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Annals of Quindaro: A Kansas Ghost Town

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I. INTRODUCTION

QUINDARO was conceived during the darkest hour of the Free-State cause in Kansas territory, and like the night-blooming cereus, the town flowered only in the nocturnal gloom of antislavery hopes, for in the fall of 1856 the proslavery program of acquiring Kansas seemed headed for success. The national administration of Franklin Pierce had approved the election frauds in Kansas, denounced all opposition as "revolutionary," and was completely dominated by the Southern radicals of the Democratic party. The people and officialdom of western Missouri had erected a virtual embargo on Free-State emigration through that state; as many travelers were turned back and subjected to indignity. Shipments to Kansas were searched for arms and all found were confiscated.

In Kansas the "Bogus" legislature had purged its Free-State members and had enacted a more rigorous slave code than existed in the many Southern slave states. A mob led by Sheriff Samuel Jones of Westport and U. S. Marshal Israel B. Donalson had pillaged the Free-State settlement of Lawrence. The grand jury at Leecompton had indicted Free-State leaders for treason following a doctrine newly devised by Judge Leecompte,¹ and some of them had been arrested and confined, awaiting a trial that never was held. Guerrilla warfare resulted in the territory, while the country seethed with the partisanship of a presidential election campaign.

In time a measure of peace came to Kansas with a new governor, John W. Geary. He wanted to be impartial, but such a policy quickly offended the Proslavery Democrats who owned the legis-

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1. This was the doctrine of constructive treason. Leecompte is said to have included this doctrine in his instructions to the jury.—W. A. Phillips, *The Conquest of Kansas* (Boston, 1856), p. 269. However, the judge denied it.—*Kansas Weekly Herald*, Leavenworth, September 27, 1856. For a discussion of this question, see James C. Malin, "Judge Leecompte and the 'Sack of Lawrence,'" May 21, 1856," in *The Kansas Historical Quarterly*, v. 20 (August, 1933), pp. 473, 491.

lative and judicial departments of the territory, so his tenure was brief.

The tide of Northern emigration was stimulated as a result of all this stress, while help for the slaveholders of western Missouri diminished gradually.

At the time Kansas territory was opened for settlement the people of western Missouri, where slave sentiment was exceedingly strong, took possession of the most favorable locations along the west bank of the Missouri on the border where their towns mostly came to be situated. The Free-State emigrants who came from longer distances, settled in the valley of the Kansas river and in the southeastern part of the territory. At that time the great national highway to Kansas was the Missouri river where a horde of steamboats carried the emigrants west from St. Louis. Eastern people who came by overland routes had to travel the Missouri roads, where citizens, feeling their slave property in jeopardy, were quite hostile, and the Northerners arriving by the steamboat found all of the Missouri river towns controlled by their foes, even those Kansas settlements on the west bank of the river.

II. QUINDARO

Need for a friendly portal for antislavery partisans to enter and leave Kansas was increasingly felt so that some leaders at Lawrence conducted a survey of the entire west bank of the Missouri river by steamboat, from the mouth of the Kansas river to the Nebraska line. At a point six miles above the mouth of the Kansas river, on Wyandotte Indian land, they found a fine natural rock ledge where the river ran along the bank six to twelve feet deep, making a convenient landing. Plenty of wood and rock were at hand for building purposes and fertile land was adjacent.

At that time planners were fashioning towns to their individual tastes at many places in Kansas, so a company was formed, a name selected and promotion commenced. The business affairs of the promoters were handled by Charles Robinson, of Lawrence, and Abelard Guthrie, whose wife was a Wyandotte Indian. Guthrie skillfully secured the necessary land for the town by purchase from his wife's fellow tribesmen. In casting about for a picturesque name for the new city, he was able to suggest Mrs. Guthrie's Indian given name of "Quindaro," a common Wyandotte word, meaning a "bundle of sticks" and interpreted by the adage, "in union there is strength."

The new townsite was surveyed and laid out in proper municipal style in December, 1856, by O. A. Bassett. The principal streets were the levee, fronting on the Missouri river, and Kansas avenue,

running south at a right angle from the levee. There was a "Main Street" adjoining the levee. East and west streets were numbered "Third to Tenth" and north and south streets were named "A to Y." On paper it was great, but the printed map failed to disclose the steep cliff just back of the levee; most of the townsite being up on the high ground. Many river towns were so planned and the hill wasn't much higher than the one just back of the landing at Kansas City.

