Kansas History as Published in the Press

The history of Linwood school, District No. 1, Johnson county, was reviewed in a double-column article in the Johnson County Herald, Overland Park, October 30, 1947.

A total of 37,330 students were enrolled in the 20 junior colleges and 22 senior colleges in Kansas in the fall of 1947 according to an editorial by Dr. Robert Taft in the December, 1947, number of the Transactions of the Kansas Academy of Science, Lawrence. Among other articles of interest were: "The Animal Industries of Kansas," by A. D. Weber, and "Censusing Wildlife," by H. Leo Brown.

The La Cygne Journal has continued to publish the historical column, "Across the Years—A History of La Cygne," by W. E. Baer. Some recent subjects were: The fire on December 17, 1892, which destroyed the La Cygne House, for more than twenty years the town's leading hotel; a letter received by the Journal in 1893 from Oliver M. Farrand, a prosperous diamond merchant of New York City, who recalled La Cygne as it was before 1861 when only one small cabin stood there; the graduating class of 1893; the first incubator in La Cygne; Miss Amanda Way, the Carry Nation of Pleasanton; the financial crisis of 1893; a destructive cyclone that swept through the area on April 3, 1893, and the opening of the Cherokee outlet for settlement. In the issue for February 6, 1948, a brief statement of the business, professional, social and religious life of La Cygne in 1893 was given. The report was taken from the Journal-Clarion published at that time by the Barber brothers. The story of L. B. Paxson appeared in the column on February 27. Mr. Paxson was an amnesia victim who disappeared in 1882 and was not seen again by his family or friends in La Cygne until 1894.


A cover picture and a story of the Anthony family, publishers of the Leavenworth Times since 1871, were a feature of the January, 1948, Graduate Magazine, of Lawrence, official alumni association publication of the University of Kansas. The same issue also contained some excerpts from a widely known essay on Kansas written by Carl L. Becker, professor of history at the University from 1902 to 1916. The essay was published in Turner’s Essays in American History (Henry Holt and Co.). Among the Kansas newspapers reprinting the excerpts in their issues of late January, 1948, were: Norton Daily Telegram, Meade Globe-News and Lawrence Daily Journal-World. The article consisted of observations by Professor Becker about the characteristics of the people of Kansas.

In an article in the Neodesha Register, January 1, 1948, Mrs. Kate Winter Pingrey named a number of local citizens who have contributed materially in preserving the history of that community.
Among those are: Kila Hays White, Mildred McGlinn, Lee Monroe Lockard, J. Kansas Morgan, O. L. Hays, Mrs. Grace Blakeslee and George Linn. Mrs. Pingrey related some of the early local history by describing the mural on the north wall of the Neodesha post office. The mural was painted by a local boy, Bernard Steffen, and installed in July, 1938. Given particular mention was Little Bear, chief of the Little Osages. At his death, Little Bear was buried on the mound northwest of Neodesha which now bears his name.

W. W. Graves’ “History of Neosho County,” has continued to appear in recent issues of the St. Paul Journal. On January 1, 1948, brief biographical sketches of the following newspapermen were printed: C. H. Howard, R. D. Kirkpatrick, John R. Brunt, Harold Claire Brunt, Dr. E. B. Park, A. J. Hopkins, W. W. Graves, F. S. Hopkins, H. T. Perry, John H. Scott, E. L. Conklin, Will M. Goodwin, Charley McKee and E. M. Dewey. Also in the issue of January 1, Mr. Graves commenced a history of the newspapers of Neosho county. Each paper was traced from the beginning, through the hands of its various owners and publishers, up to the present, or until publication was suspended. The newspaper history is continued through the issues of January 8, 15, 22, 29 and February 5. On February 12 and 19 a list of the public officers who have served Neosho county since 1864 was printed.

A story of the “Dust Bowl” and its spectacular come-back in recent years was told by Theo. W. Morse in the Kansas City (Mo.) Daily Drovers Telegram, January 2, 1948. The article reported that the relief money which congress appropriated for the dust bowl in 100 counties of the five southwestern states of Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma, Texas and New Mexico has been put back into the wealth of the nation more than a thousandfold. Mr. Morse also dealt with the question of whether the dust bowl is returning. He pointed to the improved methods of farming, the introduction of new crops in the area and the healthy bank accounts as arguments that the days of the dust storms cannot come again. Henry M. Bainer, general agricultural agent for the Santa Fe railroad at Amarillo, Tex., was quoted as saying, “The Dust Bowl will not return.”

