army installations, airfields, and anchored ships. It was 11:55 a.m. in Kansas. The Pearl Harbor generation can instantly recall what they were doing and how they learned of the attack. Immediate reactions varied; however, persons were generally shocked but not surprised, angry but not hateful, upset but not uncontrolled.

On December 8 Kansans seemed normal, even nearly complacent, as they waited to learn of their government's response to the attack. The *Topeka Daily Capital* reported "business as usual" downtown. Thousands of persons on the streets displayed no emotion and "were apparently unconcerned about the world shaking events." When the president signed the declaration of war at 3:12 p.m., "nothing happened." But while Kansans stolidly attended to affairs, "a stream of young men poured in and out, hour after hour" at army and navy recruiting offices in Topeka and elsewhere.

Pearl Harbor instantaneously united Kansans for the duration. "When the country was suddenly attacked," Dodge City newspaper editor J.C. Denious wrote Capper, "it . . . brought immediately the support of the entire population. . . . The people want the entire enterprise of war undertaken on as large a scale as we can manage and . . . the notion of the people is that it should be fought through to a finish." While recalling his own resolve to subordinate personal interests to the war effort, dairyman Orville Hoch remembered that "everyone was willing to let partisanship go by the wayside, work together . . . to win the war, and get it over with."

The abrupt shift of public opinion was reflected in civilian defense programs in which Kansans had earlier displayed faint enthusiasm. Following Washington, D.C., directives, the Kansas Council of Defense beseeched citizens before Pearl Harbor to enroll in classes

ranging from first-aid to air raid warden training. Even a simulated attack on Topeka by Fort Riley troops and the easy capture of Governor Ratner prompted few volunteers, partly due to fear of derision by neighbors.

Within days of Pearl Harbor, however, two hundred thousand men and women had signed up, exceeding two-fifths of the adult population. When eleven thousand Topekans volunteered in three days, a shortage of forms delayed registration. Not every scoffer disappeared, but the enormous rally to civilian defense convincingly refutes the pejorative view that the state was among the "oases of apathy" during the war.

Although demonstrably inexperienced, thousands of air raid wardens were on duty several days after December 7. Municipalities required only slightly longer to field civilian defense teams with firefighting, police and medical outfits, and with units to deal with public health services, food, clothing, shelter, and utilities. Frequent drills sharpened proficiency.

Officials expressed fear of enemy nuisance air raids, sabotage, and gas attacks by suicide squads. Railroads, key bridges, communication lines, and defense facilities were immediately placed under guard, lasting for the duration in some cases. Governor Ratner ordered state law enforcement agencies and appealed to the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Spanish-American War veterans to "be on the alert" against the dangers of disloyal citizens and saboteurs.

Air raid drills and practice blackouts, notoriously inept at first, became community events. Unscheduled power failures from electrical storms caused great excitement, nearly panic, in some locations. Defense against attack was a natural immediate reaction, but exercises to confound and repel the enemy and vigilance against possible internal foes were never more than a minor part of the civilian war effort, and they diminished as the threat became remoter. The only enemy penetration of Kansas occurred when a Japanese balloon landed on a farm near Bigelow. The farmer wanted the balloon for a haystack cover but reluctantly surrendered it to authorities.

Kansans spent vastly greater time and energy on tasks like collecting scarce materials and selling war bonds to support the

war than on civilian defense. Significantly, these projects promoted and heightened public unity resulting from a common threat. The *Topeka Daily Capital* expressed the popular belief that the civilian defense program would be "worthwhile" if its sole result were to "break down the barriers between neighbors." Organized under the Kansas Council of Defense, with auxiliaries in each of the 105 counties and 589 incorporated towns and cities, grass roots war-related programs often touched every person.

Examples abound. American Legion posts led blood drives to aid wounded servicemen. Local schools offered rooms in which volunteers sewed items for troops. Red Cross groups wrapped bandages, knitted clothing, and packed gift boxes for military personnel overseas. Public libraries sponsored "Victory Book" campaigns, with local women collecting reading materials for soldiers, sailors, and marines. Civilian volunteers served troops at USO canteens on military posts, in towns and cities, and at railroad and bus stations. Teresa DeLong remembered that facilities at train depots operated by groups like the Army Mothers were "a wonderful thing. People baked cookies, gathered up magazines, and took all kinds of things down to be given to troops on trains that went through."

A necessity for many families during the Great Depression, vegetable gardens were dubbed Victory Gardens after Pearl Harbor. They quickly became a conspicuous and successful symbol of the civilian war contribution. Initial government fears that V-Gardens would waste seed, fertilizer, and insecticides were expelled by high yields the first year of planting. In 1943 gardens accounted for one-quarter of the country's total food production and one-half of the commercial total of canned vegetables. Consequently, the government optimistically envisaged Americans tilling twenty million garden plots.

Attesting both to patriotism and food shortages, V-Gardens flourished in Kansas. With the shortage of available ground in towns and cities, municipal governments found vacant lots for urban dwellers. School yards were cultivated, and the Santa Fe railroad opened tracts with space enough for as many as thirty persons to work one plot. Whereas participation in specialized programs was often according

to age and gender, gardens were commonly family projects. Tips for gardeners ranging from beginners to experts were distributed by gardening clubs and published in newspapers, which meticulously reported on local plots. With 17,710 cultivated gardens in 1943, Topeka was indicative of the state trend.

Youth were assiduously snared in the war effort. Within two weeks of Pearl Harbor, officials announced plans to mobilize fifty thousand boys and girls in 4-H, Future Farmers of America, Boy Scouts, Future Homemakers, and Girl Scouts. These groups often had key duties in an array of activities, and nearly every school also enlisted students in the war-related programs. Volunteers in the Topeka High Victory Corps, for example, earned credit for graduation by baby-sitting for women in defense work and delivering Western Union messages.

Countless youngsters had experiences similar to those of Ray Call, whose family lived in Sedan. *The Emporia Gazette* editor remembered that he had avidly collected scrap metals, rubber, rags, and paper in multifarious drives, conscientiously saved tin cans, and regularly bought defense stamps at school: "Kids couldn't afford . . . a war bond, but we could bring . . . a dime or a quarter and buy a stamp. Week by week, we would accumulate first a dollar [in stamps], then five dollars, then ten dollars, and eventually we would have . . . enough in stamps so we could buy a bond."

Picking milkweed pods was a special contribution by Kansas children. The Japanese had occupied Java, the island that supplied the kapok filling used in life jackets; with the prewar supply of the material nearly exhausted, the U.S. Department of Agriculture started harvesting the milkweed substitute in June 1944. Just twenty-eight ounces of the white fluffy fiber buoyed a person for 140 hours, and state coordinator C.F. Gladfelter expected a yield of twenty-five carloads, enough for fifty thousand life vests. Primarily children were recruited to tramp the fields. Depositing pods from one of the ten "bad weeds," so designated by Kansas agricultural experts, in fifty-pound mesh onion bags, pickers were paid the bountiful sum of twenty cents for each bag.

The war effort was defined in compelling terms that required change in society to wage war with greater spirit, skill, and acumen. This was evident in programs to strengthen the family, increase educational opportunities for both youngsters and adults, and provide better public health and nutrition. Victory required a society of well

educated, physically fit, and socially responsible persons. This appeal was successful on behalf of programs that might have been strongly resisted or received only grudging support in peacetime. World War II is not usually perceived as a time of expanded social consciousness and responsibility, but that was the case in Kansas.

The war both created social problems and enlarged and intensified extant ones to the point they could not be avoided. Often in conjunction with state and national organizations, local defense councils and an array of groups began programs to aid children, strengthen families, assist needy persons, and engender community unity and morale. Countless locations adopted unprecedented programs, essentially in proportion to the amount of war-induced strain.

Staggered by wartime problems, Wichita probably set the record. Multifarious activities promoting family life and personal growth were sponsored by the Wichita PTA. One of the first nutrition committees in America was organized by the Wichita Family Life Program to train leaders for PTA classes, help welfare families, and offer an exemplary

When the United States entered World War II, Kansans across the state volunteered their time and services to aid the cause. Patriotism enveloped Kansas. These Coffey County women joined ranks with servicemen to support one of many home-front projects.

food preparation program for boarded defense workers. Even institutions like the Wichita Public Library, which provided bookmobile services to factories and manned book stations during shift breaks, accommodated wartime realities. Self-help centers offered recreation and stressed cooperation to raise community spirits. Many children enjoyed day care arranged by the staff of Wichita Wartime Child Care. One North Wichita neighbor council started its day-care center, had a home garden project, offered weekday Bible school, and planned the local Christmas celebration.

The need for programs like those noted above was apparent, as no social institution experienced greater wartime stress than the family. Of family members experiencing duress, children were a special concern. According to the Kansas Council for Children (KCC), the war had sharply "accentuated many problems of health, education and welfare for the children and youth." The council fretted specifically about escalating rates of juvenile delinquency, emotional disorders, and school dropouts. Unseparated families also had abundant problems. Parents often worked long and irregular hours, and neglected "latchkey" children had ample opportunities for wayward diversions.

Organized by fifty state bodies on October 28, 1942, the sprawling KCC formulated ambitious policies to ease deprivation of the young and strengthen society's investment in its progeny. The council criticized Kansas for lagging behind other states both in the quantity and quality of service. Striving to promote comprehensive programs in every field related to the welfare of the young, the KCC offered a model blueprint to the state legislature, which was later adopted, and encouraged local groups and schools to compensate for family dislocations with additional activities, summer programs, and greater supervision.

One laudatory response was the creation of the Sons of Victory to deal with a temporary problem that had possible long-term consequences. Noting the struggles of boys to adjust to the situation of fathers away in the military, Topeka junior high principal M.J. Whitson believed that a school-administered program was necessary to fill the void that family members and friends could not. Surrogate fathers were recruited to eat lunch regularly with boys at school and play basketball and baseball afterward. Tennis, bowling, hiking, and field trips were typical Saturday outings. Although providing a wholesome

routine, the program's key aim was to foster guidance and companionship from adults in whom the boys could readily confide. Due to the youngsters' enthusiasm, the Sons of Victory spread from school to school, and the Daughters of Victory was organized to lend girls adult emotional support. Mothers lavishly praised the "intelligent attention" and "inspiration" their children received.

War also affected well-adjusted children with normal home lives. They conscientiously imitated elders at war even in their play. Described by the *Topeka Daily Capital* as the "most enthusiastic military organization to be formed in Kansas," the Potwin Home Guard included "one captain, a dozen top sergeants, and two overworked rear-rank privates." Recruited by an eleven-year-old boy, the Potwin Home Guard trained "feverishly . . . for any eventuality." Ray Call reflected on this apparently harmless play: "We really began to take on the roles of soldiers . . . and have mock battles. We really had very accurate copies of weapons . . . and we were encouraged to play with them, because there was a great patriotic spirit and this was fostered in the children."

Eventually, as with many others, the war became real to Call, who remembered that the frightening stories his uncle told while on military leave "began to sink in, and I began to understand the horror of war." Seeing his trembling uncle reduced to "a nervous basket case" was a "terrible and a vivid experience. From that point on . . . I began to understand . . . war was hell."

It would be erroneous to conclude that the mass of Kansas children became either miscreants or neurotics. Their wartime experience was nearly idyllic compared with children in other parts of the globe who routinely knew deep sacrifice, suffering and danger, and the plight of the latter is the compelling stuff of one Kansas human interest story.

A nagging premonition of danger to his three pre-teenage children during the 1940 German blitz motivated suburban Londoner Stanley Fletcher's desperate appeal to the generosity of Hutchinson, Kansas, of which he had scarcely heard and where he knew no one. Many families in the reputedly anti-British town eagerly volunteered to raise the children for the duration. After bureaucratic delays and red tape, lawyer, businessman, farmer, and new "uncle" A. Lewis Oswald met Nigel, Patricia, and Jacqueline at the Kansas City Union

Station. Hutchinson had nearly gone into mourning earlier when the children were feared lost on a torpedoed British evacuation ship.

Adapting to an unfamiliar routine of farm work, household chores, and attending a two-room school, the children blended with their temporary family, which had two boys and a girl, and Kansas accents even seeped into their speech. Back in Great Britain, the Fletchers reciprocated for their children's care by converting their dining room into a dormitory and allowing as many as six American servicemen the run of the house.

Evacuating the children saved their lives. While safe in Hutchinson, they received news that bombs had hit the portion of the house in which they stayed; had they been there they almost certainly would have been killed. Children and parents were reunited in Kansas after the war.

While becoming more socially conscious, Kansans also were becoming more patriotic. Governmental and private groups lost no opportunity to arouse patriotism. Appeals to work harder and longer, save scrap metal, and live cheerfully with rationing gas, tires, and sugar were wrapped in patriotic symbols and rhetoric. Susceptibility to these appeals is reflected in the fact that Kansas was one of the top three states in the 1942 national scrap drive. Nearly every standard of conduct and expression was judged on whether it was conducive to or detracted from the war effort. Patriotism enveloped Kansas, and any reservations either about the war or its rightness were not evident.

Extreme wartime patriotism could have led to intolerance and grave abuses against groups and individuals whose loyalty, often for baseless reasons, was suspect. This frequently had happened in Kansas in World War I but was nearly unknown in World War II. Tolerance, it appeared, was on the increase. Black Kansans were second-class citizens before the war, which was apparent in widespread discrimination and the wall of social separation between white and black. In 1941 Governor Ratner supported full participation of black citizens in defense programs, the small first breach in the racial system. Like all Kansans, blacks performed the patriotic duties of collecting scrap, selling war bonds, and knitting for servicemen. They joined civilian defense groups, often segregated, and expressed pride in the organization of a black unit of the Kansas State Guard. But this was more a hope for the future than a reflection of dramatic change.

With all this interest in the war effort, Kansans did their best to "carry on," to do as they had always done. Many ordinary things acquired greater significance because they symbolized the purpose of the war and had greater poignancy because of the absence of loved ones. Adjustments, of course, had to be made, especially for wartime shortages and rationing.

Children and adults sacrificed equally. Ray Call remembered the "hardship" of enduring "substitute candy" in place of Hershey's and Snickers bars. "The worst was a ribbon bar. It was a little red, white, and blue coconut kind of a thing that . . . tasted like shoeleather." With the limited availability of commercial booze, some Kansans resorted to making their own. L.E. Garrison of Abilene wrote a friend in the military that "Duffy & I made a batch of 'Kickapoo juice.' It is really pretty good. It tastes like a dry wine."

Rationing affected every Kansan, and often necessitated that citizens make do and do without. Common items like sugar, meat, and gas had to be paid for in both money and ration coupons, and local rationing boards often had to grant special permission for the purchase of scarce items. No wonder many Kansans forewent the status of serving on these boards to avoid the risk of offending neighbors and friends.

One couple passed out homemade "white lightning" at their chivaree because candy was unavailable. Their wedding cake was made of sugar saved over a long period, and a short honeymoon trip was possible because they received a ration stamp for five gallons of gas as a wedding gift. Car pools, bans on outdoor Christmas lights, and cancellation of church dinners were ways that Kansans tried to conserve and thereby demonstrate their patriotism. Kansans, like other Americans, were asked to sacrifice without complaint. But cases of actual deprivation were rare, if they happened at all.

Some Kansans grumbled about rationing, usually with good humor, and a few resorted to evasion. Although the scale of the black market and violations in the state is impossible to ascertain, the greatest amount of transgressions appears to have been of the petty variety. A typical practice, admitted to years later by some store owners, was to save a shirt, women's hose, or a steak for special long-time customers.

Among the important consequences of World War II was its permanent imprint on the Kansas countryside. An exodus depleted the farm population from 607,000 in 1940 to 495,000 in 1945. Technological and economic influences responsible for this declining rural population were not necessarily new, but the exigencies of war made them stronger. Cora Phelps recalled: "I'd been down at Fredonia running a farm while my husband was in Montana. . . . I was down there until I couldn't keep help. They discovered Boeing paid more than I could so they kept going. . . . I finally wrote my husband and told him I was going to sell off the portable stuff, and I was going along with the help."

Although farm population was dropping, agricultural production was rising dramatically. According to Pete Maley, "We began to gear up for high production out on the farm." Taking advantage of the available technology, he remembered that "We plowed up everything from fence row to fence row." Kansas farm productivity surpassed the national average during the war years. Nearly all the afflictions of farmers in the Great Depression and Dust Bowl abruptly disappeared with the war boom. Crop surpluses that dragged down prices were consigned to memory. High prices, backed by government supports, apparently infinite markets for crops, and patriotism induced farmers to stretch production to the limit. The Kansas State Board of Agriculture cited production records as evidence of "the tremendous contribution of Kansas toward the inevitable victorious conclusion of World War II."

Affluence was a new experience for Kansas farmers who had their highest cash incomes in history during World War II. The $595 million they received in 1942, for example, was more than double the average for the years between 1936 and 1940. Increased farm income can best be comprehended in personal items. In the depths of the depression, farmers struggled to stay in business, lived on credit, and went without basic necessities. Some farmers made enough in World War II to pay income taxes and have the security of savings. They could escape crushing mortgages, add acreage to farms, and even afford higher quality vice—one farmer recalled that he was aware things were better when he could afford commercially-made hooch instead of bootleg.

Although old-fashioned methods lingered, farming was rapidly becoming more scientific and increasingly mechanized. The all-purpose tractor in use by 1940 is one example. Lighter and with greater power than earlier models, its pneumatic or rubber tires resulted in better traction, lower fuel consumption, fewer repairs, and gear ratios enabling highway speeds of between twelve and twenty miles per hour (compared with three miles per hour for horse teams). Proliferation of bigger and more efficient equipment specifically designed for tractors also increased cultivated acres with less labor and higher yields.

The rise of the custom combining industry was one consequence of the war. Combines were in short supply, and the government would not allow production on the scale needed. Some custom combining outfits had traveled the region before the war, but now a class of professional custom cutters followed ripening wheat from Texas to Canada. Still, technology could not offset the shortage of labor.

By 1943 the government identified the "seriously depleted" farm labor supply as one of the country's gravest problems. Desperate farmers and ranchers scrambled for any available workers, and the search for labor solutions was among the most interesting of the Kansas homefront phenomena. Relatives and friends afforded willing farm hands, although not necessarily highly skilled. This volunteer labor source was essential, but farmers sometimes appeared ungrateful. L.E. Garrison stopped spontaneously after work to help with the wheat harvest on the A.S. Merrill farm. After a stint operating the combine; Garrison confided to a friend that Merrill complained, "I wasn't worth a damn—however, when I told him I was worth perhaps all he was paying me, he didn't have much to say."

With women as the largest untapped labor source, the government (as it had successfully done in World War I) mobilized city women to replenish the dwindling supply of farm workers. Of the recruiting organizations nationwide, the most important was created in 1943 within the purview of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. County extension agents, with the cooperation of government agencies, colleges, groups and clubs, enlisted women in the Women's Land Army of America (WLA). Approximately 360,000 women volunteered for farm work on either a permanent or regular part-time basis. Although

making an effort to recruit city women, the WLA shifted its Kansas emphasis to women already on the farms.

As males departed from Kansas agriculture, farm wives and daughters assumed their jobs. Women inexperienced in outside work had to learn to operate heavy machinery, and those women who helped in the fields and with livestock before the war carried even greater burdens. In nearly every case, these duties were added to the already strenuous regimen of the typical farm woman. Consequently, the principal WLA aim was to instruct women on subjects from family nutrition to farm safety whereby they could deal efficiently with their additional chores.

Family and friends, however, seldom made up the total labor deficit. Youngsters who organized early in the war to collect scrap and babysit for mothers working in war plants also helped fill the labor void. Examples include the Boys Labor Brigade, which received time off from school to pick corn, and the Victory Corps at Topeka High, which released students from classes and gave course credit for performing agricultural labor. In 1943 farmers counted on the help of twenty-five thousand Kansas Boy Scouts.

The acute shortage of agricultural workers led to one of the most unusual episodes of the war—the use of German prisoners of war on farms and ranches. POWs performed a variety of jobs including harvesting potatoes, dressing turkeys, milking cows, and shocking kafir corn; many Kansas farmers testified that the prisoners saved their crops. Kansans liked the polite, good humored, and industrious POWs who were grateful for the generosity and kindness of their unchosen employers.

The experience changed the perceptions and attitudes of both groups. Kansans learned to judge the POWs on their individual qualities, and not on the grotesque philosophy of the nation they served. Prisoners received a practical lesson in democracy and often acquired a genuine fondness for the American way. Former POWs and Kansans still exchange recollections and news by mail, and some have visited each other. The return of former POWs to reaffirm friendships has even been the occasion of community celebrations. Imbued with the American dream, some prisoners returned to become citizens, raise families, and enjoy the freedom, opportunity, and vast open spaces that had impressed them as POWs.

The change that World War II brought to the farms of Kansas hastened an agricultural revolution that continues today. But change came not just to the farms of Kansas, but to the towns and cities as well. About 40 percent of the state's population was urban in 1940, but that increased to slightly above 52 percent as a consequence of World War II. Only 12 percent urban in 1940, Johnson County surpassed 70 percent by 1950. The huge urban population influx created enormous problems of both physical accommodation and social adjustment.

Of the small towns, one strongly affected by the war was Eudora, which found itself a neighbor of the rapidly expanding Sunflower Ordnance Works. Housing was constructed near the plant works, but Eudora was the closest town, and the Sunflower workers flocked there in search of recreation. In early 1943 a USO club was established with headquarters in the old opera house. *The Lawrence Journal-World* later reported that the building had no plumbing; nevertheless, luncheons and dinners were served successfully, even though "water had to be carried from neighboring restaurants." The club sponsored lectures, classes, parties, and held checker and ping-pong tournaments. Graveyard-shift workers were served meals when they came off at 7:30 a.m., and second-shift workers who left the plant at 11:30 p.m. could dance until 2:30 in the morning. At times, as many as three hundred people crowded the tiny hall. On occasion a USO orchestra, directed by Prof. Russell Wiley of the University of Kansas band, provided concerts. In June 1943 an expanded facility opened, but workers had begun to move out. A year later the club was closed, and its popular director, Alice Moe, was transferred to other duties. Before she left, the high school student body and faculty gave her a compact, and the city of Eudora presented her with a sapphire pin.

Wichita became one of the main wartime industrial cities in the country. Rapid expansion of the aircraft industry was responsible for a spiraling economic boom. Compelled by government policy and lured by jobs and high wages, new workers from Kansas farms and small towns and the surrounding states engulfed the city, whose population nearly doubled during the war. Nowhere in Kansas was urbanization more obvious and of greater consequence. The population shift strained Wichita to the limit.

New York Herald Tribune writer Kunigunde Duncan described the

> "nightmare" of too many people in stores, on buses, at the bank, gas, water and electricity pay windows. It takes forever to get nothing done. There are too many traffic tangles and accidents, too few lodgings for airplane workers, too few seats in school rooms. There is increase in crime, and streets are now trash-laden. It is a headache to try to telephone.

Inadequate housing was probably the severest problem. Appropriately called "hot-flops," boarding houses were common in which beds were always warm from being slept in in straight shifts. Paying generous rewards for leads on rentals, persons were grateful to find even wretched facilities. One Wichitan remembered that "old sheds and garages were converted for housing. Basements had one, two, or three apartments added. People just came from everywhere, and . . . put up with phenomenal conditions. . . . They just stuck it out."

A partial answer to the housing problem was to build the new town of Planeview on the Kansas prairie close to Wichita. Planeview, a war housing project for Wichita Boeing workers, was completed in fifteen months and became the seventh largest city in Kansas. Planeview had forty-four hundred dwellings and twenty thousand residents, a million-gallon water reservoir, 117 miles of sidewalks, parks, schools, playgrounds, and something new: the first shopping center in the Wichita area.

The "miracle" community was a good example of institutional adaptation to wartime exigencies. Planeview's institutional practices were to reflect the particular and urgent needs of workers and their families. When convention interfered, it was disregarded. Schools, for example, completely revised schedules and activities and expanded operations to include day-care nurseries for children of working mothers. The Planeview experience was duplicated throughout Kansas and the country. War changed the needs of society, and institutions responded with new services and revised operations to mirror the new realities.