Ground was broken on January 1, 1857, and Quindaro became a reality with remarkable publicity in the Eastern newspapers. On May 13, 1857, a weekly newspaper was launched. It, too, was named by a Wyandotte word, *Chindowan* (with the accent on the last syllable), meaning "leader." The editor was J. M. Walden, a former minister, who in later life became a Methodist bishop. Mrs. C. I. H. Nichols, formerly editor of *The Windham County Democrat* of Vermont, later a famous lecturer and woman's-rights leader, was his assistant editor.

The first issue of the new paper reported that trees had been removed from several acres of the townsite, that grading of the hill to the wharf at Kansas avenue had progressed so that heavy loads might be hauled on the road leading into the territory without difficulty. Thirty to forty houses had been built and occupied. A schoolhouse had been opened on May 3, which also served as a church on Sunday, and 16 business houses were in the process of erection. The Quindaro House, the second largest hotel in the territory, was opened; the town was well supplied with two hotels, two commission houses, a sawmill of 5,000 feet per day capacity (later 20,000), a stoneyard, carpenter shop, land agencies, surveyor, builders, cabinetmakers and blacksmiths. The Odd Fellows and Masonic fraternities announced their meetings.² The blacksmiths seem to have used coal mined right on the levee. By August, the first brick house was under construction on "P" street, the bricks having been burned on the townsite, and soon a brickyard was established.³

One of the earliest problems of the new town was to gain recognition by the steamboats. These craft were Missouri owned and operated and their officers refused to stop at Quindaro or even denied that such a place existed. Later they actively sought to get passengers to pass up Quindaro to land at Leavenworth or Kansas City, both Proslavery towns. Fares were charged accordingly. Passage from Leavenworth to Quindaro was \$3.00 but from Leaven-

2. *The Quindaro Chindowan*, May 13, 1857.

3. *Ibid.*, August 1, 1857.

worth to Kansas City, a longer trip cost only \$2.50. A threat to start a Free-State steamboat line from Alton, Ill., to Kansas broke up this racket as the Proslavery boatmen didn't want such competition. The profit motive prevailed over principle—this may be the key to the failure of the entire Proslavery movement in Kansas. These steamboatmen later came to regard Quindaro as the best landing on the river, and traffic there was heavy. For instance, 36 steamboat landings were made at the levee during one week of May, 1857.⁴ In July the paper reported the steamer *Polar Star* made the regular run from Fort Leavenworth to Jefferson City in 24 hours and 30 minutes, making all her usual mail and freight landings en route.⁵ A short time later the paper listed 55 steamboats operating on the Missouri at that time.

These boats brought a vast quantity of merchandise consigned to Lawrence and other Free-State towns to the Quindaro levee. A road was built for 31 miles across the Delaware reservation to Lawrence. The *Chindowan* reported May 23, 1857, that it had been graded two miles out from town 20 feet wide, and that three streams, the Wolf, Stranger, and Muddy creeks, were spanned by substantial bridges. A line of stages operated by (Alfred) Robinson, Walter and Co., proprietors, left Quindaro each morning, on the six-hour trip to Lawrence. The first 15 miles wound through heavy timber to a half-way house, kept by Delaware Indians, where lunch was not exactly relished by some of the fastidious travelers. The fare for all this luxury was \$3.00. Another road projected south to Osawatomie across the Kansas river, three miles south, where the Quindaro company maintained a free ferry. This road intersected the Westport road at the new town of Shawnee. Later a stage line ran from Wyandotte to Lawrence by way of Quindaro.

The printing press and equipment of *The Kansas News* of Emporia was purchased in Cincinnati, consigned to Quindaro, and hauled across the country by four yoke of oxen in May, 1857. Jacob Stotler, who conducted the operation, said that Quindaro looked like a mining town at the bottom of a canyon. He got the freight loaded and hauled it about three miles the first day. That night the oxen wandered away and the entire following day was spent hunting them. Finally an Indian located them about sundown. Stotler tramped back to Quindaro and helped set type on the *Chindowan* to pay for his supper. The trip from Lawrence to Emporia took eight days.⁶

4. *Ibid.*, May 23, 1857.

5. *Ibid.*, July 4, 1857.

6. *Emporia Weekly News*, February 23, 1882.

