Kansas Historical Notes

The American Pioneer Trails Association and the Oregon Trail Memorial Association will sponsor a caravan to follow the general route of the old Santa Fe trail from Kansas City to Santa Fe, N. M., August 15-25, 1942. Those interested in making the journey are invited to join the travelers at Kansas City, Mo., August 15. From Kansas City the party will proceed by private automobiles to Santa Fe, stopping at important cities, markers and other places of interest en route. Further particulars of the proposed pilgrimage may be obtained from John G. Ellenbecker, of Marysville, president of the Kansas council of the trails association.

At a meeting of the Shawnee Mission Indian Historical Society, September 22, 1941, the following officers were elected: Mrs. X. O. Meyer, president; Mrs. Clifton Shepard, vice-president; Mrs. Percy Miller, recording secretary; Mrs. Frank Lyle, treasurer; Mrs. A. V. Fuller, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Carl Harder, historian; Mrs. C. A. Brooks, curator.

Officers of the Hodgeman County Historical Society, elected at the annual meeting at Jetmore October 10, 1941, are: L. W. Hubbell, president; Mrs. Margaret Mooney, vice-president; E. W. Harlan, secretary; Mrs. O. L. Teed, treasurer; Mrs. Margaret Raser, historian; L. H. Raser, Mrs. Mooney and O. W. Lynam, directors. Mrs. Raser was appointed chairman of the program committee.

Kansas' own "Fighting Twentieth" infantry held its annual reunion in Topeka October 12 and 13, 1941. At the banquet Gen. Chas. I. Martin, a captain in the old regiment, and Walter Wilson, state treasurer, delivered addresses. Mrs. Anna Matterson, 92, of Rogers, Ark., widow of a Civil War veteran who had two sons in the Twentieth Kansas, was honored. Newly elected officers are: William Callahan, Leavenworth, president; Albert M. Shipley, Coffeyville, vice-president; Harry Brent, Topeka, secretary and treasurer; Jerry Springstead, Topeka, historian; Homer Limbird, Olathe, chairman of the Funston memorial committee. The Twentieth Kansas auxiliary elected Mrs. L. E. Coffield, Yates Center, president; Mrs. Arthur Gibson, Topeka, vice-president; Mrs. Harry Brent, Topeka, treasurer; Mrs. Margaret MacElhenny, Manhattan, secretary; Mrs. Jessie Scott, Lawrence, chaplain; Mrs. Nellie Rowe, Topeka, reporter.
In celebration of a number of anniversaries occurring in 1941, Lindsborg held a “Svensk Hyfillnings Fest” October 17-19, 1941. This is the centennial year of the birth of Olof Olsson, founder of the community; the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of Bethany academy; the sixtieth anniversary of the organization of the Messiah chorus, and the fiftieth anniversary of the graduation of the first class from Bethany College. Scandinavian music, folk dancing and costumes were featured. Visitors from twenty-seven states and from almost every section of Kansas attended.

The annual “Gold Ribbon Pioneer Party” sponsored by the Kiowa County Historical Society took place October 29, 1941, at Greensburg. A candle service was held in honor of pioneers who had died during the year. Reminiscences of early days were related during the basket dinner at the noon hour. Pioneers who came to Kiowa county fifty or more years ago were presented with gold ribbons and those who came thirty-five or more years ago received blue ribbons.

The Lyon County Historical Society met October 30, 1941, at the Civic auditorium in Emporia. One hundred and seventy persons attended. The program included a talk by W. A. White. A memorial to the late W. L. Huggins, first president of the society, was read by Leroy Raynolds. A picture of Mr. Huggins was presented to the society by his family.

The Crawford County Historical Society held its annual meeting at Girard November 4, 1941. Officers of the society include Ralph H. Smith, Pittsburg, president; Harry B. Price, Cherokee, first vice-president; Mrs. Alice Gregg, McCune, second vice-president; Ralph J. Shideler, Girard, recording secretary; Mrs. George Elliott, Pittsburg, treasurer; J. H. Tharp, Cherokee, Ellen Davidson, Mulberry, and Fred W. Brinkerhoff, Pittsburg, trustees. The program consisted of short talks and reminiscences concerning Crawford county history by Mrs. Robert Laughlin, George F. Beezley, and H. W. Shideler, of Girard, and Mrs. A. C. Graves, Mrs. Ralph H. Smith, S. L. Householder, and H. M. Grandle of Pittsburg.