Wichita adapted to the population explosion, often with ingenuity. City traffic signals were set at thirty-two seconds to enable bigger sidewalk crowds to safely cross streets. The sewage-treatment plant was reconditioned to handle a population of two hundred thousand and the new housing developments and industry. Services such as restaurants, movie theatres, and bowling alleys never closed. Social

adjustments were commonly more difficult than the physical. Although reflecting a "cross-section of America," newcomers wrenched the community life known by long-time residents, and they caused some grumbling. Often just off of farms, the newcomers typically had few acquaintances, and they were unaccustomed to organized community life and group activity. Wichita, as well as many smaller towns with a similar problem, used existing institutions like schools to introduce the newcomers to neighbors, offer group events, or simply provide an opportunity to relax or pursue a hobby. Private enterprise also had its influence—Wichita even developed a nightlife, and one that threatened a Kansas tradition. Wichita historian Bill Ellington vividly recalled:

> Dance halls were just going full blast. I can certainly relate to a quite popular one called the Blue Moon out near where the Boeing plant is today. The Blue Moon, of course, had great bands, even Glenn Gray and Charlie Stivak occasionally. It was common to carry in a bottle of booze and place it under the table . . . everyone did it. As long as it wasn't visible, that was the understanding.

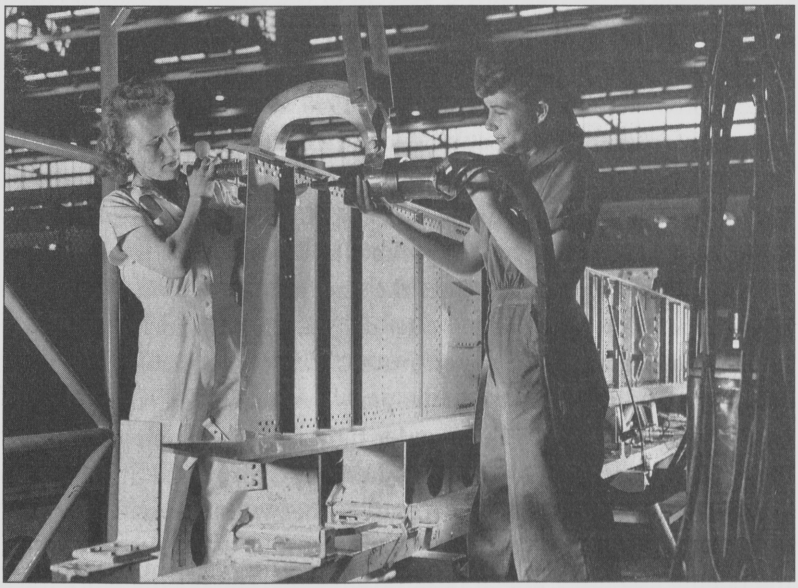
Wichita's spasms were due to the precipitant expansion of the aircraft industry. Whereas only 3 percent of the city's population relied on the industry for their livelihood in 1939, the proportion jumped to one-half by 1943. Of Cessna, Beechcraft, and Boeing, the last was the biggest story. Its Wichita operations in 1940 were basically confined to the manufacture of Kaydet trainers. In 1939 the Army Air Corps notified airframe companies that it had a "superbomber" in mind and asked them to prepare estimates. The Boeing design won the competition, and the company built experimental models while it constructed a second Wichita plant ten times the size of the first to mass produce the bomber. Boeing engineers literally redefined principles in their field to create the B-29 "superfortress," which was called the most "perfect blending of harmonious parts ever achieved . . . in the science of aerodynamics." Built under tight security, Boeing delivered the first of more than sixteen hundred superfortresses in July 1943. The B-29 could fly faster, higher, and farther with a heavier pay load than any World War II bomber. More than four B-29s a day came off the Boeing assembly line at peak production. The Boeing work force jumped from seven hundred in 1940 to twenty-nine thousand in 1944.

By 1943 thirty-one thousand women worked in the Wichita aircraft plants, many in jobs for which only men had earlier been thought suited. These women were mythologized in songs, movies, and posters as Rosie the Riveter. They labored at drill presses wearing bib overalls and bandannas to defend America and win the war. Women adjusted quickly to the demands of new work. According to Cora Phelps:

> You'd see women who had never done anything but housework in their lives. . . . They got some training, and they were working right along with the men. An awfully lot of women were doing the riveting and that sort of thing. . . . I thought they did an awfully good job of converting to something that was totally strange.

Many Rosies like Lula Reider and Laura Newell, one of the first three women hired in the Cessna machine shop, could not remember overt discrimination. But Cora Phelps described the treatment of women as

> just about what it is now down underneath. Men were used to being heads of families. If there was a good job they got it. A lot of them resented the women, but they knew they needed them. But sometimes you'd be



Women, as well as men, worked around the clock in Wichita's aircraft plants to meet wartime contracts. In December 1943, the peak of wartime employment, half of the 29,795 employees at Boeing-Wichita were women.

surprised at the individuals who backed up the women. Some believed that women ought to be able to earn money, eat, and buy clothes just like a human being.

In all accounts of women aircraft workers, receiving their first paycheck was a memorable event. Laura Newell's $18.56 check was two and a half times the amount she earned in a week as a waitress. They all testified that the experience changed them in both small and large ways: some acquired a preference for slacks even outside the factory, and others decided they would stay at work after the war. It was all part of the movement that helped change women's role in American society.

World War II spread Kansans to every corner of the world; it also brought tens of thousands of young men from every corner of America to learn the craft of war at Kansas military installations and colleges. They were usually accorded Kansas hospitality. Of one town that had an air corps cadet unit stationed at the college, Orville Hoch testified that "the community went all out to make those boys welcome, and make their stay as pleasant as possible." As a consequence, "a great many of those boys came back, finished school, and some of them married, went into business, and are still here." Military personnel and their families often became deeply assimilated, and sadness resulted from cutting close ties. While her husband was away in the service, Teresa DeLong lived in a building with four apartments, of which three were rented to the wives of cadets. "When any of their husbands marched down . . . to the Santa Fe station to be moved somewhere else," she recounted, "we'd all go and stand along the street and cry."

Occasional strains in hospitality could be humorous. On February 27, 1943, Willard Brown, state senator from Emmet, Kansas, complained that bombers from the Topeka Air Force Base had dropped six bombs on his ranch, destroying a chicken house and frightening his hired hands enough that they threatened to quit. Learning the bombs were four miles off target, Willard asked the senate to pass a resolution against "poor marksmanship."

When the war began, Fort Riley was the principal Kansas training post. The fort had been nearly ideal in peacetime. According to the director of the U.S. Cavalry Museum:

> You talk to people who were here at that time, and it was really a nice place. You had a lot of good social activities on post as well as the surrounding area. You had the polo teams. . . . They played against the teams from Wichita, Kansas City, and Oklahoma. Of course, there was the weekly fox hunting event. I've talked to a couple of boys who were raised here in the thirties, and the only mounted troop in boy scouts was right here. The kids went riding twice a week on every Wednesday and Saturday. They had the best instructors in the world at the Cavalry School, and used Cavalry School horses.

Fort Riley's horse cavalry dated back to the frontier when it was part of the onslaught against Plains Indians. By the eve of World War II, many believed that the cavalry had outlived its usefulness. With the cavalry still ingrained in military doctrine, however, army preparations for war in 1940 included expanding the cavalry by reactivating Fort Riley's Camp Funston from World War I. Construction was frenzied: "Every 45 minutes they'd have another building done. It was mass production; just throw them together; and if you dropped a nail or your hammer, don't worry about it, keep on going. They needed the buildings." This base expansion was to accommodate twenty-six thousand additional troops, and nearby towns were staggered by ten thousand new civilian construction workers plus twenty-six hundred new families.

In 1940 the army reorganized the cavalry units stationed at Fort Riley into the Second Cavalry Division. It consisted of two white and two black regiments. The influx of both white and black troops into the fort presented an interesting case study in race relations both at the post and in nearby towns. Black soldiers had long been stationed at the fort, but now they arrived in large numbers. Among them was Joe Louis, world heavyweight boxing champion.

To provide recreation for the troops, black and white, USO recreation centers were set up at Fort Riley, near other Kansas military installations, and in the major cities, where they also served defense workers and student servicemen at local colleges. All manner of local buildings were utilized, from municipal centers to the old Harvey House at Topeka, and most of the funds were raised by local donation. On October 1, 1941, the *Topeka Daily Capital* reported that Junction City had two temporary centers. The white USO was in the Municipal Auditorium, while a residence was "in temporary use for negro

soldiers." By early 1944 forty-three USO centers in Kansas were serving 375,000 uniformed men and women each month.

One week after Pearl Harbor, Ezekial Ridley, a black teacher and principal with forty-one years' experience in the Topeka public schools, organized a black USO with the support of the Topeka Citizens Committee of which he had been a member for several months. For more than a year, Ridley struggled along in a twenty-four-by-twenty-five-foot room on East Fourth Street, until he finally moved into a five thousand square foot two-story building at 112 Kansas Avenue.

On November 15, 1942, the *Kansas City Star* described the social events of Fort Riley's Eighth Squadron of black troops, and the difficulties of providing them with appropriate companionship. The squadron decided to hold a dance at the fort, and "since Kansas had never had so many Negro lads in its midst, a question of finding the feminine contingent for the dance became the problem of the moment." Corp. Joe Louis had the answer: bring girls to Fort Riley from Kansas City, Topeka, Lawrence, Abilene, Junction City, and Salina. For this activity, Corporal Louis used some of his own money.

The dance was a huge success, and the girls from Salina invited the Eighth Squadron to the Booker T. Washington Center, "the hub of all Negro activities" in that city. Recruited for the occasion were "a hundred beautifully clad young women" from McPherson, Junction City, Great Bend, Abilene, Lyons, and Ellsworth—but still "the girls had to be rationed." The visit began with a parade for the entire town led by Louis carrying the American flag. A chicken dinner was provided and a dance followed. The whole affair seemed to be viewed as a commendable reflection of American democracy.

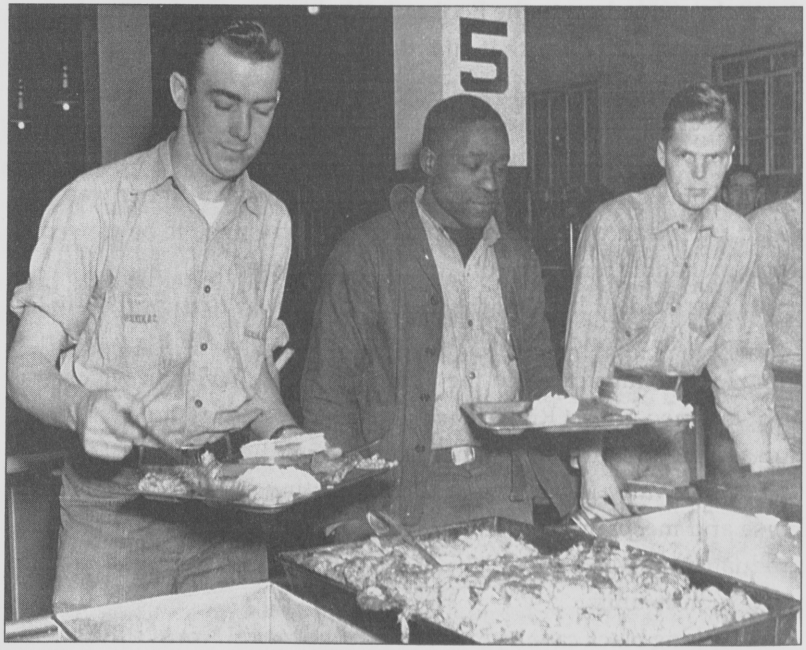
It was evident by 1942 that cavalry would be unimportant in the war, and the Second Cavalry was disbanded. Most of the white personnel were transferred to the Ninth Armored Division, which was also stationed at Fort Riley. Black cavalrymen were assigned as stevedores in the African campaign. But even after the break-up of the Second, the Cavalry Replacement Center continued to operate for both horse and mechanized cavalry. The last horse officer candidate class graduated in 1944, although most of the later horse trainees ended up in pack mule units.

Shipping black cavalrymen to be stevedores in North Africa while white counterparts moved into tanks, and the difficulties of organiz-

ing black USOs reflected the prejudice of the day; nevertheless, the service of black soldiers in World War II was an important step toward the later civil rights movement to which Kansas would have contributed its share.

By 1943 the most important military training in Kansas was to meet the burgeoning needs of both the army air corps and the navy for flying personnel. Naval air stations were established at Olathe and Hutchinson in 1942, the latter mostly on land purchased or leased from Amish farmers. Construction of the Hutchinson base was a particular trial for the little town of Yoder. D.M. Beachley's general store was unable to meet the demands of the construction workers, especially for cold soda pop: they consumed his monthly allowance in a single day. Missouri Pacific railroad agent E.J. Golden and his wife had managed the Yoder station by themselves for years; now they were supervising an army of helpers.

The base was first manned by fifteen hundred enlistees recruited from Kansas and Missouri in ten days. As no housing was available, the men were billeted in Hutchinson at the 4-H buildings at the Kan-



Naval air stations were established at Olathe and Hutchinson in 1942. Here naval recruits line up in the Olathe Naval Air Station mess hall.

sas State Fairgrounds. Mattresses finally arrived, but only after a large shipment of pamphlets on how to play water polo. Food for the men was purchased from local merchants and cooked in borrowed pots and pans. After some rudimentary training for the recruits, the base was commissioned in an impromptu ceremony, with the twenty-seven officers in uniform and the enlisted men "in their cleanest civilian clothes."

Hutchinson had to adjust to both a new military base and the demands of a thriving local defense economy. One woodcraft business, for example, became a primary subcontractor for the Wichita aircraft industry and employed a thousand persons. Besides the sailors and WAVE cadre stationed at the base, as many as eight hundred cadets were in training at one time. Generally cordial relations prevailed between the base and city, but problems were unavoidable. Friction resulted when Hutchinson laundries, unable to handle the volume of both military and civilian business, refused the navy top priority. The solution was to "Iron Your Own Shirt," a voluntary campaign that lowered demand on the laundries by elevating a mundane task to a patriotic act. In spite of early chaos, Hutchinson, which became the largest inland naval base in the nation, and Olathe produced more than eight thousand naval flying personnel by the end of the war.

But the big Kansas military story in World War II was the numerous army air bases that dotted the state at Coffeyville, Independence, Arkansas City, Winfield, Topeka, Dodge City, Herington, Great Bend, Liberal, Hays, Garden City, and Pratt where the first B-29 bound for the Pacific theater took off. In size the Smoky Hill Air Force Base near Salina was the largest army installation in Kansas and was ranked as third in the nation. To speed up B-29 deployment to the Pacific, the army air corps tested the aircraft produced at the Boeing plant in Wichita and trained crews at the same time. These two tasks were Smoky Hill's great contribution to the Allied victory.

By 1944 the need for new military personnel was winding down, and all but a few of the air and land training bases began to close. Of World War II bases, today only Forts Riley and Leavenworth remain. The military installations had served the nation well in wartime; they would do the same for Kansas in peacetime. Some were converted (or reconverted) to municipal airfields; land was turned back to the Amish farmers; Walker Air Force Base between Hays and Russell became the

subject of litigation as farmers demanded the opportunity to buy back their land, which had been found to contain valuable deposits of oil. Smoky Hill continued on for some years as Schilling Air Force Base, with missiles added, but eventually it closed. Today it houses the Kansas Technical Institute. Perhaps the most typically Kansas conversion of former airfields was at Pratt and Herington. Parts of the two bases, with their excellent underground drainage and eight to fourteen-inch concrete runways, were converted to cattle feed lots.

In August 1945 World War II abruptly ended with the atomic bombs dropped on Japan. Many Kansans have testified that they had no doubts then about using this terrible weapon against the enemy to save American lives, and time has not markedly altered their judgment. Aside from the immediate and all too brief euphoria of victory, more than anything else World War II meant change to the people of Kansas. They emerged from war with a different economy, different social institutions, and at least to some extent, different ideas and attitudes. Change has always been the natural state of America, but compressing a generation of change into four short years strained the institutions and emotional elasticity of Kansans, probably even more than that of their fellow Americans. Yet Kansans met these challenges with resilience, perhaps as a consequence of the adaptability ingrained by the earlier frontier experience and the more recent trials of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl.

When the war ended in 1945, Kansans looked forward with confident optimism to the future, although the outlines of that future were still unclear. Like other Americans, Kansans knew that they had entered a new age. As one Kansas woman confided to a *Life* magazine reporter, "When I see a transport plane flying over my house and realize that it will be across the Atlantic in 14 hours more, I know the world is a lot smaller than it used to be, and that Kansas is no longer far from anywhere." Still, Kansans believed strongly in the values inherited from the past; to preserve those values in a society transformed by war would be their next challenge.

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Chapter 7

Modern Kansas in Transition, 1950s–1970s

The transition during the decades 1950s–1970s took many forms: rural areas lost population as Kansas became more urbanized and industrialized; the issue of reapportionment dominated the legislature; the uniform school district system was established; interstate highways 70 and 35 opened; and farming was transformed into a highly commercialized "agribusiness."

This was also a period in Kansas, as in the nation, of transition in race relations. The Supreme Court decision of the century, *Brown v. the Topeka Board of Education* (1954), ended legally sanctioned racial segregation in public schools. Paul Wilson, University of Kansas School of Law professor emeritus, served as assistant attorney general of Kansas in the 1950s and represented the state in support of the Topeka Board of Education. He provides the answer to "why Kansas?" and offers a firsthand report of his involvement in this case. Professor Wilson explains that he is often introduced as the lawyer who was on the wrong side of *Brown v. Board of Education*. His eloquent response provides a personal perspective on this important aspect of Kansas history.

Thomas D. Isern, chairman of the history department at Emporia State University, investigates the cultural heritage of Flint Hills farmers and ranchers. He describes the accommodation they made to geography, the impact of technology, and the influence of external forces that document an integration of ranching (cattle) and farming (crops).

Joel Paddock, an associate professor of political science at Southwest Missouri State University, demonstrates in "Democratic Politics in a Republican State: The Gubernatorial Campaigns of Robert Docking, 1966–1972" how Docking won an unprecedented four terms. Docking's long-term success ran counter not only to national trends but also to Kansas political history. Only six Democratic governors were elected in the state's first century. Paddock credits Docking's success to an electoral strategy based on several themes: fiscal conservatism, law-and-order, and distancing himself from the national party. Docking continued his dominance by running to the right of state Republicans on taxes and social issues.

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka: *A Personal Perspective*

Paul Wilson

Brown v. Board of Education is the case that ended legally sanctioned racial segregation in the public schools of this country. *Brown* was not one case, but five. Along with Kansas in defending state statutes that produced racial segregation in public schools were Virginia, South Carolina, Delaware, and the District of Columbia. The District of Columbia case involved an issue somewhat different from those in the state litigation, but each of the cases raised the ultimate issue of whether the Constitution permitted racial segregation in the public schools.

The state cases were disposed of in a single opinion which is captioned *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka.* We call the case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka,* but obviously the South Carolina and Virginia cases affected more people and were more spiritedly contested. It's just a matter of chance. The Kansas case happened to be appealed first; it occupied the highest position on the docket of the Supreme Court. Therefore, it provided the name by which the consolidated opinions in the four state cases have from that time been known.

There were some other matters of chance, matters of fortuity, in this case that have interesting if not significant implications. For in-

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From Paul Wilson, "Speech on *Brown v. Board of Education,* May 1, 1981," *The Kansas Law Review* 30 (1981): 15–25. Reprinted with permission of *The Kansas Law Review* and Paul Wilson.

stance, Linda Brown is a folk heroine of the civil rights movement. There is talk of building a statue of her on the campus of Washburn University. Actually, Linda Brown was only one of many plaintiffs in these cases. There were 20 plaintiffs in the Kansas case and there were multiple plaintiffs in each of the others. But whoever heard of Victoria Lawton, or James Emmanuel, or Nancy Jane Todd? But we've all heard of Linda Brown for the purely fortuitous reason that her name appeared first in the list of plaintiffs in the first case to be docketed in the Supreme Court. We may have thought that her name appeared first because Brown appears earliest in the alphabet, but the attorney who prepared the complaint in the Topeka case told me that they put the names on the pleading at random, and the way the ball bounced put Linda at the head of the list.

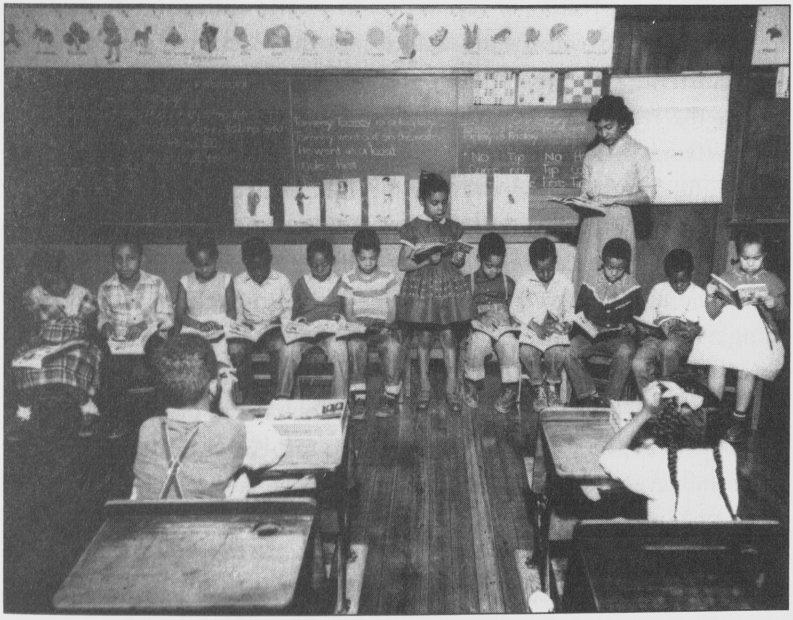
There was another fortuitous circumstance: my own role in the case. Certainly I had not planned on it, nor was I prepared for it. There was nothing in my professional experience that indicated that I was an appropriate person to even participate in a case of this magnitude. I just happened to be the person that was beckoned.

Why Kansas? After all, Kansas is the bastion of freedom. In proportion to its population, Kansas sent more men to the Union Army than any other state. Kansas is the place where John Brown got his start. How in the world did Kansas happen to be aligned with Virginia, South Carolina, and Delaware in defending this vestige of black slavery? In order to answer that question, let us look briefly at history.

School Segregation in Kansas

In territorial days no provision was made for the schooling of black students. This may not have been very significant, because there were very few blacks in the territory. When Kansas became a state, the laws generally provided that local districts could determine their own policies and might or might not establish racially segregated schools. In 1876, the Kansas school laws were codified and the new school code contained no express authorization for the maintenance of separate schools, creating the inference that Kansas had abandoned the policy of segregation.

In 1878 and 1879, a phenomenon occurred that history sometimes calls the "Black Exodus." Due to black apprehension at the ending of Reconstruction and due to the effective promotion of counterparts of our present day real estate developers and travel agents, many black people migrated from the South to Kansas, Nebraska, and other states in the area. It is estimated that in 1878 and 1879 30,000 (there is no accurate census) blacks moved from Mississippi and Tennessee and elsewhere in the South to Kansas. Thirty thousand may not seem like a very large number, but Kansas was not as heavily populated then as now, and the migration did produce an impact. These people were poor; many came up the Mississippi and Missouri rivers in boats, getting off in Kansas City, Leavenworth, and Atchison, and working their way into Topeka and beyond. At least a third became objects of public charity, and this aroused the resentment of the people in the towns. This resentment may have led to the passage in 1879 of a law permitting, but not requiring, cities of the first class (over 15,000 people) to maintain separate schools on the elementary level only. You may think



First grade, Washington School, Topeka, Kansas, 1950s. Prior to the Supreme Court's decision in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, *Kansas law allowed school boards in first-class cities (those with a population larger than 15,000) to maintain segregated schools.*

the impact of that legislation was fairly limited, but for the black people it was not limited, because most lived in cities of the first class and most black students who went to school did not go beyond the elementary grades. Therefore, this limited legislation permitted the racial segregation of most of the blacks who went to school in that day. That 1879 law remained the law of Kansas until 1954, when it was struck down in *Brown v. Board of Education*. There was only one amendment before 1954, which permitted Kansas City, Kansas, to maintain a black high school also.