In 1857 no daily papers were published along the Missouri river nearer than St. Louis. There the *Democrat* and *Republican* were great daily papers that sold for ten cents on the river boats and had wide circulation in Kansas territory. Every Free-State partisan swore by the old reliable *Democrat*, the Proslavery man's politics could be told by the fact that he always read the *Republican*. Occasionally someone would buy the wrong paper but after reading a few paragraphs would drop it like a hot potato.

During that first year Quindaro grew amazingly. In August when the town was only eight months old, the *Chindowan* reported a population of 600 living in more than 100 buildings, 20 being of stone.⁷ The Quindaro House, with 45 rooms, four and one-half stories high, was at 1, 3, 5 Kansas avenue, Colby and Parker, proprietors; while competition was furnished by the Wyandotte House across the street, about half as large, E. O. Zane, proprietor. Several thousand dollars had been spent in grading Kansas avenue running back up the hill from the river. P. Caswell, the contractor, had with some ingenuity contrived cars on an iron track to haul away the excavated debris. George Park, of Parkville, Mo., had faith in this enterprise and was building a stone hotel, 26 x 70 feet and five stories high. The Methodists and Congregationalists were both constructing churches. Albert D. Richardson, a New York newspaper correspondent, spent much time in town and was induced to lecture to the Literary Society on "Out West."⁸ Twelve hundred letters passed through the post office in 18 days of June, 1857, and the revenue was \$1,200 per year.⁹

Quindaro took vast municipal pride in its cannon, its sawmill, and its ferry. O. A. Bassett, who surveyed the town, O. H. Macauley and James Redpath had been members of a Free-State party en route from Wisconsin in 1856. The Democratic administration knew of the expedition and knew that among other armament it was equipped with a six-pounder brass cannon, so arrangements were made to waylay the party. Coming across Iowa and Nebraska, the emigrants were warned and the cannon was buried near Nemaha Falls, Neb., not far from the Kansas line. It was said that Macauley was the only person who knew exactly where the cannon had been hidden. A public meeting was held one evening of July, 1857, and a committee was formed to make the "necessary arrangements" to bring the cannon in. It took several weeks and some hunting to find it, but finally on August 25, 1857, the committee

7. *Quindaro Chindowan*, August 15, 1857.

8. *Ibid.*, February 6, 1858.

9. *Ibid.*, July 4, 1857; January 23, 1858.

arrived with its prize. A royal celebration ensued, the cannon was christened "Lazarus," and several rounds were fired on the levee.¹⁰ It was given a home in Macauley's warehouse and used in many a celebration thereafter, to the chagrin of neighboring towns, who had no cannon. Several years later a "committee" from Wyandotte quietly borrowed the cannon. When the Civil War came, it was taken on July 20, 1861, by Col. William Weer to Kansas City to be used against the Confederates, and to be returned after the emergency had passed. It saw active service during the defense of Lexington, where it was captured after a four-day siege by the army under Gen. Sterling Price who took it south when he retreated, and it was last heard of in the fortifications at Corinth, Miss.

The sawmill grew to be the largest in Kansas. The town company got it from the Emigrant Aid Society in exchange for shares in the town. This mill had been dumped into the river by Border Ruffians and later salvaged. It had a capacity of 20,000 feet daily and a forest around it to operate on. Trees that measured 20 feet in circumference were common on the townsite.

In October, 1857, a Quindaro to Parkville ferry capable of carrying 200 tons, 26 x 100 feet, with two engines and side wheels was put in service. Capt. Otis Webb was skipper of this craft which bore his name and replaced an earlier, less efficient ferry boat. You may be sure the event was properly celebrated by firing the cannon. The ferry was financed by selling shares, there being still in existence in the files of the State Historical Society a receipt dated September 5, 1857, to Alfred Gray for \$75.00 in assessment upon one share of the Parkville and Quindaro Ferry Company.

On March 30, 1857, the Quindaro company by Abelard Guthrie employed one Aaron W. Merrill to keep a free ferry across the Kansas river, four miles below the Delaware ferry on the road from Quindaro to Osawatimie. This location was just south of present City Park in Kansas City and was called the Eureka ferry. Merrill was to receive \$100 per month for faithful performance of this contract which became the subject of a suit against the company when evil days befell Quindaro.

The *Chindowan* of October 3, 1857, refers to the steamer *Minnie Belle*, built for travel on the Kansas river. This boat was a marvel for it only drew seven inches of water and was captained by James W. Davis. Even this shallow draught must have not been adequate for the paper later reported that it took the boat four and one-half days to go to Lawrence.¹¹

10. *Ibid.* August 29, 1857.

