

By the Kansas State Historical Society

TERRITORIAL CHARACTER: CLARINA NICHOLS

Clarina Nichols was a newspaperwoman. She opposed slavery and was a leader in the women's rights movement. She made enormous contributions to the rights of Kansas women by influencing the state constitution.

What did Clarina Nichols do before she came to Kansas Territory?

Clarina Nichols was born Clarina Howard in Vermont. She received a very good education. As an adult she taught school and worked for a newspaper. She also founded a seminary for young ladies in New York. She divorced her first husband and married George Nichols. He was the editor of the newspaper for which she worked. When he died, Clarina Nichols became the editor of the *Windham County Democrat* in Vermont.

As a mother of four children she fought for the rights of women. In her newspaper she criticized the fact that married women could not share property ownership with their husbands. Nor did they have rights over their children. As more and more people learned of Nichols' work, she became a popular speaker.

Why did she come to Kansas Territory?

Clarina Nichols joined the New England Emigrant Aid Company, a group that supported free-state settlement of Kansas Territory. Nichols moved her family to a claim in southern Douglas County. She came to Kansas so that her sons could establish free-state homesteads.

