The Annual Meeting

THE fifty-sixth annual meeting of the Kansas State Historical Society and the board of directors was held in the rooms of the Society on October 20, 1931. Since the Society is required by law to submit a biennial report of its activities, a full account of the proceedings will appear in the biennial report to be published following the annual meeting of 1932. In order to avoid duplication, a summary only is given here.

The officers elected for the year 1931-1932 were John S. Dawson, president; Thomas A. Lee, first vice president; H. K. Lindsley, second vice president. The directors whose terms of office expired at the annual meeting were re-elected for three years. New directors elected to fill vacancies were: for the term ending October, 1933, Wilder S. Metcalf, Lawrence; Charles E. Beeks, Baldwin; T. F. Morrison, Chanute; Mrs. W. D. Philip, Hays; for the term ending October, 1932, John G. Ellenbecker, Marysville; John H. Wilson, Salina. Mrs. W. E. Connellley, widow of the late secretary of the Society, was elected to honorary membership.

The retiring president, Charles M. Harger, of Abilene, made a most interesting extemporaneous address. A summary of his talk, prepared by Mr. Harger, follows:

The President's Address

The annual meeting of the State Historical Society is merely a milestone in a long path of usefulness. Here we can evaluate our progress and plan for the future. The past year has been one of advancement, with new functions and revision of old ones to fit into the needs of these times. No organization of this kind can go on successfully without constant readjustment of its methods and the acceptance of new ideas that will further its object. This is what gives stimulation to its membership and accomplishment worth while in its achievements.

Recorded history, as other phases of civilization, is undergoing change. In the beginnings of historic time the record was of dates and persons. Wars, massacres, cruelty stalked across the pages. Revolutions, assassinations, all the brutal characteristics of untamed rulers, made the story. Later, affairs of state, of conquest by well-instituted armies, crept into the picture.

With the settlement of the new world came the recital of the trials and tribulations of settlerhood, of the varied methods evolved by pilgrim fathers to establish order in an environment strange in its physical aspects and a citizenry difficult to please in government.

Until within a century and a half of these times the history of America was of experiment, of migration to the West, of setting up new communities, later...
to be gathered into states. It was concerned largely with the objective, only incidentally with the subjective in human experience.

Gradually into our national life came modern problems of government, the complexities of industrial life, the dawn of new theories in social progress, the rise of literature, the press and rapid communication. The tide of population swept to the Pacific coast and turned back on itself—there was no more free land, Uncle Sam was not "rich enough to give us all a farm"—his farms were exhausted. Storm and stress of a civil war disturbed and then abated. This nation finished one era and began another. Settlement in its first forms of development was over. Succeeding came the period of ideas, of changing social orders, of problems of maintaining among more than a hundred million persons constituting our population a rational procedure in living so framed as to give to each his opportunity and to protect the weak against the strong.

Somewhat parallel to this hastily sketched program has been the history of Kansas. The Kansas State Historical Society is entering a new era, one in which it has to deal with the subjective rather than the objective. For more than a third of a century it has been gathering the facts of early settlerhood. Marvelous is this collection of historical material preserved for the future. But Kansas is not old. We shall by continuing the process eventually gather all available records of what our forefathers did and how they developed this commonwealth. The efforts of this Society and of the county associations—that are working toward the same end—must some day have the picture of settlerhood completely recorded.

After this comes the period when we consider causes, events, civic and social accomplishments rather than the story of the pioneer. The rise and fall—or the establishment—of movements in government; the psychology of social trends; the spectacular rise of new leaders—and why; the cross currents in the commonwealth's administrations—what all these factors in Kansas life mean and how they were evolved—all these are to be part of the Society's endeavor, and upon it rests the duty of preserving these while they are fully attainable and their interpretation—or at least their real historic value—is possible.

