

By the Kansas State Historical Society

TERRITORIAL CHARACTER: ANDREW REEDER

Andrew Reeder was the first territorial governor of Kansas. He supported the Kansas-Nebraska Act. The act allowed the residents of the territory to decide on the issue of slavery in Kansas. Reeder tried to stay neutral on the issue of slavery, which was not easy. He eventually joined the free-state movement.

What did Andrew Reeder do before he came to Kansas Territory?

Andrew Reeder was born in Pennsylvania. He completed high school in New Jersey. After his graduation he learned the law by working in a law office in Pennsylvania. He soon became a respected lawyer. He was reported to be a fine speaker. Reeder participated in politics but did not run for office.

Why did he come to Kansas Territory?

U.S. President Franklin Pierce appointed Andrew Reeder as governor of Kansas Territory. Reeder established his first office in Leavenworth. As the first governor of the newly formed territory, it was his job to set up the government. In a very short time, Reeder conducted an election for a congressional delegate to Washington D.C. He also ordered a census to record who was living in the territory. The census was needed in order to call for an election to create a territorial legislature.

