

AN INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD SHERIDAN

Interviewer: Jewell Willhite

Oral History Project

K.U. Retirees' Club

University of Kansas

RICHARD SHERIDAN

B.S., Commerce, Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, 1940

M.S., Education, University of Kansas, 1947

Ph.D., Economic History,

London School of Economics and Political Science, 1951

Service at the University of Kansas

Instructor 1947-1948

Assistant Professor, 1952-1957

Associate Professor, 1957-1963

Professor, 1963

Emeritus, 1988

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- Q. I am speaking with Richard B. Sheridan, professor emeritus of economics at the University of Kansas, who retired in 1988. We are in Lawrence, Kansas, on August 6, 1991. Where were you born and in what year?
- A. Emporia, Lyon County, Kansas, on February 10, 1918, the birthday of William Allen White, a local editor, fifty years apart.
- Q. What are your parents' names?
- A. Bert and Olive. Her maiden name was Davis.
- Q. What was their educational background?
- A. Both were born and raised on farms in Lyon County. Before her marriage to my father, my mother taught country school near Emporia. She had a teacher's certificate. She took some courses at what was then the Kansas Normal School, now Emporia State University. My father graduated from Emporia High School and took some short vocational courses at what was then the Kansas State Agricultural and Mechanical College, now KSU at Manhattan. He was employed as a salesman the greater part of his adult life at a hardware store in Emporia.
- Q. Did you have brothers and sisters?
- A. Yes. One brother and two sisters. My brother is a KU graduate of 1947 in mechanical engineering. My two sisters graduated from Kansas colleges, one at Emporia and the other at Friends University in Wichita. They both were teachers.

Three of the four of us were teachers.

Q. What were their names?

A. My brother's name was Walter, my older sister Lillian, younger sister Elaine.

Q. You grew up in Emporia then.

A. Yes.

Q. Was William Allen White the editor when you were there?

A. I grew up reading his paper after I got to high school, along with the Kansas City Star and Times. I met him occasionally. The route I walked to school was the route he sometimes walked home. His home was several blocks inside the city. We were just outside across the KATY railroad tracks. He was very genial, and he hailed everyone he met, whether he knew them or not. I was the recipient of his greeting one time when we crossed on the sidewalk. I met him coming home. His cook and chauffeur, a lady, would drive the Packard car a block or so behind in case he got tired. He was getting along in years. He died around 1944 when I was in military service. My mother sent me the newspaper. So he was quite an influence. I was too young to know him personally. I heard him talk at some of the college events. He came into the hardware store sometimes and said hello to everybody. Everybody knew him.

Q. Emporia was a small town then, wasn't it?

A. About 12,000 or 13,000. Lawrence wasn't much bigger.

Q. What elementary school did you attend?

A. I went to the training school. It was a laboratory school for

Kansas State Teachers College. I facetiously say I was a guinea pig for the teacher trainees at the college and had professors as the main teachers. I had some very excellent teachers, Miss Humble, the science teacher; Miss Geoble, the geography teacher; Miss Franz, the history teacher; Miss Strause, the music teacher. We had home gardens and school gardens.

Q. Oh, you did? This was part of your schooling that you learned to garden?

A. Yes. We had all the college facilities, including the shops for woodworking, metal working, electricity, you name it. We had the gymnasium. One day a week we had swimming. We had playing fields. We had coaches in training, former sergeants in the World War I army. My mother valued education highly. Otherwise we would have gone to country school. We lived just outside the city limits. My dad didn't make all that much money. Paying tuition for four children was something of a burden, although today it wouldn't seem to amount to much. It was something they had to budget for, along with tithing at the church we attended.

Q. Which church was that?

A. First Friends. My family are Quakers. Religion played a large part in their lives, especially that of my mother. Most of our social life centered around the church until we got up to high school and college age. My brother and I worked for relatives on farms in the wheat harvest, in the corn fields.

Then in high school I started working part time in the hardware store and continued through college. It was a big help that I lived at home.

Q. When you were in high school, did you go to public school?

A. Yes. I went to the training school for kindergarten and the first eight grades. I went to Emporia Junior High for the ninth grade and across the street to Emporia High School for the 10th, 11th and 12th.

Q. Did you ever belong to any groups, such as the Boy Scouts?

A. No, I wasn't much of a joiner and I'm still not. At church I was in Christian Endeavor. We had a church basketball and softball team. Quakers are pacifists, and there was too much of a paramilitary image attached to the Boy Scout movement then.

Q. I see.

A. I later had qualms of conscience when I went into the military service.

Q. What were some of your favorite classes in high school?

A. I liked the social sciences, history and government, woodworking and music. I was not too much interested in science and math. I wasn't too proficient in English then. I had some good teachers, but they marked up my essays and that kind of discouraged me. I didn't learn to write passably until a summer school class I took at K.S.T.C. from a visiting professor after I graduated from Emporia. Then up here I did much better scholastically after the war than before. I went

out for track in college and lettered running mostly the two mile.

Q. Were you involved in track in high school?

A. Yes. I was too small for major sports. I thought I had to make some mark in track. My brother played on the KU football team for several years before he went into the service.

Q. Do you remember high school teachers who were influential?

A. There was a Miss Surplice, a biology teacher. I made a notebook with cross sections of flowers. I did well there. Other teachers I liked were George Lodle, Alfred D. Smith, and Anita B. Rice. In history, I especially liked the Fridays when we had current events. I got good marks on that. I was a good speller. In composition, well, I've made up for it.

Q. Were you involved in any other extracurricular activities?

A. In high school I was in Hi-Y, band and football. In college I was a member of the Commerce Club. When I was in high school, I had chores to do at home, chickens, a garden. We had a big vegetable garden and a jersey cow. I had to milk the cow and feed the chickens, gather the eggs, various chores.

Q. When did you graduate from high school?

A. In 1936. In 1990 I went to my high school 54th and my college 50th reunions. There was a big reunion with several high school and college classes together. They rented the Holiday Inn, which would accommodate a large number. I have cousins

that I meet only at the high school reunions.

Q. You had other relatives living in town?

A. We had a cousinhood living just outside the city. It was originally a Quaker settlement called Lakeview Heights. It wasn't anything for status.

Q. This was during the midst of the Depression then. How did the Depression affect you?

A. Well, my Dad's employment was pretty steady. He was laid off for a few weeks. He didn't take his vacations. Maybe he was afraid of not having a job when he went back. I don't know. I remember the construction jobs for relief workers and the many tramps on the railroads.

Q. Was it always assumed that all the children would go to college?

A. Yes, I think so. In my case, it certainly was. My brother got an athletic scholarship here at KU. He put tags on cars that were parked illegally and waited tables at a fraternity, which he was later asked to join.

Q. Now, you did not go to KU as an undergraduate, is that right?

A. I went to what was then the Kansas State Teachers College.

Q. That was the one that was at Emporia.

A. Yes.

Q. You lived at home then.

A. Yes. I worked at the hardware store and went out for track and didn't have much time for other activities.

Q. What was your undergraduate major?

- A. They called it a bachelor of science in commerce. It involved business skill subjects, typing and shorthand, also accounting, economics, marketing, life insurance and business law. It was a combination of elementary economics and business, with an emphasis on teaching high school skill courses.
- Q. So you were preparing to be a business teacher?
- A. Yes, and I become one for about a year and a half.
- Q. Did you decide to go into this field mainly because the college in Emporia was there?
- A. And because jobs were hard to get if you majored in history and government. The joke was that the principal or the coach taught those easy, soft courses. So I developed the skill courses which enabled me to get a beginning job in a small high school.
- Q. Do you remember teachers from your undergraduate days?
- A. There was a Dr. Stewart Boertman and Dr. Orville Mosher in history. Another influential teacher was Ralph R. Pickett, head of the commerce department. He went later to Kentucky University. He taught life insurance. There were some pretty rigorous courses, accounting, business law and business organization, etc. I developed a fair touch typing skill which has kept me going all these years.
- Q. That's a very valuable skill, isn't it?
- A. Seldom a day goes by without banging out something on the typewriter. Upstairs I've got what I call a word processor.

It's a glorified typewriter for me to turn out smooth copy, papers, articles and books.

Q. I guess I forgot to ask if you had any honors in high school or in college as an undergraduate.

A. No. My older sister and I console ourselves by saying that we paved the way for our younger brother and sister who made the National Honor Society and all kinds of honors in high school. We had more chores at home, I guess, and didn't break into the gang that hung around the drug store and went to proms, whatever. The church had pretty narrow views about movies, smoking, parties, dancing, and jazz.

Q. They were against all those things?

A. Yes, they were teetotalers from way back. I was more influenced than my younger brother. My sister went to a church school and married a student. They are still very active in the local church southwest of Wichita. My elder sister is active.