The preservation of material things—pictures, diaries, furniture of significance—is not to be belittled. These have their place. No one can traverse the countryside of Virginia valleys or the hills and vales of New England without being impressed by the devotion to their noble history that animates their people. Kansas has no history going back 300 years as do they. Its history is recent. Many of those who took part almost in its beginnings are yet with us. It is far simpler to record events than in older commonwealths. Hence this Society has opportunity for a comprehensive record that will not only preserve every possible feature of the beginnings of things but may add to this an interpretation of the events that have come in the building of the structure of state and in its many significant activities.

Kansas is making history to-day that is as fascinating as any in its past. Present-day events will be as interesting to future generations as is to us the record of pioneering and settlerhood. The new era is concerned with things spiritual rather than with adventure; it touches on economics and social readjustments. The story of trends in government, in education, in rural and urban life will never end.

Coming historians will look back on these years as offering material for
speculation as to what sort of people we were in the second decade after the World War. They will realize that Kansas faced a type of problems new to its experience, and will seek to determine how it met them. The stress of economic conditions—its effect on community life, on government, its influence in retarding progress or in arousing a determination to conquer and so spiritually uplifting the people to new heights—will be analyzed to decide what kind of men and women made the Kansas of to-day.

The history of these times should be preserved fully that it may be known by those who come after how calmly, fearlessly and intelligently this commonwealth overcame difficulties—for so it will solve its problems. Kansas has ever won victories; it has never known defeat. We shall fail in our full duty if we do not visualize for future generations the strong manhood and womanhood of this Kansas of our period.

We should not devote all our energies to gazing into the past, for we are makers of history now, writing a page in the chronicle of the state’s accomplishments that challenges in abundant interest the pages our forefathers inscribed. All the glory of days gone by was but the forerunner of the greater glory of the Kansas of to-day.

The Society has a wider field than merely the local tradition. In every county should be an historical society that will have for its object the preservation of material and records that pertain to its own existence. The state Society has for its field the consideration of broader trends in development. Notable as its accomplishments, it cannot hope to cover every minor field. To devote its attention to those matters that relate to the state as a whole seems to me its true function. If we accomplish that successfully, if we give to that our unified attention, if we make this Society a group of earnest seekers for establishing a picture of Kansas as its history develops and so arrange and preserve that record as to make it available to those who come after us we shall have accomplished its high purpose. This is the duty that lies before us as members of the Society. This is the path that will lead the Society to its greatest usefulness and make its endeavors a satisfaction to this generation and of notable value to our children and our children’s children.

The members of the executive committee for the year 1930-1931 were W. W. Denison, chairman; E. A. Austin, H. K. Brooks, Thomas A. Lee, T. M. Lillard. This committee was reappointed by President Dawson for the year 1931-1932. The annual report of the executive committee for the year ending October 20, 1931, follows:

**Report of Executive Committee**

The executive committee of the board of directors of the Kansas State Historical Society hereby submits the following report:

Monthly meetings of the committee have been held except during the summer months, at which the president, Mr. Harger, and the secretary, Mr. Mechem, attended.

The committee has examined the vouchers made in the expenditure of funds from the membership-fee fund, and three members of the committee, in accordance with the constitution and by-laws, have approved of all the vouchers for such expenditures.
The state accountant has audited and checked the books of the treasurer and the receipts and disbursements of the Society, including state appropriations and other receipts and disbursements.

The committee has reconciled the books of the treasurer of the Society with the report of the state accountant and with the cash certified to be on hand by the National Bank of Topeka to the credit of the Society.

The special committee of seven appointed by the president to rewrite or revise the charter, constitution and by-laws of the Kansas State Historical Society, performed this duty and made a report revising the charter, constitution and by-laws, practically following the constitution and by-laws of the American Historical Society, which by the direction of the executive committee has been approved and copies sent out to each member of the board of directors of the Society more than four months prior to the annual meeting now in session. The committee recommends its adoption.

The president and secretary recommended to the executive committee the publication of a quarterly in place of the annual or biennial bound volume of the Collections. The executive committee approved this recommendation and the first number of the Quarterly is now ready for distribution.

