Windows To Yesterday

The Journals of the Kansas State Historical Society

by Patricia A. Michaelis

In the preface to volume fourteen of the Kansas Historical Collections, William E. Connelley, editor and secretary of the State Historical Society, apologized for not publishing that volume in 1915, when it originally was scheduled to appear. The volume, the first one published after the Society moved to the Memorial Building, covered the years 1915 through 1918, and Connelley offered the following explanation for the delay: "As most of our time was lost in moving the Society from the statehouse to the Memorial Building, and as there can never arise a similar cause for delay, it will be an easy matter to have future volumes of the Collections on time," Connelley here implied it was inconceivable that the holdings of the Kansas State Historical Society would ever fill the stately and elegant Memorial Building. Obviously Connelley's ability to foresee the future was limited to the Historical Society filled that building and has recently moved its library and archival holdings to a new research facility adjacent to the Kansas Museum of History. I imagine it would have been difficult for anyone living in the early twentieth century to anticipate the "paper explosion" ahead that would necessitate the construction of a separate museum in the early 1980s and the recently completed Center for Historical Research.

Pat Michaelis earned her MPhil and Ph.D. degrees in American History from the University of Kansas. She joined the staff of the Kansas State Historical Society in 1977, and since 1992 she has served as the director of the library and Archives Division.

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Throughout the eighty-one years that the Kansas State Historical Society occupied the Memorial Building, the publications of the Society reflected the historical interests of Kansans as well as the changing trends in historical research for the nation as a whole. The articles published, the collections used by researchers, and the documents edited and annotated for inclusion in the Collections, Kansas Historical Quarterly, and Kansas History also reflect the changing interest over time. Some themes such as the territorial period and the Civil War have been recurring. Every year or so at least one article, if not more, has focused on these two eras in Kansas history. Native Americans were a popular topic but the perspective often was that of missionaries who had worked in Kansas. By the middle of the twentieth century, Kansans and others in the nation and abroad had become fascinated with cowboys, and Kansas' cattle town history was of great interest. Kansas politics, the personal experiences of settling various parts of the state, local history, and ethnic groups also were popular topics. In some of the early volumes, particularly in Kansas State Historical Society presidential addresses, there are reflections on current events. The Collections contain numerous biographical sketches and autobiographical accounts of early days in Kansas, and later volumes continue to provide articles about the activities of Kansans. This article will offer some observations on the nature of Kansas history over the past eighty-one years as found in the three regular publications of the Kansas State Historical Society.

After the move to the Memorial Building, the Society published only four additional volumes of the Kansas Historical Collections, with the last one dated 1928. The original purpose of the Collections (initially called the Transactions of the Kansas State Historical Society), when that series began publication in 1881, was to publish the Society's biennial reports and items that were indicative of the nature of the Society's holdings. The biennial reports soon were published separately, but the early volumes of the Collections contain reprints of some of the primary resources held by the Society. Throughout its history, the focus of many of the items in the Collections had been biographical and autobiographical in nature with many of the pioneers during the territorial period submitting their personal memoirs. By 1918, however, Connelley was lamenting the fact that "the generation that settled and made Kansas is passing rapidly" and that volume fourteen marked "the practical close of the personal narrative of survivors of the vastly important territorial and Civil War days. In the future," he wrote, "these volumes will have to rely on the rich unpublished archives of the Society for their material." Connelley, not known for his modesty, concluded that "in the digest of the manuscript resources of our Society our volumes will take a higher place in dealing with historical problems." Volume fourteen reflects the beginning of this change and includes articles on history of state institutions such as the Kansas Penitentiary and the State Printing Plant and what Connelley described as "the first attempt to treat the Indian occupancy of the Great Plains country from a critical standpoint." (The article was written by Connelley.) It also includes four additional articles about Native Americans, with one of them based on archaeological explorations, and eight articles relating to the territorial and Civil War periods.