Q. What year did you graduate as an undergraduate?

A. 1940.

Q. Then where did you go to teach?

A. I taught at Edna in Labette County in the '40-41 school year. It's a small town close to Coffeyville.

Q. You were teaching in high school?

A. Yes.

Q. What did you teach?

A. I taught typewriting, shorthand, business arithmetic. I

taught a so-called psychology course. It was more personal adjustment. I tried to tame the savages. Well, some of them were, actually. They tried to drive the teacher out. Have you ever read Dr. Arthur Hertzler's book, The Horse and Buggy Doctor? It's about a Kansas Mennonite doctor who became a professor at the KU Medical Center. He went to such a school. My mother had big bullies who came to school to drive out the teacher, and they succeeded with others but not with her. It was a rough life.

Q. And there was still some of that when you started teaching?

A. Yes. I found that I could get another job the second year. One of my track team mates in college -- we ran the two-mile together -- was principal and superintendent of the high school at Bancroft up in Nemaha County, close to the Nebraska border. It was a happier school up there. There I was able to keep discipline, whereas Edna had a ninth grade class who were terrors. I called them savages.

Q. People complain about kids in schools now, and you are saying that it was the same back then.

A. Yes, it was a tradition. John Ise taught schools where he grew up at Downs, Kansas, and he told about these bullies who would come to school after the harvest for a few weeks or months. Terms were very short in country schools, the first eight grades. I didn't teach the first eight grades. I taught high school. We had a regular terms from September through May, two semesters.

Q. When you taught in these small towns, where did you live?

A. I roomed with local families, and the dining room table would have one or two teachers along with family members. At the first place I stayed, the man and wife had two of their parents living with them. One of them was senile and babbled incoherently. They had to watch her pretty carefully. I had one room and shared the bathroom and dining room. The second place I taught was similar to that. I stayed with an aging couple. The man, when he went to town on Saturday, sometimes came home a little tipsy. I walked back and forth between where I lived and the school. I had friends among the fellow teachers. Some of us had cars, so we could take off on weekends to the bigger towns and go to movies, drink 3.2 beer for the more daring, if we thought there weren't any spies.

Q. They were very careful about what kind of lives teachers led then, weren't they?

A. Yes. They didn't like us to go off from Edna to Coffeyville where there were all kinds of "dens of iniquity."

Q. When you were teaching in the second place, it must have been when Pearl Harbor occurred.

A. Shortly before. When I was teaching at Edna, I went up to Parsons and took courses in a business school in shorthand and some other subject, and I learned about Civil Service jobs for clerk typists in Washington that paid \$1,440 a year and that looked pretty good. I was getting \$950. I took a Civil Service typing exam. I was accepted. A week or so before

Pearl Harbor I got a telegram from Washington to come back. I left my parents' home in Emporia on Pearl Harbor Sunday in my Ford coupe, '37 model. I turned on the radio and heard about Pearl Harbor while I was driving to Washington. I got back there when it was in a state of turmoil. In the office where I worked, the supervisors were so busy with meetings planning for expansion, physical and otherwise, that I became friendly with an older lady who had worked there for years, and I helped her and finally managed to keep busy.

Q. What department did you work for?

A. It was in the Quartermaster Corps of the Army.

Q. But you weren't in the Army at this time, you were a civilian employee, weren't you?

A. That's right. I was a civilian employee until the draft board in Emporia got after me. The notices came more frequently and more urgently. I had the conscientious objector problem. But I caved in to peer pressure, which I still think about. At the last minute, I guess I wanted to spite my draft board, so I enlisted in the Navy in Washington, D.C., and they gave me a typing test. I passed and they made me a yeoman third class, which is a petty officer rating. After I worked in a Navy office, I continued to live where I had been living and wore the uniform of a sailor. I learned that I could apply for a commission, which I did, and I became an ensign, a gentleman by act of Congress, they called it. They sent me out to Washington to a Navy blimp base for blimps which

patrolled up and down the West Coast after some Japanese submarines had surfaced and shot a few shells into Astoria, Oregon.

Q. You were stationed on the West Coast then.

A. Yes. I was assistant communication officer out there. I learned cryptography, somewhat on my own.

Q. That's codes, isn't it?

A. Yes. Then they sent me down to Treasure Island in San Francisco Bay to a Navy school where I learned seamanship and navigation, ordinance and gunnery, but mainly communications. From there I went to Miami, Florida, to an antisubmarine school. Again, communication was the main course of study. I was training to be a line officer. After finishing both those schools, I was ordered to Orange, Texas, where the destroyer escort I was on for two years was under construction. I was in charge of a group of chief petty officers and other petty officers. We were called the nucleus crew. We were to get the paperwork and supplies organized while the ship was under construction. It was pretty far along. The greater part of the officers and crew came from Norfolk, Virginia, just shortly before the ship was commissioned. It's a long story.

Q. What was the name of the ship?

A. The U.S.S. Kretchmer. I've been the "official" historian since our first reunion in 1988. It was named for a U.S. Navy officer who was killed in the Pacific in the early part of the

second war. Destroyers were named for officers, cruisers for cities, and battleships for states. There was once a U.S.S. Kansas.

Q. Where did this ship go? Was it in the Pacific or the Atlantic?

A. It's a pretty long story. First we went to Bermuda. We went through all kinds of training exercises. That was called shake down. Then we went to Charleston for some repairs, then down to the Caribbean where we escorted convoys between Cuba and Trinidad for several months.

Q. Were there German submarines in that area?

A. Yes.

Q. I didn't realize they were that close.

A. Yes, they made some of those islands bases, especially uninhabited islands. And they sank a lot of tankers carrying oil from Texas and Louisiana around to Bayonne, New Jersey, and East Coast ports. It was said that the burning ships would light up the darkened cities like Miami.

Q. Did you see these burning ships?

A. No. We got in rather late. The sinkings occurred mostly before we were commissioned in December of 1943. Then we went from the Caribbean to the Mediterranean escorting tankers carrying high octane aviation gasoline from Curacao in the Dutch West Indies to Naples, Italy. We made two of those runs. Then we got into North Atlantic convoy escort duty from the Brooklyn Navy Yard to United Kingdom ports. We made five

round trips convoying troops and supplies. Then after the war in Europe in 1945, we went out to the Pacific. We were at Pearl Harbor for training exercises, and then we went to the Philippines, Okinawa, and Formosa, now called Taiwan. We rescued American and British prisoners of war on Formosa at the end of the war. I got off the ship in the Philippines. The ship came around the world via Hong Kong, Singapore, Ceylon and the Mediterranean. The officers and men had a nice vacation in the Madeira Islands. The sailors all brought bottles of Madeira wine on board, which they had to dump before the ship came into Charleston, South Carolina, where the ship went into mothballs. It was recommissioned and refitted for the Cold War in the Atlantic, the missile crisis in Cuba, and the Vietnam War. We started having reunions in Emporia, Kansas, in 1988. One of my shipmates and his wife organized the first reunion in 44 years. This year it is in Omaha. A lot of us were recruited from Midwestern states. We had men from Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska and Iowa.

- Q. You said you got off the ship in the Philippines. Did you spend the remainder of the war in the Philippines?
- A. No. I came home on a troop ship from Manila to Bremerton, Washington, and took a train to Great Lakes Naval Station north of Chicago where I was relieved from active duty but was put on the reserve list. I was over in England as a graduate student during the Korean War, and I had to report in to the

American Embassy. I was afraid I was I would be called back, which would interrupt my progress toward a degree, but I wasn't. Some of my fellow officers were brought back in the service. They have gone up in rank to commander. I ended the war as a lieutenant, which is equivalent to captain in the Army. I was communications officer on the ship as well as deck officer in charge of a four-hour watch on the bridge, an open bridge in all weather, all temperatures. In Casco Bay, Maine, where we went for training, it was miserably cold.

Q. When you got out of the service then you went back to school.

A. Yes. I came home to Emporia. Just before Christmas I came up here and enrolled in the spring term as a graduate student in the School of Education.

Q. How did you happen to choose KU?

A. Well, my brother had been here, and he had sort of paved the way. Both of us were students here and received degrees in May of 1947. When I was growing up in Emporia, KU was considered sort of a tax-supported country club for the local bankers' and leading merchants' sons and daughters. We were not in that class. I felt it pretty strongly. I still do. It's something I can't get over. My wife says, "Keep quiet on that subject," but no. It's been the making or breaking of me. Anyway, my politics have been greatly influenced by my Quaker religion and radical professors at KU and London, so I'm a bleeding heart for the poor and downtrodden, the Native Americans, African Americans and all other minorities.