11. *Ibid.* March 13, 1858.

Another Quindaro boat in the Kansas river trade was the *Light-foot*. It had a draught of 18 inches which probably made its use in the Kansas river seasonal.

During 1857 Quindaro had the brightest prospects of any town on the river. Each share of stock entitled its owner to ten lots and their location was determined by a drawing, the company reserving wood and timber on the lots. Several hundred shares were sold and land grew rapidly in value. Business lots on the levee sold for \$500 to \$750 and on Kansas avenue \$500 to \$1,250, and were considered dirt cheap. The town's future was advertised far and wide across the North and many New Englanders invested through the influence of Charles Robinson. Railroad fever was a factor. The Pacific railroad had been built as far west as Jefferson City, Mo., with two trains daily, where the Lightning Line of steamboats connected to carry the mail up the river to Leavenworth. Quindaro men joined with George Park of Parkville to organize the Quindaro, Parkville and Grand River railroad to connect with the Hannibal & St. Joseph railroad, then building westward across Missouri. Quindaro was later dropped from the name. The line was surveyed and projected across the Missouri river at Parkville and on into southern Kansas.

Park had an article printed in the *Chicago Daily Journal*, urging the building of this line so that merchants of Chicago might take hold of the vast trades of the Southwest. In May, 1858, the Quindaro steamer, *Otis Webb*, carried a load of citizens to Wyandotte, a rival town founded about the same time, for a railroad mass meeting. They managed to hit the Wyandotte ferry as they came into the landing and put it out of commission for several days.¹²

Life was pleasant and interesting in Quindaro. Dances were frequent. Lodges and churches met regularly. The *Chindowan* of June 27, 1857, proudly proclaimed that J. V. Fitch served ice cream and soda at his store. The Literary Society was popular and provided regular lectures, while a library committee offered more than 200 volumes of good reading. J. J. Barker offered his services as photographer, and a lady of the Delaware nation rode her horse into town wearing a red petticoat! During the summer and winter of 1857, V. J. Lane tells that S. C. Smith, Charles Chadwick, Owen A. Bassett, A. D. Richardson, J. M. Walden, P. T. Colby, G. W. Veale, C. L. Gorton, Dr. Buddington, Alfred Gray, A. J. Rowell, J. G. Fisk, and himself organized a Shanghai court and made it a rule to arrest someone every night and try him for some alleged misdemeanor.

12. *Ibid.*, May 22, 1858.

When the court opened the sheriff brought in the prisoner (intended victim), a jury was empaneled, the prosecuting attorney was called, and the court appointed counsel for the prisoner. A regular trial was had, but the jury invariably found the prisoner guilty and assessed a fine of a box of cigars or a bushel of apples. Lane, in his recollections, also tells of a tornado that passed over on the evening of July 4, 1857, and blew several houses down in Quindaro.

Leavenworth, Quindaro, and Wyandotte were great rivals for trade. People of Quindaro referred to Wyandotte as "Y &," while the latter spoke of Quindaro as "Hole in the Hill." Politics was a vocation to be constantly cultivated. Free-State militia were organized under the Topeka convention and 68 citizens at Quindaro were enrolled, guarded the election of October 5, 1857, and carried the Wyandotte precinct, where Proslavery sentiment usually predominated. The Free-State party captured a clear majority in both houses of the legislature in spite of election frauds at Delaware, Oxford, and Kickapoo. In January, 1858, the territorial legislature chartered the city and a municipal election soon followed.¹³ Two parties, the People's and the Workingmen's, both endorsed Alfred Gray, who became the first mayor.¹⁴

Quindaro formed a Temperance League. At a meeting in January, 1858, it was resolved to close the liquor shops in five days, and the town voted, 77 to 25, to make liquor illegal.¹⁵ This induced many emigrants, especially women, to prefer Quindaro to other towns. Citizens wanting to "go on a spree" had to go to Wyandotte or patronize the local bootleggers. It was soon discovered that whisky was hidden in a hollow west of the Quindaro House which prompted 30 women to present a petition to the town council. A meeting was called and the offending barrel was hauled from beneath its owner's bed and spilled out in the street.¹⁶

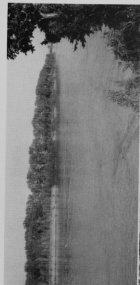
In a letter to the *Wyandotte Gazette* in 1882, Mrs. C. I. H. Nichols recalls that many slaves took the underground railroad at Quindaro for the interior of the territory and freedom. Just west of town in the bottom land was the home of a bachelor who was dedicated to "emancipation without proclamation," so that his place was called "Uncle Tom's Cabin" by the residents. Of the many slaves who took refuge there, only one was ever taken back to Missouri and many escaped to the comparative safety of the interior. She told the story of

13. *Private Lexis of Kansas* . . . 1858, p. 254.