The Pawnee County Historical Society met November 15, 1941, at Larned. The following officers were re-elected: A. H. Lupfer, president; Mrs. E. G. Wickwire, first vice-president; Mrs. A. A. Doerr, second vice-president; Mrs. Jessie B. Grove, secretary; Mrs. Leslie E. Wallace, treasurer; Lois Victor, custodian. Members of the board of directors are: J. C. Browne, J. A. Dillon, E. E. Frizell, Henry Norton, Mrs. A. H. Moffet, and H. L. Reed. County com-
missioners are ex officio members of the board. Mr. Lupfer presided at the meeting and told of his pioneer experiences. Mrs. Doerr read a paper, “Pioneer Days of the ’60’s and ’70’s,” and Miss Victor read a brief autobiography of I. H. Ulsh. Mrs. Doerr’s paper was printed in The Tiller and Toiler, Larned, November 27, 1941.

On November 21, 1941, the Dickinson County Historical Society held its annual meeting at Abilene. The following officers were elected: Mrs. Carl Peterson, president; Mrs. E. E. Rohrer, vice-president; Mrs. Walter Wilkins, treasurer, and Mrs. H. M. Howard, secretary. Talks were given by J. B. Edwards of Abilene, Mrs. W. C. Bocker of Solomon, W. T. Sterling of Carlton, and Mrs. A. B. Seelye of Abilene. At two o’clock the meeting adjourned so that members might participate in the ceremony dedicating the Kansas Historical Marker, “Abilene, End of the Chisholm Trail,” which was placed at Sand Springs.

For the second year officers of the Douglas County Historical Society were re-elected at the society’s ninth annual meeting December 10, 1941, in Lawrence. They are Sen. Robert C. Rankin, president; Irma Spangler, first vice-president; John Akers, second vice-president; Ida G. Lyons, secretary, and Walter H. Varnum, treasurer. Mrs. E. M. Owen, Mrs. Alice Sears, Fredo Barteldes, J. R. Holmes and Ed Arnold were elected to the board of directors. The principal address, on the military history of Douglas county, was delivered by Richard B. Stevens. Special mention was made of the work of the late W. L. Hastie, chairman of the committee to preserve records of rural cemeteries.

Last October the first of the Bulletins of the American Association for State and Local History was published. This organization was formed in December, 1940, to coordinate the efforts of institutions and individuals interested in state and local history. Subject of the Bulletin is “What Should Our Historical Society Do?” by Edward P. Alexander, superintendent of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. It deals with problems confronting state and local societies. Those interested in the publications should write David C. Duniway, secretary-treasurer of the association, Box 6101, Washington, D. C.

“American Newspaper Reporting of Science News,” by Hillier Kriegbaum, is the title of a recent Kansas State College Bulletin. Mr. Kriegbaum is associate professor of industrial journalism at the college and a member of the National Association of Science Writers.
The article is a short history of the publication of science items in American newspapers from 1690, when two paragraphs on prevailing "fevers" and a small-pox epidemic appeared in Publick Occurrences, of Boston, Mass., to the accurate and concise science reporting of today. Steps in the growth of this service have been integrated by Mr. Kriehbaum to form an absorbing story.

A series of letters describing pioneer life and events in Kansas, edited by Herbert Oliver Brayer of the University of New Mexico, was published last year by the University of New Mexico Press under the title To Form a More Perfect Union; the Lives of Charles Francis and Mary Clarke From Their Letters, 1847-1871. Twenty-year-old Clarke ran away to America from Suffolk county, England, in 1847. After several unsuccessful business ventures he enlisted in the First U. S. dragoons, serving from 1849 to 1854. While stationed at Jefferson Barracks, Mo., in 1850, he met and married an Irish girl, Mary McGowan. Upon his release from the army he became clerk to the quartermaster at Fort Leavenworth, later being stationed at Fort Riley. In 1860 he purchased a toll bridge over the Kansas river on the Fort Riley military reservation, and when floods carried it away in the spring of 1861 he established a ferry. On October 4, 1861, Clarke became a first lieutenant in Co. I, Sixth Kansas Mounted volunteers—later Co. F, Sixth Kansas cavalry. On October 21 he was made a captain and until his death served as assistant adjutant general to Gen. J. W. Denver. He died suddenly at Memphis, Tenn., December 10, 1862, leaving his widow with five young sons to rear. Her letters from Junction City continue the story to 1872.