Volume fifteen of the Collections covers the period 1919 through 1922. It contains "the only attempt worthy of mention to show the processes of obtaining constitutional prohibition for Kansas." Written by Clara Francis, Kansas State Historical Society Librarian, the study was useful because, according to Connelley, "constant calls on the Society are made for information on this subject." The article traces the development of the prohibition movement in Kansas through the amendment of the state constitution in 1880. Two master's theses on topics now considered

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social and women's history were published in volume fifteen. Although primarily narrative rather than analytic, "The Development of Public Protection of Children in Kansas" and "State Regulation of Woman and Child Labor in Kansas" reflect the Progressive Era's interest in living and working conditions experienced by women and children.3 The volume acknowledges the influence of World War I in "A Summary of the Achievements of the American Expeditionary Force in France, 1917-1919" and an article on the founding of the American Legion. The 1918 presidential address of George P. Morehouse, a lawyer from Council Grove, was entitled "Kansas as a State of Extremes, and Its Attitude During This World War." At the beginning of the speech Morehouse noted: "It has been the custom, upon occasions such as this, for the retiring president . . . to be eulogistic of the state and her citizens and only to dwell upon pleasant things." That Morehouse's address was not typical of the speeches of outgoing Society presidents is evident from the following excerpt that took Kansas to task for their initial reluctance to support the war effort:

The tendency of our state to go to extremes along political and other lines was fully demonstrated during the present World War. From a condition of German worship and apology for its early warlike acts, Kansas passed into such a strong opposition to any form of war preparedness that it seemed that Topton propaganda had our schools, press, public men and churches completely under their direction. From that ridiculous and un-Kansan position the people suddenly changed to a wonderful enthusiasm for a vigorous war policy, such as we are now so earnestly supporting.

We have almost forgotten, and even try to conceal the fact, that Kansas started off on the wrong

foot in this grand march for the renovation of the world from the curse of kaiserism. We are now really ashamed of our tardiness in getting into this war game against the un-speakable Hun and are trying with all our might to work overtime in order to blot out our blundering, inconsistent, and foolish diplomacy. In times past Kansas had established a reputation for being a vigorous and militant commonwealth, but the country as a whole was shocked at our lack of wisdom and unusual spirit and criticized us severely. To many it appeared that we had gone back upon our cherished ideals . . . and had returned to that period of naivete existing when in Kansas Populist congressman once said, in opposition to a navy appropriation bill, "What do we want of battleships? they can't blow corn."

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"We must have gone 30 miles when we saw the first few herds of buffalos. The Canadian said, 'Let us stop and get some of these.' But the Captain [Van Matre] said, 'Why no, there is not enough to bother with.' So we went on further and further and could see more and more, all peacefully grazing on the mesquite grass (called Buffalo grass). We got in a fairly level country; the bands had become more and more plentiful [sic].

"We had on a sort of higher upper prairie, and we could see all around for perhaps 15 miles. The beautiful far away haze mized me of the Ocean where water and skies seems to join; and herds of buffalos were scattered all over.

"The captain had stopped, and he said, 'This is more like it. But we must find a camping place, a draw with some water,' and while he was standing up investigating some far away location, I was admiring the multitude of those creatures, and trying to count the compact herds. Some were small and some very large, from about 500 to 5000.

"I averaged them at 2,000 per band and counted 63 herds in full sight. Then there were a few struggling animals here and there. Then I could see some more on the far away horizon—too far away to make any guess on. No one but real buffalo hunters will believe this, hence I prefer to underestimate the number."

The account describes other buffalo hunts, peaceful encounters with Native Americans, and the destruction of the vast buffalo herds.

More than three-fourths of the fifty-nine articles in the next volume (seventeen) deal with the still popular themes of the territorial era, the Civil War, settlement, local history, and Native Americans. It also contains additional information on Kansas' Wild West past, however, and makes a significant contribution to the history of the cattle town era with the publication of Everett Dick's "The Long Drive." The cultural history of Kansas is represented by another master's thesis examining "Kansas in the American Novel and Short Story" and by a compilation of information about "Kansas Art and Artists." The publication of histories of state institutions continued with "The Kansas State Board of Agriculture: Some High Lights of History."