The executive committee accepted the generous offer of John A. Hall, Esquire, of Pleasanton, Kan., to deed to the Society a small tract of land near Pleasanton, Kan., of very considerable historical interest from several points of view, explained more fully in the secretary's report.

The executive committee takes pleasure in reporting to the Society that our president, Mr. Charles M. Harger, has shown a most unusual and diligent interest in the affairs of the Society, unexcelled by any previous president, and the committee hereby tenders to him the thanks of the Society for his services.

The committee further reports to the Society its very real satisfaction with the services of our new secretary, Mr. Kirke Mechem. We feel that the Society has made unusual progress during the past year under his efficient and able management.

Further actions of the committee will be shown by the secretary's report to the Society.

Respectfully submitted,

W. W. Denison, Chairman,
Edwin A. Austin,
Thomas Amory Lee,
Henry K. Brooks,
T. M. Lillard,
Committee.

The report of the secretary, as read at the annual meeting, is given below. The report in detail will appear later in the biennial report:

Report of the Secretary

The Society in the past year has progressed steadily in all departments, both in volume of accessions and in usefulness to the public. In the affairs of an organization so large and so well established there is little necessity for innovation. With the exception of the new work being done in the archives department and the establishment of the Quarterly there have been no changes. This statement, therefore, is mostly a recital of the volume of routine work ac-
completed. While our staff is limited it is efficient and harmonious, and it handles smoothly the many demands made upon it.

The secretary has been greatly assisted in the work of the year by the president of the Society, Mr. Charles M. Harger, and by the executive committee. The executive committee has met regularly once a month, and all matters of importance have been referred to it. Mr. Harger came from Abilene for nearly every meeting.

LIBRARY

The library has had a normal growth in number of accessions and in volume of business transacted. The loan file constantly increases in number of subjects and in usefulness. During the year approximately 2,000 requests for information were received. Much help was given to students preparing thesis material.

Accessions to the library proper and to the archives and newspaper sections for the year ending June 30, 1931, were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Accessions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books (volumes)</td>
<td>886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pamphlets</td>
<td>2,909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers and magazines (volumes)</td>
<td>1,149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archives:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separate manuscripts</td>
<td>84,445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuscript volumes</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maps</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maps, atlases and charts</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pictures</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These accessions bring the totals in the possession of the Society, including the museum, to the following figures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library, including books, pamphlets, bound newspapers and magazines</td>
<td>336,247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archives, separate manuscripts</td>
<td>847,699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archives, manuscript volumes</td>
<td>26,541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archives, maps</td>
<td>414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maps, atlases and charts</td>
<td>10,051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pictures</td>
<td>14,082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum objects and relics</td>
<td>32,430</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ARCHIVES

The 1931 legislature gave the Society two additional clerks for repairing and calendaring manuscript material in the archives. These clerks began work the first day of July. In order to be able to institute proper methods the secretary made a trip to the East, where he inspected processes used in the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library and the Pennsylvania Historical Society. The preservation and cataloguing of manuscripts presents a difficult problem in any institution, and this is especially true in one like ours, where the work is new and the methods unfamiliar. Progress is slow and but little headway can be made by two clerks on the vast collections owned by the Society. We have been taking inventory and have unearthed hundreds of priceless manuscripts that have been stored away uncatalogued and forgotten. It is essential that this source material be made available to the historian and the public, and it is hoped that two more clerks may be secured at the next session of the legislature.
Many valuable accessions have been received by the archives department. Notable among the additions to official state documents was the voluminous accession which came from Gov. Clyde M. Reed, including thousands of letters from the general office correspondence of former governors.

NEWSPAPER SECTION

The death on March 10 of William E. Bacon, who for thirty years had been in charge of the newspaper section, was a severe loss to the Society. Mr. Bacon had a wide acquaintance in the state, especially among newspaper men, and he had done much to build up what is one of the largest newspaper collections in the country.