The Hutchinson News-Herald has continued the publication of pictures of “Historic, Beautiful Kansas,” by Russell Walker of St. John. Among the recent pictures were: Scott County State Lake, January 5, 1948; Waconda (Great Spirit) Springs, west of Beloit,
January 19; Scott County State Park and Lake McBride, north of Scott City, January 26; Pony Express station, near Hanover, February 2; Geodetic Center of the United States, 18 miles southeast of Osborne, and a highway sign showing 1,561 miles to New York City and the same number to San Francisco, near Kinsley, February 9; one of the largest trees in Kansas (an old cottonwood $30\frac{1}{2}$ feet in circumference), near Hutchinson, February 16; Post Office Oak where westbound travelers on the Santa Fe trail left mail for eastbound caravans to pick up, at Council Grove, February 23; guardhouse at old Fort Hays, south of Hays, March 1; Pawnee Rock, near Larned, March 8, and the cabin near Smith Center in which Dr. Brewster Higley wrote "Home on the Range," March 15.

Histories of Abram and Lincoln Center, rival Lincoln county towns which were later merged, were sketched in the Lincoln Sentinel-Republican, January 15, 1948.

A history of the Mullinville schools by Benj. O. Weaver, for 28 years a member of the high school board, was published in the Mullinville News, January 15, 22, 29, February 5, 19, 26, and March 4, 1948. Mr. Weaver stated that the first school in Mullinville was a subscription school conducted by a Mr. Carpenter in 1885. The first term of a tax-supported school began November 1, 1886. J. B. Hunt and Belle Wells were the teachers and they had 50 pupils. W. W. Payne was county superintendent. A two-room schoolhouse was completed in the fall of 1887. This building was used until 1911 when part of the present grade school building was completed. The first high school class started in 1912. The high school district—Rural High School District No. 2—was organized in the spring of 1919. The high school used rooms in the grade school at that time. In 1925 a new high school building was started. The News for January 29, 1948, listed members of the school board of District No. 36 who have served the longest. Also listed are those who served on the high school board. In the same issue was a list of the graduates of the high school. There were 31 classes and 380 graduates from 1917 to 1947. In the issue for February 5, 1948, others were listed who attended the high school part time between 1911 and 1925, and later installments gave the names of the superintendents, principals and teachers.

The history of the Merrill Springs hotel, located about 14 miles south of Topeka near Highway 75, was sketched in the Topeka
*Daily Capital*, January 18, 1948. The hotel, now being razed, was built in the late 1880’s.

A series of historical articles by Harry H. Seckler have been printed in the Leavenworth Times in recent months under the heading “Early Leavenworth.” Some of the articles were: “City Was Enmeshed in Early History of the ‘Pony Express,’” the story of the brief existence of the pony express, January 18, 1948; “This City Was the Gateway To the ‘Great Unknown’ in West,” the part that Leavenworth played in the building of the West, January 25; “This City Once Was Largest in the ‘Great American Desert,’” February 1; “Pioneer Days Were Exciting Ones in Platte County, Mo.,” the early days in Platte county, Missouri, and Leavenworth, February 12; “Missouri River’s Greatest Known Flood Was in 1844,” February 19; “Hardy Pioneers Were Beset by Plagues, Disease and Crime,” February 29, and “‘Dream’ Trip Along the City’s Business Streets in Early Days,” a story of early Leavenworth in the form of a letter that might have been written by someone who had passed through the streets in the early days, March 8.

Excerpts from letters and diary of E. D. Smith, selected by Lura Smith, were published in the Meade Globe-News, February 1-12, 1948. Mr. Smith was for many years a resident of Meade county, having come to Kansas from Iowa in 1886 after a doctor had told him that he had but a few weeks to live. Among other historical features published recently in the Meade Globe-News were the reminiscences of Mrs. T. B. Novinger of Plains, who arrived in Meade county in 1884 (reprinted in the issue of February 22 from the Plains Journal of February 5), and “Salt Well Was Scene of One of Meade County’s First Manufacturing Plants” (February 29).

A column entitled “Early Day Frankfort History,” has been appearing in the Frankfort Index beginning February 5, 1948. The column first briefly told of the Indians that once occupied what is now Marshall county. Among early settlers mentioned in the February 19 issue was Frank J. Marshall for whom Marshall county was named. On February 26 and March 4 the Index named many of the early settlers of the Vermillion valley.