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The new Kansas Historical Quarterly's content included scholarly and popularly written articles similar to those found today in Kansas History, although the use of illustrations in the Quarterly was fairly limited. It continued to include accounts of the Society's annual meetings and several regular features.

Beginning with the first issue of the Quarterly, "Kansas History as Published in the State Press" notes historical articles published in the state newspaper. "Kansas Historical Notes" first appeared in the February 1932 issue and ran through the winter of 1976. This column provided news about the activities of county and local historical societies and other history-related organizations, information about upcoming celebrations of anniversaries of historical events, and other miscellaneous items deemed to be of interest to Society membership. "Bypaths of Kansas History" was inaugurated in February 1937 in order to publish some of the holdings of the Society's research collections—one of the purposes outlined at the inauguration of the Quarterly and a continuation of that tradition in the Collections. The items found in this column were not annotated but the fact that they were published made them more widely available to members of the Kansas State Historical Society.

In his history of the Society, Langsdorf, as noted previously, recognized the contributions of James Malin as associate editor of the Quarterly. A history professor at the University of Kansas, Malin had a broad-ranging interest in Kansas and Great Plains history and authored approximately forty articles, many of them running over several issues, in the Society's publications. Two early contributions were based on surveys of the Society's research materials related to the cattle range industry and Populism. He undertook a multi-part series entitled "Notes on the Writing of General Histories of Kansas" that evaluates some of the early histories of the state and the efforts of several organizations such as historical and philosophical societies involved in preserving the "materials of history."

Malin wrote numerous articles about John Brown and his activities in and outside Kansas based on the Society's holdings, a series of articles about Kansas philosophers, a three-part article on nineteenth-century dust storms, and two articles on emergency housing in Lawrence during the territorial period. His series of articles on the history of the production of various varieties of wheat in Kansas and the Great Plains and the connection of their success and failure to the weather and geography of the region was an early example of what is now known as environmental history. His interests in literature and culture were represented by numerous articles on Eugene Ware, a well-known Kansas poet during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and on several theatrical troupes and theaters in Kansas including one article on the "Dodge City Variety—A Summer Interlude of Entertainment, 1878."

7. Edgar Langsdorf, "The First Hundred Years of the Kansas State Historical Society," Kansas Historical Quarterly 4 (August 1979): 358-360. Technically, Macfarren was the Society's fifth secretary. Floyd Riker, who served for less than two months before being replaced by Franklin G. Adams (1875-1889), was "nominally the first secretary" of the Kansas State Historical Society, see Langsdorf, ibid., 307.


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as with the Collections and the First World War, the Quarterly recognized the importance of World War II to Kansans and included two articles about that conflict in 1945. The first features General Dwight D. Eisenhower who had gained worldwide prominence for his leadership during WWII. Kansans were proud to honor his accomplishments. The second article, which examined the role of Kansas manufacturing in supporting the war effort, is entitled "The Battle of Kansas."10 Other articles on the war appear in later issues of the publications, but the ones contemporary to the war indicate its pervasiveness on the home front.

Malin's own writings published in the Quarterly and his efforts as an associate editor, along with those of Kansas State Historical Society secretaries Kirke Mechem and Nyle Miller and subsequent editors, helped shape the nature of that publication. It was recognized for expanding the reader's knowledge of Kansas history through well-researched articles that often presented new perspectives on the history of the state. Political and economic issues, for example, were studied in articles such as "Some Phases of the Industrial History of Pittsburg, Kansas," "A History of Kansas Child-Labor Legislation," "Labor Problems During the First Year of Governor Martin's Administration," "Portrait of a Workers' Utopia: The Labor Exchange and the Freeomin, Kan., Coloky," and "Cat- klemen, Ranchers, and the Kansas Livestock Association—the 1890's."11

Beginning in 1946 Robert Taft, a chemistry professor at the University of Kansas, authored a fifteen-part series entitled "The Pictorial Record of the Old West" that explores the role of photography in contributing to our knowledge about the settlement of the West. Taft became known nationally as one of the first historians of western photographs, and he authored other articles for the Society such as one on Alexander Gardner's photographic documentation of the building of the Kansas Pacific Railroad. Taft's research notes, the primary resources he gathered in his studies of western photography, and his photograph collections later were donated to the Society.