Segregation in the public schools was assumed at that time to be a valid policy. It was justified on the basis of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, decided in 1896, in which the Supreme Court said that so long as public facilities were equal in their objective characteristics, there was no denial of equal protection of the law because of mere separation. *Plessy v. Ferguson* involved public transportation, not public education. Nonetheless, on the basis of the opinion, the courts justified separate but equal segregation policies in many different areas. Around the fourth and the fifth decades of this century, blacks became increasingly impatient with the results of separation in public education because, in most parts of the country, the facilities for the blacks were not equal to those provided for others. They were separated, and then neglected. Under the leadership of the NAACP in the 1930s and 1940s, black plaintiffs successfully carried a great deal of litigation to the Supreme Court attacking racial separation in public education. You remember some of these cases: *Missouri ex. rel. Gaines v. Canada; Sipuel v. Oklahoma; Sweatt v. Painter; McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents*. All of these cases, though, involved higher education, and each involved something more than mere separation, usually inequality or actual discrimination. Therefore, none of the cases brought into issue the constitutional validity of the separate but equal doctrine in public education. By about 1950, the NAACP was ready to test the validity of separate but equal on elementary and secondary levels. They filed several lawsuits, one in Topeka.

In 1950, there were twelve cities in Kansas that were authorized to maintain separate schools, and of course, Topeka was one of those cities. There were then twenty-two elementary schools in Topeka; eighteen were white and four were black. Both sides conceded, and the federal court found, that they were of equal quality, according to ob-

jective criteria: they had equally good buildings, equally good equipment, equally qualified teachers. The only difference in the treatment of the black and the white students was that the blacks were bussed. The four black schools were scattered throughout the city, and consequently the Board of Education provided the black students with bus facilities that were not provided to the whites who attended school closer to home. Of course, this was quite a different bussing than we now experience in litigation, because bussing was then employed to implement a policy of segregation, not integration.

Topeka was selected as one of the target areas for the attack upon separate but equal because it was one of the few districts in the country where there were separate schools which were in fact equal. Therefore, it was one of the few places where the doctrine of separate but equal could be challenged without some extraneous considerations of inequality.

Early in 1951 a group of plaintiffs in Topeka, with the assistance of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, filed a case in the federal district court seeking to enjoin the maintenance of separate schools in Topeka on the grounds that the statute was unconstitutional. In a case like this, a three-judge federal court is convened. And when a suit seeks to enjoin enforcement of a state statute on the claim of unconstitutionality, notice must be given to the governor. Notice was given to the governor, and he was given the opportunity to answer the suit and defend the statute. The governor and the attorney general had a conference. They decided the attorney general would file an answer, and he did file an answer, but in that answer he simply denied that the statute was unconstitutional. The trial was in the summer of 1951, and the Attorney General's Office did not participate in the trial, except to enter an appearance. Eventually, after the trial was ended, the case was decided by the three-judge court in favor of the Board of Education and against the plaintiffs. But the three-judge district court made one interesting finding, which later assumed significance in the opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States.

The district court found that the "segregation of white and colored children in public schools has a detrimental effect upon the colored children. Further, the impact is greater when it has the sanction of law; for the policy of separating the races is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the Negro group. This sense of inferiority

affects the motivation of a child to learn. Segregation with the sanction of law, therefore, has a tendency to retard the education and mental development of the Negro children, and to deprive them of some of the benefits they would receive in a racially integrated school system." In spite of that finding, the district court felt that it was obligated to find for the Board of Education based on *Plessy v. Ferguson*, and because by objective standards the schools were equal. The Supreme Court of the United States relied on this same finding to find a denial of equal protection under the law. You may be wondering when and how I get into this case. From here on, it is kind of a personal memoir.

In late 1951, I went to work in the Attorney General's Office. I was not particularly young. Professionally, I was kind of a slow starter. I had been out of law school for twelve years. I had been in the military service four years, and I'd practiced down in Osage County, south of Topeka. I'd been a county attorney. I'd been an attorney for a state department. And in 1951, I went to work in the Attorney General's Office. One of the reasons I went there was that I had no appellate experience, and I wanted to get some experience on that level. Shortly after I got into the office, the attorney general had a conversation with me.

I neglected to mention that the plaintiffs who lost in the district court appealed to the Supreme Court. In the case of a three-judge district court, you don't go through the court of appeals but appeal directly to the Supreme Court. Anyway, the attorney general said that we had this case, and he wanted to go and argue it, but he wanted me to work on the brief. He also wanted me to go to Washington when he argued it, and he would get me admitted to the bar of the Supreme Court of the United States. And of course I was overjoyed. There are lots of lawyers who practice a lifetime and are never admitted to the bar of the Supreme Court of the United States, and here I was on the threshold of that achievement. So, I began to get familiar with the case; I began also to get familiar with the rules of the Supreme Court. I got my papers for admission on file, so I would be ready to be admitted when I arrived there. Then, to my dismay, I discovered I didn't have anything to wear.

The traditional dress before the Supreme Court is a black morning coat and gray striped trousers. But I was so recently out of Osage

County, Kansas, that I suppose it is understandable that my wardrobe did not include garb of that kind. As an alternative, the rules permitted appearance in a dark business suit, but I didn't have that either. I had a tan gabardine, I had a black and white, known as a pepper-and-salt tweed, I had some sport jackets and some miscellaneous pants, but nothing that would fit the rule. So, I decided I'd better get a dark suit. I went down to the Palace Clothing Company that used to be in Topeka, as some of you may remember; it was kind of a poor man's Jack Henry. I looked around and I found a double-breasted, dark blue suit, that then fit me like a glove, and I decided, that's what I am going to wear to the Supreme Court. So I had them lay it away for me. It cost $40, and I didn't have $40 available then. And besides, I wanted it to be new when I wore it to Washington, so I paid $5 and had them lay it away.

Then some things happened that I had not anticipated. Segregation had been a controversial matter in Topeka, and there was a vocal minority of the school board that wanted to eliminate segregated schools as a matter of local policy. In the election in the spring of 1952, the anti-segregation minority became the majority and took control of the Board. Shortly after the Board was reorganized, it announced its intention not to resist the appeal in *Brown v. Board of Education*. The attorney general was dismayed when he learned of this. He had many friends in the black community and he had always enjoyed their support and prized their friendship. So, he announced that this was the Board of Education's case, and if they were not going to resist it, then the attorney general was not going to take care of their dirty linen for them by making an appearance and assuming responsibility for defense of the trial court's decision. He told me to put the file aside.

So, I stopped work on *Brown*, but it caused me a lot of misgiving. It seemed to me that as a matter of professional responsibility, when you have a case in the Supreme Court of the United States, you ought to do something about it: you ought not to let it go down the drain, summarily. And besides, I had my blue suit laid away, and it didn't look like I'd have anywhere to wear it.

There was a lot of concern expressed by the southern lawyers, because these cases were assigned for argument one after the other: the first Kansas, then South Carolina, then Virginia, then the District of Columbia, and then Delaware. Virginia and South Carolina thought

that if Kansas failed to appear and let the matter go by default, it would not do much for the atmosphere in which their cases were to be heard and decided. They exerted all kinds of pressures on people in Kansas to get the attorney general involved, but he was determined that he would not.

The case was set for argument on December the 8th, 1952. On November 24 of 1952, The Supreme Court made an interesting order. It is found in the U.S. Reports, at 344 U.S. 141. It concludes:

> Because of the national importance of the issue presented, and because of its importance to the state of Kansas, we request that the state present its views at oral argument. If the state does not desire to appear, we request the attorney general to advise us whether the state's default shall be construed as a concession of invalidity.

Kansas was on the spot. At the time the order came over the wire, the attorney general was out of state. He didn't get back until two or three days later. Obviously, we could not concede the invalidity of a statute that had been passed by the legislature and in at least six cases had been held valid by the supreme court of the state. We had to do something. So, the attorney general sent a wire to the Clerk of the Supreme Court saying: Kansas will be there. Kansas will appear and argue and file a brief.

Then, he called me to his office, pointed to a stack of files, and said, "Take the damn thing and do what you can with it." When I think of these events, I am reminded of something that I read long ago in my course in Shakespeare Rapid Reading: "Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them." I went to work. My first act was to go to the Palace and pick up my blue suit. The next thing to do was to write a brief, because I had no brief.

I worked weekends, and I worked during Thanksgiving vacation; there really weren't very many weekends. I want to read you here a quote from a book, mainly to call your attention to the fact that I'm mentioned in a book. This is Kluger, *Simple Justice*. He said: "Working steadily, sleeping little, Wilson turned out a concise, direct, and clearly competent brief. Kansas was not coming to the Supreme Court to argue the economic, sociological, ethical, or religious desirability of school segregation. Its only concern in appearing was to defend the state's right to permit such a practice." Then he further discusses our

argument, but that, of course, was the gist of it: under the federal concept, under all the precedents that we knew, the maintenance of public education policy within a state was the business of the state, not of the Supreme Court of the United States.

I got my brief written. I had arranged with the state printer to expedite its printing. On a Saturday morning, before the case was set to be argued on Tuesday, I got on a train headed for Washington, with forty copies of my brief in my briefcase. I wanted to go on the train because I hadn't had any time to think about my argument, and it took 28 hours for the train to get from Topeka, Kansas, to Washington. I had a drawing room, and in that 28 hours, I thought and made notes and arrived in Washington on Sunday evening, ready to argue in the Supreme Court.

When I got off the train, I bought a newspaper in the station. I looked at the headlines and it said, "Legal Titans to Do Battle in the Supreme Court." I began to read, and it occurred to me, "Why, they're talking about me." But I read a little further, and I discovered they were really talking about the attorneys in the Virginia and South Carolina cases: John W. Davis, Thurgood Marshall, Spottswood Robinson, and Attorney General Lindsay Almond. In the last line it did say, "The State of Kansas will be represented by Assistant Attorney General Paul *Williams*."

From the station I went to the hotel—the Carlton Hotel, a gracious old hotel. When I registered, there were two messages waiting for me: one from my adversaries, who wanted to get a copy of my brief, and one from the attorneys for the other states, who wanted to be sure I was really there, and that there was such a person as I. So I went first to the hotel of my adversaries across the street, and there I met men who have since become great. Actually they were great then—Thurgood Marshall, Robert Carter, and Spottswood Robinson III. They were confident, cordial, agreeable men.

I delivered my brief to them and went back and made contact with the attorneys from the other states, who, if not my colleagues, shared a common interest with me. And they, too, were clearly confident, gracious, and agreeable men. I delivered my brief to them, and we agreed to meet the following evening to plan our strategy.

The next evening I met with my colleagues. Included in that group was John W. Davis, who was representing the state of South Carolina.

John W. Davis was perhaps the greatest constitutional lawyer of this century. He had held numerous high positions in the government, he had been the Democratic candidate for President in 1924, and, after his defeat, he had gone to New York and become the head of one of the great Wall Street law firms.

He was in the case because he was the personal friend of the governor of South Carolina. He was then in his eightieth year. That evening for two hours, he took me under his wing and gave me a course in appellate argument; I had never argued an appeal. I hadn't even had a course in appellate advocacy. But here I was, ready to go to the Supreme Court of the United States, in the case of the century, being instructed by the greatest constitutional lawyer of the century. It was great! When we separated, he inquired if I had been admitted to the bar of the Court, and I replied I had not. He said that he'd be glad to move my admission. I had made arrangements for someone from the office of Senator Schoeppel to move my admission, but when Mr. Davis made his proffer, I thought, "To hell with Andy Schoeppel." The next noon when the Court convened, Mr. Davis stood up with me and vouched for my character and professional qualification, and his name will always appear on my certificate of admission to the Supreme Court.

Eventually, the cases were called for argument. My case was first, but fortunately I was the appellee, and my adversary, Mr. Robert Carter, had to speak first for the appellant. So I got to observe him, and the Court's treatment of him, before I had to stand on my feet. All this time I was sitting beside John W. Davis, and he was passing notes to me, telling me what to say in response to the argument, and if the Court asked me this question, what to say in answer to it. It did give me some security, but not much. Finally Mr. Carter sat down, and the Chief Justice, who was then Fred Vinson, smiled at me and said, "General Wilson." I was an assistant attorney general, and he was giving dignity to my dubious status. And so I stood up and began to talk. Surprisingly, I could make sounds, and the sounds were relatively coherent. Mr. Kluger says about my argument: "Paul Wilson climbed to his feet for the first time before the Supreme Court, and proceeded to deliver a perfectly able, if somewhat simplistic, argument for the State of Kansas, following closely the arguments he had made in his brief." Kluger was writing in 1975, and we've become a lot more so-

phisticated than we were in 1952. Maybe if he'd been writing from the perspective of 1952, he wouldn't have found my argument so simplistic. I don't know whether Kluger liked me or not. In his book, at one point he made this, I guess, unsympathetic comment: "By eastern standards, Paul Wilson was a hayseed. His background and practice as a lawyer did not seem to qualify him very well for the role thrust upon him, as a reluctant dragon defending his state's Jim Crow public schools." But still, in his book generally he treated me kindly, so he may have felt sorry for me.

At the argument, after I began to talk, I enjoyed it. The Court asked me many questions, and they were kind questions. They seemed designed to help me develop my argument. After using not all of my time, but as much as I needed, I sat down. And the next cases were heard.

I came back to Kansas, and we waited until spring for word about the case. Finally the word came, and the cases had been restored to the docket for further argument the next December. This time the Court had directed that the arguments focus on the intent of the Congress that proposed the Fourteenth Amendment, and the intent of the legislatures that ratified it, as to its effect on public education. This time, of course, I had plenty of time. I was an experienced Supreme Court advocate. I was in touch with the outside world.

So I prepared a brief during the summer and got ready to go back and argue. But in the meantime, the city of Topeka pulled the rug out from under me by announcing that they were going to abandon the policy of segregation. Still they hadn't abandoned it, and the plaintiffs still claimed that the statute was unconstitutional, so I felt the case remained alive. Anyhow, I went back to Washington this time and did not experience the uneasiness that I'd experienced on my first trip, but instead I felt quite secure. Also, I had with me a prepared argument, a prepared speech, and I was going to stand there, and, unless the Court digressed too much, I was going to present my prepared speech. The other time I had only some notes on the margin of my brief.

Again, *Brown v. Board of Education* led off. Mr. Carter began to argue, but Justice Frankfurter interrupted him, and he said "Mr. Carter, isn't your case moot?" Justice Frankfurter apparently read the newspaper. And Mr. Carter very graciously said, "Well, I'd like to have

General Wilson address that question." There was nothing at all about mootness in my prepared speech. I responded as best I could, and finally Earl Warren, who had become the Chief Justice after the death of Fred Vinson, said, "I don't think the case is moot. We've invited General Wilson to come here and speak, and I propose that we let him present his argument." And Justice Frankfurter said no more, but it was obvious to me that they did not want to hear extended argument in this case. So the argument I gave was quite an abbreviated one, and not the one that I had prepared. For 28 years I have cherished the manuscript of that speech, hoping to find a place to give it.

Again, the Court took the case under advisement, and again it was spring before an opinion was announced, and you know of course what the opinion was. There were further arguments, directed at how the decree should be implemented, that is, how segregation should be phased out. Those arguments were in the spring of 1955, about a year after the decision. But during these first two arguments I'd gotten pretty good press in this part of the country, so the third argument was made by my boss. I went along, but I just carried the papers. Anyhow, it was all a great experience.

Now, when I make these presentations, I ask a bit of personal license, to say a word in my own defense, my own behalf. It is commonly assumed that I was on the wrong side of this case. From the standpoint of winning or losing, I was. From many standpoints I was. You know, my children have always been kind of embarrassed about the role their daddy had in standing before the Supreme Court defending racial segregation. They feel about this like they feel about all those times that daddy voted for Nixon. Frequently, I have been introduced at meetings as the lawyer who was on the wrong side of *Brown v. Board of Education*, and people look at me as though I must be some kind of a racist. My response is that I'm not a racist, I am a lawyer, and in our society a lawyer's role is a useful and honorable one. We choose to decide issues of this kind in an adversary process, and before wise decisions can be made by courts, the courts must be fully informed. The job of the lawyer is to inform the court as to the merits in the position he represents. Here, the Supreme Court was being asked to decide one of the most important issues of the century. It was being asked to reverse the trend of the law, because our decisions did support the policy that was under attack. It was being asked to reverse a

trend that was supported by the values that society had traditionally held. If it was to decide the issue correctly, the justices needed to be fully informed. The Kansas position was not a frivolous one. It was supported by precedent, by tradition, by history, and by the values in our culture. I think I probably said all that could be said for the State of Kansas. I said it as well as I could say it, and in doing that, I think I performed a service to the Court and to the State of Kansas.

And now, if I may exhibit a bit more paranoia, I suppose the person who was best able to evaluate my performance was my adversary, Robert Carter. After the decision, we corresponded. In his first letter to me he said: "We are certain that your purely lawyerlike examination of constitutional power, unfettered with emotions and demagoguery, helped embolden the court to make its courageous and statesmanlike declaration of May 17. However poorly stated, this is meant as a tribute to your honesty and integrity as a member of the bar and an official of the State of Kansas." He may have been just being nice. I hope he meant it.

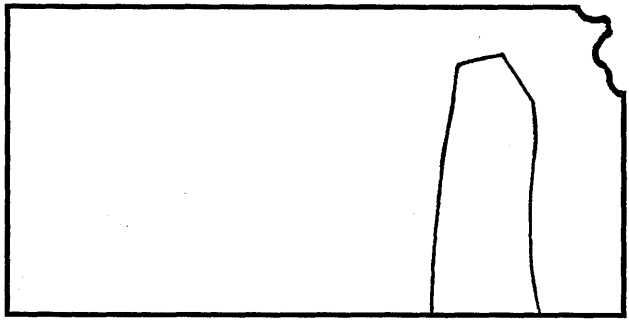
Farmers, Ranchers, and Stockmen of the Flint Hills

Thomas D. Isern

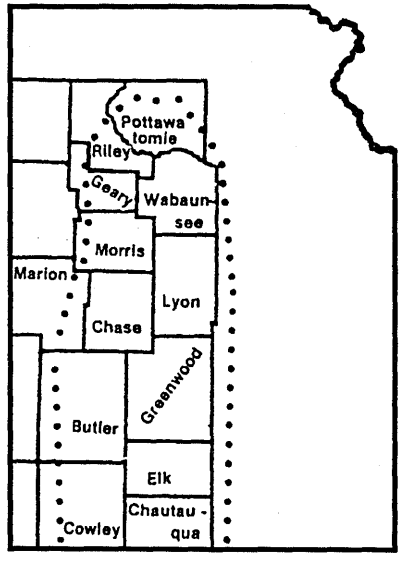
The Flint Hills are a region of rolling hills and rough country in east-central Kansas, embracing all or parts of the counties of Butler, Chase, Chautauqua, Cowley, Elk, Geary, Greenwood, Lyon, Marion, Morris, Pottawatomie, Riley, and Wabaunsee, comprising some five thousand square miles. (Osage County of Oklahoma is contiguous and is environmentally similar, but political lines have imposed on it a somewhat different historical development.) The valleys of the creeks and rivers—tributaries of the Kansas and Arkansas such as the Big and Little Blue, the Neosho, the Cottonwood, the Verdigris, the Fall, the Elk, and the Big Caney—contain good, black ground suitable for intensive farming. The upland soils are loose, littered with fragments of limestone, and laced with pale, outcropping ledges of the same stone.

Most of the uplands—the slopes and divides that define the watercourses—remain tall grass prairie. The principal grasses are big and little bluestem, Indian grass, and switchgrass—species excellent for summer pasture and for prairie hay, but less nutritious for cool-season grazing. Consequently, the region is sparsely populated, except where county seats or oilfield developments have concentrated population disproportionate to the agricultural use of the land. In counties

From Thomas D. Isern, "Farmers, Ranchers, and Stockmen of the Flint Hills." *The Western Historical Quarterly* 16, no. 3 (July 1985): 253–64. Reprinted with permission of the *Western Historical Quarterly* and Thomas D. Isern.



The Flint Hills of Kansas



Flint Hills Boundary • • • •

economically devoted almost exclusively to agriculture, even county seats are small towns: Sedan, seat of Chautauqua County, had 1,579 people in 1980; Cottonwood Falls, Chase County, 954; Alma, Wabaunsee County, 925. Cities and good-sized towns such as Winfield, El Dorado, Emporia, Manhattan, and Topeka lie on the fringes of the Flint Hills, not within them.

Although tied economically to adjacent regions at first by railroads (particularly the Santa Fe and the Missouri Pacific), and in more recent times by major highways (prominently the Kansas Turnpike), the Flint Hills remain in many ways an agricultural enclave distinct from other areas. To the west lies cash grain farming characterized by winter wheat in rotation with grain sorghum; to the east are corn, stock farming, and outreaching bands of deciduous forest. Within this enclave a number of distinct classes of agricultural operators have developed. Relations among these operators have changed through the years and often have been misunderstood, even by residents of the region. These agriculturalists have sought their own discrete niches in the Flint Hills according to a web of determinants, including their own cultural heritage, the environment they encountered, innovations of technology, and economic and cultural forces external to the region. A study of these elements in the Flint Hills may provide a useful format for considering agricultural subregions elsewhere in the West.

With establishment of the Territory of Kansas and quick extinguishment of Indian titles, settlement of the Flint Hills got underway in the late 1850s. Settlers in numbers sufficient to effect county organizations took claims of bottomland. Immigration ceased during the Civil War, but during the late 1860s and the 1870s farmers filled the valleys. Their farming was diversified: they raised corn on the bottoms, made hay on the slopes, maintained modest herds of Shorthorns, fed a few over the winter, kept Poland China hogs to follow the cattle in the lot, and scattered feed to some Rhode Island Red chickens. On the unenclosed uplands their loose stock grazed under the eyes of a herd boy. Both cattle and hogs reached railroad corrals by drives to towns such as Burlington or Emporia.

Most of the early bottomland farmers were Midwesterners by birth, but among them were identifiable cultural groups that originated not only from the Midwest but also from other regions or nations. Examples were the Quakers from the Ohio Valley states who

settled on the Cottonwood, the Norwegians on the Fall, the German-Swiss on the Verdigris, and the Swedes on Diamond Creek. Many of the Europeans were second-stage migrants, having lived previously for a time in the midwestern states.

During the late 1870s and the 1880s, the proliferation of railroads brought both easier access to markets and a new wave of agricultural settlers—the upland farmers. The uplands, where not tied up in railroad land grants or snapped up by speculators using veteran's scrip and other devices of acquisition, were the subject of considerable debate in local newspapers. Hopeful editors and correspondents regarded them as good wheat ground to complement the feed fields of the bottoms.

Judging by occupations listed in the manuscript state census, the preponderance of upland farmers fell into one of two groups. The first comprised those who were not farmers by trade. Carpenters, merchants, and others probably came intending to preempt claims in a developing area and then sell out at a profit. Others, though, may have had intentions of permanence. They generally had ties of kinship or intermarriage with families in the bottomland.

Fewer ethnic communities were visible in the uplands. One exception was blacks, who had a settlement of several hundred near Dunlap and smaller groupings elsewhere, such as southwest of Eureka. Their lack of ties to the bottomland and their shortage of capital made upland farming particularly hard for them.

Upland farmers in general found cash crops, largely limited in early years to ill-adapted spring wheat, inconsistent and difficult to market by wagon. Grazing on the unenclosed grasslands was important to them. The ones with kin in the bottoms could work out mutually beneficial arrangements, herding loose stock from the bottoms on the abundant range, supplementing their own meager millet and other upland feed grains with corn from the bottoms.

