Work on a farm... this Summer

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“Putting up hay” has long been a critical part of most summertime farm operations. Like virtually all farm chores, the technology involved in harvesting this important Kansas crop has undergone many changes. This photograph from the Society’s Henry L. Wolf collection shows farm workers operating an early hay baler in Finney County around the turn of the century. The worker in the background and his two draft horses are operating a sweep rake which gathers the mowed hay from the field and brings it to the stationary, horse-powered baler.

Bales had many advantages over the traditional hay stack. They required less storage space and were easily loaded onto railroad cars. A crew of six to seven hands could bale about eighteen tons of hay per day with a horse-powered baler like the one pictured here. This was a significant reduction in the labor requirement over the old methods of handling loose hay. In 1910, Kansas farmers harvested nearly 4 million tons of hay valued at $27,698,000, making all types of hay the third most significant crop grown, trailing only corn and wheat.
The Kansas Congressional Delegation and the Lend-Lease Act of 1941
by Philip A. Grant, Jr.

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Veterans as Political Activists: The Kansas Grand Army of the Republic, 1880-1893
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The Fort Hays - Fort Dodge Road
by David Clapsaddle

Memoirs of a Santa Fe Railroad Man
By Herman Collins (1874-1953)
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Book Reviews

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