Kansas Historical Notes

Oregon trail markers have been placed along the 2,000-mile route of that famous emigrant road in recent months in observance of the centennial of the forming of Oregon's provisional government. The marking program is sponsored by the Oregon Council of the American Pioneer Trails Association. Kansas received forty markers. These are being placed in schoolyards, towns and along the highways of the counties of northeastern Kansas which were crossed by the trail and its feeders. The markers are cedar posts, three and one-half inches square and six feet long, branded with the words "Oregon Trail." Most of them are being centered in pyramids of native stones set in cement. John G. Ellenbecker of Marysville, Kansas chairman of the Pioneer Trails Association, has directed the work in this state. Among those assisting him are: Leo Dieker, Hanover, Washington county; C. E. Hedrix and D. W. Conger, Marysville, Marshall county; William E. Smith, Wamego, Pottawatomie county; George A. Root, Topeka, Shawnee county; Sen. Robert C. Rankin, Lawrence, Douglas county, and the commissioners of Johnson county. It is hoped these temporary markers can be replaced in postwar days by something more enduring. Mr. Ellenbecker reviewed the story of the trail and discussed the importance of the marking program in a four-column article published in the Marshall County News, of Marysville, September 7 and 14, 1944. The article has also been issued as a reprint.

"Space and History—Reflections on the Closed Space-Doctrines of Turner and Mackinder and the Challenge of Those Ideas by the Air Age," was the subject of Dr. James C. Malin's address before the Agricultural History Society in Washington, D. C., February 14, 1944. Dr. Malin was the retiring president of the society. His study was published in the April and July numbers of the society's magazine, Agricultural History, and was later reissued as a reprint.

The Hollenberg Ranch State Park near Hanover has been considerably improved during the past year by the Washington County Oregon Trail Memorial Association, the organization designated by the state to manage the property. The building, which once served as a pony express station, has been repaired and the six rooms have been replastered. Brush has been cleared from the 7 1/2 acres in the park area. The driveways have been graded, brome grass planted,
and 185 cottonwood and 75 native cedar trees have been set out. A
decorative rock retaining wall has been built along the crest of a
slope in front of the building. Leo E. Dieker, of Hanover, president
of the Washington County Oregon Trail Memorial Association, is
supervising the restoration. He has been assisted by the other offi-
cers, all of Hanover, including Edward J. Flaherty, secretary, John
Merk, Jr., treasurer, and Dugald Spence, Henry Brockmeyer and
Fred Brockmeyer, trustees. The building is not yet being opened at
stated hours, but it may be inspected at any time on application at
one of several downtown places in Hanover where keys are kept.

Mrs. Medora Hays Flick, Manhattan, secretary of the Riley
County Historical Society, reports the following new officers: Walter
McKeen, president; Mrs. Gertrude B. Failyer, vice-president; Mrs.
Flick, secretary; Mrs. Caroline Abbott Smith, treasurer, and F. I.
Burt, curator. Directors are Miss Mary Lee, Mrs. Florence Fox
Harrop, Mrs. Loyal Payne, Mrs. Flick, Mr. McKeen, Joe Haines,
Sam Carlsson, F. R. Smith and Mr. Burt. The organization has
celebrated its thirtieth anniversary with one charter member, Mrs.
Smith, still active. The log cabin museum is open on Sunday after-
noons.

The annual business meeting of the Shawnee Mission Indian His-
torical Society of northeast Johnson county was held September 27,
1944. Newly-elected officers are Mrs. C. V. Scoville, president; Mrs.
A. M. Meyers, vice-president; Mrs. K. S. Browne, recording secre-
etary; Mrs. John Barkley, corresponding secretary; Mrs. F. B.
Belinder, treasurer; Mrs. M. Y. Griffin, historian, and Mrs. A. E.
Wedd, curator. During the year the society assisted the Pioneer Trails
Association in dedicating an Oregon trail marker at Old Shawnee Mission. Mrs. Percy L. Miller was the retiring president.

At the annual business meeting of the Crawford County His-
torical Society at Pittsburg, September 29, 1944, the following officers
were elected: George F. Beezley, Girard, president; S. L. House-
holder, Pittsburg, vice-president; Mrs. Eula Paris, Pittsburg, re-
cording secretary; Mrs. Ralph Shideler, Girard, corresponding secre-
etary; Mrs. George Elliott, Pittsburg, treasurer, and Charles Grand-
dle, Cherokee, J. F. Fowler, Arcadia, and F. W. Brinkerhoff, Pitts-
burg, directors for three years. Dr. Ralph H. Smith was the retiring
president.