Farmers were not the only parties to recognize the grazing value of the uplands. During the late 1860s and early 1870s drovers from Texas had arrived on their way to Abilene and other railheads. They lingered for cattle to take on weight and even attempted to winter herds in the hills, although cattle that wintered on bluestem suffered losses. At least a few droves of sheep also arrived from the Southwest.

These arrivals precipitated animosity reflected in news columns and in legislative action. Farmers with their small herds of Shorthorns and other eastern stock blamed losses from Texas fever on contact with Texas herds on the uplands. The state quarantine laws that resulted, however, were less important as exclusionary forces than were the herd laws. The state legislature in 1872 empowered the county commissions to enact herd laws, much to the pleasure of farmers in the Flint Hills. One from Chase County wrote in 1872:

> We want this law to protect us from the large herds that are driven in here by men who do not settle and help to improve the country, but merely turn non-residents' and railroad lands into stockyards, and allow their cattle to run at large, destroying all crops that are not strongly fortified. . . . It is the interests of the many, instead of the few, that should be protected.

Most counties of the Flint Hills enacted herd laws by the early 1880s.

The parties with most at stake in this sort of controversy, though, were not the small farmers, but another class of operators that had moved in alongside them—the big-time stock farmers. These capitalists bought up claims in the bottoms, accumulating ground for cornfields, barns, and lots. They had herds of purebred stock, Shorthorns predominantly at first, Herefords increasingly by the 1890s. Although they might graze some Texas steers on upland pastures (pastures perhaps carved from railroad lands), cattle breeding and feeding were the mainstays of their operations. Their capital came from success in other endeavors—banking, commerce, railroad construction, or trading in Texas cattle. William McBrown, a successful merchant in Woodson and Greenwood counties, began investing in land in 1870 and stocked it with Durham cattle. In 1897 he initiated a Hereford breeding program, and he left to his sons a prosperous stock farm. Fred Harvey, provider of elegant dining on the Santa Fe Railroad, established a stock farm in western Lyon County. The greatest of all stock farms, at least in reputation, was Hazford Place near El Dorado, home of champion Herefords and of attorney and land speculator Robert H. Hazlett. Less well known than these cattlemen were the sheepmen who brought flocks of Merinos from the upper Mississippi Valley. They acquired bottomland to raise feed, bought some pasture, and also made use of free grass on the "back range," as they referred to the unenclosed uplands.

Big and small operators alike were engulfed by change during the mid-1880s. The question at issue was the disposition of the uplands. Texas cattle were for the moment excluded. Upland farmers, although hanging on, exhibited no such success that they might fill the uplands. Technology meanwhile reached into the hills. East-west railroads built branches that fingered out in the hills, such as the Santa Fe branch from Strong City down to Bazaar. Most important, barbed wire became available.

Overnight, historically speaking, the uplands were fenced. In 1964 Henry Rogler, a well-known rancher from near Matfield Green, could still recall when the first black, ungalvanized wires went up in his area. By the close of the 1880s the open range was no more in the Flint Hills. Fenced pastures, though, were large: a section was a small parcel, and ten might be enclosed by a single fence.

The big pastures were owned largely by absentees—capitalists who lived in Emporia and other towns in the area, generally not distant. They bought out small claim holders, acquired federal land where available, often through exchange of veteran's scrip, purchased states' Morrill Act lands, and bought railroad lands—a particularly good option in places where one land grant crossed another, such as where the Katy intersected the Santa Fe, the overlapping land grants filling in the checkerboard pattern. The owners leased the pastures to cattlemen to fatten steers on grass. Thus began a long-term control of upland pastures by absentee, urban owners. As late as 1965 geographers studying Chase County, which was generally regarded as a classic big-pasture county, found that parties residing in cities and towns outside the county owned 51 percent of all lands and 57 percent of the grassland.

The lessees were mostly cattlemen from Texas, now able to ship aged steers (four- and five-year-olds) by rail into enclosed pastures. The hills became a bovine cosmopolis: whiteface Herefords gradually displaced longhorns, but mingled among them were strange-looking Brahmas and other critters of uncertain parentage from Texas, Arizona, Colorado, or even Mexico. From the early 1890s on, every village, every siding in the Flint Hills had a cluster of chutes and pens that each year became a mass of mud when the cattle arrived, in March and April, and a cloud of dust when they were shipped out to commission men in Kansas City, beginning in late July. The otherwise re-

mote village of Bazaar, in southern Chase County, became the greatest shipping point for cattle on the entire Santa Fe system. The number of cattle shipped into the Flint Hills swelled year by year until by the 1920s it consistently exceeded 400,000 annually. The number of stockers shipped annually into the Flint Hills was particularly impressive when compared to the number of "Other Cattle"—beef cattle of all ages—reported present in the entirety of Kansas by the State Board of Agriculture: 1,967,201 in 1925.

The common arrangement bringing together steers and pastures, cattle owners and pasture owners, was through a pastureman. The pastureman occupied one of two niches in the system. One was to lease the pasture from its owner, then to sublease it to a cattle owner. The other was to be an employee of the pasture owner, who leased directly to the owner of the cattle and hired the pastureman to handle them, a job known simply as "taking care of cattle." In either case the pasture owner just delivered a pasture with a good fence in the spring. The pastureman received the cattle at the siding, drove them to pasture, saw that they had water and salt, kept the fence up, and drove the cattle back to the siding for shipping out. The subleasing pastureman sought the best margin of profit he could get for his trouble. The employee pastureman generally got "ten percent of what the grass brought," meaning 10 percent of the lease money. Although some pasture was leased by the acre, more commonly it was let on the basis of "so much per animal," with varying rates and acreage allotments for different ages of cattle. The pastureman was the key figure in the scheme. He accounted for every animal; if one died by some act of God, he brought in the hide.

The establishment of this system of transient grazing had far-reaching effects. Some were environmental. The requirements of the Texas stockmen dictated certain practices of range management that did not conform to local opinion. For instance, the Texas "steer men," as they were called, demanded early spring burning of pastures to promote quick grass growth and rapid weight gains. Although resident owners also practiced burning, they were more discriminating, tending to burn only when the accumulation of mulch warranted it, and generally burning later in the spring in order to achieve better control of weeds.

Still greater effects were social. Upland farmers were casualties of the system of transient grazing. The speculators among them sold out and departed happy, but the ones who intended to stick it out suffered. The herd law and enclosure may have driven out the drovers, but it also deprived farmers of free grazing. With cash grain farming inconsistent, with upland feed crops insufficient for large-scale finishing, and with no further possibility to serve as herding outposts for bottomland kin, upland farmers dwindled in number. Curious cattle rummaged among their abandoned homesteads.

The majority of upland farmers who survived (and some do to the present day) did so by adapting to the new order. Most supplemented their farm incomes through other work. Many of the blacks of Dunlap became expert stonemasons. Other men from upland farms drove teams or entered other trades in the developing oilfields of Butler and Greenwood counties and then stayed on to pump wells. Still others handled a few thousand acres of pasture as pasturemen. On their farms, they learned that kaffir-corn excelled corn for feed grain on the uplands.

Bottomland farmers also felt the squeeze, but not so badly. They suffered the loss of free grazing, but for most, upland grazing had been ancillary anyway. They continued to practice diversified farming and to market stock. A new element in their operations, with the shipment of Texas cattle in by rail, was buying steers to fatten on whole-ear corn broken on the edge of the trough. At the turn of the century they added alfalfa to their crops, first for local feeding, but also, especially during World War I, for cash sale. Almost as early they began erecting wood, tile, steel, or concrete upright silos and filling them with Orange cane, which many found a more economical feed than corn.

Strung along the watercourses, the bottomland farmers had well-knit communities. They passed one another whenever they went anywhere, they performed the same agricultural tasks simultaneously with their neighbors, they supported neighborhood churches and schools, and they formed concentric circles of cooperation to accomplish such operations as driving cattle, threshing oats, putting up hay, and filling silos.

On the other hand, many of the big-time stock farms of the late nineteenth century dispersed within a generation, for a variety of rea-

sons. Sheep raisers, deprived by barbed wire of their back range, liquidated their flocks. Cattle raisers suffered similarly but to a lesser extent. Big stock farms also were split through inheritance or dispersed because of reversals in the other business enterprises of the owners.

Nevertheless, after enclosure there emerged, mainly from the ranks of the big stock farms and bottomland farms, a class of operations referred to as ranches. The Moxley Ranch in Morris County, for instance, made the transition; so did the Huntington Ranch in Greenwood County, as well as the McBrown Ranch, eventually inundated by Fall River Reservoir. The owners of these ranches were all large landholders to begin with, but also there were many who had been simple farmers financially able to buy or lease substantial acreage of pasture and to shift the emphasis of their operations from feeding to grazing. For instance, from the humble claim of their father, E. B. Crocker, on the Cottonwood, Edward and Arthur Crocker in 1895 began to acquire grass and to build a herd that eventually would number five thousand head of registered Hereford stock. The Crockers and the others called their operations ranches, and their employees considered themselves cowboys, no matter if they had to pitch in once in a while to pick corn or put up alfalfa.

Many of the ranching families initiated a kind of integration whereby they incorporated the advantages of both the resident rancher and the transient grazier. They bought ranches in the Southwest, mostly in Texas, where they maintained sizable breeding herds. They also had cow herds in the Flint Hills, and in summer they put stockers from both herds on pasture in the Flint Hills. The Crocker brothers owned a ranch in Arizona that eventually grew to 800,000 acres. The Wheat and Price families, resident in northern Lyon County, were among those who had ranches in Texas.

So in the Flint Hills during the early twentieth century, as the diverse agricultural operators in the region dealt with both changing economic systems and constant environmental conditions, a general dichotomy developed based on geographic differentiation between the bottomlands and the uplands. Even so, variations existed within the two areas. The uplands were largely the domain of absentee pasture owners, absentee cattle owners, and pasturemen, but the pasturemen operated in different legal relationships with the owners. The bottomlands were the home of farmers and the headquarters of

ranchers, whose holdings by lease or purchase stretched out towards the divides. The difference between the farmers and the ranchers was first one of proportion, that is, whether they emphasized feed or grass, and second one of self-image. "In fact, I guess from the very start most of the farmers and the cattlemen were the same ones," said an old farmer from the Verdigris Valley. "Even the big cattlemen farmed and the little farmers had a few cattle."

In subsequent years the differentiation among the dwellers of the bottomland became yet less distinct. Both groups began to seek more integrated, diversified operations. For the ranchers this meant more cropland, especially for alfalfa. For the farmers this meant more grass, whether by purchase or by lease. These simultaneous trends made possible the building of cow herds and a lessening dependence on imported steers.

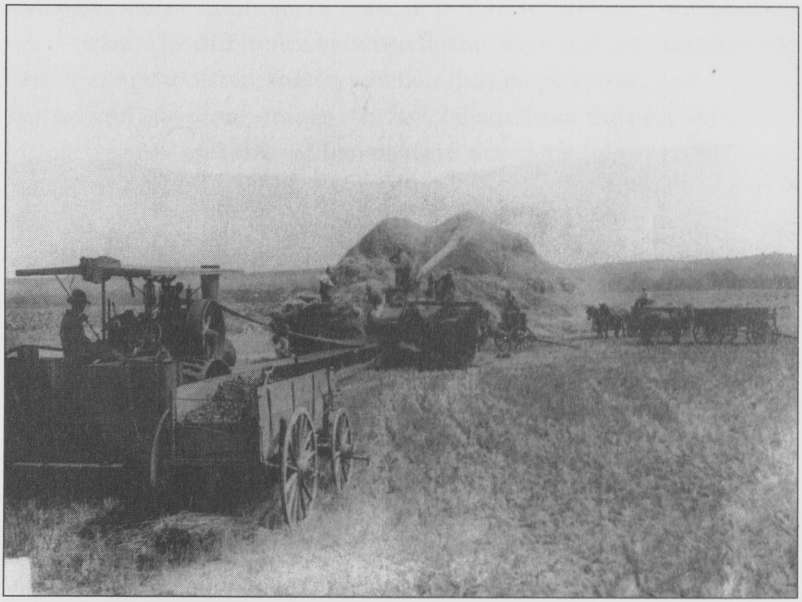
Such integration started slowly, but the drought of the 1930s encouraged it. The steer men were hard hit, not so much by the lack of grass as by a shortage of water on upland pastures. The depressed market provided little incentive to make costly accommodations to get water to steers; it was better to liquidate, selling to the government if necessary, and then keep cattle off pasture for a while.

Resident operators who had cow herds in the Flint Hills, however, survived the hard times and refined their operations. Most of them began filling silos, especially more efficient, less expensive trench silos, since Atlas sorgo had become available for silage. Creep feeders came into common use to get calves started on grain more quickly. Cottonseed cake provided a cheap, protein-rich ration.

Moreover, especially after the 1960s, fewer cattlemen attempted to finish cattle on grass. Instead they either provided feeders to men with lots or fed them out themselves on grain or silage. Large commercial feedlots came into existence, either by farmers expanding feeding operations in an area of abundant feed, as was the case with the Crofoot family of the Cottonwood Valley, or by capitalists developing yards in areas convenient to rail transport, as was true of the feedlots on the west side of Emporia. The aged steer became identified only with the transient cattle business on leased pastures, and even there his numbers diminished. Early finishing of young steers and heifers was elevated from the status of 4-H Baby Beef projects to standard commercial practice.

A. G. T. Cooper ranch. Many ranching families integrated cattle herds in the Southwest and Flint Hills. Drought in the 1930s prompted ranchers to add cropland operations. After the 1960s many ranchers shipped cattle to large commercial feedlots or fed them on grain or silage. Photo by Leslie Halbe, 1911.

Pasture leasing, transient cattle grazing, and pasturemen survived the hard times of the 1930s, resurged during the 1940s, made the transition to truck transport in the 1950s and early 1960s, and remain important parts of land use in the Flint Hills today. The Crop and Livestock Reporting Service still issues a "Bluestem Pasture Report" reporting on rates and progress of leasing pastures in the Flint Hills. The relative importance of this activity has declined, however, with consumer tastes having abandoned grass-finished beef, and with the cost-price squeeze having made it simply uneconomical to mature cattle several years, the function of leased pastures has become to provide feeders ready for the lot. Resident farmers and ranchers, on the other hand, although diminishing in concert with national trends of migration of population out of agriculture from the 1940s through the early 1970s, have relatively stable operations. Controlling their own land use, unlike the case on the leased pastures, they have implemented more sophisticated practices of range management, including deferred or rotational grazing and more discreet burning. Conservation and control of farm practices by owner-operators are not enough, how-



Threshing in Tom Dixon's wheat field, Junction City, Kansas, 1913. In the 1870s–80s the railroad brought easier access to markets and a new wave of settlers, the upland farmers, to the Flint Hills. By the 1890s technological advances in farm machinery such as disk cultivators, riding plows, headers, binders, and threshers profoundly influenced farming practices in the Flint Hills and elsewhere in Kansas. Photo by Joseph J. Pennell.

ever, to stem the attrition of farms in the region, for local operators are subject to the national cost-price squeeze in agriculture. From 1890 to 1980, for instance, the number of farms in Wabaunsee County—a county without substantial economic activity other than agriculture—declined from 1,709 to 690; population declined from 11,720 to 6,867. The relative stability during the same time of the population of Alma, the county seat—a decline only from 1,125 to 925—showed that it was the countryside and farm villages that suffered the most serious depopulation.

To term the present agricultural situation of the Flint Hills "stable" is foolhardy, considering the history of land use recounted here. Agriculture in the region has evolved continually, not only in degree, but sometimes also in its basic nature. Farmers, ranchers, and farmer-stockmen—whichever the producers of crops and livestock choose to call themselves—may contend that today they are bringing agricultural

endeavor in the region to an ecological climax, to a stable state conducive to both environmental preservation and economic productivity, but this is a matter of faith, not historical analysis.

This survey of the agricultural history of the Flint Hills does suggest an outline for the study of regional farm culture in the West, including land use. The first point here is that many practices and customs were the result of cultural infusions from other regions. The Midwesterners who introduced corn culture, shorthorn cows, and Poland China sows were an obvious example. They hoped to replicate the sort of farm culture they had known in their previous places of residence. Likewise, southwestern culture came to the region through the arrival of Texas stockmen using the big pastures and through the acquisition by Kansans of ranches in Texas.

Every agricultural operator in the Flint Hills, however, had to find a place in the region's geography and in the evolving economy influenced in turn by geography. The early midwestern immigrants found their bottomlands, the Texans their big pastures. The upland farmers enjoyed no comparable success, and as the agricultural system changed around them, they made their individual accommodations to it. Farmers and ranchers today make conscious efforts to achieve diversification in their operations by exploiting the diversity of the region's geography.

Technological change, although generally not originating within the region, profoundly affected the developing relations between culture and environment. Hedge, stone, and timber were inadequate to fence the upland; barbed wire made it possible. The extension of railroads into the region and their eventual supplantation by trucks changed agricultural operations and determined the fates of towns dependent on the regional agricultural economy.

Finally, some developments in the region were the product of external forces heedless of, but nevertheless relevant to, the agricultural situation in the Flint Hills. Chief among these were the vagaries of the national economy. Capitalists successful in the marketplace elsewhere poured money into agricultural enterprises in the Flint Hills. Economic depression, while a hardship for all, strengthened the stance of certain agricultural groups in relation to the others. Changing consumer tastes dictated how long cattle should be kept on pasture.

These four interpretive points—the cultural heritage of agriculturalists coming to the region, the accommodation to geography, the impact of technology, and the influence of external forces—provide useful lenses for future examination of the agricultural history of the Flint Hills and other subregions throughout the West, histories yet largely unwritten.

Democratic Politics in a Republican State: The Gubernatorial Campaigns of Robert Docking, 1966–1972

Joel Paddock

Between 1966 and 1972 Democrat Robert B. Docking won an unprecedented four terms to the Kansas governorship. Docking's success ran counter not only to trends at the national level, where the New Deal Democratic coalition was being fractured, but also to Kansas political tradition in which only six Democratic governors were elected in the state's first century. Of the state's six previous Democratic governors, five were elected at a time when the Republicans were badly split, and one was elected in Franklin Roosevelt's 1936 landslide. The 1960s, however, were the early stages of what one scholar of Kansas elections called a new period in Kansas politics. The state's first century was characterized by Republican dominance, the result of the partisan cleavages forged during the Civil War. Republican factionalism made occasional Democratic victories possible "and so kept alive a semblance of a two party system." Beginning in the 1950s, however, weakening party organizations along with emerging television coverage contributed to an electoral environment in which

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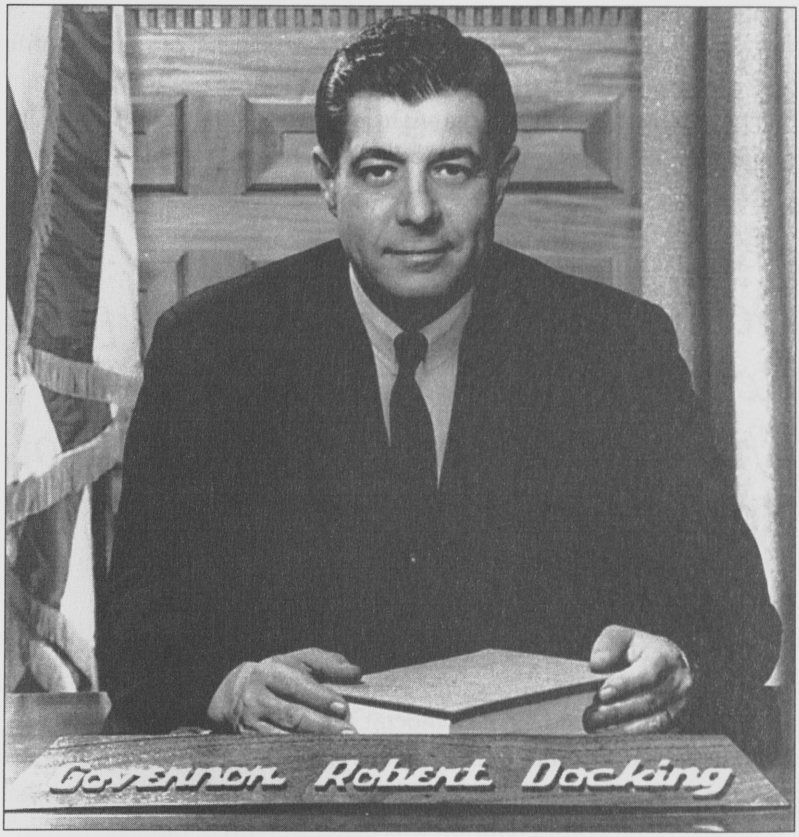
From Joel Paddock, "The Gubernatorial Campaigns of Robert Docking, 1966–1972," *Kansas History* 17, no. 2 (Summer 1994), 108–23. Reprinted with permission of the Kansas State Historical Society and Joel Paddock.



From 1966 to 1972 Democrat Robert Docking won an unprecedented four terms as Kansas governor. He ran to the right of Kansas Republicans on taxes and social issues.

"issues and candidate image began to rival party identification as influences on voting behavior."

In this environment Robert Docking emerged as a successful statewide politician by fashioning an electoral strategy based on several themes: fiscal conservatism, law-and-order, and a distinct movement away from the national Democratic Party. The son of two-term Democratic Governor George Docking, Bob Docking's governmental experience was limited to service on the Arkansas City city commission in the early 1960s and a one-year stint as the city's mayor. Docking was active in local Democratic organizations during the 1950s, but most of

his experience was in business, first as a bank vice president in Lawrence, then as a bank president in Arkansas City beginning in 1956.

Despite his lack of political experience, Docking effectively appealed to the Kansas electorate of the late 1960s and early 1970s. This was a time when the heterogenous lower-class coalition constructed by the Democrats in the New Deal era was being fractured by the emerging array of divisive social issues and a growing conservative backlash against rapid cultural change and various equalitarian extensions of the New Deal. Docking avoided the national party's reputation for social and cultural liberalism, and he successfully put forth policy alternatives responsive to specific constituency demands. During a period when candidate-centered electoral politics were weakening traditional partisan divisions, Docking contributed to the erosion of Republican dominance in Kansas by successfully running to the right of state Republicans on taxes and the social issue. As such, Docking's four successful gubernatorial campaigns provide an instructive case study in the changing nature of American, and Kansas, electoral politics in the 1960s and 1970s.

Incumbent Republican governor William H. Avery had reason to be concerned about his reelection chances in 1966. He was closely linked to a 1965 state tax increase, and with the benefit of hindsight, some scholars have concluded that no issue between 1960 and 1980 had as great an impact on defeating incumbent governors as the tax issue. Of the sitting governors defeated during that period, 23.8 percent lost on the single issue of taxes. In 1966 Ronald Reagan won a surprising victory over an incumbent governor in California, primarily on the issue of opposition to tax increases. Still, as the year began, Avery's campaign showed little indication of being in serious trouble. In early January a *Wichita Beacon* columnist summarized the prevailing view of the governor's race: "Barring any major setbacks in the next ten months Governor Avery should win a second term."

Sensing Avery's vulnerability on the tax issue, Democratic operatives successfully placed taxes at the top of the state's political agenda in early 1966. Although court-ordered reapportionment was the principal issue of the 1966 special legislative session, taxes dominated political debate. At issue was the school foundation program enacted by the 1965 legislature, which provided broader state support for elementary and high schools through increases in the sales, liquor, ciga-

rette, and income taxes. The income tax fostered the greatest public outcry, particularly because the state had instituted the income withholding tax at precisely the same time the federal government began collecting higher social security taxes. Perhaps realizing the volatility of the issue, Governor Avery proposed deferring the withholding system until April, prompting state Democratic chairman Tom Corcoran to label the governor's proposal "blatantly political" and to claim that Democrats opposed the "multimillion dollar Avery tax increase." State Democrats and members of the Docking team frequently repeated this claim throughout the 1966 campaign.