Q. Did you decide to get a master's in education because you intended to go on teaching?

A. Yes. I thought I could get a better high school teaching job. But I took some hard courses in the social sciences especially, price and income, public finance, history of economic thought, economics, advanced principles, etc. I took all of John Ise's courses that he taught at the senior graduate level. He was the leading economist on the faculty here for about 40 years. I audited money and banking, which I had had at Emporia. I took several economic history courses because they linked economics together with history and government. I took political science courses and labor economics, comparative economic systems. Among the professors from whom I learned the most and liked the most are John Ise, Richard Howey, Hilden Gibson, Ernest Bayles, Eldon Fields, Walter Sandelius, Ted Nelson and John Nelson. I took an American Literature course from John Nelson. He was long-time dean of the Graduate School here. He encouraged me. When I'd go to enroll, he'd look at my transcript and say, "Well, you're doing pretty well." He no doubt had seen my Emporia Teachers College transcript, and that wouldn't mean much here. I had to prove myself. I had the G.I. Bill. I was a plodding student who learned he could write essay exams and term papers in my economics and social sciences courses. Ernest Bayles was my professor of Modern Teaching Procedures I and II, and he was my master's thesis advisor.

Q. What did you write your thesis on?

A. Several teaching units for a Problems in Democracy course. It involved economic and political problems of the time for a high school gifted program, if it was a big enough high school. Bayles was very helpful, but quite rigorous. It wasn't easy the first time. I had to do more chapters over. I had, what do you call it, baptism of academic fire.

Q. What do you remember about KU and Lawrence when you first came here?

A. Well, Lawrence was much like Emporia, but KU was a bit bewildering. The campus buildings, timetables, schedules of classes, the variety of courses, getting from the School of Religion where I took a course over to Lindley. Richard Howey taught Price and Income and the History of Economic Thought, and I took his courses as a graduate student. We both had strong bibliophile interests. He collected books for the KU library system, rare books on economics. Many of them are over in the rare book and special collections in Spencer. Well, I remember that to make my \$75 G.I. Bill stipend go as far as possible, I lived in Spooner-Thayer Museum (now the Anthropology Museum) which had one floor converted to a dormitory. It was mostly ex-G.I.s. We had one nice Mennonite boy who had been a conscientious objector during the war. He worked in hospitals. I made some good friends. Some of them went on to do quite well. We called ourselves "museum pieces." We had a common shower and bathroom and sleeping

room with double decker war surplus bunks. There were unpainted tables for study purposes. It was very convenient to the campus, right on top of the hill. We'd go over to the Union for meals and over to the library at night if we wanted to get away from the noise in the dormitory.

Q. When did you get your master's degree?

A. In May of 1947.

Q. Did you go directly on for your Ph.D. then?

A. No, I was asked to teach here, Introductory Economics and American Economic Development, another name for American Economic History. Ted Nelson was my Economic History prof here. So I taught here in '47 and '48 and had a pretty heavy teaching load. I took some more courses, thinking I might go on for a Ph.D here. Then I applied over to London.

Q. What made you decide to go to London?

A. One of the Spooner-Thayer fellow graduate students, Stillman Vincent, had been a business school teacher. He got a master's here and went to teach at Emporia. We talked about going to foreign universities where the G.I. Bill applied. We talked quite a bit about LSE, the London School of Economics and Political Science. It is part of the University of London. I actually wrote a letter, sent for the literature and put in an application. I asked people to write recommendations. I think John Ise's recommendation was the most important one. He wrote a nationally first-rate introductory textbook in Economic Principles. I found a copy

later in a bookstore in London. So he was known abroad. I don't know if any other profs I asked to write recommendations were known over there. The second time around they accepted me. I went over in September of 1948 after I had taught here a year and I taught down at Emporia Teachers the summer term, Introductory Principles, Applied Economics and Money and Banking. I was teaching intensively with new textbooks and new preparations. Fortunately, at Emporia I lived at home. I didn't have to worry about living facilities.

Q. So you wanted to see more of the world again?

A. Yes. My wife thinks I have itchy feet still. I've been back the last two years going to conferences and presenting papers.

Q. What was London like when you went back? Had it recovered from the war?

A. No. I saw London when we took convoys over. Those buzz bombs came over and blasted areas. They were rocket bombs which were launched from across the channel. They were so terrible. Before that wave after wave of Nazi bombers blitzed London. They concentrated on the East End where they hit the docks and the railroad terminals. All the area around St. Paul's Cathedral was just leveled. Pious religious people say it was divine intervention that saved St. Paul's, Christopher Wren's great architectural achievement. Schools had been moved out, grade schools, high schools, colleges, universities, the British Museum. They were back but had only been back for a year or two when I got there in '48. I learned to live

cheaply there as I had previously at Spooner-Thayer, but even more so because they had rationing and price controls.

Q. Did you live with English people?

A. I lived in what you would call a bed-and-breakfast, "digs," or rooming house. I had a single room and a communal bathroom and dining facilities. I paid rent for my room. I paid for big copper pennies to put in the gas meter. I paid for breakfast and a Sunday meal. I turned my ration book over to the landlady, who was the cook and housekeeper. Sunday we would have a joint. When I told this to my students, they couldn't understand. They laughed about it, and it turned out they thought I was smoking marijuana. A joint was a cut of meat, which was rationed, as were other foodstuffs, clothing and appliances.

Q. Yes, I knew what that was.

A. I was able to woo my wife. She was a fellow student.

Q. Was she an American or English?

A. English. Once English, always English, they say.

Q. Was she a graduate student or undergraduate?

A. Undergraduate.

Q. What was her field of study?

A. She was studying economics preparing to be a secondary teacher. Then she went from LSE to the Institute of Education, which is a one-year teacher training school in London. I persuaded her to come over after I returned and got a job.

Q. What is her name?

A. Audrey. Her family name is Porter.

Q. When you were working on your Ph.D., who was your major professor?

A. F. J. (Jack) Fisher. He was then a reader, the equivalent of an associate professor. He later became a professor. Fisher's mentor was Professor Richard H. Tawney, who was retired from LSE but continued to offer a seminar, of which I was a member. He was on the examining committee for my degree. Tawney was a Christian Socialist and an economic historian of the liberal-left bent. He wrote some classic books, including Religion and the Rise of Capitalism. He believed that capitalism and the Christian religion are generally incompatible; I still think so. Communism (or Marxism) was a breakaway from the terrible conditions and hardships the workers underwent during the Industrial Revolution in England.

Q. Was socialism popular in England after the war?

A. Oh yes. They were the government from 1945 when they voted Churchill out and Attlee in (Americans couldn't understand that). Churchill came back after Attlee and several other Labour Party leaders. And then before Thatcher, they went back and forth several times in and out.

Q. What did you do your dissertation on as a Ph.D.?

A. It's called "The Sugar Trade in the British West Indies, 1650-1756," with special reference to the island of Antigua. I

expanded it after much further research and published it as a book, which, in turn, resulted in spinoffs in the form of numerous articles in learned journals.

Q. Were you interested in the West Indies because you had visited them during the war?

A. Partly. I needed a dissertation topic. I wanted something that had to do with the Old World and the New World. I didn't go back to the West Indies, however, until '62 when I got a Fulbright and went to Jamaica and took the family.

Q. What year did you get your Ph.D. in?

A. 1951.

Q. Then you were married after that.

A. In 1952. Audrey came over in October after KU had commenced, and we were married one weekend in Emporia. Our honeymoon was virtually nil. I was back in school on Monday. I tried to keep it quiet, but in one class the news somehow got out. My face turned red. They sang at the end of the class, "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow."

Q. Where did you and she live here after you were married?

A. We were fortunate. John Nelson, who was the dean, knew a Dr. Sudler who had quite a nice house close to the campus. He had a garage apartment. It had been an old barn on a farm, a stone building. He and his wife had lived in it while their home was being built. It had all the conveniences and especially a \$50 a month rent. I could walk back and forth. Audrey finished her degree here and later went on for a

master's degree. She's a reading teacher and teaches at India School, before they consolidated, India-Kaw Valley. She's been an elementary school teacher for some years.

Q. Have you had children?

A. Yes. Richard is in his 30s. He has a bachelor's in General Studies and a master's in Media Arts from KU. Margaret finished her bachelor's and made Phi Beta Kappa in Anthropology at KU just this last spring.

Q. When you came back, what were you teaching at KU?

A. I taught mostly Introductory Economics and American Economic Development. Later I inherited John Ise's Land Economics, which now would be called environmental economics. Then I developed some senior graduate courses. One I called Economic History of the Caribbean Region. The other one was The Economic History of Peasant and Plantation Society, which enabled me to marry my research and publication interests with my teaching. Well, I never had very large classes. My bread and butter class was Land Economics. I taught it every semester for some years. I forgot to mention that I taught two Economic History of Europe classes, mostly British history.