14. *Quindaro Chindowen*, January 30, February 6, 1858.

15. *Ibid.*, January 23, 1858.

16. *Wyandotte Gazette*, December 22, 1882.



Upper right: A view of the Missouri river from the site of old Quindaro, at the northern edge of present Kansas City, Kan. A few bits of masonry obscured by heavy foliage is about all that remains of this once booming town. Lower right: Six-Mile tavern, west of Quindaro on the stage road to Leavenworth, as it looks today. Left: The hanging oak near Six-Mile tavern. (See p. 319.)

QUINDARO COMPANY.

1879 24

1 Share



This Certifies That *Rev. John G. Pratt*
is entitled to One Share, of Ten Lots each, numbered

39, in the CITY OF QUINDARO, situated on the Wyandotte
River, as called, and the Quindaro Company, is pledged to give
on spec and valued title to the same, when the shares shall have
been drawn.

W. M. Simpson Secy.

John W. Warner Presl.

Received \$100.00

in full for the above share.

W. M. Simpson
Quindaro, Kansas, Dec. 26, 1876.



TRCS.

A share in the City of Quindaro made out to the Rev. John G. Pratt.

a poor fellow who escaped from near Parkville. On learning he had been sold South, he had tried to get away but was caught and manacled. Another slave assisted him and he managed to draw one foot out of the encircling iron, bringing with him the chain attached to the other foot. Afraid to take a boat at Parkville, they found an old dugout, paddled up the river for ten miles before they could steal a boat, then drifted down to Quindaro. A few days later in two large dry goods boxes they were freighted to Lawrence. If they could get by Six-Mile tavern, the critical part of the journey was past.

Mrs. Nichols also told of Fielding Johnson bringing a colored girl, Caroline, to her home where she was hidden in the cistern at the very time 14 slave hunters from Missouri were camped in Quindaro Park. The following day Caroline and another girl were conveyed to Leavenworth on the road to freedom.¹⁷

The *Chindowan* often listed arrivals at the hotels and names of other Argonauts who passed through the town. Gov. Robert J. Walker made his first stop in Kansas at Quindaro and spoke briefly to about 200 people. Sen. Henry Wilson, of Massachusetts, was on the same steamer, *The New Lucy*, and was accorded a much finer reception. Wilson went off to Lawrence in company with Charles Robinson. Governor Walker came again in the fall of 1857, but very few citizens consented to an introduction; he was permitted to enjoy the quiet of his stateroom and left in a few hours.

Many homey touches are recorded in the newspaper. A map of the Delaware Trust Lands to be offered for sale at Osawkee on July 15, 1857, was printed for Chadwick and Bless, land agents. Apparently no copy has survived. Due probably to inebriation, several citizens got lost on the road from Wyandotte on the evening of July 4. The first marriage in Quindaro was of Peter Nelson to Lavicia Lyle, of Rochester, Mo., on July 23, 1857. That fall the woods were full of hazelnuts and Mr. Beckwith, who resided on a farm adjoining the town, successfully raised a Chinese sugar cane called "sorgho," which made excellent syrup. The Lightning steamer, *Tropic*, sank near Waverly, Mo. Samuel Stover, of Wyandotte, was shot in the face by a stranger near Mr. Cotter's, but would recover. An Indian by the name of Mundy fatally shot himself while hunting in the bottom near Quindaro. Shawnee lands for sale at \$1.25 per acre; Col. H. T. Titus brutally assaulted S. C. Pomeroy with a club in a courtroom at Kansas City. (It was unsafe for Free-State men to transact business there. Why did Kansas emi-

17. *Ibid.*, December 29, 1882.

grants build up and sustain the cities of their oppressors in Missouri?)

The spring of 1858 saw Quindaro's fine prospects slowly begin to fade, for the first year of Quindaro's existence saw most of its improvements made. Alfred Gray told of owning several lots on the hill and being offered five 20-dollar gold pieces for one of them in June, 1858. He turned the offer down, sure that the buyer would pay \$150, the same price the town company was asking for its residence lots. He mournfully recalled that the offer was never raised or even repeated and the buyer left town with the gold still in his pocket.