Docking faced little opposition for the Democratic nomination, allowing him to consolidate his support among party activists and continue his criticism of the Avery administration. He named Hays attorney Norbert Dreiling as his campaign manager. He also enlisted the support of Junction City publisher John Montgomery, an unsuccessful United States House candidate in 1964 and former state party chairman and highway commission member during George Docking's administration. Although most Democratic activists publicly remained uncommitted during the pre-primary period, Docking was commonly known to be favored by the party organization, and he was considered a "safe bet" for the nomination throughout the campaign. His primary opponent, former State Treasurer George Hart, alleged that money raised from a dinner for Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey the previous fall was used by the Docking campaign, and that the executive director of the Kansas Democratic State Committee Paul Pendergast supported Docking. Voters could be certain, Hart asserted, that he (Hart) was "not hand-picked by any political boss." Despite the rhetoric, the Democratic primary was not particularly divisive; Hart enjoyed little statewide support, and Docking largely ignored the challenge, focusing instead on Avery and tax issues.

Although taxes dominated debate, candidates addressed other issues during the primaries. Docking publicly supported a statewide vote on the liquor-by-the-drink question, objected to parimutuel wagering, and opposed a right-to-work law. He called on Avery to lobby the New York Stock Exchange Board of Governors to locate their new fifty-million-dollar headquarters in Kansas, a proposal Avery dismissed as "dreaming." Docking avoided controversial national issues. As a candidate pledged to fiscal responsibility and tax relief he could

not be perceived as identifying too strongly with the national Democratic administration, especially at the height of President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society. Docking's polls suggested that Kansans generally supported some aspects of Johnson's program, namely Medicare and federal aid to education. Johnson was not overly popular in the state, however, and Docking's pollster advised him to avoid being closely linked with the president.

The Vietnam War was a major national issue in 1966, but it was rarely addressed in the gubernatorial campaign. The state Democratic platform pledged to support the administration's efforts "to bring peace to Vietnam under the rule of law and international order," while Docking called the war a federal question that "should be left to military experts and those who have the facts, beginning with the Commander-in-Chief." Although Vietnam had little impact on the 1966 gubernatorial race, the domestic unrest associated with opposition to the war significantly affected Docking's later campaigns.

As the summer primaries approached, opinion polls indicated with increasingly clarity that Avery was in trouble, primarily over the tax issue. Before his June announcement for reelection, Avery ignored the Democratic criticisms of his administration. After officially announcing his candidacy, however, he took the offensive stating that "it's time for the Democrats to stand up and say how they would help support these programs they helped enact." Shortly before the primary Avery charged that the Democrats had employed two professional campaign organizers—Matt Reese and Tom Williams—who held close ties to Robert F. Kennedy. The implicit assumption was that the opposition had struck a deal in which Kennedy would help Docking get elected in exchange for support at the 1968 presidential nominating convention. Avery asked a Hutchinson audience, "Can Bobby Kennedy buy Kansas like he bought New York?"

The Democratic primary provided no surprises. As expected, Docking soundly defeated Hart. In the Republican primary, however, perennial candidate Del Crozier, whom Frank Garofalo of the Wichita Beacon called "the Wichita character who provides comic relief in political campaigns," polled more than forty-four thousand votes. Since Crozier admittedly had not campaigned, his votes were interpreted as a protest; some claimed they were registered against the governor's tax policies. Others, such as Clyde Reed of the *Parsons Sun*,

cited poor relations between Governor Avery and Republican legislative leaders on patronage matters and the perception that the state party was in disarray. Whatever the reason, the primary contest confirmed the suspicion that Avery was in trouble.

Docking's post-primary polls further demonstrated Avery's weakness. A statewide poll taken during the second week of August gave the governor a 54 percent negative rating, almost as low as President Johnson's standing in the state. Although voters tended to like Avery's "friendly personality," many cited the fact that he "raised taxes unnecessarily." Of all the negative attributes listed in the survey, voters most frequently mentioned the tax issue. Docking's pollsters stated: "William Avery is in poor condition. This is the first indication we have that he may not repeat his victory of two years ago. A rule of thumb in political opinion research is that an incumbent with a job rating below 60 percent favorable has a fight on his hands. . . . Governor Avery is 14 points below that magic figure." In contrast, four out of five Kansans polled gave Docking a favorable rating.

Despite Republican charges that he had no program, Docking continued to criticize Avery on taxes. In response to Republican criticism of the Johnson administration's handling of inflation, Docking told audiences that the most dramatic example of inflation in Kansas was the inflation of state taxes. Docking also used the tax issue to consciously distance himself from Johnson and the national Democrats, a strategy he openly acknowledged. Responding to Docking's fiscal conservatism, Avery seized the education issue, attempting to associate his administration with progressive reforms in Kansas schools. United Press International writer William R. Brinton aptly described this somewhat unique policy divergence: "In Kansas, you can't tell the Democrats from the Republicans without a program. Robert Docking . . . sounds more like a Republican or a southern Democrat. And . . . William Avery sounds like the national Democrats defending their spending programs."

A poll commissioned by the Democrats in late October indicated the tax issue was cutting both ways. Avery was perceived to have done a good job on education, whereas Docking was strongest on taxes. The question of "outside influence" in the Docking campaign—Republican charges that Robert Kennedy and the AFL-CIO were working to elect Docking—was not, the pollsters asserted, a major factor.

However, the poll revealed that Docking's six-point lead in August had evaporated to one point. With less than two weeks remaining, it appeared that some of the disaffected Republicans were coming back into line rather than "go to the grave with a Democratic vote on their conscience." But 11 percent of the electorate was still undecided.

While Docking criticized Avery on taxes, the governor continued to accuse Docking of lacking a program. Early in the campaign Avery refused to debate Docking and stated, "if they don't have a program of their own, I see nothing to debate." He contended that Docking could not be "identified with anything except the fact he's running for office." Avery tried to portray Docking as an opportunist: a candidate supported by Kennedy and organized labor who was being packaged by professional advertising men, had no program of his own, and was capitalizing on his father's name. He emphasized this theme almost as frequently as Docking emphasized taxes. Avery later admitted that he underestimated the political impact of the tax issue. Because he had won the governorship in spite of Lyndon Johnson's 1964 landslide, Avery mistakenly believed he could take responsible action to fund education and enforce the collection of income taxes and still survive at the polls in 1966.

Election day saw Docking defeat Avery by a margin of almost seventy-six thousand votes (54.8 percent to 43.9 percent) despite substantial Republican gains nationally. Republicans won all five Kansas congressional districts, the open U.S. Senate seat, and a 76–49 majority in the state house of representatives. The Kansas Senate remained Republican by a 27–13 margin. Nationwide the Republicans gained forty-seven seats in the House and three in the Senate, as President Johnson's approval rating dropped from 66 percent in November 1965 to 44 percent in October 1966. The Republicans claimed that the electorate had repudiated the Great Society. Pollster George Gallup asserted that the Vietnam War was "probably the prime reason why the G.O.P. did so well." Urban riots and the resulting backlash were also significant factors, as some Republicans effectively exploited the newly-emerging "law-and-order" issue.

The most frequently cited and credible explanation for Docking's victory was the tax issue; national issues such as law-and-order, Vietnam, and the Great Society had little impact on the voters' decisions. At a time when inflation was beginning to seriously erode the dispos-

able income of many Kansans, state tax increases were taboo. Politically, Docking was on the right side of this issue. Avery simply became another casualty in the long list of tax-loss governors in the 1960s.

Another credible explanation relates to the two candidates' organizations. According to most accounts, Docking had the superior campaign organization. At a time when candidates relied less on precinct captains and ward leaders to mobilize the party faithful, Docking made effective use of pollsters (the polling firm Oliver Quayle and Company), political consultants (Matt Reese and Associates), and a professional advertiser (Tom Downing). In contrast to Docking's campaign machinery, the Avery campaign was, by several accounts, overly optimistic and unorganized. According to the *Wichita Eagle*, the Republicans "spent a great deal of money on television advertising so tasteless that it hurt more than helped." Republican editor Clyde Reed of the *Parsons Sun* wrote that taxes "were only part of the story." He placed much of the blame on an ineffective Republican organization, which he said had "become somewhat flabby in recent years."

Docking successfully kept national issues off the state's political agenda, and Avery was unable to link the policies of the Johnson administration with the Kansas Democracy. However, it was only a matter of time before such volatile national issues as Vietnam, the black and youth rebellions, and law-and-order made their way into the relatively tranquil Kansas political environment. That became evident as the tragic and unpredictable year 1968 approached.

Docking entered the 1968 campaign after a 1967 legislative session in which he was unable to convince the Republican-controlled legislature to pass a significant part of his program. The governor's proposed increase in interest rates on the state's idle funds was diluted, he was forced to veto a bill reducing the rate of income tax withholding below what he proposed, his plan to eliminate fees for using state parks was killed in committee, a conflict of interest bill he supported was defeated in a house committee, and his proposal to build new turnpikes in the state was rejected. However, Docking had one major victory: his recommended one-half-of-one-percent reduction in income tax was included in a tax bill sponsored by the Republicans.

Although 1967 was not an election year, the governor was already engaged in a permanent campaign. He persisted in advocating lower taxes and was advised to continue building on his urban base before

the next election. He also continued his contact with Matt Reese concerning "building the Kansas party," while George Hart threatened party harmony by warning the governor that he would challenge him in 1968 if Docking appointed either Vincent Bogart or Jack Glaves—Hart's enemies—to the Kansas Corporation Commission. Docking even engaged in a form of pork barrel politics, claiming credit for releasing a federal water project—Round Mound Dam—that had been detained in Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall's office. In an obvious reference to Republican Congressman Robert Dole, Norbert Dreiling urged Docking to announce the project from the governor's office rather than the office "of some damned midwest congressman who fights all appropriations except when there is a vote to be made in the big First District."

In considering his own reelection prospects for 1968, Docking faced the potentially risky decision of whom to support in the presidential race. Since Kansas was not a presidential primary state, the importance of the state party convention scheduled for March 30 was enhanced, and the governor played an influential role in selecting delegates to the national nominating convention. Early in the year, it appeared Docking's choice for president would be easy; President Johnson was the clear front-runner for the Democratic nomination. His prime challenger was Minnesota's Senator Eugene McCarthy, who opposed the president's Vietnam policy. Discontent with the president had appeared within the party as early as 1966 when a "Citizens for Kennedy–Fulbright group" had formed. Johnson, however, appeared to have the nomination secured if he chose to run. Events changed rapidly. In January 1968 the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong launched the Tet offensive, which undermined public support for the war, and in February McCarthy stunned the president by carrying 42.4 percent of the vote against Johnson's 49.5 percent in the New Hampshire primary. Robert Kennedy, probably underestimating the president's weakness on the Vietnam issue, announced his candidacy on March 16.

Kennedy previously had agreed to deliver the Landon lecture at Kansas State University and thereby made an early campaign appearance in Kansas. Accompanied by Docking, the New York senator gave speeches at Kansas State University, the University of Kansas, and Haskell Institute, declaring Johnson's domestic and foreign policies

equally wrong and in need of correction. Despite the wildly cheering crowds Kennedy drew in the state, his gain in delegate strength was questionable. Docking supported Johnson, and four out of five district conventions had chosen delegates to the national convention. Although uncommitted, they were expected to follow Docking's lead at the state convention. Most of the party regulars remained loyal to the president, but as Wayne Lee of the *Hutchinson News* wrote, "State Democratic party members—trained to rigid loyalty—admit they may faint under the strain of having a solid, attractive, moneyed, and intelligent contender shoot at the seat of a president who shows no inclination of giving it up." Or as one Kansas Democrat told Lee during a reception for Kennedy: "He [Kennedy] has about as much chance as a snowball in hell, but he'll hurt the party." Docking was placed in the unenviable position of attempting to prevent factional warfare from tearing apart a weak state party. He already was under pressure from McCarthy supporters to oppose the unit rule and to take an uninstructed delegation to the national convention. Publicly the governor supported such a move, but he admitted that "history has shown that other delegations have usually supported an incumbent president."

At the state convention Docking declared himself a friend of both Johnson and Kennedy, and urged the delegates not to split the party. The convention adopted a resolution that required the delegates to vote as a unit at the national convention by following Docking's lead. This clearly indicated that the convention supported Johnson; Docking supported the president, as did most delegates. However, in keeping with the unpredictable nature of 1968, the situation dramatically changed the next day. In a March 31 television address, Johnson told a stunned nation that he would not seek reelection. Docking was, by most accounts, surprised by the announcement, and he did not immediately comment on how it would influence the Kansas delegation. Speculation arose that Docking would follow the lead of his chief advisor, Paul Pendergast, and support Kennedy. Docking, however, remained uncommitted until summer.

Meanwhile, a more pressing political decision faced the governor. For months, political analysts speculated that Docking would seek the vacated U.S. Senate seat of retiring Republican Frank Carlson. In mid-April Docking sent letters to state party officials and Democratic legislators requesting their advice. Most favored a reelection attempt;

they considered it a safer bet, and as governor, Docking was viewed to be in a better position to build the state party machinery. A few, however, urged a Senate try, fearing that first district Congressman Robert Dole might win the seat and be entrenched in it for years. Docking's private polls indicated that he could win either race. In early May the governor made the decision to seek reelection.

Although Docking had decided on his political future, he still had not committed himself to a presidential candidate. Immediately after his reelection announcement, two of the major Democratic presidential contenders—Vice President Hubert Humphrey and Senator Robert Kennedy—telegrammed their support to the governor. Docking cordially responded, but refused to make a commitment to either. Docking clearly did not support McCarthy, but he apparently was undecided between Humphrey and Kennedy. Two of his top advisors—Pendergast and Mike Harder—were split on the issue; Pendergast had for quite some time supported Kennedy, while Harder announced his support for Humphrey on May 2. State party activist Robert Brock, an influential Topeka businessman, was Kennedy's state chairman, and he urged Docking to support Kennedy. However, a poll of officers of the Kansas AFL-CIO, a group supporting Docking, showed Humphrey overwhelmingly ahead of Kennedy 193–25, and a *Wichita Beacon* poll of the thirty-eight-member Kansas delegation to the Democratic National Convention indicated Humphrey was a three-to-one choice over Kennedy. Docking never had to choose between Humphrey and Kennedy; on June 5 Kennedy was assassinated after winning the California primary.

Docking did not officially announce his support for a presidential candidate until the convention, but it became clear after Kennedy's death on June 6 that Humphrey would receive the governor's support. McCarthy's supporters in the state attempted to reverse the move toward Humphrey; some threatened to withhold support for Docking's gubernatorial bid if he instructed the delegation to vote for the vice president. Others attempted to gain control of local party organizations, much to the chagrin of some party regulars. The chair of the Riley County party complained to Docking, "We are in a hell of a mess over here. . . . They [the McCarthy supporters] had never contributed any work or money but were quite insistent. They ate our free cookies and coffee with gusto, but no contributions. . . . They are going to try

to control the election of a county chairman." Docking received numerous petitions supporting McCarthy and urging abolition of the unit rule.

At the national convention in Chicago the Kansas delegation voted overwhelmingly for Humphrey, giving the vice president thirty votes to George McGovern's three and McCarthy's one. Humphrey immediately quelled speculation that Docking, who reportedly had been on Robert Kennedy's list of prospective running mates, was under consideration for the vice presidential nomination by choosing Senator Edmund Muskie of Maine.

The legacy of the Democrats' Chicago convention of 1968 was not easily forgotten. The riots that marred it focused public attention on the extremely volatile social issue and contributed to a growing public perception that the national Democrats were "soft" on the law-and-order issue. Although Kansas did not experience widespread urban and campus unrest until two years later, the memory of the Chicago convention affected Docking's political strategy for the remainder of his career.

In the August gubernatorial primary Kansas Republicans nominated Rick Harman, a thirty-nine-year-old businessman, while Docking ran unopposed for the Democratic nomination. Harman emphasized that property taxes were too high and that state aid to local schools must be increased. He criticized Docking's veto of a bill that would have provided $11.5 million in state aid to local schools, but Harman's pledge to shift the tax burden backfired. Initially he advocated higher income and sales taxes; later he modified this proposal to include tax increases only on cigarettes and liquor. The damage, however, had been done. Harman's pre-primary pledge of income and sales tax increases, like Avery's income tax increase of three years before, gave Docking the political high ground on the tax issue. As in 1966, he repeatedly stressed the issue throughout the campaign.

Despite the volatile national climate in 1968, Docking limited his agenda to, in the words of one advisor, "tax reform, fiscal responsibility, and executive reorganization." Docking justified his education bill veto stating that the bill was an act of "fiscal irresponsibility" on the part of the Republican legislature and that only half of the revenue in the bill would be used for property tax reduction. The Docking campaign portrayed the Republicans as big spenders, stressing that the

choice was between "tax reform without unnecessary tax increases under Governor Docking as opposed to tax increases under Harman." On a few occasions he emphasized his record of maintaining peace in Kansas City and Wichita after the Martin Luther King assassination, and he pledged to use "whatever force is necessary to maintain law and order." For the most part, however, he avoided the volatile social issue that divided his party at the national level.

Docking defeated Harman in the November election by thirty-seven thousand votes (51.9 percent to 47.6 percent) following a campaign that was overshadowed by the national election. Richard M. Nixon easily carried the state as did Republican senate candidate Robert Dole. Republicans again won all five U.S. House seats, gained five seats in the Kansas Senate to take a 32–8 majority, and picked up eleven additional seats in the state house to forge an 87–38 margin. The Democrats no longer had the support in the house to sustain a Docking veto. In a repeat of 1966, the gubernatorial race was substantially out of line with other races in the state; the most common explanation was Docking's stand on taxes. Republican state chairman Don Concannon admitted that the "overriding factor was the tax issue" and that the Republicans "allowed Docking to build up a psychological effect of no increase and let it become the overriding issue of the campaign."

Inevitably Docking's conservatism brought him into conflict with his party's liberal wing. Late in 1968 an organization calling themselves the New Democratic Coalition of Kansas (New Deck) arose as part of a national movement to maximize minority participation and move the party to the left. Although the group apparently had little grass roots support in Kansas, their central demand—more open and participatory party processes—received considerable support among insurgent elements in the national party. Charges that the 1968 convention was "brokered" by party bosses prompted the national party to appoint a Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection (the McGovern–Fraser Commission) to adopt guidelines to ensure a more open and democratic convention. The issue pitted the party's traditional elements against issue-oriented, left-of-center activists, many of whom had supported McCarthy in 1968. Docking sided with the traditional elements, and he believed the McGovern–Fraser Commission and groups such as New Deck were "embracing the New Left"

and precipitating "dissension and polarization in Democratic ranks." He worked with other Democratic governors throughout 1969 to moderate the party's steps toward reform.

Meanwhile Docking assessed his political future. A poll commissioned by the governor in October 1969 revealed that Docking's job rating remained high and that a substantial majority of the public had no reservations about electing a three-term governor. The poll, however, indicated that Docking increasingly was viewed as a moderate liberal, a potential problem in a state in which 86 percent of those polled considered themselves either moderate or conservative. As the national Democrats appeared to drift to the left, Docking's partisan label became a liability. The poll also noted that Attorney General Kent Frizzell would be a "dangerous challenger" for the governorship in 1970, and that President Nixon and Republican Senator James Pearson, whom Docking considered challenging in 1972, had very high approval ratings.

Two factors significantly contributed to setting the course of debate for the 1970 election: the results of the 1970 legislative session and the urban violence in the state, especially at the University of Kansas. After a divisive 1969 legislative session in which Docking vetoed a Republican-sponsored education bill and in which the legislature failed to act on the governor's tax reform measures, the 1970 session was relatively harmonious. The session's accomplishments included passing homestead exemption legislation to provide tax relief for the elderly, increased state aid to education, establishing the Council of Ecology, new conflict of interest laws, a state fair housing law, and a property tax lid. Predictably Docking hailed the property tax lid as the most significant accomplishment of the session, and it became one of the major themes of his campaign.

Meanwhile urban violence, which had plagued the country for several years, flared in Kansas during the spring of 1970. In April racial violence closed several public school districts, and the University of Kansas became a focal point of campus unrest. Engaging in a bit of hyperbole, a *Time* magazine reporter compared the situation in Lawrence with the pre-Civil War violence in the town: "Flames lit the sky over the town, gunshots cracked in the night air. Police and National Guardsmen patrolled the streets, and nervous citizens, fearful of the new outlaws in their midst, could only watch and wonder why

'Bleeding Kansas' was being bled again." The social issue, which for several years hovered just beneath the surface of political debate in Kansas, moved near the top of the state's political agenda.

Kent Frizzell, nominated by the Republicans in what was described as a "dull" gubernatorial primary, took a tough law-and-order stance on campus unrest but otherwise ran an unfocused campaign. For example, during the primaries he called the property tax lid a "sham," but by October he supported the limitation. The Frizzell campaign never developed a clear theme; it used, in the words of the *Topeka Daily Capital*, a "shotgun approach, skipping over a myriad of issues without fixing any firmly in the minds of the voters."

In contrast, Docking, who announced his bid for a third term in early May, emphasized three major issues: the property tax lid, a budget freeze, and his actions to keep the University of Kansas open in the aftermath of the campus unrest. He echoed his fiscally conservative themes of 1966 and 1968 and stressed the law-and-order issue that President Nixon and Vice President Spiro T. Agnew used with some success in the 1970 congressional campaigns. He told audiences that "we're just simply not going to allow a minority of 1 or 2 percent of the students and some 'street people' to deny the vast majority of students their rights to an education." In taking this stand, Docking followed the advice of his pollsters who recommended that the governor "should make it clear that his stand against violence and disorder is almost identical to the President's." Docking's polls indicated that he had a distinct advantage over Frizzell on the issue. In an October survey, 63 percent of those with an opinion thought Attorney General Frizzell should have responded more aggressively to student disorder. In contrast, 78 percent respected Docking's firm stand on campus demonstrations. Docking successfully overcame the growing public image that Democrats were soft on the law-and-order issue.

Docking defeated Frizzell by more than seventy-two thousand votes (54.3 percent to 44.7 percent). The Democrats picked up three seats in the Kansas House, cutting the Republican advantage to 84–41, and one U.S. House seat (Bill Roy's upset victory over incumbent Chester Mize) ending the Republican monopoly of the Kansas congressional delegation. Unlike Docking's previous elections, no post-election consensus explained his victory. The *Garden City Telegram* saw taxes as the crucial issue. *The Lawrence Journal-World* viewed Docking's

stand against disorder and against closing state schools as the key factor. Others viewed the Frizzell campaign's inability to develop a cohesive theme as crucial to the outcome. Once again, as the Parsons Sun noted, Docking developed "a fixed image of himself in the citizen's mind as a tight-fisted man with the public dollar," a theme, the *Garden City Telegram* stated, that "Frizzell couldn't touch . . . without taking a me-too stance."

After being elected to an unprecedented third term as governor, speculation immediately emerged that Docking might challenge incumbent U.S. Senator James Pearson in 1972. Despite reports of the moderate Pearson's vulnerability to a challenge from the right, Docking's polls showed the Republican senator's support strong throughout 1971. In June 1971 pollsters wrote that it would be "much easier for the Governor to win a fourth term than . . . to unhorse Pearson." Docking ended the speculation on April 3, 1972, when he announced his candidacy for a fourth term as governor. Citing the refusal of the 1972 legislature to make the tax lid permanent, Docking stated, "this token extension [of the tax lid] only can be interpreted as a gamble that I will not be in the governor's office in January 1973." For the fourth and final time, taxes were the major theme of Docking's campaign.