Q. What building were you in?

A. I started out with an office in the basement of Strong and taught in Strong and the temporary buildings behind Strong, long before Spencer was built. There had been a V-6 program training supply officers for the Navy here. We took over some

of the buildings and part of the quonset hut. I worked part-time when I first got back from London in the Bureau of Business Research, and my first book was the Economic History of South Central Kansas, down to the 20th century. I was half-time there and half-time teaching.

Q. When was that book published?

A. In 1956.

Q. Who was chairman of the department?

A. Leonard Axe was then, but when I taught for a year before I went over to London, Frank Stockton was dean. I was the junior colleague of some of the profs I had taken courses from, Ise, Galliardo, Malone, and Ted Nelson. I shared an office with John Ise in 1954-55, the last year he taught. At that time economics and business were under the same dean. Then later the college broke off because I think there was a squabble between Axe and Chancellor Murphy. Axe was made head of administration over in Topeka when they reorganized the state financial system. By that time Axe was in the Department of Administration and later went down to Pittsburg State as president. Leland Pritchard, from whom I had audited Money and Banking, became our first chairman in the college. We were in the same building as the business school, but we were part of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences after we moved down to Summerfield from Strong.

Q. You said your research interests included Jamaican economic history and that you spent a year there on a Fulbright.

- A. I collected research materials and started to revise my dissertation, which finally came out in 1974 as a book, Sugar and Slavery, an economic history of the British West Indies from 1623 to 1775.
- Q. That sounds like an interesting topic. Were you discussing the economic implications of slavery then?
- A. Yes, imperial regulation, consumption, production, trade, finance, shipping, the whole works. North Americans sent down fish and flour and all kinds of food and lumber products and returned with molasses, rum, sugar, coffee, etc. Then I got interested in Scotland and Ireland because they were subcolonies of Britain at one time.
- Q. It must have been fun to live in a tropical place like that.
- A. Yes and no. It was hard on the family. My wife could tell the story a lot better than I can because I would take off in the little car that we had to do my research. The archives were in Spanish Town near Kingston. She was left with our son who started school there -- he went to a private school -- and our daughter, who was a baby. It is so difficult to live in a poor country, a tropical country, if you don't have servants. We finally had to get some. We had thought we'd get along without, as we have always done in Lawrence.
- Q. I suppose you didn't have the things you had here, such as a washing machine and refrigerator.
- A. That's right. We did have a refrigerator, but there were many power outages. Food would spoil. There was no hot water

heater. We had to hire a laundress, a gardener and part-time cook and housekeeper. Sometimes they fought among themselves. Some were East Indian extraction and others were African. They wanted us to employ their unemployed relatives.

Q. Did they speak differently?

A. They spoke patois or Creole. Do you know about that?

Q. I have been to Trinidad. They speak English, but not really.

A. I know. I taught there.

Q. Was that after you had been to Jamaica?

A. Yes. I've been in the West Indies teaching or doing research on three occasions. The Fulbright was in '52-53. I was visiting professor at the College of the Virgin Islands in '71. I went down alone for the spring term and took the family in the fall. Then my last tour in the islands was in the spring of 1987. I was visiting prof at the University of the West Indies at St. Augustine, Trinidad. Do you know that?

Q. I was just down there for a week when my husband was there on business. It's been some time ago.

A. Port of Spain, I suppose.

Q. It was one of the bigger places. You mentioned two books. Were there any other publications you wanted to mention?

A. Yes. I have some pride in authoring. The Economic History of South Central Kansas came out in 1956 after I had been back four years working part-time as a teacher and part-time in the Bureau of Business Research. I had full-time in the summer to work on that and part-time during the school year. Then there

was Sugar and Slavery, the one based on my London dissertation. I worked off and on for 25 years on that. After that I worked about ten years on Doctors and Slaves (1985). One led to the other.

Q. Was this about doctors who worked with slaves?

A. Yes. Both black and white doctors, mainly white doctors who went from England and Scotland out to the islands to the sugar plantations. They had hospitals on the plantations. They had black nurses called doctoresses. They were paramedics.

Q. And then you have a book called Chapters in Caribbean History.

A. Yes. It is eventually supposed to be part of a big three-volume general history. A lot of people will contribute to it.

Q. Then you've written articles on the history of Kansas and Missouri.

A. Yes. Of my 45 articles and book chapters, 41 are concerned with the history of the British West Indies, North America and Great Britain, and the other four with Kansas and Missouri history. This is apart from the four books we discussed.

Q. You've done quite a lot of writing, haven't you?

A. Quite a bit in a variety of journals and books. I've gone to professional meetings and presented papers which have been published in the proceedings. I'm still at it. I guess Land Economics and John Ise led me to Kansas history. His classic book is Sod and Stubble.

Q. You've got quite a list.

A. "From Chattel to Wage Slavery in Jamaica" is the most recent. I went to a conference in London last May and presented that paper. I tell my wife I've got my "marching orders" from the editor on how to revise it for publication.

Q. What about "Eric Williams and Capitalism and Slavery."

A. I went all the way to Bellagio, North Italy, north of Milan in the Alps on Lake Como, to a conference. It was published, together with other papers in a book entitled British Capitalism and Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams. Williams was an Afro-Caribbean native and historian who became prime minister of Trinidad and Tobago. He was a pioneer historian who said the wealth of the West Indies made England rich and arrogant. I have picked up some of these attitudes, but I have to be careful. My wife is still a British citizen.

Q. I see.

A. I have a variety of interests. I found records about the maroons who were slaves who ran away and founded villages in the rough mountainous areas on an African basis. I got interested in the buccaneers, Sir Henry Morgan in particular, who stole gold and silver from the Spaniards, who, in turn, stole it from the Native Americans. I wrote an article about Captain William Bligh of Mutiny on the Bounty fame. He made two trips. The first was aborted because of the mutiny, but on the second voyage he brought breadfruit from Tahiti to Jamaica to feed the slaves at a time when feeding costs were high. The second voyage was in 1793. Another article is

concerned with the American Revolution and its aftermath, when, as the result of trade restrictions and a series of devastating hurricanes, some 15,000 slaves died of malnutrition and disease in Jamaica. Odds and ends like that make me sort of an oddball around this place, I suppose.

Q. They sound like interesting topics.

A. Well, I get interested.

Q. Have you ever been involved in administration?

A. No, I've avoided it.

Q. You've been on university committees, I suppose.

A. I have. I might say I got my fill of administration in the Navy. I was communications officer on the ship. I've been on committees but I never volunteer.

Q. Do you remember some of them?

A. There was a task force to reorganize Black Studies, now the Department of African and African-American Studies. I was on the committee of the Organization of Tropical Studies. Some of the scientists were active in that, Bill Argersinger and Ken Armitage. I was also on the Search Committee for chairman of the Department of History, on the Committee on Promotion of the Department of Economics and the College Planning Committee and the Library Committee. I've been on quite a number of Ph.D. committees over the years.

Q. Did you have quite a few graduate students?

A. A fair number. I had graduate students in economics but more so from the history department, from geography, occasionally

journalism, political science, the School of Education and sociology. I've got a list of students I've had: Bill Tuttle, Jr. Federal Reserve Board member Wayne Angell did a Ph.D. in economics. Then there is Richard Lobdell who teaches up in Manitoba at the university. Glenn Miller is over at the Federal Reserve Bank in Kansas City. He did a Harvard Ph.D. Luis Major was a Cuban who came to the U.S. and has a degree from K.U. He's done well in the business world. Ron Kuby is a lawyer for Mr. Kunstler, the lawyer who takes all those hard cases, civil rights, etc. He's been on television. Angus Wright teaches at Sacramento State College in California. He's an authority on environmental history, especially in Mexico. Terry Harmon lives in Lawrence. He is assistant state archivist over in Topeka. Laird Okie teaches history at Ottawa U. where Wayne Angell taught economics before Senator Dole elevated him to the Federal Reserve Board in Washington. Virgil Dean is probably my last Ph.D. He's now editing the Kansas History journal at the state historical library. Dennis Highberger took land economics. He was president of the student body at KU. Bob Billings. I don't need to mention his connection with Lawrence, do I?

Q. You mean the builder?

A. Yes. He took Introductory Economics from me. Some other outstanding students were Frank Cross, Jr., Jon Kepler, Morgan Williams, Darrel Cady, John Caldwell, George Betz, Bob Keeny, Roderick McDonald and David Miller.

Q. You said you had made other trips back to London after you finished your Ph.D. What were you doing when you took these trips? Were you teaching or doing research?

A. Researching materials for articles and books. The two latest trips were in 1990 and 1991. I made several trips to Jamaica for research purposes besides teaching. I had four sabbaticals during my tenure at KU, three of them in England.