A number of articles focused on foreign immigration to Kansas, including those that came as organized colonies for various purposes in addition to acquiring inexpensive land. The Quarterly contains accounts of the settlements of Germans, French, English, Swedes, and Mennonites in various parts of the state. Examples are "German Settlements Along the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway," "History of the French-Speaking Settlement in the Cottonwood Valley," and "Settlements Among the Mennonite Brethren at Gaddawan, Marion County."12

While accounts by and information about women appear in many of the edited primary resources, women were not often the subject of articles until the 1970s and later. One of the few exceptions is a 1943 study of "The Woman Suffrage Campaign of 1912."13 More recent attention includes "Women Officeholders in Kansas, 1872–1912" and "The Women's Land Army During World War II."14 African Americans fared only slightly better. One of the first accounts appeared in 1942 in "The Story of a Kansas Freedman," an edited version of the dictated reminiscences of Larry Laspsey, a slave who escaped from the South during the Civil War and settled in Sedgwick County. It describes some of his life as a slave and his escape to freedom. The first scholarly article, Dudley Cornish's "Kansas Negro Regiments in the Civil War," appeared in 1953. Other treatments of the experiences of African Americans in the Quarterly include a study of the town of Quindaro, an article on "Wyanedote and the First "Exodusters" of 1879," and one on "Nicoodemus: Negro Haven on the Solomon."15

Two long series based on the Society's holdings made their appearances in the early 1960s. "Some Notes of Kansas Cowtown Police Officers and Gun Fighters" was published in the midst of the nation's fixation with television westerns and was based on information from newspapers, various government papers in the state archives, county commission and law enforcement records, and other sources. The eleven-part series documents the activities of some of Kansas' most notorious citizens: Bat Masterson, Wild Bill Hickok, Luke Short, Bill Tilghman, and many more. Numerous original sources were reprinted as part of the series.16

The other major series, "Kansas Before 1854: A Revised Annals," began in the spring 1961 issue and ran for seven years. Louise Barry prepared this comprehensive compilation of pre-territorial activity that became Kansas. These annals drew heavily on the Society's holdings and included federal documents, eastern newspapers, and almost anything recounting the activities of whites and their interactions with Native Americans prior to 1854. Examples of the entries follow:

1828 The large Santa Fe caravan (about 170 men) which left Missouri in the fore part of May is said to have taken merchandise valued at $150,000 to New Mexico; and, by report, the smaller caravan (about 50 persons) which left the last of May, carried goods worth $41,000. Alphonso Wetmore captured the latter expedition. . . . Wetmore's company reached Council Grove on June 11; met a return caravan on the 12th; crossed Cow creek (in present Rice county) on the 24th; and on July 4 arrived at the Caches (Wetmore called them "Anderson's caches") of 1823 origin. There the caravan crossed the Arkansas and proceeded by way of the Cimarron desert route to New Mexico. . . . At Cantonment Leavenworth, on May 29, a post office was established—the first in what is now Kansas. Philip G. Randolph, first appointee, was succeeded as postmaster by Thomas S. Bryant on October 16, 1843. January—In a period of fine weather and break up of ice in the Missouri (during a winter described as a "long hard one"), the steamboat came up to Wetport Landing (Kansas City, Mo.). . . . Ministers William Patton and Wesley Brown, of Missouri, beginning a tour of Methodist Indian missions in "Kansas," arrived at the Indian manual labor school (present Junction county) on April 27. They "examined" the school on May 1, found 62 boys and 39 girls, representing some 12 tribes in attendance. Accompanied by the Rev. Thomas Johnson, they started for Kickapoo Mission on May 4, crossing the Kansas at the Delaware (for Grinter) ferry and stopping overnight at Dalwela Mission. . . . where the Rev. Edward T. Peery was in charge.17

As with the Collections and the First World War, the Quarterly recognized the importance of World War II to Kansans and included two articles about that conflict in 1945. The first features General Dwight D. Eisenhower who had gained worldwide prominence for his leadership during WWII. Kansans were proud to honor his accomplishments. The second article, which examined the role of Kansas manufacturing in supporting the war effort, is entitled “The Battle of Kansas.”