The Society is now regularly receiving 725 newspapers and periodicals. Of these 56 are dailies and 504 are weeklies. The 1931 legislature appropriated $1,800 for new steel shelving, which is now installed and which for the time relieves the congestion in this department. It is still necessary to stack hundred of volumes of out-of-state newspapers on benches. New shelves for these are necessary for their proper preservation. Outstanding among newspaper accessions for the year were 81 volumes of Leavenworth newspapers dating from 1864 to 1921, which the late D. R. Anthony II, of Leavenworth, donated to the Society before his death. In September the Society made a gift of 186 volumes of duplicate northwestern Kansas newspapers to the State Teachers College at Hays. The 1931 annual list of Kansas newspapers and periodicals received by the Society was published in June.

MUSEUM

The museum continues to be the most popular department with the general public. During the year ending June 30, 1931, the attendance was 29,546. The total number of accessions was 131. With the exception of the Goss collection of birds, all the relics in the museum have recently received a thorough cleaning and have been newly labeled. The 1931 legislature appropriated money to give the walls a much-needed plastering and painting. This work is now being done and the museum will be closed for nearly two months.

KANSAS UNIVERSITY SEMINAR

For the first time in the history of the Society a class of students did special research work under the direction of an instructor. Dr. James C. Main, associate professor of history at Kansas University, conducted a seminar during the last summer and six students of the University spent their full time examining source material. In addition to this class many other students, a number of whom came from universities out of the state and in the East, did special work. Also, several well-known writers and historians consulted the Society’s records. Much constructive use was made of source material during the past year.

MEMBERSHIP

The year since the last annual meeting has been a most successful one from standpoint of membership. We now have 716 life members and 234 annual members. Since the last meeting 102 life members have been enrolled, considerably more than in any one year in the history of the Society. Senator H. K. Lindsay, of Wichita, personally secured 68 of these. Aside from his personal efforts there has been no membership campaign. The secretary ex-
pects to make a more systematic effort to secure members as soon as the press of other work will permit. The membership of the Society, considering its size and importance, is not nearly as large as it should be.

THE KANSAS HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

For some years many members have felt that quarterly publication of the historical material printed in the biennial collections would be of advantage to the Society. This, of course, was not criticism of the content of the Collections, since their popularity has always testified to their worth, but it was believed that the unwieldiness of the volumes and the infrequency of their appearance set a regrettable limit to their use and value. After investigation by a special committee and approval by the executive committee of the committee's report, the proposal was submitted to the board of directors by letter for approval. With only one exception the answers expressed full approval. Over the two-year period the Quarterly will publish approximately as much material as did the biennial Collections, and it is believed that their more frequent appearance will be of greater value in maintaining the interest of our members.

PUBLICITY

In the belief that publicity about the activities of the Society will attract members and increase its usefulness, a series of newspaper stories has been written and will be sent regularly to all the leading daily and weekly newspapers of the state. The first of these was released this week. For the past three months station KFBI, owned by the Farmers & Bankers Life Insurance Company, of which Senator H. K. Lindsley, a director of this Society, is president, has been broadcasting a series of biographical sketches of eminent Kansans which were prepared by this Society. By this means a wide distribution of historical information is secured, for which the Society is given proper credit. The new Kansas Historical Quarterly, it is believed, will also attract new friends to the Society.

LOCAL AND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

Since the last annual meeting two county historical societies, two local historical societies, and one old settlers association have affiliated themselves with the state Society by taking out life memberships. In addition the Society has given assistance to the organizers of three other county historical societies not yet affiliated. Since our records show only twelve county historical societies in the state it is felt that the past year represents a good beginning upon what should develop into an important branch of the Society's activity. In this connection it may be of interest to know that the Society has given advice and instruction to several persons planning to write county histories.

County societies are asked to submit annual reports prior to the Society's annual meeting. Only one complied this year, the Hodgeman County Society. This society reports a membership of 119. It held eight meetings during the year, possesses 50 manuscripts relating to county history and has collected 212 historical relics.