Q. I see that you were also consulting editor for the Journal of Caribbean History.

A. I am now writing a report on a master's thesis from the University at Jamaica. I am one of the external examiners. They have both internal and external examiners, the British system.

Q. I see. How did the events of the late '60s and '70s affect you and your department?

A. My wife didn't want me to go back to Summerfield to work nights.

Q. Did they want you to guard the building?

A. No. She thought I might get blown up because the computation center was on the ground floor and the economics office was above. They did bomb the stairwell at the east end of Summerfield. We heard sirens every night when it got intense, fire, police, ambulance. I went to some of the meetings, especially the all-university daytime convocation in the stadium when Chancellor Chalmers was on the playing field alone addressing students and faculty through a public address

system. He was later joined by faculty activists, one was Larry Velvel, a law professor. He and other activists had an open mike to address the big crowd in the stadium. The big question was should we close KU down early or go to the end of the term, and we voted to cut short and give the students three options. One was to give them the grade on the books at that time, the other was to let them take the final later, and the third was some special arrangement for completing their course work. Most of my students opted for the grade they had on the books. They had other more pressing courses to think about. The Kansas Union burning, I remember that. Activists threw rocks at the military science building, which is half way up the hill to Malott Hall, breaking windows. I never was much of an activist, committee man or joiner. I had students who kept me informed as to what was going on. It was a turbulent time.

Q. I see that you have listed some of your honors: The National Institute of Health Grant from the National Library of Medicine for research on medical and demographic aspects of slavery. Then you were the North Carolina bicentennial article contest winner for one of your articles about a colonial governor. You are listed in Contemporary Authors 1974, Who's Who in America 1986-87 and Who's Who in the World 1991-1992.

A. Yes.

Q. You have the Edward Langdorf award for excellence in writing

Kansas History from the Kansas Historical Society. What writing was that?

A. An article I wrote, "From Slavery in Missouri to Freedom in Kansas," is the short title. I recently gave a short talk based on that when the Kansas Historical Society met here in Lawrence back in June. I'm doing research on Quantrill and the Lawrence massacre or raid.

Q. Do you belong to professional organizations?

A. Not much any more. I used to belong to the Economic History Association, the Economic History Society, just a few now.

Q. Did you ever hold offices on the national or state level?

A. No. I wasn't interested. I put my research and publications pretty much on a par with teaching. I never felt I slighted teaching, and the longer I taught, the more I felt my research and publications were interrelated with what I was teaching, especially courses on the Caribbean.

Q. Have you been involved in community activities?

A. Not much. I belong to the Douglas County Historical Society. My wife and I give financial support to what we regard as worthy causes, local, state, national and international. These include the church we belong to, Salvation Army, community fund drive, the Shelter, Coalition for Peace and Justice, Kansas Committee for the Humanities, Kansas Natural Resources Council, the Land Institute, American Friends Service Committee, Oxfam America and others.

Q. You've talked about the fact that you are still writing. Do

you continue to be involved with the university?

A. Nothing direct. I have given one public lecture and a class lecture since I retired. There are some people, faculty and others, with whom I have common interests, especially librarians. Jim Helyar's a Brit. He and his wife have been good friends with me and my wife. He helped design the cover of The History of the Kretchmer. He does graphics. He put on a display of some of my publications the spring I retired. At the reception for me at Spencer Research Library, some of my publications and books were in the display cases.

Q. What kinds of things have you been doing since you retired? You said something about liking to travel.

A. But I always combine work with pleasure. The work ethic won't let me take a vacation just for enjoyment.

Q. You mean you research something when you go somewhere.

A. Yes, or I go to a meeting and do similar things. Last year I went to the annual meeting of the Society for Caribbean Studies in Britain, that's interdisciplinary. I was a spectator. I went to meet some old friends. Richard Lobdell presented a paper on hurricanes in the West Indies. He married a Jamaican girl. This year I went to the conference at London on "From Chattel to Wage Slavery in the Americas and Africa." I gave a paper on Jamaica. This has kept me busy on my word processor.

Q. Did you recently do this history of your ship?

A. I did that a year or so ago for our third anniversary in Los

Vegas, that place where I said I'd never go. I guess the hotel rates are cheap in order to attract gamblers. We wanted to draw some of the West Coast boys who were on the ship. I wrote the history for that meeting. I'm taking the second part, the history of our Pacific duty, to the meeting up in Omaha this coming October. I've revised some articles and written some new things. There's always something in the mill to justify my existence in retirement, to assuage my guilt feelings if I don't turn out something every day that might outlive me. Well, that's too grandiose.

Q. What is your assessment of KU as a university and particularly the Department of Economics?

A. I don't know much about my department. I became partly alienated quite long ago. I guess they went one way and I went the other. I more or less stayed with what I was doing. I had closer ties with people in history and African Studies. I've been most active with African Studies.

Q. Your research went in that direction then?

A. Yes. Geography, history and sociology, etc. The kind of economic history I learned and taught was kind of put on the back burner, downgraded to make room for an emphasis on statistics and "pure" theory. It's called econometric history. Younger colleagues couldn't understand what that old "duffer" was doing. I had more bookshelves and books, and they were content with textbooks and blackboards. So I had a few close friends in economics, especially those who weren't

so much in the new wave of neo this and neo that. Harry Shaffer is a good friend.

Q. I've interviewed him.

A. Good. Did you get any of this same kind of output?

Q. Well, he's a socialist.

A. I know. I am too. I call myself a Christian Socialist, partly sincere and partly to confuse people. That's a contradiction in terms for most people.

Q. But some countries call their political party that, don't they?

A. Yes, the Labour Party in Britain and some of the parties in the Scandinavian countries. It's kind of middle ground. Tawney was the leading Christian Socialist. What I like best about KU is the library. I didn't find many of my younger colleagues coming over there. The older colleagues, especially Dick Howey, devoted probably half of his time there when he was on the faculty and also in retirement. He'd get catalogs from booksellers, mostly in Europe, some outside, and he'd check holdings and he'd order. He'd use up the economics book budget, and if there were any other unexpended balances from other departments, he'd try to grab them. He built up a wonderful collection which has been admired by one of the leading Harvard librarians. This librarian came to KU and was amazed at our collection of rare books in economics and related disciplines that Howey had put together since he came on the faculty in 1929. Marion Howey, Dick's wife, was a

long-time documents librarian at KU. I used the library when I could get away from the office, classes, student appointments, committee meetings -- I never got into any department governance if I could help it. I was on the Economics promotions committee. I was more or less passive. I didn't make waves. I went on and did what I thought I could do best.

Q. Is there anything I've forgotten to ask you that I should have?

A. I don't have real hobbies, unless it would be travel, but I don't travel just for pleasure. I was on a church history committee.

Q. What church?

A. Congregational. It was my wife's church. When our kids were of preschool age, we wanted them to go to Sunday School, so I joined my wife's church. The Quakers here were divided between the real liberal, you might say leftist, hill group, Oread Quaker Meeting, and the downtown evangelical. My wife didn't feel comfortable with the hill group. On another subject, I think KU has kept up its academic side quite well. I applaud its record of turning out Rhodes, Marshall and Summerfield, etc., scholars, their great books curriculum for gifted students that used to be under George Waggoner. I was quite close to him. He once put me on a planning committee for the College. I'm afraid I wasn't too responsive, since I always carried a heavy teaching load. I taught three or four

courses, most semesters. So I tried to build bridges to other departments. I thought of myself as an interdisciplinary type of the "old school," history and social science. In the current "PC", politically correct controversy, I'm somewhere in the middle but lean toward a multicultural curriculum which derives from my interest and concern for Third World countries, especially in the Caribbean, Latin America and Africa.

Q. It's unusual to teach three or four courses a semester, isn't it?

A. It was not until the last few year that I slacked off a bit and staggered my Peasant and Plantation and Caribbean courses. I tried to get something written, at least on weekends. Maybe that's enough.

Q. Thank you very much.

A. I thank you very much for interviewing me.

A. That's fine.

CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL DATA

NAME: Richard B. Sheridan
DATE OF BIRTH: February 10, 1918
MARITAL STATUS: Married, two children

EDUCATION

B.S. Emporia Kansas State University, 1940
M.S. University of Kansas, 1947
Ph.D. London School of Economics and Political Science,
University of London, 1951

HONORS AND GRANTS

Fulbright Research Scholar, University of the West
Indies, Jamaica, 1962-63
National Institutes of Health Grant from the National
Library of Medicine (LM- 01539) for research on medical
and demographic aspects of slavery in the British West
Indies, 1973-76
North Carolina Bicentennial Article Contest winner, 1976
Listed in Contemporary Authors, 1974; Who's Who in America,
1986-87; Who's Who in the World, 1991-92.
The Edgar Langsdorf Award for Excellence in Writing Kansas History,
Kansas State Historical Society, 1989.