The twelfth annual old settlers' reunion of the Kiowa County His-
torical Society was held at Greensburg October 3, 1944. The oldest
person in attendance was Washington Kennedy of Mullinville, now 95, who went to present Kiowa county in 1878. Officers of the society are: Frank Dowell, Wellsford, president; A. S. Barnes, Mullinville, Herbert Parkin, Greensburg, and Mrs. Sam Booth, Wilmore, vice-presidents; Mrs. Benj. O. Weaver, Mullinville, secretary, and Mrs. Charles T. Johnson, Greensburg, treasurer. Mrs. Weaver, who has been secretary of the society since its organization, reports a membership of 500.

Although Volume II of Chase County Historical Sketches will not be published until after the war the Chase County Historical Society continues to collect manuscripts, according to Mrs. Helen Austin, of Cottonwood Falls, secretary. Volume I contained 448 pages and was published in 1941.

Records of twenty-nine rural cemeteries of Douglas county with tombstone inscriptions, 1854-1940, have been collected during recent years as a major project of the Douglas County Historical Society. Typed copies of the completed work and an index of the 3,200 names have been placed in the city library at Lawrence and the Historical Society at Topeka. Sen. Robert C. Rankin, retiring president of the Douglas County Society, paid tribute to the late William Hastie who directed much of the work at a meeting of the county society at Lawrence, October 12, 1944. The compilation was indexed by the Betty Washington Chapter of the D. A. R., of Lawrence, under the chairmanship of Mrs. H. E. Chandler. The newly-elected officers of the Douglas County Historical Society are: John F. Akers, president; Elmer Riggs, first vice-president; Miss Ida Lindell, second vice-president; Miss Ida Lyons, secretary; Walter Varnum, treasurer, and Dr. Edward Bumgardner, historian. Senator Rankin and Mrs. William Hastie were chosen to fill two vacancies on the board of directors, the other members of the board being reelected.

The Dickinson County Historical Society meets annually each autumn in different parts of the county. The fall meeting of 1944 was held on October 25 at Pearl. At the morning business session the following officers were reelected to serve for two years: Fred Ramsey, Solomon, second vice-president, and Walter Wilkins, Chapman, treasurer. The early history of the Pearl community was reviewed in several family histories featured at the afternoon session. Some of these sketches are being published in Dickinson county newspapers. The society's history file now fills thirty looseleaf volumes with enough other material to fill five or six more. Copies of a part
of this collection have been filed with the State Historical Society. Included among the society’s active officers are Mrs. Carl Peterson, Enterprise, president; Mrs. A. B. Seelye, Abilene, librarian, and Mrs. H. M. (Georgie Nichols) Howard, secretary.

A paper, “How To Organize a Local Historical Society,” by Bertha L. Heilbron of the Minnesota Historical Society, has been printed as Vol. 1, No. 9 (November, 1944) of the *Bulletins of the American Association for State and Local History*. The thirty-page booklet discusses the leadership, plans and organization of a historical society and includes model constitutions and bylaws. The *Bulletins* are distributed by the secretary of the American Association for State and Local History, Box 6101, Washington, D. C.

The Iowa, Sac and Fox mission building east of Highland, recently restored by the state under the supervision of the Northeast Kansas Historical Society, is open every Sunday afternoon from one to six, according to Mrs. C. C. Webb, of Highland, president of the society. A museum has been started for relics and antiques from northeast Kansas. The society is in need of an antique pulpit for the chapel, writes Mrs. Webb, and anyone knowing where one may be secured is asked to get in touch with her.

*Local History: How To Gather It, Write It, and Publish It* is the title of a 186-page book by Donald Dean Parker and Bertha E. Josephson which was recently issued by the Social Science Research Council. The book discusses sources of information for local history; explains the technique of gathering and organizing local historical material; provides a model outline; explains details in composition for historical writing, and tells how to make a bibliography and an index. Various methods of publishing local history are discussed. In an appendix, Lester J. Cappon of the University of Virginia outlines a method of writing the war history of communities. The book is a handy guide for semi-professional historians as well as beginners and may be purchased for one dollar from the Social Science Research Council, 230 Park Avenue 17, New York.