In the same month the newspaper had difficulty due to adverse economic influences. Publication was suspended, and Editor J. M. Walden returned to Ohio. A great financial panic had drawn the money out of the Western states, where the resulting depression was most severe and prolonged. One of the causes of this panic was the extended speculation in railroads and in towns such as Quindaro. The city suffered because the Free-State party no longer needed its port as an entryway into the territory, for it now controlled the legislature and it became evident that slavery could not flourish in the Kansas climate. The rivalry of Quindaro had caused a rebirth of every Proslavery Missouri river town in Kansas except Kickapoo. Leavenworth, Wyandotte, and Kansas City quickly became Free-State, equal-rights towns. Hard times continued through 1859, when Wyandotte county was formed, and Wyandotte City, only a few miles away, became the county seat. Most of the county was Indian land and not subject to taxation at the time of its formation, which cast the burden of the cost of the county government on the two towns, Wyandotte and Quindaro.

Up to that time Wyandotte City couldn't support a barber and some of its citizens were in the habit of walking to Quindaro to be shaved. In its heyday the *Wyandotte Gazette* confessed that there was more business in Quindaro in a day than in Wyandotte in a week.

In 1858 there were few new arrivals and business came to a standstill. George Park's fine hotel progressed to three stories, was then roofed over, but never finished inside. The churches and the town company kept hope for a while, contributing most of the building in that year. A Congregational church was dedicated on January 27, 1858, and the Methodist Episcopal church, in the resi-

dential section, was dedicated on April 25, 1858, by Bishop E. S. Janes, of New York City, who was returning from the annual conference at Topeka.¹⁸ Services had been held within its walls before it was completed, the first sermon having been preached by the Rev. Ephraim Nute, of Lawrence, on September 13, 1857. The preacher assigned to this charge was Richard P. Duvall, who served the Wyandotte, Quindaro, and Delaware churches.

As its income stopped due to these hard times, the town company was unable to meet expenses. Creditors sued individual members of the company and enforced their claims by taking unsold lots. Abelard Guthrie, who had invested in land and was considered a rich man, lost it all because of company debts. In his journal, he stated that he owned more than one half of the stock in Quindaro Company. He became very much embittered by his misfortune, blaming Charles Robinson, who came out of the situation in much better financial shape. It is impossible at this late date, with incomplete records available, to decide the controversies of that time. However, such documents as have survived, including Guthrie's journal, cast considerable discredit on Robinson.¹⁹

Quindaro didn't fall in a day, the decline took several years and many another Western town suffered at the same time. Some residents remained optimistic, hopeful for an upturn and various schemes were laid for the future. Plans for getting a railroad connection were almost promising. Guthrie spent much time at Washington in efforts to secure the terminus of the projected Pacific railroad. Thaddeus Hyatt and Charles Robinson were appointed agents of the city to promote appropriations of land for the extension of the Parkville and Grand River railroad to Quindaro and westward to San Francisco. Two letters of Mary A. C. Killiam to her aunt and cousin in New Hampshire survive, which were written in 1859. Her husband operated a hotel, and she confided that they made a living, "that is all these hard times in Kansas"; and that John Brown had been a boarder for several days.

Alfred Gray remained the most loyal resident. He had been the first mayor and later served as a member of the state legislature under the Wyandotte constitution. He became quartermaster of the Fifth Kansas cavalry, was first secretary of the State Board of

18. *Quindaro Chindowan*, January 30, April 24, 1858.

19. "Diary" of Abelard Guthrie.—See entry of February 16, 1858. A copy of the diary is in the manuscript division of the Kansas State Historical Society.

Agriculture, was appointed a commissioner to the Paris Exposition, and died in 1880.²⁰ He was also agent to look after a great deal of property in the derelict town; he wrote to one nonresident owner on August 1, 1861: "You have no conception of the entire prostration of all kinds of business [here]." The Civil War really gave Quindaro its knockout blow. All of the young men left to join the Union army and business stopped completely. From January 20 to March 12, 1862, the Ninth Kansas Volunteer infantry was quartered in the empty business buildings and underwent reorganization to become the Second Kansas cavalry.²¹ Officer control was slack, so the men proceeded to gut the town, tearing up everything movable for firewood, leaving a mere shell of the abandoned buildings a prey to weather, fires, and theft. The lot on which O. H. Macauley had built his warehouse had cost \$1,200; the second floor had housed the *Chindowan*, but in the course of time the building and lot were sold to Alfred Gray for \$5.00 and a pair of Chester White pigs.