EXPERIENCE

United States Naval Reserve, 1942-46
Instructor in Economics, University of Kansas, 1947-48
Assistant Professor, University of Kansas, 1952-57
Associate Professor, University of Kansas, 1957-62
Professor, University of Kansas, 1963-
External Examiner in History for the University of the West
Indies
Consulting Editor, The Journal of Caribbean History
Visiting Professor, The College of the Virgin Islands, 1971
Research trips to the United Kingdom and Jamaica, 1957-58,
1969, 1970, 1973, 1974, 1977, 1979, 1980, 1981, and 1984.
Visiting Professor of History, The University of the West
Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad, Spring Term, 1987.

PAPERS PRESENTED AT PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS

- "The West India Sugar Crisis and British Slave Emancipation, 1830-1833," The Economic History Association meeting at Bloomington, Indiana September, 1961.
- "Economic and Demographic Factors in the Rise of the British Slave Trade," The South Carolina Tricentennial Commission Symposium of Scholars, Columbia, South Carolina, March, 1970.
- "The Slave Trade to Jamaica in the Eighteenth century," Rocky Mountain Social Science Association meeting at Salt Lake City, Utah, April 28, 1972.
- "The British Sugar Planters and the Atlantic World, 1763-1775," Symposium on the History of Florida and the Caribbean Region, sponsored by Florida International University, Miami Beach, Florida, May 18-20, 1972.
- "The Jamaican Slave Trade, 1730-1800: An Analysis," The Duquesne History Forum, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, November 3, 1972.
- "The Role of the Scots in the Economy and Society of the West Indies," Conference on Comparative Perspectives on Slavery in New World Plantation Societies, New York City, May 24-27, 1976.
- "The Guinea Surgeons on the Middle Passage," Pacific Coast Branch of The American Historical Association, La Jolla, California, August 17-19, 1976.
- "Slave Demography in the West Indies and the Abolition of the Slave Trade," Symposium on the Abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade, University of Aarhus, Aarhus, Denmark, October 17-19, 1978.
- "The Internal Economy of the American and West Indian Colonies, "Conference in Anglo-American Colonial History 1607-1763, St. Catherine's College, Oxford, August 1-7, 1981.
- "Biographical and Historiographical Aspects of Eric Williams and his Capitalism and Slavery Book," Conference on "Capitalism and Slavery in the British West Indies: The Contribution of Eric Williams," Bellagio, Italy, May 21-25, 1984.

PAPERS PRESENTED AT PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS (cont'd.)

"Medical and Demographic Aspects of Slavery in the British Caribbean Colonies, 1680-1834," Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association, Seattle, Washington, August 15-18, 1984.

"Medical and Demographic Aspects of Slavery in the British Caribbean Colonies, 1680-1834," The Economic History Workshop, University of Chicago, March 15, 1985.

"Changing sugar technology and the labor nexus in the British Caribbean, 1750-1900, with special reference to Barbados and Jamaica," International Congress of Americanists, Amsterdam, Holland, July 4-8, 1988.

COMMENTS ON PAPERS PRESENTED AT PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS

Commentator on three papers delivered at the "American Colonial History" session, Annual Meeting of the Economic History Association, Atlantic City, New Jersey, September 8-10, 1971.

Commentator on two papers delivered at "The Slave Trade to Colonial America: A Transatlantic Comparison" session, Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, New York, December 28-30, 1971.

Commentator on two papers delivered at "The Men of the Slave Trade" session of the Annual Meeting of the Organization of American Historians, Chicago, Illinois, April, 1973.

Commentator on two papers delivered at the "Slavery and Freedom in the Atlantic World" session, Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, Washington, D.C., December 28-30, 1976.

Commentator on two papers delivered at the Slave Revolts in the Caribbean and the United States" session, Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, New York City, December 28-30, 1979.

Commentator on draft manuscript at the "Liberty Fund Economic History Conferences," held at the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia, October 9-10, 1980.

Commentator on two papers delivered at the "Quantitative Studies in Colonial American History" session, Annual Meeting of the Social Science History Association, Bloomington, Indiana, November 4-7, 1982.

COMMENTS ON PAPERS PRESENTED AT PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS (cont'd.)

Commentator on two papers delivered at the session on "The External Slave Trade and the South Atlantic Colonies," at the annual meeting of the Southern Historical Association, Charleston, South Carolina, November 12, 1983.

PUBLIC LECTURES

The Goveia Memorial Lecture, entitled, "Why the Condition of the Slaves was 'Less Intolerable in Barbadoes, Than in the other Sugar Colonies'." The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados, May 8, 1987.

PUBLICATIONS

- "The Molasses Act and the Market Strategy of the British Sugar Planters," The Journal of Economic History, Vol. XVII, No. 1, 1957, pp. 62-83. Reprinted in Paul Goodman (ed.), Essays in American Colonial History (New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), pp. 363-381.
- "Letters from a Sugar Plantation in Antigua, 1739-1758," Agricultural History, Vol. 31, No. 3, 1957, pp. 3-23.
- "The Commercial and Financial Organization of the British Slave Trade, 1750-1807," The Economic History Review, Vol. XI, No. 2, 1958, pp. 249-263.
- "Samuel Martin, Innovating Sugar Planter of Antigua, 1750-1776," Agricultural History, Vol. 34, No. 3, 1960, pp. 126-139.
- "The British Credit Crisis of 1772 and the American Colonies," The Journal of Economic History, Vol. XX, No. 2, June, 1960, pp. 161-186. Reprinted in Thomas C. Cochran and Thomas B. Brewer (eds.), Views of American Economic Growth: The Agricultural Era, New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966) Vol. I, pp. 47-66.
- "The West India Sugar Crisis and British Slave Emancipation, 1830-1833," The Journal of Economic History, Vol. XXI, No. 4, 1961, pp. 539-551.
- "The Rise of a Colonial Gentry: A Case Study of Antigua, 1730-1775," The Economic History Review, Vol. XIII, No. 3, April, 1961, pp. 342-357.

PUBLICATIONS (cont'd.)

- "Temperate and Tropical: Aspects of European Penetration into Tropical Regions," Caribbean Studies, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1963, pp. 3-20.
- "Slavery and Antislavery Literature," Books and Libraries at the University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, vol. 2, No. 4, May 1963, pp. 11-15.
- "Planter and Historian: The Career of William Beckford of Jamaica and England, 1744-1799," The Jamaican Historical Review, Vol. 4, 1964, pp. 36-58
- "The Wealth of Jamaica in the Eighteenth Century," The Economic History Review, 2nd ser., Vol. XVIII, No. 2, August, 1965, pp. 292-311.
- "William Beckford (1744-1799), Patron of Painters of Jamaica," The Register of the Museum of Art, University of Kansas, Vol. III, Winter 1967, Nos. 8-9, pp. 14-23.
- "The Wealth of Jamaica in the Eighteenth Century: A Rejoinder," The Economic History Review, 2nd ser., Vol. XXI, No. 1, April, 1968, pp. 46-61.
- "The Plantation Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, 1625-1775," Caribbean Studies, Vol. 9, No. 3, 1969, pp. 5-25.
- "Simon Taylor, Sugar Tycoon of Jamaica, 1740-1813," Agricultural History, Vol. XLV, No. 4, October, 1971, pp. 285-296.
- "Planters and Merchants: The Oliver Family of Antigua and London, 1716- 1784," Business History, Vol. XIII, 1971, pp. 104-113.
- "Africa and the Caribbean in the Atlantic Slave Trade," The American Historical Review, Vol. 77, No. 1, February, 1972, pp. 15-35.
- "Comments on Papers by Jones, Shepherd and Walton, and McCusker," Annual Meeting of the Economic History Association, Atlantic City, New Jersey September 8-10, 1971, in The Journal of Economic History, Vol. XXXII, No. 1, March, 1972, pp. 159-162.
- "Introduction" to A History of the Virgin Islands of the United States, by Isaac Dookhan. Caribbean Universities Press, London, 1974, pp. v-xiv.