Other articles on the war appear in later issues of the publications, but the ones contemporary to the war indicate its pervasiveness on the home front.

Malin’s own writings published in the Quarterly and his efforts as an associate editor, along with those of Kansas State Historical Society secretaries Kirke Mechem and Nyle Miller and subsequent editors, helped shape the nature of that publication. It was recognized for expanding the reader’s knowledge of Kansas history through well-researched articles that often presented new perspectives on the history of the state. Political and economic issues for example, were studied in articles such as “Some Phases of the Industrial History of Pittsburg, Kansas,” “A History of Kansas Child-Labor Legislation,” “Labor Problems During the First Year of Governor Martin’s Administration,” “Portrait of a Workers’ Utopia: The Labor Exchange and the Freemen, Kan. Colony,” and “Cat-tlemen, Ranchers, and Nomadic Hordes: the Kansas Livestock Association—the 1890’s.”

Beginning in 1946 Robert Taft, a chemistry professor at the University of Kansas, authored a fifteen-part series entitled “The Pictorial Record of the Old West” that explores the role of photography in contributing to our knowledge about the settlement of the West. Taft became known nationally as one of the first historians of western photography, and he authored other articles for the Society such as one on Alexander Gardner’s photographic documentation of the building of the Kansas Pacific Railroad. Taft’s research notes, the primary resources he gathered in his studies of western photography, and his photograph collections later were donated to the Society.

A number of articles focused on foreign immigration to Kansas, including those that came as organized colonies for various purposes, in addition to acquiring inexpensive land. The Quarterly contains accounts of the settlements of Germans, French, English, Swedes, and Mennonites in various parts of the state. Examples are “German Settlements Along the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway,” “History of the French-Speaking Settlement in the Cottonwood Valley,” and “Settlements of the German and Mennonite Brethren at Gnadestadt, Marion County.”

While accounts by and information about women appear in many of the edited primary resources, women were not often the subject of articles until the 1970s and later. One of the few exceptions is a 1943 study of “The Woman Suffrage Campaign of 1912.” More recent attention includes “Women Officeholders in Kansas, 1872–1912” and “The Women’s Land Army During World War II.” African Americans fared only slightly better. One of the first accounts appeared in 1942 in “The Story of a Kansas Freedman,” an edited version of the dictated reminiscences of Larry Lapsley, a slave who escaped from the South during the Civil War and settled in Saline County. It describes some of his life as a slave and his escape to freedom. The first scholarly article, Dudley Cornish’s “Kansas Negro Regiments in the Civil War,” appeared in 1953. Other treatments of the experiences of African Americans in the Quarterly include a study of the town of Quindaro, an article on “Wyandotte and the First ‘Exodusters’ of 1879,” and one on “Nicolomas: Negro Haven on the Solomon.”

Two long series based on the Society’s holdings made their appearances in the early 1960s. “Some Notes of Kansas Cowtown Police Officers and Gun Fighters” was published in the midst of the nation’s fixation with television westerns and was based on information from newspapers, various governors’ papers in the state archives, county commissions and law enforcement records, and other sources. The eleven-part series documents the activities of some of Kansas’ most notorious citizens: Bat Masterson, Wild Bill Hickok, Luke Short, Bill Tilghman, and many more. Numerous original sources were reprinted as part of the series.

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Throughout the years a number of articles have focused on foreign immigration and settlements of ethnic groups. While accounts by and information about women (the ones left) appear in many of the edited primary resources, women were not often the subject of articles until the 1970s and later. African Americans (below) have fared only slightly better in earlier publications, although in recent years accounts of black history have appeared more frequently.