As in 1968, the 1972 Docking campaign unfolded against the backdrop of a presidential election that highlighted Democratic intraparty divisions. Party reforms had weakened the role of professionals and had enhanced the power of liberal, issue-oriented activists. The Democratic presidential front-runner was Senator George McGovern whose liberal image was not conducive to Docking's attempts to portray himself as a moderate conservative. Docking met with McGovern's campaign manager in November 1971, but the governor refused to commit his support for the South Dakota senator or any other Democrat throughout late 1971 and early 1972. By the spring of 1972 Docking clearly had no intention of supporting McGovern, but despite news stories to the contrary, his correspondence with McGovern supporters, some of whom were active in Democratic registration drives in the state, remained cordial. Nevertheless, Docking further distanced himself from McGovern and the national party in May when he turned down an invitation to act as chairman of a regional hearing on the national platform. In a letter advising Docking to avoid the platform

hearing, Norbert Dreiling wrote, "With national party developments being what they are, I would recommend all options be kept open and that you anticipate the probability of not appearing personally. . . . Until the situation changes, I see no advantage in your appearances before the national committee meetings."

While a split developed between McGovern and anti-McGovern forces in the Kansas Democratic Party, a worse factional division emerged in the state Republican Party over the gubernatorial nomination. In a four-way race, the Republican leader in the Kansas House of Representatives, Morris Kay, defeated former governor John Anderson, Ray E. Frisbie, and Reynolds Schultz. Despite Kay's comfortable fifty-thousand-vote victory over Anderson, a considerable amount of intraparty animosity developed. Kay entered the campaign late, filing on June 19, one day before the deadline. He began an ambitious television and radio campaign that led to charges from fellow Republicans that he tried to buy the nomination. The Republican *Parsons Sun* stated, "Kay won the nomination in August after a costly, say-nothing campaign which relied solely on an electronic blitz," and that "He was sold as soap or coffee." The Republicans also split over an allegation that national G.O.P. Chairman Robert Dole, a longtime political enemy of Anderson, worked to help Kay's campaign. The Republican animosities seriously damaged Kay's chances in the general election, particularly when the Democrats offered such an attractive alternative for Republican voters.

Docking, who was unopposed in the Democratic primary, exploited the general impression that Kay had bought the nomination. Norbert Dreiling repeatedly stated that Kay received considerable financial support from corporate interest groups outside the state. He charged that Kay assured the groups that if elected he would support repeal of the federal income tax deduction elimination on state corporate tax returns. Docking emphasized similar themes stating that Kay was "merchandized like breakfast cereal." Ironically these same charges were frequently leveled against Docking. Wayne Lee of the *Hutchinson News* described Kay's St. Louis public relations specialist as a "calmer version" of Docking's public relations man Tom Downing, and he wrote, "One of Docking's aides labeled Kay 'Brand X' almost six years to the day from the time Whitley Austin of the *Salina Journal* . . . labeled Docking with it."

Robert Docking portrayed himself as a moderate conservative, but the 1972 Democratic presidential frontrunner, Senator George McGovern, presented a liberal image. Governor Docking, pictured here with McGovern in 1968, distanced himself from the senator through the 1972 campaign.

The governor focused his campaign on his accomplishments: income tax reductions, homestead property tax relief, the tax lid on property taxes, disallowance of federal income taxes on corporate tax returns, voting rights for eighteen-year-olds, welfare reform, antidrug trafficking laws, and an open meetings law. Of these he stressed the familiar issue of tax reform. He promised to make homestead property tax relief for both urban and rural homeowners his top priority in the next legislative session, and proposed what he called a "tax breaker" law to limit property taxes based on adjusted gross income. Kay also emphasized the tax issue, repeatedly advocating an exemption of food and drugs from state sales tax and a constitutional amendment allowing local units of government "to determine the proper tax mix to solve their problems."

While Docking distanced himself from the McGovern–Shriver ticket, Republicans in the state formed the "Republicans for Docking" organization. Two prominent Kansas Republicans—Dana K. Anderson and William L. White—were instrumental in its formation. The group believed that Docking's philosophy of government was compatible with that of the Kansas G.O.P. and emphasized his conserva-

tive stand on tax issues. It also printed and distributed "Nixon–Docking" bumper stickers, an action Docking tacitly approved and appreciated. The link with Nixon and the Republicans caused considerable discontent among, in the *Wall Street Journal's* words, "the beleaguered band of liberals" in the state, but it undoubtedly helped Docking's reelection chances.

As expected, Docking handily defeated Kay, capturing almost 230,000 more votes than his Republican opponent (62 percent to 37.1 percent), by far his widest victory margin. Meanwhile, Nixon carried the state by almost 350,000 votes over McGovern, and Senator James Pearson defeated Democrat Arch Tetzlaff by more than 421,000 votes. The Democrats did, however, make minor gains in the state legislature, adding five seats in the senate and four in the house. As in his previous elections, Docking rode his record and promises of tax reform and his generally moderate to conservative image to victory. He had the additional advantage of a major split in the state Republican Party. The division among Kansas Democrats was not as serious; McGovern supporters, while never numerically dominant in the party, had little alternative in the governor's race. Although Kay was more effective than Frizzell in focusing on the tax issue, his party was badly split and his image was tainted. More important, however, was Docking's image, developed over six years, as a tight-fisted, tax-cutting governor.

Between 1966 and 1972 Kansas experienced many of the broader changes occurring in American electoral politics. The state's electoral politics, like those nationally, were in flux. Nationally, the sectional and class-based partisan divisions forged during the Civil War and New Deal eras were eroded by weakening partisan ties in the electorate and growing split-ticket voting. In Kansas, the historical dominance of the Republican Party was slowly replaced by more competitive two-party politics in which individual political entrepreneurs ran candidate-centered campaigns. Robert Docking epitomized this new style of electoral politics. Like many Democratic officeholders who survived and even flourished during a period of growing Republican dominance of presidential politics, Docking fashioned an electoral strategy that appealed to an increasingly independent electorate. Ironically, this increasingly independent electorate contributed to greater two-party competition in Kansas during the 1970s and beyond.

Suggested Readings

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Chapter 8

Kansas, Today and Tomorrow

Writing about the recent past, the present, and the future is difficult at best. For historians these subjects are not as tempting as the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Good history requires perspective. Therefore, Chapter 8 relies on economists, social scientists, and literary writers to analyze this period and to make comments about the future of the state.

In their article on the economic outlook for Kansas, Charles E. Krider, professor of business and director of the Institute for Public Policy and Business Research at the University of Kansas, and Norman G. Clifford, director of research at the Institute, found that while the Kansas economy lagged behind that of the United States in the 1980s, it has experienced steady growth in the 1990s. The forecast is for continued modest growth. The authors demonstrate that not all areas of the state are showing the same positive growth. The sharp decline of the rural areas in the 1980s appears to be bottoming out, however, while the urban areas continue to show strong growth.

Fred Bentley, former administrator of the Kansas Rural Center, analyzes the poor economic conditions in the 1980s that have "accelerated a chronic, long-term trend of farm consolidation, closure of small-town businesses, and emigration." Bentley notes that three strategies for the future seem to have the widest currency: 1) to "stay the course," concede that consolidation is inevitable, and develop an industrial agricultural model; 2) to expand the small farm sector by encouraging greater diversification and enhanced marketing; and finally,

3) to emphasize the development of organic farming systems and improved local marketing. In her postscript, Mary Fund, communications director of the Kansas Rural Center, notes that there is still a two-tiered system of agricultural. One tier is industrial, large-scale, and high-tech; the other consists of smaller, more diversified farms serving a more local regional food system. The large factory-style production of hogs is an example of the first tier, and the second tier is exemplified by sustainable agriculture with organic niche market. Caught in the middle are medium-sized family farms not big enough to adopt expensive technology but too big for niche products. What effect the new federal farm policy under the "Freedom to Farm" Act, which phases out government support programs, will have on agriculture in Kansas remains a big question.

Thomas Fox Averill, professor of English and coordinator of the Center for Kansas Studies at Washburn University, discusses how Kansans today deal with "The Wizard of Oz," a phenomenon that is part of our national, as well as Kansas, culture. Averill recounts the history of L. Frank Baum's books, the various plays, and the MGM movie ("The Wizard of Oz" was released in 1939 and has been widely shown in theaters and on television in the last 50 years) and provides a fascinating analysis of its effects on the people of Kansas. He closes with an assessment of Dorothy, the "quintessential" Kansan.

The Economic Outlook for Kansas

Charles E. Krider and Norman G. Clifford

Introduction

The Kansas economy has experienced steady growth throughout the 1990s, and the outlook is for continued modest growth in employment and income. Kansas' economic growth lagged behind that of the United States in the 1980s. In the 1990s, Kansas experienced relative improvement in its economy and has matched economic growth of the nation as a whole. This improvement in the economy suggests that the state is making a successful adjustment to economic forces that negatively impacted economic performance in the 1980s.

While the Kansas economy overall is good, not all areas of the state are showing the same growth. Most metropolitan areas are experiencing rapid economic growth while rural areas have generally stopped declining. There is a major distinction between rural areas that have a major city with a population of more than 10,000 and those rural areas without a city that large. The former, including cities such as Salina, Hays, Garden City and Dodge City, have been able to diversify their economies beyond agriculture and are showing good growth. Rural areas still heavily dependent on agriculture continue to show a decline in population but at a lower rate than in the 1980s.

This article will examine economic trends in Kansas in terms of population, employment, personal income, and the outlook for 1998. The major conclusions are that economic trends in Kansas are posi-

tive and most economic growth is occurring in metropolitan areas and rural areas that have a city with a population larger than 10,000. A major finding is that long-term decline in population has ended in rural areas as a whole. These areas are currently experiencing good employment growth. Major challenges for the state are to improve the skills of the Kansas workforce, to adapt to rapid technological change, and to improve per capita personal income by generating more high-wage jobs.

Population

Kansas population growth has been consistent at approximately 0.6% in recent years and remains below the U.S. average growth. During the 1980s the Kansas population increased by 4.8%, slightly less than one-half of the U.S. population increase of 9.8%. From 1990–1995, the Kansas population increased at a rate of 3.5%, again below the U.S. population increase of 5.7%. This more recent population growth has, however, shown improvement relative to the U.S. growth. Population changes since 1980 are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

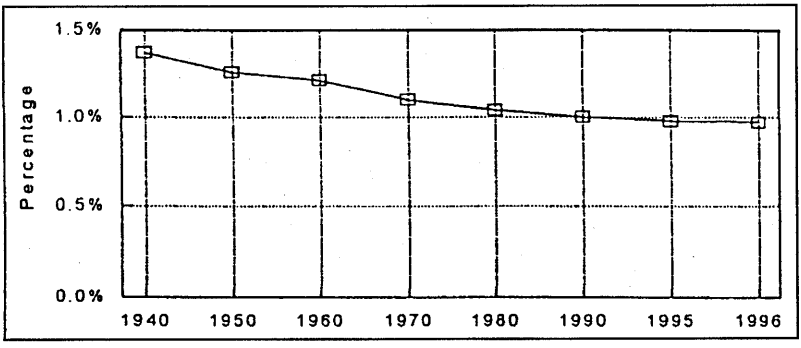
Population Growth in Kansas and the United States 1980–1997

Year	Kansas	% Change	U.S.	% Change
1980	2,364,236		225,545,805	
1990	2,477,588	4.8	226,545,805	9.8
1995	2,563,618	3.5	262,889,634	5.7
1996	2,579,169	0.6	265,179,411	0.9
1997	2,594,840	0.6	267,636,061	0.9

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, March 1998.

Figure 1

Kansas as a Percentage of the U.S. Population 1980–1996



Source: Kansas University Institute for Public Policy and Business Research. Kansas Statistical Abstract, 1996.

In 1996 Kansas made up 0.9% of the total U.S. population, down from 1.37% in 1940. Kansas is becoming a smaller proportion of the United States. Figure 1 shows the long-term consequence of slower population growth for the state.

Not all parts of Kansas are showing low population growth. The greatest growth has occurred in the metropolitan areas, particularly suburban Johnson County, the Wichita area, and Lawrence. In Kansas there are nine metropolitan counties and 17 mid-sized counties that contain a city of 10,000 people or more. The remaining 79 counties do not have a city of that size. Table 2 shows population growth for metropolitan and nonmetropolitan counties and indicates that all of the state's population growth in the 1980s occurred in the nine metropolitan areas. These areas have experienced the most growth in the 1990s as well. The mid-size counties experienced a modest 0.8% growth during the 1980s but only .01% from 1990 to 1996. Population of nonmetropolitan counties declined by 7% in the 1980s but grew 0.3% in the early 1990s. It appears that the population decline of the most rural counties in Kansas has bottomed out, but there is no indication that population will grow in these areas at more than a very small rate. The trend towards urbanization of the Kansas population continues.

Table 2

Population for Metro and Nonmetro Counties in Kansas 1980–1996

				Percent Change*	
	1980	1990	1996	1980-1990	1990-1996
Metro	1,183,988	1,337,218	1,425,407	12.9	6.6
Midsize	575,022	579,779	580,285	0.8	0.1
Nonmetro	591,311	550,102	552,007	-7.0	0.3

*Because the two intervals are not equal, no direct comparisons should be made.

Metro Counties: MSA counties (9)
Midsize Counties: non-MSA counties containing cities with a populations of 10,000 or more (17)
Nonmetro Counties: non-MSA counties which do not contain cities with populations of 10,000 (79)

Source: "Kansas County Profiles," IPPBR; U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Figure 2 shows population growth in six Kansas regions. The northeast region, which includes Johnson County, and the south central region, which includes Wichita, exhibit a long-term upward trend in population. Population growth of southwest Kansas has been prompted primarily by the meatpacking industry and is largely a result of immigration from Mexico and Asia. There are major beef processing plants in Liberal, Garden City, and Dodge City. Northwest Kansas has remained primarily agricultural and has shown steady population decline. The recent decline in the north central region is due primarily to reductions in employment at Fort Riley in Junction City.

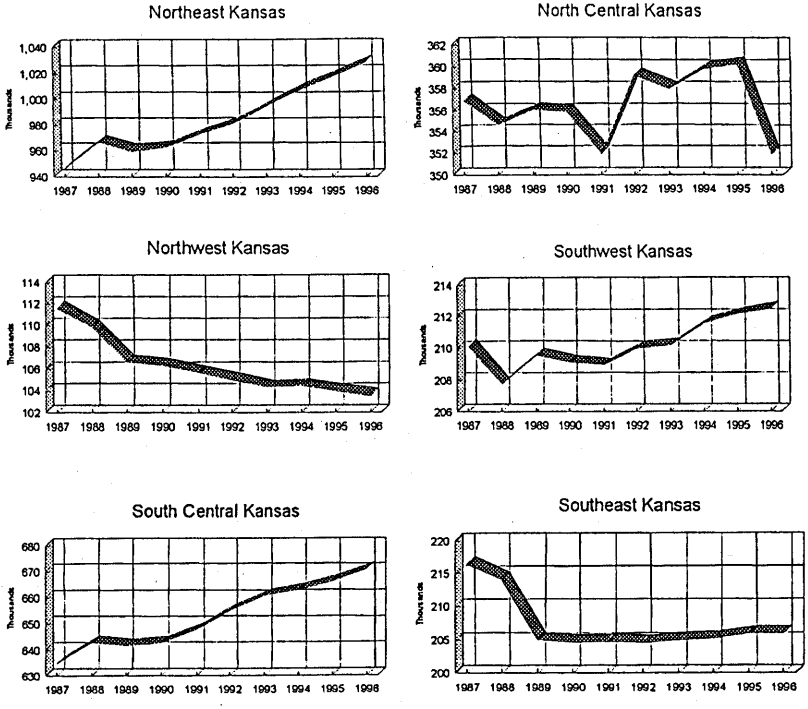
Employment

Kansas has had steady employment growth since the mid-1980s and in 1997 is at full employment. As shown in Table 3, employment increased from 1,243,000 in 1990 to 1,314,563 in 1997. In the first quarter of 1997 employment increased an additional 2.7%. The current unemployment rate for 1997 is 3.9%.

Much of the economic growth has occurred in the Kansas City area, primarily Johnson County. Leading technology firms such as Sprint and Allied Signal, two of the largest employers in the state, are located in Johnson County. Much of the growth has been in services,

Figure 2

Kansas Population by Region 1986–1995



Source: Population Distribution and Population Estimates Branches, U.S. Census Bureau. Provided by Kansas, Inc.

Table 3

Kansas Employment Growth 1980–1996

Year	Employment	Change	% Change
1980	1,131,000		
1985	1,174,000	43,000	3.8
1990	1,243,000	69,000	5.9
1995	1,270 000	27,000	2.2
1996	1,279,128	9,128	0.7
1997	1,314,563	35,400	2.8

Note: Data are by place of residence

Source: Kansas Department of Human Resources.

however, particularly business services. In Wichita, economic growth has been driven by a dramatic rebound in the aircraft industry. Boeing, Cessna, Ratheon, and Lear Jet are located in Wichita and have experienced growth in the mid-1990s. As previously mentioned, the meatpacking industry has contributed to economic changes as well as population growth in southwest Kansas.

The 79 counties that make up the nonmetropolitan areas of Kansas showed a positive employment trend of 3.9% from 1990–94. In the 1980s these same counties lost 2.9% of their jobs. While the metropolitan and mid-sized counties showed greater growth in employment in the 1980s and 1990s, it is apparent that new jobs are being created in rural Kansas. Mid-sized counties grew more in the 1990s than in the 1980s. If this positive economic trend continues, population growth should follow. Table 4 shows employment comparisons for metropolitan and nonmetropolitan counties from 1980 through 1994.

Table 4

Employment for Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Counties in Kansas 1980–1994

				Percent Change*	
	1980	1990	1994	1980-1990	1990-1996
Metro	673,443	833,520	893,835	23.8	7.2
Midsize	322,303	344,476	366,101	6.9	6.3
Non Metro	306,586	297,564	309,183	-2.9	3.9

*Because the two intervals are not equal, no direct comparisons should be made.

Note: Data are by place of work. The numbers in Table 3 are not comparable to numbers in Table 4.

Metro Counties: MSA counties (9)

Midsize Counties: non-MSA counties containing cities with a populations of 10,000 or more (17)

Nonmetro Counties: non-MSA counties which do not contain cities with populations less than 10,000 (79)

Source: "Kansas County Profiles," IPPBR; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, (REIS).

One reason for the improved economic performance of rural counties is that firms are moving to or expanding in rural areas because of a greater availability of workers. Labor shortages are increasingly severe in the metropolitan parts of Kansas. For example, in the mid-1990s Cessna Aircraft built a new manufacturing plant that employed 1,000 people in Independence, in Montgomery County. The county had a high unemployment rate at a time when there were labor shortages in Wichita. Building of the Cessna plant led suppliers to locate in the county, causing a general revitalization of the county's economy. A dispersion of manufacturing plants into rural areas in search of a labor supply is likely to be a long-term trend.

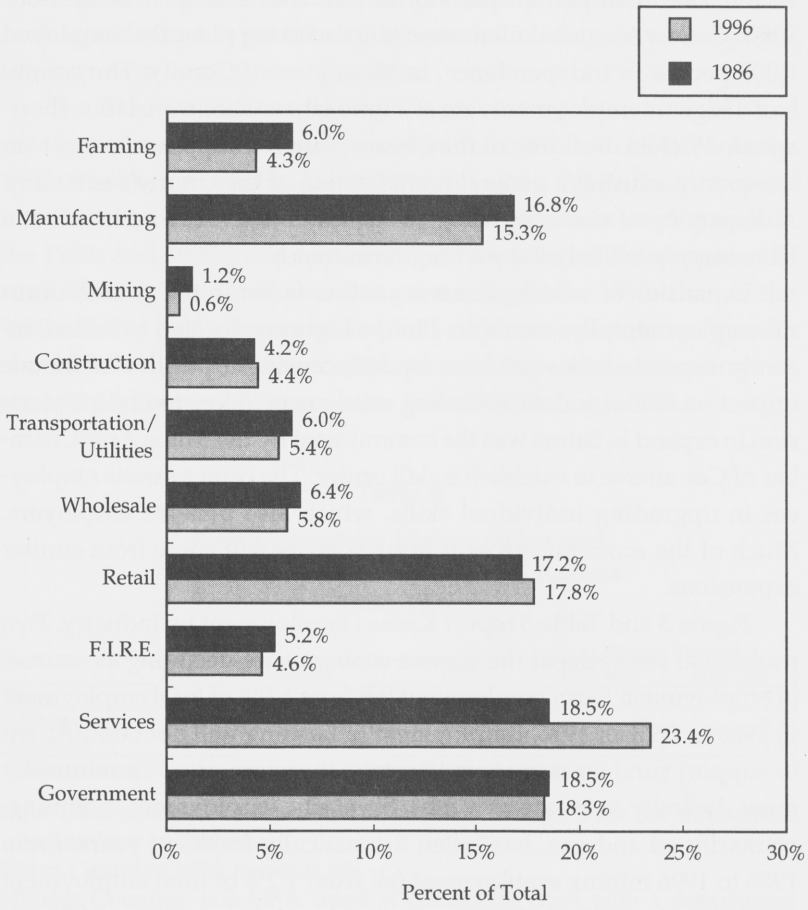
Expansion of existing firms is another factor in the growth of rural employment. For example, Philips Lighting, located in Salina, recently expanded its workforce by 500, causing a positive economic impact on Salina and surrounding rural areas. A key to Philips' decision to expand in Salina was the commitment by the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce to establish a skill center. The center assists employees in upgrading individual skills, which also benefits employers. Much of the economic growth in rural areas will come from similar expansions.

Figure 3 and Table 5 report Kansas employment by industry. Two traditional strengths of the Kansas economy are declining as sources of employment. Farm employment fell from 6.0% of total employment in 1986 to 4.3% in 1996. Employment in farming will not be sufficient to support rural economies in the state; therefore, rural communities must diversity to create new jobs. Similarly, employment in mining, primarily oil and gas, has fallen dramatically in recent years. From 1986 to 1996 mining employment fell from 1.2% of total employment to 0.6%. In the 1990s 2,100 jobs were lost in mining, a decline of 26.6%. The oil industry has provided well-paying jobs in rural areas of Kansas, but the state's oil wells are high-cost and the industry will likely continue to decline as a source of employment.

Growth industries for employment have been in services, construction, and retail. Service employment has been greatest in the metropolitan areas. Rural counties are not adding service jobs at the same rate as the state. Manufacturing's percentage of employment declined, but there has been modest growth in the number of employees in manufacturing. Approximately 15% of all jobs are in manufacturing,

Figure 3

Changes in Employment Percentages by Industry in Kansas 1986 and 1996



Source: Kansas Department of Human Resources, Labor Market Information Services.

Table 5

Kansas Employment by Industry 1986 and 1990

	1986	1990	% Change	1996	% Change
Agricultural Services	63,000	55,000	-12.6	55,500	0.9
Mining	12,300	10,000	-18.6	7,900	-21.0
Construction	43,700	41,400	-5.2	56,800	37.2
Manufacturing	175,600	185,500	5.6	196,100	5.7
Transportation	62,300	66,600	6.9	69,800	4.8
Wholesale	66,500	69,900	5.1	74,900	7.2
Retail	180,200	197,200	9.4	228.500	15.9
F.I.R.E	54,200	58,100	7.1	58,600	0.9
Services	193,200	241,800	2.5	300,600	24.3
Government	195,100	214,400	9.9	235,100	9.7
TOTAL	1,046,100	1,139,900	9.0	1,283,800	12.6

Source: Kansas Department of Human Resources, Labor Market Information Services.

Table 6

Forecast of Kansas Employment 1997–1998

			96 - 97		97 - 98
	1996	1997	% Change	1998	% Change
Civilian Labor Force	1,340	1,387	3.5	1,414	1.9
Employed	1,279	1,330	4.0	1,357	2.0
Unemployed	60	57	-6.4	56	-0.1
Unemployment Rate	4.5%	4.1%	-9.7	4.0%	-2.1

Numbers are in thousands

Source: Kansas Econometric Model, University of Kansas, Institute for Public Policy and Business Research.

about the same as for the nation as a whole. Major manufacturing industries are aircraft, automobiles, and meat packing. Table 6 provides a forecast of Kansas employment for 1997–98 and Table 7 shows the forecast by industry for the same time period.