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- "The Crisis of Slave Subsistence in the British West Indies during and after the American Revolution," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd ser., Vol. 33, No. 4 (October 1976), pp. 615-641.
- "Mortality and the Medical Treatment of Slaves in the British West Indies," in Stanley L. Engerman and Eugene D. Genovese (eds.), Race and Slavery in the Western Hemisphere: Quantitative Studies. Princeton University Press, 1975, pp. 285-310.
- "Sweet Malefactor: The Social Costs of Slavery and Sugar in Jamaica and Cuba, 1807-54," The Economic History Review, 2nd ser., Vol. XXIX, No. 2, May, 1976, pp. 236-257.
- "The British Sugar Planters and the Atlantic World, 1763-1775," in Samuel Proctor (ed.), Eighteenth-Century Florida and the Caribbean, The University Presses of Florida, Gainesville, 1976, pp. 1-14.
- "The Jamaican Slave Insurrection Scare of 1776 and The American Revolution," The Journal of Negro History, Vol. LXI, No. 3, July, 1976, pp. 290-308.
- "The Role of the Scots in the Economy and Society of the West Indies," in Vera Rubin and Arthur Tuden (eds.), Comparative Perspectives on Slavery in New World Plantation Societies. The New York Academy of Sciences, New York, 1977, pp. 94-106.
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"Slave Demography in the British West Indies and the Abolition of the Slave Trade," in David Eltis and James Walvin, (eds.), The Abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade: Origins and Effects in Europe, Africa, and the Americas (Madison, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1981), pp. 259-285.

"The Plantation Revolution and the Industrial Revolution," in Roberta Marx Delson, (ed.), Readings in Caribbean History and Economics: An Introduction to the Region (New York, Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1981), pp. 44- 51. (This is a reprint of my 1969 article.)

"The Guinea Surgeons on the Middle Passage: The Provision of Medical Services in the British Slave Trade," The International Journal of African Historical Studies, Vol. 14, No. 4 (December 1981), pp. 601-625.

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- Economics 525. Economic History of Europe
" 534. Economic History of the Carribean Region
" 580. Land Economics
" 767. Economic History of Europe
" 771. Economic History of Peasant and Plantation Societies
" 930. Economic History Seminar-Workshop

SERVICE TO THE UNIVERSITY AND NON-UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY IN RECENT YEARS

Committees at K.U.

African Studies Steering Committee
Latin American Studies Committee and Caribbean sub-committee
Search Committee for Chairman of the Department of History
Committee on Promotion of the Department of Economics
College Committee on Graduate Studies

Other Service

External examiner in history for the University of the West Indies
Invited lectures at the Command and General Staff School, Leavenworth
Invited comments on papers by economic history colleagues at other universities
Numerous letters of recommendation for students, both past and present
Made arrangements and acted as host for a visiting speaker at K.U.

A SKETCH HISTORY OF EMPORIA AND LYON COUNTY, KANSAS

by Richard B. "Dick" Sheridan

William Allen White, who for many years before his death in 1944 was the spokesman for Middle America, wrote, "It is most important that we should know our past, that we of Emporia and Lyon County should know why we are what we are; how inevitably today came out of yesterday." "At the start," he wrote, "we were of New England blood." Although Indians and a few white settlers lived on the land that was to become the town and county, Emporia was founded in 1857, when the Emporia Town Company was organized chiefly by a group of citizens of Lawrence, Kansas, of whom Preston B. Plumb was to become the outstanding leader. Settlers took advantage of the rolling prairie of the Flint Hills, famous for its bluestem grass, to develop a cattle and sheep grazing economy, and the fertile bottom land of the Cottonwood and Neosho river valleys to carry on agriculture in the tradition of the family farm with its mixed crops and domesticated animals. Standing on a rise half-way between these two rivers, Emporia became the center of a large trading area supplying its inhabitants with a variety of goods and services.

Like other country towns in Middle America, Emporia and Lyon County have grown and developed from a small, isolated, and largely self-sufficient community to a still relatively small but nonetheless integral part of a national economy and society that has been shaped by the values and institutions of its people and the dynamic changes engendered by modern science and technology. In the remainder of this sketch history I will point out some changes that have occurred in the town and county and highlight some of the town's big scandals as well as the contributions of its people, and especially three of its leading men, to the making of our nation's history.

Transportation and communication improvements have played an important part in linking the town and county to the outside world. The first white men crossed the northern part of Lyon County on the Santa Fe Trail. After Kansas Territory was created in 1854, single men and especially families came in growing numbers on horseback and in prairie schooners. The first railroad, a branch line of the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad, reached Emporia from Junction City, Kansas, in 1869; the following year the Santa Fe Railroad built from Topeka to Emporia. In later years the Santa Fe Stockyards in Emporia came to play an important part in the nation's beef cattle industry. Horse-drawn trams were supplanted by electrified trams in 1911, and the town was supplied with electricity by the street car company. By 1926, however, motor buses had largely replaced the trams. Emporians have been automobile lovers since the first decade of the present century. According to Laura M. French, the town's historian, "In 1907 there were 24 up-to-date motor cars in daily use on the streets, and at least 80 Emporia people enjoyed a spin every day." Car ownership grew rapidly in subsequent years, rising to county totals of approximately 1,000 in 1915 and 7,600 in 1929. Telephones also became popular. In 1923 Emporia was said to have 4,281 telephones, leading the state in this communication service. Emporia's population grew seven fold from 1875 to 1950: it was 2,194 in 1875; 9,107 in 1886; 12,030 in 1923; 12,487 in 1932; and 15,560 in 1950.

Along with gains in the well-being of the people came advances in education, religion, health, charitable bequests, recreation, and commercial entertainment. By a law of 1863, the State of Kansas established the State Normal School in Emporia. It later became the Kansas State Teachers College, and later still, Emporia State University. In July 1885, the cornerstone of the College of Emporia, an institution of the Presbyterian Church of Kansas,

was laid. In 1875, Emporia had approximately 15 churches, while Lyon County had 80 school houses, 159 private libraries and upwards of 12 public libraries. Early in the present century Andrew Carnegie made a gift to Emporia of \$20,000 for the erection of a city library building.

Access to happenings at home and abroad was facilitated by the publication of three daily newspapers, as reported in 1887, free mail delivery in the following year, and a new postoffice building in 1902. For several decades prior to its burning in 1913, the Whitley Opera House provided dramatic and other entertainment by touring stock companies. In 1910, according to Laura French, "the motion picture theaters charged an admission of ten cents, having advanced from the nickelodean stage of five cents admission." Hollywood's impact on Emporians escalated when the ^{Grand} ~~Grand~~ Theater, "the largest and most pretentious building in Emporia," costing \$350,000, was opened October 3, 1929. Self-styled upper class Emporians sought to distinguish themselves from the common herd in 1911, when plans were made to form a country club and to include golf links.

The generally upward movement in the well-being of the people did not preclude serious reverses from time to time. Periods of prosperity alternated with those of recession and depression; favorable weather with timely rains in the growing season and warm and dry harvest periods alternated with floods, droughts, hail storms, tornadoes, and blizzards. Emporia and Lyon County were still in their infancy in 1860 when a devastating drought in Kansas necessitated relief shipments of food and clothing from states as far distant as Massachusetts and New York. Again in 1873 and 1874 came severe drought accompanied by a plague of grasshoppers and nation-wide financial panic and economic depression. On the other hand, the half-decade from 1875 to 1880 was said to be one of prosperity to town and county alike. "The winter of

1914-1915 was a hard one," according to Laura French, "much of the distress being occasioned by war conditions. Fifty tramps slept in the city jail during January, according to Officer Sam Marsh." The influenza epidemic was so severe at the close of World War I that schools and churches were closed and few public meetings were held.

The interwar period from 1919 to 1940 was one of slow growth, stagnation, and depression, interspersed with short periods of rapid growth. Few Emporians were rich enough to be "wiped out" by the stock market crash of 1929, but the subsequent severe and prolonged depression dealt a devastating blow to townspeople and country dwellers alike. Nature added to the hard times, bringing severe drought, dust storms, and even floods in the Cottonwood and Neosho river valleys. Emporians persevered, however, and coped with drought and depression by means of individual initiative and community, state, and national programs of relief, recovery, and reform. When the Works Project Authority Guide to 1930s Kansas was published in 1939, Emporia was said to have a population of 14,067, and was the seat of Lyon County. It was a division point of the Santa Fe Railroad and trading center of a farming and dairying region.

The WPA Guide noted that

"Emporia manufactures cheese, candy, mattresses, stock feeds, patent medicines, and flavoring extracts. There are three grain elevators with a combined storage capacity of 75,000 bushels. The Santa Fe Railway maintains stockyards and feeding pens for livestock temporarily quartered here enroute to eastern markets, that can accommodate 12,000 cattle and 60,000 sheep."

Furthermore, the WPA Guide noted that the business district, centered at Sixth Avenue and Commercial Street, was composed of two- and three-story brick structures. "Four blocks past the business district Commercial Street runs plump into the Kansas State Teachers' College which, with the College of Emporia, enables local civic leaders to call their town the "Educational Center of the West'."

Today Emporia, with a population of nearly 30,000, serves a trade area of some 65,000 with employment opportunities; agricultural and industrial goods and services; education, professional, governmental, and cultural . . . opportunities and needs; and a network of transportation and communication services. To take advantage of the livestock in the region, it has several feed lots and one of the largest packing plants in the state. Other important industries include printing, publishing, and office machines; livestock feed processing; and food processing.