Mrs. C. I. H. Nichols lived at Quindaro for about ten years. In 1882 she wrote a series of reminiscences of the town to the *Wyandotte Gazette* and recalls asking Nelson Cobb for the bricks in a chimney of a house that had burned. "Yes, Mrs. Nichols, if you will steal them," was his response. One day she was toiling up one of the hills, picking her way through the underbrush and trash of the townsite, and came across a man trying to move a heavy log with several yoke of oxen and much cursing. He said he never would have to come to Kansas, except he heard "that Mrs. Nichols" lecture in the East about it being such a smooth, level country.²²

C. M. Chase wrote a series of letters to the Sycamore (Ill.) *True Republican and Sentinel*. He says: "We visited Quindaro [in 1863] and found only one family there—a poor man and a crazy wife had strayed into the hall of the hotel and occupied a bunch of rags." In 1873 he revisited the place and thus reported to the *Vermont Union* of London, Vt.:

Quindaro was, but now she is not. One store with a granite front and iron posts stood as good as new and various other buildings were in good preservation, but empty. Governor Robinson [Kansas?] Avenue was graded back into the bluff 75 rods, where it stopped, leaving an embankment 20 feet high.

20. Quarterly Report of the State Board of Agriculture for the Quarter Ending Dec. 31, 1879, pp. 161, 162.

21. A. T. Andreas and W. G. Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago, 1883), p. 182.

22. *Wyandotte Gazette*, June 16, 1882.

Small cottonwoods had sprung up in the street and the owls were making selection of choice localities for places of abode. The solitary family of 1863 even has abandoned the place.

The legislature of 1862 repealed the act which incorporated Quindaro, and the town company was officially put out of business. Later the plat of the city was vacated, but most of it is now within the city limits of Kansas City.

In 1896 a list was compiled of early residents still living in Wyandotte county. The following were recorded from Quindaro, together with the dates of their arrival:

1849	James Zane
1853	George Zane
1857	Roger Sherman
	Loisa McIntyre
	Elisha Sorter
	Mrs. Effie Sorter
	Henry E. Sorter
	Mrs. Charles Morasch
1858	Helen Grafke
	R. M. Gray
1859	Mrs. S. G. Gray
1860	D. R. Emmons
	Fred Sorter

Dr. George M. Gray, who is still living, came to Quindaro at the age of two in 1858 with the family of R. M. Gray. His father was a merchant there and brother of Alfred Gray.

Hardly anything remains of the old business section of Quindaro now. A pipe line company has done grading there recently and covered up some of the rubbish and ruins which is all that endures of the proud hopes of its founders.

III. SIX-MILE HOUSE

Just west of Quindaro on the stage road to Leavenworth was Six-Mile House, a part of which is still in use. It was built in 1860 of polished black walnut as a tavern and became an important stop on the old stage route from Independence to Leavenworth. It was so named because it was just six miles from the Wyandotte ferry by the road, and is now one of the most fascinating buildings in the county. The land where it stood was acquired by J. A. Bartles on execution from its original Wyandotte Indian owner. Bartles and his son, Theodore, ran the notorious tavern.

As originally built, it consisted of nine rooms and two stories, with a wine cellar and secret closets. In 1894 its owner, James K.

P. Barker, had it cut in two. The front part was moved several hundred yards to the east where it is now the home of Edna Williams Jarvis and is designated as 4960 Leavenworth road. The back section, or the "L," was moved about 200 feet east to become a part of a barn, which has only recently been torn down. Barker then built a larger modern home on the former site which still stands. A fine well where travelers and stock of the stage line found refreshment still exists near the roadway which has become Kansas Highway No. 5. Andreas mentions the name of the stage line—Kimball, Moore & Co.—which ran from Westport to Weston in 1857 by way of Six-Mile and Leavenworth.

The eastern part of Wyandotte county was then quite rough, with deep ravines and steep hills, the whole covered with forest. The land belonged to members of the Wyandotte and Delaware tribes, and except for small clearings and the Kansas river bottom land; the balance was a tangle of matted vines, underbrush, and heavy timber. This was ideal cover for bushwhackers, guerrillas, and deserters, who made existence of the inhabitants a terror during the Civil War era when most young men were away in the army.