SHAWNEE MISSION

The most important of the properties belonging to the Society is the Shawnee Mission at Kansas City, Kan. In their present condition these buildings do little credit to the state. The north building is in such a bad state of re-
pair that visitors cannot be admitted. The east building has had considerable work done upon it and is fairly presentable. It was discovered this spring that all the original oak and walnut studding had rotted out and the building had to be jacked up and new timbers installed. When the plastering and painting which is to be done this fall is finished this building will be in good condition. The legislature reduced our appropriation for repairs at the Mission below what we thought was necessary. However, it allowed $500 a year for 1931 and 1932 for landscaping. Under the supervision of L. R. Quinlan, of the Kansas State College at Manhattan, the first year’s appropriation was used in grading the grounds and seeding them to blue grass. The Shawnee Mission Floral Club is installing at its own expense a lily pool and rock garden.

**FIRST CAPITOL OF KANSAS**

The First Capitol building, on highway 40 near Fort Riley, continues to attract many visitors. Road signs erected by the Junction City Chamber of Commerce have greatly increased the attendance. There were 9,349 visitors for the five months ending with September, an increase of 1,788 over the corresponding period last year.

**PIKE PAWNEE MONUMENT**

Pike Pawnee monument, near Republic, was improved last spring by the addition of a slate promenade with stone trim about the base. It has been suggested to interested persons in Republic that the road from the town to the monument be suitably marked.

**KANSAS FRONTIER HISTORICAL PARK**

The 1931 legislature established at Hays the Kansas Frontier Historical Park on the site of old Fort Hays. The park is under the control of a board of five, of which the secretary of the Historical Society is a member. On the 23d and the 24th of June the citizens of Hays celebrated the dedication of the park and the thirtieth anniversary of the Kansas State College. It was estimated that 10,000 persons visited the two old stone buildings and heard Gov. Harry H. Woodring dedicate the park. Vice President Charles Curtis spoke in the auditorium of the college in the morning. Charles M. Harger, president of the Historical Society and chairman of the State Board of Regents, presided at both meetings.

**GIREAU TRADING POST**

John A. Hall, of Pleasanton, a director of the Society, recently gave to the Society the site of the old Gireau trading post. This is situated in the town of Trading Post, where Highway 73E crosses the Marais des Cygnes river. It is in the center of a section full of historical associations. The site itself marks the spot where Michael Gireau traded with the Indians as early as 1834. It was later the site chosen by General Scott for the erection of barracks, before Fort Scott was established in 1842. It was here that John Brown dated his famous _Parallels_, which were written in January, 1859. Only a few miles northeast the Marais des Cygnes massacre occurred; just outside the town the bodies of the victims now lie; here General Pleasanton quartered his troops during the winter of 1864; and only a few miles south of the near-by town of Pleasanton the battle of Mine Creek was fought.

In addition to giving the site Mr. Hall will pay one-half the cost of a
permanent marker which will be erected. Signboards descriptive of the historical significance of the site and surrounding country will be erected.

Respectfully submitted,  
KIRK MECHEN, Secretary.

REVISED CHARTER, CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

As directed by the Society at its 1930 meeting, the president appointed a committee to revise the charter, constitution and by-laws. The members of the committee were George P. Morehouse, chairman; Mrs. Lucy Greene Mason, John S. Dawson, T. F. Doran, and James C. Malin. The revisions as prepared by this committee were submitted to the executive committee. After approval by the executive committee they were submitted in writing to the directors. In the absence of Mr. Morehouse, chairman, the revisions were presented to the members of the Society at the annual meeting by James C. Malin. Upon vote, they were unanimously adopted. The revised charter, constitution and by-laws, as adopted, follow:

CHARTER

Be it resolved by the Kansas State Historical Society: That the charter of said Society, heretofore filed with the secretary of state on December 15, 1875, as amended June 2, 1928, by the action of its executive committee, be further amended to conform to the provisions of the constitution and by-laws of said Society adopted by it December 3, 1912, and that section 4 be amended to read as follows:

Fourth. The said corporation shall be managed by a board of ninety-nine directors of three classes, one class of thirty-three to be elected each year at the annual meeting of the Society.