A history of Easton was briefly sketched by Delores Gwartney in the Leavenworth Chronicle, February 12, 1948. A Kentuckian, A. J. Dawson, who came to trade with the Indians, was one of the first to settle in the Easton area. In 1855 the town became an or-
ganized settlement. It was first named Eastin, for L. J. Eastin, editor of the Kansas Weekly Herald, of Leavenworth, but soon an “o” was substituted for the “i” to make the name correspond with that of Gov. A. J. Reeder’s home town in Pennsylvania. The first schoolhouse was built in 1855 and the first high school was established in 1908. The population of Easton is now about 200.

The Winfield Daily Courier published an 108-page diamond jubilee edition on February 16, 1948, in observance of Winfield’s 75th year as an incorporated city and the Courier’s 75th year of publication. The first issue of the Courier made its appearance in January, 1873, and Winfield was incorporated as a third class city on February 22, 1873. One of the principal features of the edition was the “Story of Early Days in Cowley,” written in thirteen chapters, each chapter dealing with a different phase of the early life in Cowley county. Another historical article was “Cliff M. Wood’s Own Story,” in four chapters. Mr. Wood was the first to erect a building on the Winfield town site. Other items of interest included a biographical sketch of Col. E. C. Manning, founder of Winfield; a history of Cowley county newspapers; the census of Winfield taken in 1870, and articles on the following subjects: The fight for the county seat between Winfield and Arkansas City; the coming of the railroads to Winfield; the establishment and growth of the schools and churches; the grasshoppers, blizzards, droughts, floods, dust storms and other hardships through the years; the city government, and athletic teams from Winfield. Also in the jubilee edition were many pictures of Winfield and its citizens in early days.

The Gove County Advocate, Quinter, printed the history of the Quinter Methodist church in three installments, February 19, 26 and March 4, 1948. The church observed its fiftieth anniversary February 17. The Rev. W. E. Scott was the first pastor of the church. Services were held in a schoolhouse for several years until the completion of a church building in 1903. The building now in use was erected in 1910.

A history of the Gaylord family which has been featured for several months in the Protection Historical Society column, “Notes From the Early Days,” published in the Protection Post, was concluded in the issue for February 20, 1948. The material was compiled by Mrs. Harry Vincent, a member of the Gaylord family, and is part of the historical material assembled by Miss Ida Bare,
historian for the Protection Historical Society. The column for
February 27 carried an article by John Webb about a baseball game
in 1891.

“Wichita,” by Charles B. Driscoll, one of a series of articles on
America’s most colorful cities being published by The Saturday
Evening Post, appeared in the issue of February 21, 1948. Accord-
ing to Mr. Driscoll, Wichita’s first permanent settlers were James
R. Mead and William Greiffenstein who started trading posts there.
The town was incorporated in 1870, and became a cowtown in 1872
when the Santa Fe railroad built to its borders. Famed for its flour
milling, Wichita also received an oil boom in the 1920’s and oil has
been a steady source of income ever since. During World War II,
Wichita became the site of several large airplane factories which
still continue to operate. Some of the other items mentioned by
Mr. Driscoll are: Wichita in 1878, the weather in Wichita, Jesse
Chisholm, A. A. Hyde, the city’s trees, South Wichita, the battle
with the railroads over freight rates, the police department, colleges,
schools and churches.

The March, 1948, number of the Shawnee County Historical So-
ciety’s Bulletin included the following articles: “Topeka Trans-
portation,” a history of public transportation in Topeka by Arthur
J. Carruth, Jr.; “Flour Mills—Important Industry,” by Euphemia
B. Page; the second installment by Mrs. Dorothy Crane Keller, of
“Founders of Topeka,” which concludes the biographical sketch of
Dr. Franklin Loomis Crane and extracts from his journal; the third
installment of the reprint of William W. Cone’s “Shawnee County
Townships”; “Topeka in 1856,” by John E. Rastall, and a continu-
ation of the “Chronology of Shawnee County,” by George A. Root.

The Russell Record, March 1, 1948, printed a brief history of the
first Russian colonies in Russell county. The initial colony con-
sisted of 73 persons and was known as the Kratzka colony. They
arrived in October, 1876, and settled ten miles south of Russell at
Bender Hill. The second colony arrived in December, 1876, and
the third in June, 1878. Of the 73 persons in the Kratzka colony
12 are still living. The names of the members of this colony ap-
peared in the article.