In 1978 the Kansas Historical Quarterly was replaced by Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains. The title change was accompanied by a change in size and layout, but initially the articles' contents were similar to those of the Quarterly. The format continued to evolve to modernize the look of the publication, and the articles in Kansas History began to reflect the broadening of the study of history nationally to include minorities, ethnic groups, women, and labor. Articles include such diverse historical topics as "Changing Climate in Kansas: A Late 19th-Century Myth," "The Appeal to Reason and American Socialism, 1911-1919," "People of the New Frontier: Kansas Population Origins, 1865," "The Birth of a Nation and the Kansas Board of Review of Motion Pictures: A Censorship Struggle," "Oil Field Camp Women and Mothers," "The Kansas Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, 1900-1930," and "Oz and Kansas Culture."

Several special issues of Kansas History have been published. Women's history was featured in the winter 1984-1985 issue, which includes articles on Carry Nation, Kate Richards O'Hare, women in the Populist movement, and the role of women's organizations in "Civilizing Kansas." Quilts are the focus of the spring 1980 issue. Articles feature the Kansas Quilt Project, which documented more than fifteen thousand quilts owned and made by Kansans, the role of quilting in women's lives, group quilting, quilts on the Kansas frontier, and the aesthetics of quilting. This issue also contains a section that served as the exhibit catalog for Textile Diaries: Quilts as Cultural Markers, a quilt exhibit that was displayed in the special exhibitions gallery of the Kansas Museum of History and traveled across the state. The centennial of the birth of Dwight D. Eisenhower is commemorated in the autumn 1990 issue of Kansas History. Here six different scholars contributed articles that examined portions of Eisenhower's military and political careers, his response to the civil rights movement, and his impact as president of the United States.

As previously indicated, the Kansas Historical Quarterly and Kansas History, in addition to scholarly articles, frequently contain edited primary resources, usually from the holdings of the Society. The "First Day's Battle at Hickory Point," in volume 1, number 1 of the Quarterly, was edited from the diary and reminiscences of Samuel James Reader, a territorial settler. Reader's diary and reminiscences are unique because they contain watercolor and pen-and-ink illustrations in a primitive style. Also featured in the first volume of the Quarterly are letters from the John G. Pratt manuscript collection that provide information about early Baptist missions in Kansas. The use of edited primary resources continued in most volumes of the Quarterly and frequently in Kansas History. Reminiscences, letters, and diaries of those participating in the Civil War, of missionaries working among Native Americans, and of prominent persons involved in other momentous events appear regularly. However, some of the most engaging diaries are


The annals, an invariably accurate twelve-hundred-plus-page reference work, were published in their entirety by the Society in 1972 as The Beginning of the West. The amount of research, preparation, and editing required for this monumental work is difficult to imagine and, amazingly, it was prepared in the pre-computer era.

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those depicting daily life activities of pioneers who settled the Plains. Abbie Bright's 1870–1871 diary, for example, describes how she baked bread while living with her brother Philip near Clearwater:

[May] 31st [1871]—Mrs. N [West] moved to town. She gave me her cat. Cats are very scarce here. [John] Robberts an acquaintance of brothers is stopping here. Not very convenient to have him. He has selected a claim next to mine. I am kept busy, sewing for Philip, caring for the garden and cooking. The baking is tedious, can only bake one loaf at a time in the dutch oven. I knead a loaf out, when that is light, I put it in the oven, and knead out another and when the first is baked, the second goes in oven, and the third is kneaded out. All day I must keep the oven hot enough to bake and brown the bread, which is quite a task and takes three hours or more. But Philip likes it, and so I enjoy baking. It takes me all fore noon to bake a batch of cookies, Can only bake five at a time."

In short and not always grammatically correct lines, Henry Raymond, a friend of the Masterson family of western lawmen fame, recorded his activities as a buffalo hunter near Dodge City in his diary that was published in 1965. "The" is Henry's brother Theodore, Abe is probably A.B. Mahew, and Ed, Bat, and Jim are the Masterson brothers.