And further be it resolved by the Kansas State Historical Society: That the amendment of section 2 of the said charter, duly adopted by the executive committee of the Society May 28, 1928, and duly filed with the secretary of the state of Kansas, June 2, 1928, by which amendment power is given to acquire by purchase and otherwise title to historic spots, together with the authority to improve and repair grounds and structures, be and the same is hereby confirmed and approved.

CONSTITUTION

Section 1. The name of this Society shall be the Kansas State Historical Society.

Sec. 2. Its object shall be the promotion of historical studies.

Sec. 3. The Society shall consist of annual, life and honorary members, to be elected by the board of directors. Fees and dues of life and annual members shall be fixed by the board of directors. The term of life and annual membership shall begin with the date of payment of fees or dues, subject to election by the board. County and city historical societies may affiliate with the state Society by taking out one life membership and may elect one delegate member. Editors and publishers of newspapers and periodicals who contribute
regular issues of their publications to the Society shall be considered annual members during the continuance of such contributions.

Sec. 4. The officers shall be a president, a first vice president, a second vice president, a secretary and a treasurer. The president and the vice presidents shall hold office for a term of one year. The term of office for the secretary and treasurer shall be two years, each new term to begin on July 1 after election.

Sec. 5. There shall be a board of directors consisting of ninety-nine, who shall be elected from among the members, and who shall maintain their residence in Kansas. The directors shall serve for three years and shall be divided into three classes, one class of thirty-three to be elected each year. Vacancies on the board shall be filled for the unexpired term by the executive committee. Any number not less than ten shall constitute a quorum.

Sec. 6. The board of directors, in conformity with the state laws governing the Society, shall conduct the business, manage the property, and care for the general interests of the association. In the execution of its proper functions the board of directors may appoint such committees, commissions and boards as it may deem necessary.

For the transaction of necessary business when the board of directors is not in session, there shall be an executive committee of five members, to be chosen from among members of the board of directors, as follows: The president elected at the 1931 meeting shall appoint two members for one year and three members for two years, and thereafter each newly elected president shall appoint members to fill vacancies as they expire, the term being two years. Subject to the general direction of the board of directors, and in conformity with the state laws governing the Society, the executive committee shall be authorized to exercise the powers of the board, and shall be responsible for the management of the Society and the carrying out of its policies.

Sec. 7. The annual meeting shall be held in Topeka on the third Tuesday in October. Any number not less than fifteen shall constitute a quorum.

Sec. 8. This constitution may be amended at any annual meeting, notice of such amendment having been given at the previous annual meeting, or the proposed amendment having received the approval of the executive committee and having been submitted in writing to the members of the board of directors at least three months previous to the annual meeting.

BY-LAWS

1. The officers provided for by the constitution shall perform the duties and functions customarily attached to their respective offices, together with those fixed by law, and such others as may from time to time be prescribed. The secretary and treasurer shall be required to give satisfactory bonds.

2. Income from membership fees shall be used to supplement state appropriations. All warrants drawn on the treasurer shall be upon sworn vouchers approved by a majority of the members of the executive committee. The executive committee shall examine and audit the accounts and vouchers of the treasurer annually before the time of the annual meeting, and at the annual meeting they shall make a written report to the board of directors.
3. There shall be a committee on nominations, to consist of five members of the board, to be selected by the president. It shall be the duty of this committee, annually, at some time previous to the annual meeting, to make a selection of persons whom they deem proper to recommend for officers and members of the board of directors, and shall present the same for action at the annual meeting. If elective offices become vacant it shall be the duty of this committee to nominate candidates; vacancies on the directorate shall be filled by the executive committee.

Kirke Mecham, Secretary.