Kansas Historical Notes

A business meeting of the board of managers of the Fort Hays Frontier Historical Park was held April 1, 1940, at Hays. The park was inspected and several suggestions made for further improvements. Plans for the future include erection of markers on the sites of the old fort buildings, placing of memorials honoring Generals Custer, Sherman, Forsyth, Lawton and other famous commanders at the fort, and marking of the old Fort Hays-Fort Dodge trail. C. E. Rarick, of Fort Hays Kansas State College, was re-elected chairman of the park board of managers.

New officers of the Kansas Commonwealth Club were elected at the 1940 annual meeting held recently in Wichita. They include: O. F. Sullivan, president; Grover C. Dotzour, first vice-president; S. M. Swope, second vice-president; Mrs. D. W. Basham, third vice-president; Mrs. W. E. Haines, fourth vice-president; Amy Burton, recording secretary; R. M. Cauthorn, executive secretary, and Dr. H. C. Holmes, treasurer.

Frank Cooper was elected president at the organization meeting of the Lincoln County Historical Society held at Lincoln on April 25, 1940. Other officers chosen were Glenn Sheppard, vice-president; Thelma J. McMullen, secretary, and Floyd Sowers, treasurer. A campaign for additional members was announced, and plans were made for the collection and display of historical photographs, documents and relics. Nearly 300 persons attended the society's first general meeting on June 9 at Lincoln.

The following officers were elected to head the Wichita Public Museum Association at the recent annual meeting: O. A. Boyle, president; Mrs. D. W. Basham, first vice-president; Bertha V. Gardner, second vice-president; R. M. Cauthorn, secretary, and H. D. Lester, treasurer.

At a meeting held in Clay Center on May 20, 1940, a Clay County Historical Society was organized and the following officers elected: president, Mrs. Laura Stratton; vice-presidents, B. F. Hemphill and Mrs. George Kreeck; secretary-treasurer, Mrs. E. T. Pyle. Directors are to be chosen from each township and community in the county. The executive committee consists of nine members. The object of the society is to study the history of the county and to preserve pictures, relics and documents illustrative of the early days.
On May 30, 1940, a marker was dedicated commemorating a battle between Cheyenne Indians and the Eighteenth Kansas cavalry, which occurred in August, 1867, near present Long Island in Phillips county. The ceremonies were conducted at Long Island by the Phoebe Dustin chapter of the D. A. R.

After more than two years of work the Clark County Council of Clubs on June 23, 1940, dedicated a monument on Monte Casino, near Ashland, marking the site of a Benedictine monastery erected in 1876. The project was carried out by the council as part of its program for marking historic sites, and was accomplished with the assistance of thirteen organizations representing the entire county. Several articles on the monastery have been printed in the "Clark County Historical Society Notes," in The Clark County Clipper, Ashland, and are mentioned elsewhere in this issue of the Quarterly.

Sister Mary Paul Fitzgerald, instructor in history in Saint Mary college at Leavenworth, is the author of a book, *Beacon on the Plains* (Leavenworth, 1939), which reviews the history of Osage mission, founded in 1847 by the Jesuits. The theme of the book is the significance of the religious motive in the settlement of Kansas, in contrast to the usual treatment which tends to emphasize economic and political factors at the expense of all others. The author does not assert that religion was the most important urge in westward expansion, or that settlement could not have been accomplished without it, but does believe that "de facto religion was an always present and therefore constant factor. . . ." Sister Mary's main purpose, as stated in her introduction, is "to set forth the peculiar character of a great missionary enterprise and its contribution to the making of Kansas." Materials for the study are chiefly from Catholic sources, adequately supplemented by manuscript and printed works.

An autobiography, *Days of My Life*, by Mrs. Flo V. Menninger, of Topeka, was published in 1939 by Richard R. Smith, New York. The greater part, Mrs. Menninger explains in a foreword, was written in 1899, although some material was subsequently added. It was written primarily to be read by her children, as a record of a life different from their own, and it was published at their request. The subtitle, "Memories of a Kansas Mother and Teacher," explains adequately the character of the narrative. The original manuscript has been donated to the Kansas State Historical Society.
Joseph G. McCoy’s *Historic Sketches of the Cattle Trade of the West and Southwest* (1874) was edited by Dr. Ralph P. Bieber, associate professor of history in Washington University, St. Louis, Mo., and was republished in Volume VIII of his *Southwest Historical Series* (The Arthur H. Clark Company, Glendale, Cal., 1940). In the sixty-eight page introduction Doctor Bieber presented a well-documented history of the cattle trade in the Kansas region. He annotated the original McCoy work and furnished considerable biographical information on McCoy. For sixteen years Doctor Bieber has been gathering notes on the cattle trade. He was qualified to edit the 1874 edition which is now scarce and is seldom to be found for sale.

*A Guide to Leavenworth, Kansas*, one of the publications of the American Guide Series compiled and written by the Kansas division of the Federal Writers’ Project, was issued in May, 1940, from the press of the Leavenworth Chronicle. It is a sixty-seven page volume, amply illustrated, describing and reviewing the history of the city and its institutions, and including two routed tours to points of interest in the county. The work was sponsored locally by the Leavenworth Chamber of Commerce, and was carried on under the editorial direction of Harold C. Evans.

*Cattle Trails of the Old West* by Col. Jack Potter, edited and compiled by Laura R. Krehbiel (Clayton, N. M., 1935 and 1939), is a volume of stories and reminiscences by a veteran cattleman and range-rider of the old Southwest. Of special interest to Kansas historians is the explanation and tracing of the old cattle trails, particularly the Chisholm and the Western (Dodge City) trails over which, according to Colonel Potter, some nine million cattle were driven. Several cut-off and intersecting trails are also described, and a folded map inserted in the volume shows the routes.