In his essay on "Kansas," historian Carl Becker asserted,

"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."

This spirit of individualism and self- and community-help is exemplified in the motto on the Seal of the State of Kansas, "Ad Astra per Aspera," which is translated, "To the Stars through Difficulties."

The New Englanders and others who settled Emporia and other communities in Kansas subscribed to an ethic of industry, frugality, honesty, self-discipline, and abstinence from vice. It was not enough to internalize these self-denying ordinances into one's psyche; community pressures were exerted to prevent the citizens from straying from the straight and narrow path. For example, the town charter of 1857 forbade the sale of liquor and of gambling on the town site. In 1913, a city election voted pool halls out of existence, and in the boyhood of the author of this sketch there was a heated campaign to outlaw the showing of motion pictures on Sunday.

Efforts to legislate morality collided from time to time with intractable human nature. One example of this was the losing struggle to enforce national

prohibition after World War I; in 1928 alone there were 221 liquor law violators in Emporia and Lyon County who were convicted and sentenced.

Much more disturbing to the town's code of ethics and morality were the leaders of banking and finance who absconded or speculated with their depositors money and a minister of the gospel who not only cheated on his wife but also murdered her and conspired with his mistress to murder the latter's husband. The first great scandal occurred in 1898 after the suicide and crash of the banking and cattle empire of Charles S. Cross, who was the president of the First National Bank of Emporia. Even greater was the Finney bond and bank scandal which occurred in the summer of 1933, at the nadir of the Great Depression. It involved Ronald Finney who forged state bonds and his father, W. W. Finney, who was president of the Fidelity State and Savings Bank in Emporia. Before the affair was over, three banks closed permanently; a major Chicago brokerage firm went bankrupt; the younger Finney went to prison; and his father committed suicide. The recent scandal of 1983 involved the Reverend Tom Bird and his secretary and mistress, Lorna Anderson Eldridge and the murder of their spouses, followed by their trials and prison sentences; widespread news stories; the making of a motion picture; and even a lengthy article in the January 6, 1986 issue of the prestigious magazine, The New Yorker.

To end this sketch history on a positive and upbeat theme, I will single out three Emporians who made notable contributions to their community, state, and nation.

Preston B. Plumb, who was the most famous Emporian in the nineteenth century, was a journalist, lawyer, soldier, banker, and United States Senator. He was born at Berkshire, Delaware County, Ohio, October 12, 1837, the eldest child of David and Hannah Maria (Bierce) Plumb. As a young man he learned

the printer's trade and worked in a printing office to pay his way through Kenyon College at Gambier, Ohio. He came to Lawrence, Kansas in 1856 and worked for a time on the Herald of Freedom newspaper. The following year, as one of the founders of the Emporia Town Company, he came to Emporia and established the Kansas News. He also read law and was admitted to the bar in 1861. In 1862 he entered the service of the Union Army as second lieutenant and recruited two companies for the Eleventh Kansas Cavalry Regiment in the Civil War. He had a distinguished military record which included the commanding of a cavalry unit which pursued Quantrill and his gang of guerrillas after the raid on Lawrence on August 21, 1863. At that time he had risen to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. Returning to Emporia at the close of the war, he practiced law and entered politics, being elected to the state house of representatives in 1867. He was later reelected and served as speaker of that body. Forced to give up the law and politics because of failing health, he became president of the Emporia National Bank in 1873. Four years later he was elected United States Senator, and took his seat March 4, 1877. He was twice reelected to the Senate, serving until his death on December 20, 1891. He was a useful member of the Senate, serving on the committee on public lands and becoming its chairman in 1881. His whole career was said to be marked by strenuous effort, untiring industry, and wholesome enthusiasm. The Plumb home at 224 East Sixth Avenue is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is the present site of the Lyon County Community Center.

William Allen White needs no introduction to Emporians and other Kansans. For our visitors, however, a brief sketch of his interesting and useful life is called for. He was born at Emporia, February 10, 1868, the son of Dr. Allen and Mary (Hatton) White. He was a direct descendant of Peregrine White,

the first child born in New England of Puritan parentage. The White family moved to Eldorado, Kansas, in 1869, where young William attended the public schools, learned the printer's trade, and became a reporter for a local newspaper. He entered the College of Emporia in 1884, and the University of Kansas in 1886. As a student, he worked as city editor of a Lawrence newspaper. In 1890 he left the University to become business manager of the Republican Daily Journal in Lawrence, and later an editorial writer and Topeka correspondent for the Kansas City Journal and Kansas City Star. In 1895 Mr. White bought The Emporia Gazette, in which his widely-copied and politically important editorial, "What's the Matter with Kansas," appeared in August, 1896. During his long career Mr. White remained loyal to his conception of his small town roots and associations, at the same time combining journalism with the writing of numerous magazine articles in leading periodicals, and the writing of twenty-three books. White was married on April 27, 1893, to Sallie, daughter of Joseph M. Lindsay, of Kansas City, Kansas. They had a son, William Lindsay White, and a daughter, Mary White, both deceased. For a brief account of White's achievements, his own biographical sketch, his famous editorial, "To An Anxious Friend," and a list of his books, I refer you to your Kretschmer Reunion Folder, in which is placed a copy of Emporia, A Guide to Emporia and Lyon County Kansas, which is published by the Convention and Visitors Bureau of Emporia and Lyon County, and for which we thank Ms. Jan Ralston, Director of the Bureau, for this booklet and other brochures. On the day of William Allen White's death, January 29, 1944, President Franklin D. Roosevelt sent the following telegram to Mrs. White from the White House:

"My heart goes out to you and Bill in the loss of a beloved husband and father. The newspaper world loses one of its wisest and most beloved editors in the death of William Allen White. He made The Emporia Gazette a national institution. As a writer of truth, forcible and vigorous prose he was unsurpassed. He ennobled the profession of journalism which he served with such unselfish devotion through more than two score years. To me his passing brings a real sense of personal loss, for we had been the best of friends for years. Mrs. Roosevelt joins me in this assurance of deepest sympathy." "Franklin D. Roosevelt."

Since this is a reunion of a warship that was engaged in both World War II and the Vietnam War, I think it appropriate to give a biographical sketch of an Emporia boy who rose to the rank of vice admiral in the United States Navy, and a summary account of the Emporia boys who made the supreme sacrifice in two of the major wars in our history.

George Lester Weyler was born at Emporia, May 11, 1886, the son of John William and Laura Amelia (Schmidt) Weyler. He attended the State Normal School at Emporia in 1904-05; received his B.S. degree from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1910; LL.B degree from George Washington Law School at Washington, D.C., in 1922; and was a graduate of the Naval War College in 1938. George Weyler was commissioned an ensign, U.S. Navy, in 1912, advanced through the grades to rear admiral in 1942, and retired with the rank of vice admiral in 1946. He served on all types of ships except submarines and aircraft carriers for a period of twenty-two years, chiefly in the Pacific area. His shore duty included service in Navy Yards, the Navy Department, the Naval Academy, Naval War College, and the Naval Operating Base at Guantanamo, Cuba. Furthermore, he was a naval attache in Peru and Ecuador. He was decorated with campaign badges for three wars--Mexican, World War I, and World War II (with citation). He was awarded the Legion of Merit with a gold star, the Order El Sol del Peru, Knight Commander, and Navy Cross. He married Laura Gertrude Pearks on March 22, 1917, and had two daughters. Admiral Weyler died August 6, 1971, and was buried in the San Francisco National Cemetery.

Emporians and Lyon Countians made the supreme sacrifice in five or six wars from 1861 to the mid-1970s. Although I lack information on the numbers killed in the Civil War, Spanish American, Korean, and Vietnam Wars, the death toll in World War I was sixty-one, and in World War II, one-hundred-and-six. In World War II, Dwane Robinson and I lost relatives, friends, acquaintances, many of them fellow students in the Emporia schools. One of my first cousins, who delivered William Allen White's Emporia Gazette on his bicycle in his high school years, was shot down piloting a bomber plane over German-occupied France and his body never recovered.

Some of my other memories may be stated very briefly. As a boy my parents took me to a parade down Commercial Street of Civil War veterans who were holding a state convention of the Grand Army of the Republic in Emporia. I was also taken to a parade of the Emporia Klan of the Ku Klux Klan whose members were thinly disguised by their white hoods and other regalia. Living east of the Katy Railroad tracks on Ninth street and walking back and forth to grade school in town, I occasionally met William Allen White walking from the Gazette Office to his "Redrocks" home on the corner of Tenth and Exchange streets. I remember well his greeting me in his cheery, high-pitched voice, as he invariably did with acquaintances and strangers alike.

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Written for the USS Kretchmer (DE 329) Reunion,
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