Nov. 29, 1872
killed and skinned 13 buffalo. I killed one. The sick, Abe and Steve went to town, or rather started.

Nov. 30, 1872
Ed and Bat and me killed and butchered 17 buffaloes. Jim pegged.

Dec. 1, 1872
Ed and me butchered 10 bulks. Jim pegged. Indians at camp.

Dec. 2, 1872


have been at work on Uncle Eli's dugout. It is the south side of the river... We all played hop the handkerchief in the evening. There are lots of flowers around here.

April 1—Gene and I put on old dresses and went bathing in the river. The water was above our waists.

April 2—Very windy. We looked out from our room and saw bows and ribbons of all colors flying all over the prairie. A balloon's trunk had blown open. We saw 7 buffalo crossing the river. In the evening there was a splendid prairie fire northeast of us. There is a prairie fire in sight every night almost and sometimes 5 or 6.

May 26—Two loads of lumber came from Solomon City for our house. They raised the roof today. We went to a dance in Cawker. Arabella curled my hair and I wore my white dress and slippers. We all went in the wagon and sang all the way. The dance was in a little house with 3 rooms. Two sets could dance at once. They had fiddles. The music wasn't very good but we had a good time and danced till 2 o'clock then had refreshments and came home over the trails in the dark. Got home at 4:30.

Diaries such as these and other glimpses of the past as described in the words of people traveling through the area that became Kansas and those who made their homes here are contained throughout the "Collections Quarterly," and "Kansas History." In their entirety, these published versions of primary resources comprise a rich (although not comprehensive) and accessible documentary history of Kansas.

Likewise, these publications contain the Kansas State Historical Society's records in the Memorial Building, and those in the earliest volumes of the "Collections," are among the richest sources available for learning Kansas history. The diversity of articles written by professional and amateur historians is endless, with something to appeal to almost everyone. These publications are available at many public and school libraries and local historical societies, and many back issues are still available for purchase from the Society. Although the Society's publications are unparalleled sources for studying Kansas history, many subjects are yet to be explored and re-evaluated. Thus a need remains for the continued study and publication of information about the history of Kansas. The library, archives, manuscripts, photographs, and artifact collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, housed in the Kansas History Center, can provide the foundation for future endeavors, and the publications of the Kansas State Historical Society can provide the medium for sharing new interpretations of Kansas history with the public.
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Dec. 29, 1872
Ed and me went to Yahoos for two guns. Got two guns, went to main Kiows to hunt turkey. Saw fellow with cap made of hide off antelope head, with horns and ears on. Saw four antelope and lots of turkeys but killed none. But did not come. Nothing today.11

The first series of entries gives some perspective on the destruction of the buffalo herds, with eighty buffalo killed by three and four men over five days. A personal favorite, the diary of Luna Warner, appeared in 1966. Luna was fifteen years old when a large party (twenty-one persons) of extended family emigrated to Kansas in the 1870s. They settled near Cawker City, and her diary entries reflect her excitement about the adventure of moving as well as her youthful honesty:

March 29, 1871—Our family went out onto our land and commenced to dig a cellar. All the men have been at work on Uncle Eli's dugout. It is the south side of the river. . . . We all played drop the handkerchief in the evening. There were a lot of flowers around here. April 1.—Genoa and I put on old dresses and went bathing in the river. The water was above our waists. April 2.—Very windy. We looked out some noon and saw browns and ribbons of all colors flying all over the prairie. Arabella's trunk had blown open. We saw 7 buffaloes across the river. . . . In the evening there was a splendid fire north of us. There is a prairie fire in sight every night almost and sometimes 5 or 6. May 26.—Two loads of lumber came from Solomon City for our house. They raised the roof today. We went to a dance in Cawker. Arabella curled my hair and I wore my white dress and slippers. We all went in the wagon and sang all the way. The dance was in a little house with 3 rooms. Two sets could dance at once. They had fiddles. The music wasn't very good but we had a good time and danced till 2 o'clock then had refreshments and came home over the trails in the dark. Got home at 4:30.12

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