Highlights of the employment forecast are:

- Employment will increase by a healthy 3% in 1998. The labor force will grow at a slower rate so the unemployment rate will decline from 4.0% in 1997 to 3.9% in 1998. The state will continue to be at full employment over this two-year period.
- Jobs in manufacturing will increase by 3.1% in 1998. This growth will continue to be driven by a strong transportation equipment sector that includes aircraft manufacturing.

Table 7

Forecast of Kansas Employment by Industry 1997–1998

Employment Type	1996	1997	96 - 97 % Change	1998	97 - 98 % Change
Farm	55.5	52.4	-5.7	49.7	-5.1
Manufacturing	196.1	202.0	3.0	208.2	3.1
Mining	7.9	7.9	0.9	7.9	-0.5
Construction	56.8	59.4	4.6	61.9	4.2
Trans. & Utilities	69.8	71.8	2.8	73.1	1.9
Wholesale	74.9	76.6	2.3	78.1	1.9
Retail	228.5	235.1	2.9	241.3	2.6
F.I.R.E.	58.6	59.8	2.1	60.5	1.2
Services	300.6	312.9	4.1	327.3	4.6
Government	235.1	239.1	0.4	243.1	1.1

Numbers are in thousands

Source: Kansas Econometric Model, University of Kansas, Institute for Public Policy and Business Research.

- Employment in mining will be stable but farm employment will continue to decline by about 5% in 1998.
- Employment in services will continue to grow at a strong 4.6%.

The Kansas economy has performed better in relation to the national economy during the 1990s than it did through most of the 1980s. This relative improvement can be seen both in job growth and in personal income growth. Figure 4 shows the rates of nonfarm job growth for the United States and Kansas. As the figure clearly shows, the rate of job growth in the U.S. exceeded the rate of job growth in Kansas in every year from 1981 through 1988. In 1989 Kansas job growth exceeded that of the United States. Except for 1993 and 1994, when the rate of Kansas job increase fell just short of the U.S. rate, jobs in Kansas have increased at a faster rate than U.S. jobs since 1989. As Figure 4 also shows, this pattern is expected to continue according to the Institute for Public Policy and Business Research forecast for 1997 and 1998.

Figure 5 compares the U.S. and Kansas unemployment rates. Interestingly, the Kansas unemployment rate has been lower than the U.S. unemployment rate in every year since 1981. This is partly explained by the way in which unemployment rates are measured. In Kansas more of the slack in employment is taken up by exit from the labor force than in other states. Nevertheless, in the early 1990s, a period of national recession and slow recovery, the Kansas unemploy-

Figure 4

Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment Growth, United States and Kansas 1981–1998

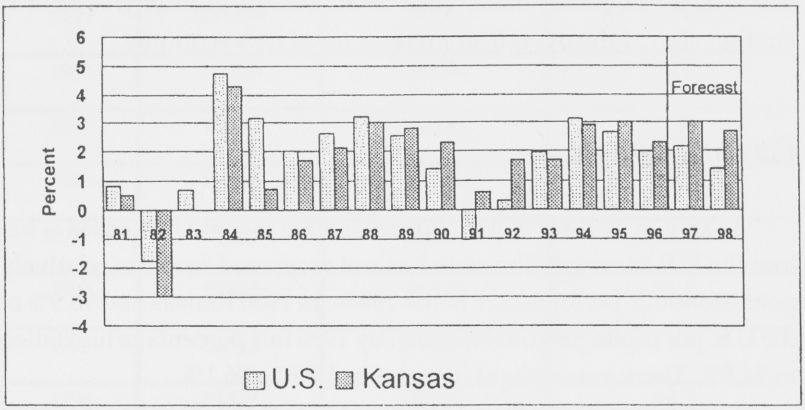
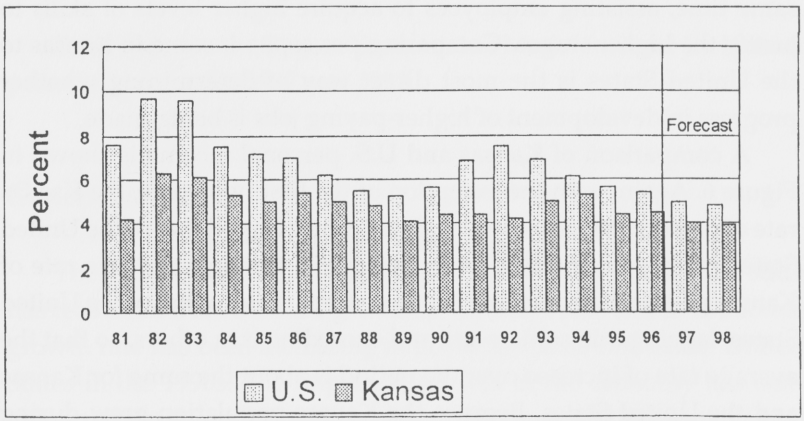


Figure 5

Unemployment Rate, United States and Kansas 1981–1998



ment rate remained fairly stable while the national unemployment rate increased dramatically. In general, it has been a pattern of the Kansas economy over the last decade to be somewhat insulated from the shocks that have influenced the national economy. This is probably due to the rather broad base of the Kansas economy. If so, it is another sign of the overall strength of the state's economy.

Personal Income

As shown in Table 8, per capita personal income in Kansas is below the U.S. average. The state has not recovered from its relatively poor economic performance in the 1980s. In 1980 Kansas had 98.9% of the U.S. per capita personal income. By 1990 this percentage had fallen to 94.5%. There was a slight increase in 1996 to 96.1%.

A fundamental problem for Kansas is that the state has lost high paying jobs in mining and in some areas of manufacturing and has not been able to replace them with jobs that pay equally well. Much of the employment growth in Kansas has been in low-wage service and retail industries. There has been substantial growth in meat packing, particularly in southwest Kansas, but this is a low-wage industry. A challenge for Kansas is development of high-wage jobs while, at the same time, assisting employees to acquire higher levels of skills to justify the higher wages. Comparing per capita income in Kansas to the United States is the most direct way of determining whether progress in development of higher-paying jobs is being made.

A comparison of Kansas and U.S. personal income is shown in Figure 6. Again, with the exception of the first two years, the Kansas rate of personal income growth significantly lagged that of the United States every year through 1989. From 1990 through 1996 the rate of Kansas personal income growth was comparable to that of the United States, lagging it in some years and exceeding it in others, so that the average rate of increase over the period is about the same for Kansas and the United States. Because the Kansas population grew during this period, there was some improvement in Kansas per capita personal income relative to the United States. Kansas personal income growth is expected to be comparable to U.S. personal income growth in 1997 and 1998.

Table 8

Per Capita Personal Income, Kansas and United States 1980–1996

Year	Kansas	U.S.	Kansas As % of U.S.
1980	$ 9,829	$ 9,940	98.9
1985	13,847	14,155	97.8
1990	17,642	18,666	94.5
1991	18,567	19,638	94.5
1992	19,582	20,582	95.1
1993	20,243	21,223	95.4
1994	20,884	22,045	94.7
1995	21,855	23,196	94.2
1996	23,281	24,231	96.1

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Survey of Current Business, May, 1997.

Table 9 shows the Kansas Econometric Model forecast for Kansas personal income for 1997 and 1998.

Conclusions

The general condition of the Kansas economy is good. The state has recovered from the slow growth in the mid 1980s and its economic growth rate has been increasing at about the same rate as the United States in the 1990s. The improved growth in the economy has benefited the rural as well as the metropolitan areas of the state. While the rural areas continue to underperform the metropolitan areas, the declines that were observed in the 1980s have mostly been halted. In particular, population in rural Kansas has essentially stabilized after a decade of decline in the 1980s.

Table 9

Forecast of Kansas Personal Income
1997–1998

Income Type	1996	1997	'96 - '97 % Change	1998	'97 - '98 % Change
Total Personal	$59,884	$63,643	6.3	$67,426	5.9
Real Personal (1992 $)	54,525	56,657	3.9	58,433	3.1
Farm Proprietors	1,136	1,191	4.9	1,240	4.1
Nonfarm Proprietors	4,413	4,731	7.2	5,038	6.5
Dividends, Interest, Rents	10,669	11,240	5.4	11,813	5.1
Transfer Payments	9,141	9,674	5.8	10,271	6.2
Other Labor	4,160	4,490	7.9	4,804	7.0

Dollars are in Millions

Source: Kansas Econometric Model, University of Kansas, Institute for Public Policy and Business Research.

The major economic development issues for Kansas are:

1. The availability and skills of workers. A labor shortage exists in the urban areas of Johnson County and Wichita, and employers are generally concerned that workers need higher levels of skill to be competitive.

2. Workforce skills. Improvements in job preparation for K–12 students who are not going on to a four-year college program are necessary.

3. Adaptation to technology. Kansas firms must adapt to new technology in order to be competitive, and Kansas communities must insure that existing firms have access to appropriate technology, particularly in telecommunications.

4. Highway improvements. Continuing highway improvements are needed, particularly in rural areas.

5. Deregulation. Deregulation of telecommunications and electricity must be implemented in a manner to benefit all areas of the state.

6. Business taxes. State taxes on business must not put Kansas companies at a disadvantage compared to competitors in other states. High property taxes on business, particularly equipment and machinery, are a specific concern.

The Future of Agriculture and Rural Communities

Fred Bentley

Agriculture and rural communities across Kansas are in a state of transition. Poor economic conditions in this decade have accelerated a chronic, long-term trend of farm consolidation, closure of small-town businesses, and emigration.

Predictions that only 25 or 35 farm service centers and that just a few thousand farmers will dominate the state's rural economy in the 21st century have prodded government, institutions, and citizens' groups to determine how to hold onto the family farms and rural communities in the years ahead. Three strategies for the future seem to have widest currency.

One strategy is to "stay the course," conceding that a greater concentration of farm and rural business ownership is "inevitable" and should be accepted. The model of development for this strategy is the industrial agricultural system of southwest Kansas. Key elements in this plan are a loosening of the Kansas corporate farming law with regard to swine production, encouraging large-scale hog and poultry processing plants to move into the state, and the improvement of international markets.

Another strategy is to beef up the small farm sector by encouraging farmers to develop a niche in the marketplace. This strategy recognizes that the nature of farming is changing and that many oppor-

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tunities exist on Kansas farms that weren't widely considered in the past. Although there is no single strategy that will work for every farm, greater farm diversification and enhanced marketing assistance can help many farmers survive.

A third plan is a low-input strategy to help small and mid-sized farms cut production expenses and conserve resources by converting to lower input methods of farming. This approach encourages diversification of traditional grain and livestock production, with an emphasis on greater development of organic farming systems and improved local marketing for a variety of farm products. This strategy emphasizes that mid-size farms must survive and flourish to give rural communities the opportunity to rebuild.

To help shape the debate and to evaluate the merits of these three directions, and to show that state institutions and citizens have considerable power to affect the structure of farms and rural communities, at least four issue areas must be discussed in the context of the traditional values that have so long characterized rural Kansas: corporate farming, farming practices, farm credit, and marketing.

The "stay the course" strategy believes that the current trends toward an industrial agricultural system cannot be changed. Although widespread ownership of land, businesses, and the means of production is one of the fundamental values of our democratic, agrarian tradition, only about 1 percent of the largest farms (about seven per county) produce nearly 50 percent of the state farm receipts. On the other end of the spectrum, 70 percent of the state's farmers, or 49,000 farmers, produce only 14 percent of the farm receipts. With this disparity in purchasing power, it is no surprise that small-town businesses from equipment dealers to grocery stores and variety stores are going out of business and are being replaced by conglomerate-owned, regionally located businesses and services.

The terms of the stay-the-course strategy would foster corporate development of family farms and businesses, in processing industries and in the infrastructure of support for rural people. This would hasten the decline of the mid-sized family farm and the erosion of small-town businesses, churches, and schools that provide the basis of support for more than a million Kansans.

In contrast, the other two strategies offer a new direction for the survival of small and mid-sized farms and locally owned small busi-

nesses. The niche and low-input strategies recognize that for rural communities to survive those 49,000 farmers who make only 14 percent of the sales must increase their farm income in order to put more dollars back into the local economy.

State policy can effectively address the trend toward fewer farmers and larger farms by strictly regulating corporate entry into agriculture and vertical integration of businesses that serve farmers and rural residents.

As far as farming practices are concerned, agriculture of late has adopted practices that fly in the face of traditional family farm values of resource conservation and land stewardship. Conventional contemporary farming practices rely significantly on imported petroleum, petrochemical products, and sophisticated technology. The high cost of using these products has been a major contributor to escalating farm expenses and a principal cause of the cost-price squeeze that has plagued agriculture for many years.

At the same time, there is growing evidence that these farming methods are having a negative impact on human health and the environment. Heavy losses of topsoil, depletion of water resources, and contamination of food and water supplies constitute a "resource crisis" as severe in magnitude as the human side of the farm crisis. The need for farmers to cut production expenses and to preserve natural resources for the future, as well as public demands for safe food and a cleaner environment, is creating pressure for changes in farming practices.

The stay-the-course strategy ignores the resource crisis and exhorts farmers to become better managers by using conventional farming techniques more efficiently and effectively. Implicit in this strategy is a belief that technology should be pushed to its limits and that it can solve any problem or fulfill any need that agriculture might experience in the future.

The niche strategy does not directly address farming practices and resource policies. It does recognize that diversity of farm production is crucial to the survival of many farmers and that consumer demands must be met to be successful in specialty markets.

The low-input strategy is based on a strong conservation ethic that advocates a diversified farming operation of crop rotations, legumes, and the avoidance of high-cost chemical and mechanical in-

puts. This is a beginning in the process of weaning agriculture from what are sure to be increasingly expensive petroleum products.

The low-input strategy also implies a strong sense of responsibility to future generations by protecting soil and water resources. Low-input farms are typically smaller operations that can be managed with greater care and concern for the land. This condition in turn makes it feasible for more farmers to engage in agriculture.

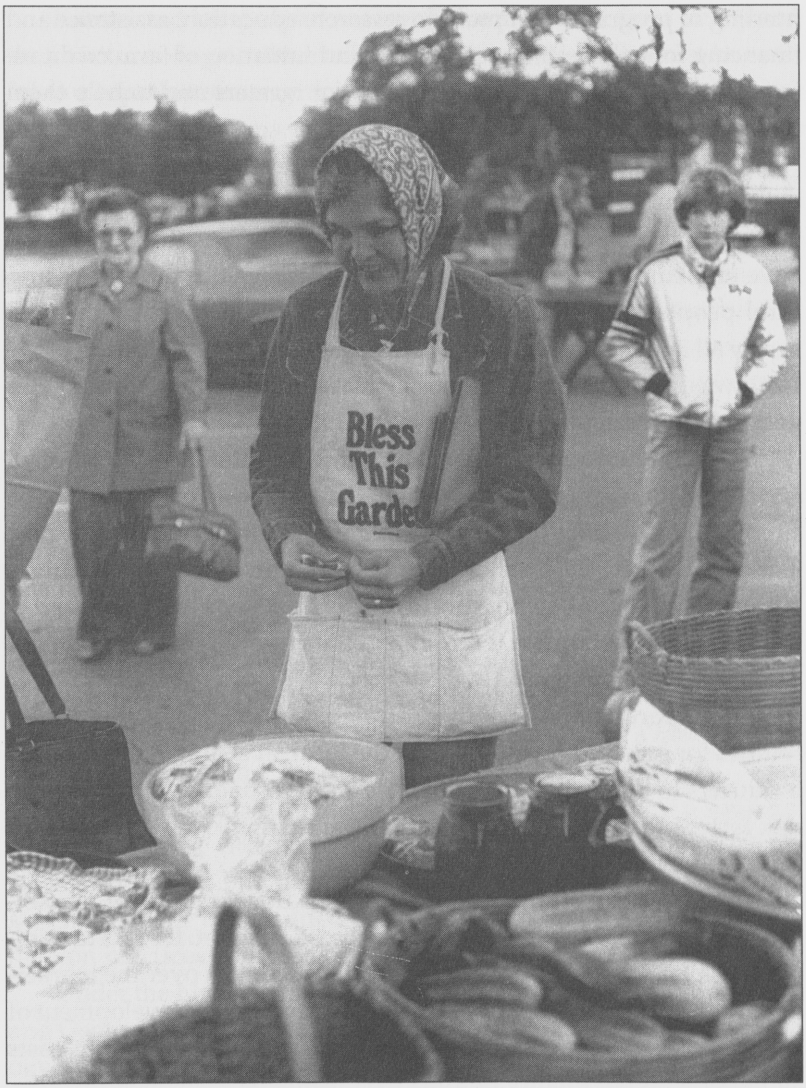
Public policy can address the issue of farming practices through regulation of state water policy, funding of cost-share conservation programs and sustainable agriculture research and education programs, regulation of health and environment, programs to assist farmers who want to make a transition from conventional farming practices, and consumer protection policies. Individual farmers also have considerable power and control over the way they manage their farms.

The stay-the-course strategy regarding farm credit assumes that current trends in the structure of agriculture will continue. This tendency would mean an increase in the numbers of large-scale farms, which normally are highly leveraged operations. These farms, as we have witnessed in the 1980s, are vulnerable to the vicissitudes of the marketplace, which increases the risks and liabilities of doing business. If these farms can show a profit, and if current lending policies and practices continue, capital will remain available.

The other two strategies assume that current trends can be resisted. The niche strategy may be difficult to finance because of the risk and uncertainty of developing a new product or service. For this reason, the state has promoted the formation of private and quasi-public venture-capital companies to provide operating funds for niche farmers. Venture-capital companies, though, expect a greater than normal return on investment that would take more dollars out of local circulation.

The low-input strategy relies less on borrowed capital but more on greater labor inputs to provide a quality of farm management and land stewardship that is frequently lacking in an industrial operation. Low-input farmers are typically cautious borrowers; many have no debt at all. This tendency leaves more dollars for farm improvement and local circulation.

State government has significant power over farm credit and rural development issues through the regulation of state banking laws,



Local markets—such as this Lawrence, Kansas, farmers' market—help farmers cut transportation time and costs and provide a higher quality product for consumers. These marketing cooperatives give producers more control and increase local income.

funding of programs that provide research, education, assistance and financing for economic development, and initiation of farm credit reforms to provide equity under the law for farmers and to help them remain in agriculture.

Marketing of agricultural products, however, is the key to further development of each of the strategies identified above. Agricultural marketing is presently dominated by powerful corporate interests that have eroded the independent and self-reliant values of farmers and rural people. Since the 1970s the international market has dictated nearly all agricultural marketing strategies. The overexpansion of the 1970s was fueled by a tremendous increase in farm exports, but a steep decline in foreign sales followed in the 1980s.

The stay-the-course strategy holds that the internationalization of agriculture is one of those "inevitable" developments that cannot be altered. This strategy is based on regaining and expanding export markets at any cost, even if the competition of low-price markets drives more farmers out of agriculture. The niche strategy also emphasizes the world marketing, but it recognizes the growth possibilities in domestic and local markets.

The export emphasis of these strategies may increase the opportunities for income enhancement at the local level, but it also subjects producers to the whims of an unstable world economy, increasing the risk factors for farmers and communities that rely on such trade for their well-being.

The low-input strategy emphasizes the development of marketing cooperatives to serve primarily a domestic market. It seeks to minimize risk factors by exerting more producer control over the marketing process. This strategy pays particular attention to development of local markets, such as farmers' markets, to cut transportation costs and offer a higher quality product to consumers.

State policy has a great influence over marketing strategies. State activities have included increased promotion of Kansas-grown products at trade shows and the making of marketing agreements with foreign and domestic corporations. Public institutions can provide important research, producer education, technical assistance, and consumer information to help in development of marketing plans.

Each of these strategies probably will develop further in the future. The policies and actions of government, institutions, and individuals will play a pivotal role in this development.

Kansas and her people must work hard to affect farm policy and the structure of agriculture and rural communities. We must be careful to adopt that strategy that has the greatest benefits over time for the majority of Kansans.

Postscript

Mary Fund

In the seven years since Fred Bentley made his comments on agriculture's future, agriculture has continued along a two-tiered track. The first tier is the industrial, high-tech, large-scale farms producing commodity crops and livestock for export markets. The second tier is the smaller, more diversified farms that adopt lower input, ecologically sound production practices and explore innovative niche markets and value-added production options, developing a more local or regional food system.

Medium-sized family farms continue to be caught in a squeeze. They are not big enough to adopt the expensive technology of the largest operations but are too big to adopt the marketing role necessary for niche or value-added products without major changes in production practices and perhaps size of operation.

Under the high-tech system, precision agriculture, biotechnology, and Geographic Information Systems dependent on satellite technology will help a handful of vertically integrated corporations eventually control every facet of production, processing, and marketing. The role of people in agriculture shifts from one of owner/operator to employee.

Over the past seven years, this industrialization process has intensified in Kansas, as well as across the country. It is exemplified by the growth of mega-swine production on factory-style hog farms in southwest Kansas and the increase of contract hog production among

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traditional family farmers. Confinement buildings housing thousands of hogs and waste lagoons several acres in size now dot the southwest Kansas landscape among the center-pivot irrigation systems, grain elevators, and feedlots.

Federal farm policy has dramatically shifted from its safety net approach of complex commodity support payment programs, price floors, loan guarantees, and conservation compliance requirements to a "Freedom to Farm" market-based agriculture. Passed in 1996, the federal farm bill established a seven-year phaseout of commodity support programs to wean agriculture from government payments. Whether this market approach will sustain farmers and rural communities is not known.

As the commodity support programs are withdrawn, so are many of the incentives for conservation of resources. While compliance is necessary to obtain payments during the seven-year transition, how many farmers will adopt or maintain conservation practices when the short-term returns from a cash crop are more profitable?

Juxtaposed to the high-tech industrial approach to the future of agriculture is what some have coined "high think" agriculture or "sustainable agriculture." Sustainable agriculture, dependent on ecological principles and social values, is envisioned by a growing number of people as a response to the problems created by high tech, industrial agriculture. Ecosystem management, whole farm planning, integrated or biological pest management, and relationship marketing are a few of the terms relevant to this kind of agriculture.

Increasing concern about the high costs of production and the environmental impacts of industrial agriculture, as well as the health and safety of our food and water, are driving sustainable agriculture. Pesticides and fertilizers threaten the environment and public health, as do the animal waste systems of large confinement operations. The controversies over atrazine in drinking water and the odor and water quality of large swine lagoons have brought public attention to agriculture. This is creating opportunities and niche markets for products produced by ecologically sound and socially responsible means.

More Kansas farmers are taking advantage of the new approaches to sustainable agriculture. Interest in lowering production costs drives many farmers to adopt practices that use on-farm resources of legumes, cover crops, and animal manure for fertility needs and erosion con-

trol. Mechanical cultivation and extended crop rotations are used for weed and pest control. Organic agriculture proponents are benefiting from a growing market for organic grains and feedgrains for organic livestock.

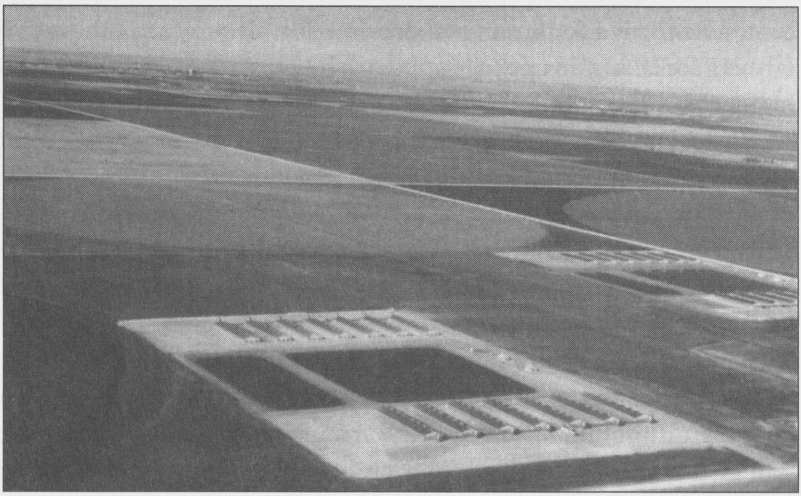
In the past five years, the numbers of farmers' markets in both larger urban areas and smaller communities have increased. As big companies strive for a uniform one-size-fits-all product, innovative farmers are taking an opposite approach by providing consumers with high-quality local production. They identify preserved or value-added products. Direct marketing of meat and poultry is growing. Several "community supported agriculture" efforts, in which consumers share in the farmers' risk or subscribe to food production services, have begun near population centers. All of these enterprises hold promise for both on-farm and off-farm growth of related small businesses that benefit small communities.