On August 3, 1861, the *Wyandotte Gazette* summed up the situation: thirteen murders had been committed in the county in the past two years; none had been punished. Other papers were full of accounts of robbery, horse theft, and kidnaping of free Negroes by visitors from across the Missouri. The citizens of Wyandotte met this critical situation with a people's court which often administered punishment by horsewhipping and hanging.

Six-Mile House became a well known rendezvous for vicious gangs. On July 17, 1862, a mass meeting was held by the citizens at the courthouse in Wyandotte to consider a means of putting out the fire. A "Committee of Safety" was formed with the avowed object of tearing down Six-Mile House as being a den of red-legs. Col. A. C. Davis was also castigated for the conduct of his regiment at Quindaro during the winter of 1861-1862. He had allowed his troopers to go across into Missouri to steal horses as well as destroy much property in the town. The next day this committee journeyed out to see Theodore Bartles, proprietor of Six-Mile, but were not shown the usual hospitality of the place. Bartles had heard of the projected visit and its purpose, had ridden to Fort Leavenworth to see the commandant, Gen. James G. Blunt. So the committee was surprised to find a company of soldiers from the fort encamped around Six-Mile. Blunt ordered that there be no destruc-

tion of property and the members of the committee were taken to the fort and required to give bond to keep the peace. Bartles was later arrested by local authorities but no evidence could be found against him. Three kidnapers were also arrested in the vicinity. Col. A. C. Davis had already left the county.

On December 18, 1862, a man named Smith was shot at Six-Mile House by a posse looking for horses stolen near Westport. Several companions were taken prisoner.

The *Gazette* also reported that on July 16, 1863, a party of bushwhackers crossed the Missouri river above Parkville with the intent to burn Wyandotte and Six-Mile. Some of these marauders were caught and taken to Kansas City for trial.

William E. Connelley in his *Quantrill and the Border Wars*, tells of a long acquaintance with Theodore Bartles, whom he describes as of the better class of "Red Legs." Bartles admitted to Connelley that he was a famous shot with the revolver; he had even defeated "Wild Bill" Hickok in many a contest of marksmanship! Bartles also is almost the sole authority for the curious tale of an attempt to warn the people of Lawrence of the Quantrill raid on August 21, 1863, sending Pelathe, a Shawnee Indian, from Six-Mile House on a midnight dash across the Delaware reservation. Bartles even furnished a fine thoroughbred horse for the desperate venture for Pelathe got to the Kansas river across from Lawrence just as the raiders fired the first shots in the doomed city.²³ I have been unable to verify this story from any contemporary source and if Pelathe followed the well-traveled road he didn't break any records.

After the war banditry continued in the locality. The paper of November 11, 1865, reported robbery in the vicinity. The next week it was further outraged because Dr. J. B. Welborn and wife, who later platted the area and gave it their name, were shot as they were sitting at home one evening by a charge of buckshot fired through the living room window. Both later recovered.

Old-timers can still show the tree near the site of the old hostelry where, during the war, a traveler and his son were hanged after being robbed by the bushwhackers. Sixty years ago neighbors of the tavern were convinced that ghosts of these victims still haunted the vicinity but the present owner will have no part of these tales. She is very gracious to visitors and will show the old bar with an arch over it where liquid inspiration was sold. Many a lurid adventure would entertain us if those old walls could reveal the past.

²³ William E. Connelley, *Quantrill and the Border Wars* (Cedar Rapids, 1910), pp. 319, 332-334.

The *Wyandotte Gazette* of December 30, 1881, reviewed the history of Six-Mile, as the locality around the tavern became known. It recalled that 15 years before, Six-Mile was quite a business center. It had a church, school house, blacksmith shop, a store, a hotel and a tobacco factory. The article went on to say that the Six-Mile post office had been moved to Braman Hill, one mile south.

"Young America" was the picturesque title given to a Delaware trading post on the road from Quindaro to Leavenworth about a mile beyond Six-Mile Tavern. Although the trader carried a stock of merchandise, "grog" was his fastest moving commodity. In his journal Abelard Guthrie tells of stopping there—that Indians in various degrees of intoxication were lying about as though a battle had just concluded.²⁴

24. "Diary" of Abelard Guthrie, entry of March 15, 1859.



QUINDARO KANSAS.

Surveyed Dec. 1856, by
O. A. BASSETT.