For both industrial and sustainable agriculture, credit availability to agriculture and small business enterprises will continue to be a defining or limiting factor. Business management and skills training will also be needed. Information on best management practices or environmentally friendly production practices will be needed.

As industrial agriculture steps on the toes of local citizens in terms of environmental threats and local control, citizens' skills and commitment to taking responsibility for their future will be tested. State leaders will have to make some hard decisions.

As Fred Bentley emphasized, public policy at both the state and federal levels can create opportunities for agriculture. State and federal institutions and programs can provide research, information, and financial incentives. Over the past ten years, we have seen programs and funding that benefit both tiers of agriculture, although sustainable agriculture's share has always been small. Most of the progress thus far made in sustainable agriculture has occurred without the benefit or blessing of official leaders and policy makers.

University of Missouri agricultural economist John Ikerd has stated, "It takes productive people, not just production, to sustain local communities." Indeed, industrial agriculture's lack of a need for people may well prove to be its greatest weakness. Never underestimate people's need for productive, creative work and for a place to call home.



Feedlots such as this one in southwestern Kansas house thousands of hogs. These facilities have been a focus of escalating disputes between environmentalists and advocates of community growth, particularly in rural areas with declining populations.

Oz and Kansas Culture

Thomas Fox Averill

One can walk into any gift or souvenir shop in a Kansas town, or drop into one of the tourist traps along a Kansas highway, and find Dorothy and other characters from *The Wizard of Oz*. They are reproduced on postcards, T-shirts, mugs, posters, plates, or whatever holds their images or our image of ourselves. The people of contemporary Kansas are intricately, ambivalently, and inevitably linked to Oz.

Kansans have not always been. When L. Frank Baum published *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* in 1900, neither national nor Kansas journalists noted as significant that Dorothy was from Kansas, even though Baum's depiction of the state is one of the bleakest literary portrayals in Kansas literature. Dorothy lives "in the midst of the great Kansas prairies," where there is "nothing but the great gray prairie on every side." Baum uses the word "gray" eight more times. Aunt Em is "thin and gaunt, and never smiled, now." Uncle Henry "never laughed. He worked hard from morning till night and did not know what joy was."

Baum humorously depicts the differences between Oz and Kansas. In the fourth chapter, after Dorothy tells the Scarecrow about "Kansas, and how gray everything was there," he responds:

> "I cannot understand why you should wish to leave this beautiful country and go back to the dry, gray place you call Kansas."

From Thomas Fox Averill, "Oz and Kansas Culture," *Kansas History* 12, no. 1 (Spring 1989): 2–12. Reprinted with permission of the Kansas State Historical Society and Thomas Fox Averill.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself!"

Dorothy, in L. Frank Baum's The Wonderful Wizard of Oz *(1900), is, for many people, the quintessential Kansan. She has brains, heart, and courage and her greatest wish is to "get back to Kansas."*

> "That is because you have no brains," answered the girl. "No matter how dreary and gray our homes are, we people of flesh and blood would rather live there than in any other country, be it every so beautiful. There is no place like home."
>
> The Scarecrow sighed.
>
> "Of course I cannot understand it," he said. "If your heads were stuffed with straw, like mine, you would probably all live in the beautiful places, and then Kansas would have no people at all. It is fortunate for Kansas that you have brains."

Similar passages pepper not only the rest of *The Wizard*, but *Ozma of Oz* (1906), *Dorothy and the Wizard in Oz* (1908), *The Road to Oz* (1909), and *The Emerald City of Oz* (1910).

In *The Emerald City*, Dorothy takes up permanent residency in Oz, bringing Aunt Em and Uncle Henry with her. Henry is broken, tired, and in poor health, about to lose the farm to a mortgage company; Em is careworn, still thin and gaunt, but hardworking. When transported, clad in her apron, she is holding a just-dried supper dish. They immediately begin a tour of the magical fairyland. Uncle Henry loves Oz, pointing out to Em how beautiful, wonderful, exotic, and, best of all, work-free it is. Em is a grump. Without work, she finds no pleasure or meaning. The Ozites let her care for the single chicken, Billina, who has just had her first chicks. The two have rich arguments over chick care (all animals in Oz can talk), Aunt Em insisting on her superior knowledge after having raised chickens for over fifty years. Baum's comic portrayal shows that Kansans do not retire easily and tend to remain Kansans wherever they go, just as Dorothy did in the first book.

Still, in spite of Kansas characters and themes in the fourteen books from *The Wizard of Oz* in 1900 to *Glinda of Oz*, published posthumously in 1920, nobody, inside Kansas or out, chose to highlight the Kansas/Oz connection. In fact, after Baum's second in the series, *The Marvelous Land of Oz* (1904), the books were ignored by all reviewers—no citations exist for them in *Reader's Guide to Periodicals* or *Book Review Digest*.

Kansans, or at least the Kansas press, saw no need to respond to Baum's image of Kansas and Kansans. Kansas was experiencing a fine couple of decades: crops were relatively good; the economy was fairly stable; the state had nationally prominent journalistic spokespersons in William Allen White and Edgar Watson Howe; and Kansas was on the cutting edge of much social reform—Carry A. Nation with prohi-

bition, Samuel J. Crumbine with public health, and William Allen White leading Kansas into the era of Progressive Republicanism. Additionally, readers of the Oz books were young, not shapers of a national image of Kansas.

The most pertinent question at that time, though, might have been why Baum set the book in Kansas in the first place. Surely, he had no idea his book would play such an important part in Kansas' identity, that through *The Wizard of Oz* Kansas would be defined, remembered, reviled, and ridiculed by people from New York to Hollywood, from Japan to Australia to Africa and all around the world. It was impossible for Baum to foresee that, for out-staters, Kansas would become synonymous with grayness, tornadoes, Dorothy, and the Scarecrow, even confused with Oz itself. Nor could he have known how confused Kansans themselves would become. One wonders if Baum's decision to choose Kansas as the "realistic" location of the book was arbitrary, or if he had reasons. It seems he had reasons, and plenty of them. Baum showed that he had brains when he chose Kansas.

Contrary to popular belief, as well as the many biographies and articles, L. Frank Baum did experience Kansas. His first success as a playwright and actor was *The Maid of Arran*, a sentimental, romantic, five-act, Irish drama: "a play to ensnare all hearts and leave an impress of beauty and nobility within the sordid mind of man." *The Maid* took him on tour from New York, to Chicago, and as far west as Lawrence, Kansas, in the winter of 1882. His troupe of actors, including "Four recognizable stars" (the Misses Agnes Hallack and Genevieve Rogers, Mr. Frank Aiken and Baum himself), came to Lawrence from December 4 to 6, playing Monday and Wednesday evenings at the Bowersock Opera House. From there, the show played Olathe and points east.

The Monday night performance was a success. On Tuesday it began to rain, and by Wednesday the rain turned to snow. After *The Maid of Arran*'s second performance, the *Lawrence Daily Journal* reported: "Yesterday was a dismal, dull day." About the show, it reported: "The troupe that presents this play was unfortunate as to weather. Owing to the extreme cold the house was not so large as the one that met it on Monday night." At noon Wednesday, the temperature was twenty-four degrees. The paper's weather report seems echoed, though very faintly, in the opening description of Kansas in *The Wizard of Oz*.

The second terrible thing in the book (the first being Kansas itself) is the tornado. Kansas often averages fewer tornadoes per square mile than several other states, including Georgia, but quite close to Baum's Kansas tour, one of the most frightening, devastating, and noted tornadoes of the nineteenth century struck Irving, Kansas. On May 30, 1879, Irving became the only town hit twice by a tornado in one day. The town of four hundred had been touted that same year by *The Emigrant Guide or Hand-book of the Central Branch of the Union Pacific Railroad*: "It is one of those places where seems to dwell something in nature that imparts the best of thoughts and feelings." But the double tornado levelled thirty-four homes and businesses, and killed nineteen people. The disaster was covered by the national press, and circulated reports fixed the event in the national mind:

> The effect upon the people was pitiful. Night after night hundreds of people never went to bed, but remained dressed and with their lanterns trimmed, watching for a fresh onslaught, which they expected momentarily. Every dark cloud seemed to them filled with forebodings, which could not be allayed until every vestige of the supposed danger had vanished.

The Irving tornado became legend, creating a close connection between violent wind and Kansas. Baum, as editor of the *Saturday Pioneer*, published many stories about tornadoes, sharing the Great Plains residents' fascination with the weather and all its doings.

Irving had literary connections, having been organized on the day of Washington Irving's death, November 28, 1859. Also, among the nineteen Irving dead, six were members of the Gale family, a fact Baum must have been unaware of when he finally gave Dorothy a last name in the third Oz book.

Every writer needs to create a landscape. Baum conjured Oz. For the "real" place, he needed another place to conjure. Kansas is the geographical center of the contiguous United States, as the Emerald City and the Wizard are the geographical center of Oz. Kansas had prominence in the national consciousness, with its "Bleeding Kansas" Civil War connection, its place in the rapid expansion into the West after the Civil War, its grasshopper invasions and legendary blizzards, and its place in the saga of cowboys and cattle towns. Kansas was also important because of its early experiments in prohibition and woman suffrage (Baum's mother-in-law, Matilda Joslyn Gage, was a prominent suffragist and friend of Susan B. Anthony, who traveled in Kan-

sas, and whose brother, Daniel Anthony, settled in Leavenworth), as well as because of its prominence in the national politics of Populism.

Interestingly, Henry Littlefield, a New York high school teacher, wrote in 1964 a Populist interpretation of Baum's novel as midwestern political allegory, with Dorothy as the "everyperson" from the Populist heartland who joins with a brainless farmer, a mechanized laborer, and a regal, pompous and finally cowardly buffoon (William Jennings Bryan) to regain her place in the world. During her journey, she kills the Wicked Witch of the East, who, with her silver slippers, represents the stranglehold of the eastern money moguls on capital. Dorothy meets an ineffective ruler unable to control either the East or the West (this could be any of the Republican Presidents between Lincoln and McKinley). She also encounters the winged monkeys, whose story sounds very familiar to one any Native American might tell. Dorothy conquers the West with water and leaves each of her companions to rule a different sphere of Oz. Then, with the power of the silver slippers, reflecting the free silver issue of the Populists, she returns home for a happy ending. The Populists, of course, were not as successful.

Littlefield's interpretation points to one reason Baum might have chosen Kansas as conjure-name for the book. But, whatever the reason, Kansas has never been quite the same, especially since 1939, the year of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's great movie. By then, Kansas was a different place than it was when the Baum books first appeared, a place ready to bow its head to, even accept, the image of careworn, gray flatness beset with the difficulties of poverty, dust, and erratic weather. Ten years of the Great Depression and six years of Dust Bowl had taken their toll. Kansas was less a cutting edge and more a bludgeon for social reform. William Allen White ruminated about this loss of power and cultural distinctiveness as early as 1934, in a magazine article entitled "Just Wondering?"

Coincidentally, in 1939, Dr. Karl Menninger wrote "Bleeding Kansans" for the *Kansas Magazine*. He speculated that Kansans

> have gone off the deep end with desperate seriousness, and in so doing earned for themselves the name of being a humorless, puritanical people, incapable of joy and grudging in their attitude towards those happier than themselves.
>
> This is not a pretty reputation and naturally one shrinks from accepting this description of oneself and his friends and neighbors. Oddly enough, however, we do accept it almost unanimously and meekly endure the

> opprobrium and ridicule of other states. This I believe to be due to a humility and self-distrust so great as to be crippling to our energies.

Dorothy never experienced self-distrust in Baum's books. She was proud of Kansas. But the movie image survives, hitting home for a people who, as Menninger also wrote, "had an ascetic disapproval of joy or anything that would make it appear that we were a happy, progressive, successful state."

Menninger's analysis helps explain why the MGM movie had such an effect on Kansas and Kansans: it hit home, but not immediately. Although successful in first release, the film was not shown again until a celebrated re-release in 1949. A 1955 showing was unsuccessful, and in 1956, the rights sold to CBS, it appeared for the first time on national television, the first of over twenty-five showings over the last thirty years. *The Wizard of Oz* has been seen by more people than any other movie. It is a part of the national culture, part of America's sense of self, and of Kansas.

Baum would have been celebrating in the late 1950s and early 1960s when the reprinted books with their serendipitous television/film tie-in insured his American fairy tale's endurance in the national mind.

It also insured a Kansas image, one based on the book and movie. During the 1950s, Kansas was starting to look closely at itself. Dwight Eisenhower was in the White House. William Inge's Kansas plays were top draw on Broadway. At home, Kansas was between centennial celebrations, territorial (1954) and statehood (1961). It is no wonder Kansans were self-conscious and began reacting to and exploiting the Oz image.

A dual image emerges: first, that Kansans are innocent, virginal, and wide-eyed in the face of anything exotic—hence the most quoted line from the movie, "Gee, Toto, I don't think we're in Kansas anymore"; second, that Kansas is *not* Oz and is, in fact, the opposite—a bleak, harsh, flat, boring land from which anyone would do well to be removed, even by a tornado. In both cases, Kansans are the butt of jokes: on a postcard from a San Francisco gay leather bar, Dorothy utters her famous line to Toto; her innocence and love for home are questioned by T-shirts that read, "Dear Aunt Em, Hate you, Hate Kansas, Taking the dog"; and there is the postcard from the Motel of Oz, Emerald City, that reads, "Dear Dorothy, Sorry about last night. Hope

you will still respect us in the morning. Scarecrow, Tin Man, Lion." The image of landscape appears in a T-shirt cartoon by Guindon of a dumpy bag lady with a black dog in her shopping bag on a brick road leading to nowhere. The simple caption says: "Kansas, gateway to Oz."

This leads to the campaign designed to exploit Kansas' Oz fame, mounted by the then Kansas Department of Economic Development: the slogan, "Kansas, Land of Ah's"; its purpose, "To dispel the image of the State of Kansas as dry, flat and boring in the minds of Kansans and potential tourists and tour companies." The KDED initiative was both well received and highly criticized. Geared at first to Kansas residents, it confused people about whether Kansas was or was not Oz. Kansas was both "over the rainbow" and "home." When the nation sniffed out the campaign, Kansas was upbraided in a *Wall Street Journal* article which could not understand why Kansans would take the most negative association, their albatross of the past thirty years, and use it to promote the state. In the *Journal*'s opinion, the campaign could only reinforce the dual images: that Kansans are naive, wide-eyed hicks and Kansas is a place to escape from. From inside the state came similar complaints. Kansas had better images to promote. Reminding people of the Oz image could only hurt Kansas. But many Kansans put bumper stickers on their cars and appreciated the pun. The legislature designated U.S. 54 to be "The Yellow Brick Road," but stopped short of funding the highway signs to christen the route. Recently, the "Land of Ah's" slogan was dropped in favor of "Ah Kansas!" Asked about the campaign, Cathy Kusick of the Kansas Department of Commerce said that it was better received than not, and that Kansans seem more disturbed by the Kansas image projected by *The Wizard of Oz* than non-Kansans, who see it simply as an image, rather than a slur.

Kansans both love and hate the Oz image in the ascetic, self-denying way Dr. Karl Menninger analyzes. Kansans do not want to enjoy themselves, to find the positive image, and need *The Wizard of Oz* exactly so that they can complain about it and embrace it furiously at the same time. Kansans also want to claim their innocence and deny it at the same time. Kansans want to live in Kansas, but they also want everybody to know how hard it is. That is just like Kansans—they have had the same relationship to alcohol and its prohibition all these years and, as Menninger points out, to most other pleasures, too. Per-

haps Kansans need to be psychoanalyzed to get over this great schism in their personality.

Ironically, in the recent Disney movie, *Return to Oz*, Dorothy is seen as a very disturbed little girl and is taken to an electric healer, who promises Aunt Em he will drain the excess electrical currents out of her head and make it so she does not dream about Oz anymore. He looks very Freudian—short beard and pipe—and Dorothy escapes just in time, when a thunderstorm cuts the power of this doctor's terrible machine, and the subsequent flood carries her to Oz. In *Return to Oz*, Kansas is bleak, but the new Oz is worse. The talking chicken, Billina, says, "If this is Oz, I'll take my chances in Kansas."

It would be nice to enjoy Kansas *and* Oz, at the same time, for Kansans to be at home with what they are, rather than to complain about how others see them. After all, it is others who have been reinterpreting Oz. Kansans have only been reacting. They steam when people in New York ask them how Dorothy is, if their dog is named Toto, or if they have an Aunt Em. Kansans have been trying to control the Oz image rather than trying to understand, appreciate, and reinterpret it and its part in Kansas culture.

Kansans should remember that Baum himself was ambivalent about the Great Plains. He tried to live there and failed. Yet he returned for the setting of his best novel. Perhaps Baum needed only a gray contrast to the beautiful, colorful, water Oz. Perhaps, too, he was examining the brains, heart, and courage it takes to survive the Great Plains and Oz. This leaves readers with Dorothy—more the center of the book than either of the landscapes. One cannot think of a better representative for Kansas, considering her behavior after she kills the witch:

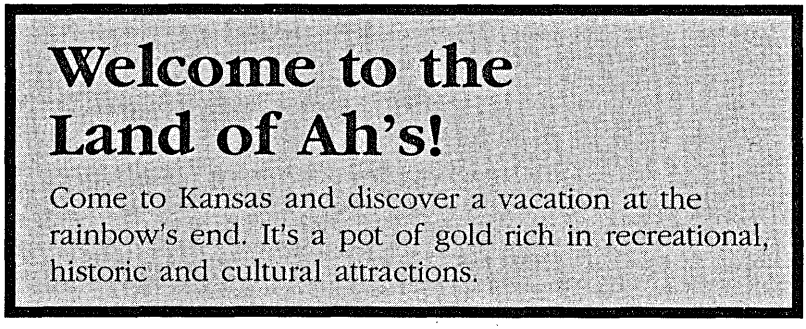
> . . . the Witch fell down in a brown, melted, shapeless mass and began to spread over the clean boards of the kitchen floor. Seeing that she had really melted away to nothing, Dorothy drew another bucket of water and threw it over the mess. She then swept it all out the door. After picking out the silver shoe, which was all that was left of the old woman, she cleaned and dried it with a cloth, and put it on her foot again. Then, being at last free to do as she chose, she ran out to the courtyard to tell the Lion that the Wicked Witch of the West had come to an end, and that they were no longer prisoners in a strange land.

Later, Dorothy explains again her desire to return to Kansas:

> "My greatest wish now," she added, "is to get back to Kansas, for Aunt Em will surely think something dreadful has happened to me, and that will make her put on mourning; and unless the crops are better this year than they were last I am sure Uncle Henry cannot afford it."

Dorothy is loyal, logical, considerate, practical, sympathetic, straightforward, strong. She is unafraid to show her anger when necessary, and when she does, she finds positive results: Dorothy exposes the lion for a coward and melts the Wicked Witch of the West. She solves problems, moves steadily ahead no matter the odds, and, most important, she triumphs.

Kansans might not always appreciate Baum for choosing Kansas as the setting for *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. But they should at least appreciate that Baum also gave them Dorothy, a person strong enough, with enough brains, heart, and courage to endure the bleak and forbidding Kansas he created. He also gave us a big portion of Kansas folklore, and a genuine part of the Kansas and American mind.



The images of Oz sell postcards, t-shirts, mugs, and posters. Oz bumper stickers entice tourists to come to Kansas.

Suggested Readings

Flentje, H. Edward, ed. *Kansas Policy Choices*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1986.

Harder, Marvin A., ed. *Politics and Government in Kansas: Selected Essays*. Topeka, KS: University of Kansas Capitol Complex Center, 1989.

Parker, Tony. *Bird, Kansas*. New York: Alfred Knopf, 1989.

Shortridge, James R. "The Vernacular Middle West," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 75, no. 1 (1985): 48–57.

Williams, Burton J. "Kansas: A Conglomerate of Contradictory Conceptions," *Heritage of the Great Plains* 19, no. 3 (Summer 1986): 3–11.

Kansas History and Culture Internet Resources

http://ink2.ink.org/
Kansas' official homepage. Information on state agencies, legislature, professional associations, business, and education.

http://www.ukans.edu/~kuinfo/kscities.html
University of Kansas Information Center site. Links to sites on cities and counties in Kansas.

http://lawlib.wuacc.edu/washlaw/kansas/kansas.html
Washburn University Law Library's Kansas Web site. Links to sites with information on Kansas history, educational institutions, cities, business, entertainment, and special interest groups.

http://history.cc.ukans.edu/heritage/kshs/kshs1.html
Kansas State Historical Society. An award-winning site. Links to resources for researching Kansas history, Kansas State Historical Society publications, and Kansas historical sites.

http://calcite.rocky.edu/octa/octahome.htm
Oregon-California Trails Association. Well-researched and constructed site. Includes links to emigrants, publications, preservation, education, tourism, genealogy, and trail facts, maps, stories, graves, and photos.

http://history.cc.ukans.edu/heritage/research/sft/sftrail-2.html
Santa Fe Trail site. Valuable links to the trail's history and literature and to other Kansas historical sites.

http://cei.haag.umkc.edu/history/resource/kcpage1.htm
Kansas City regional history homepage created by UMKC. Useful resources on Kansas City, including census data and railroad history.

http://skyways.lib.ks.us/kansas/
Award-winning site of the Kansas State Library's Internet system, Blue Skyways. Extensive information about Kansas communities, education, government, and libraries. Unique resources including the Kansas Constitution, state publications, and home pages for government agencies, libraries, schools, and communities statewide.

http://www.fn.net/~howell/history/index.html
A partner of the Kansas State Library's site. Links to Kansas historical sites by categories. Information about Kansas communities, counties, history, poetry, and museums.

http://history.cc.ukans.edu/heritage/abilene/ikectr.html
Information on the Eisenhower Presidential Library.

http://sunsite.utk.edu/Civil-War/
Award-winning Civil War site. Comprehensive resources on various aspects of the Civil War, including some Kansas-related sites.

http://wsrv.clas.virginia.edu/~tsawyer/HNS/Kansas/kansas.html
University of Virginia site on "Kansas Territory: Crucible of American Experience."

http://www.nps.gov/brvb/
National Park Service page on Brown v. The Topeka Board of Education. Extensive background material on "Kansas and the African-American Public School Experience, 1855–1955" and descriptions of corresponding cases.

http://www.library.csi.cuny.edu/westweb/
West Web, a city university of New York site. Interesting links on the history and culture of the American West.

http://www.emporia.edu/S/www/cgps/grplsst.htm#HERITAGE
Emporia State University's Great Plains Studies site. Good links to other sites.

http://www.emporia.edu/socsci/journal/main.htm
Emporia State University *Teaching History* site. Helpful links to resources for teaching history.

http://www/nara.gov/education/classrm.html
National Archives and Records Administration site. Digital Classroom links provide resources and activities for educators and students.

http://www.wuacc.edu/home/public/zzcwcks/cks.html
Washburn University's Kansas Studies site. Links to resources on Kansas literature, history, movies, radio, and local information.

http://www.cc.ukans.edu/carrie/kancoll/
Kansas Collection, University of Kansas. Links to full texts of writings by Kansans of the mid-nineteenth century and brief descriptions of those works.

http://history.cc.ukans.edu/heritage/heritage_main.html
Kansas Heritage Center for Family and Local History site. Interesting links to Old West Kansas and Kansas prairie sites.

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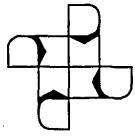
Paul K. Stuewe, a native Kansan, teaches history and government at Lawrence High School. He is a member of the executive board of the Kansas State Historical Society and gives many lectures and tours on Kansas history.



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