Kansas Historical Notes

The annual meeting of the Kansas Association of Teachers of History and Related Fields was held in the Memorial building, Topeka, April 16 and 17, 1948. Speakers and their subjects were: Dean Ernest Mahan, Pittsburg State Teachers College, “Some Observations on the Early Mormon Movement”; Jack Rodgers, Fort Hays State College, Hays, “Legal Aspects of the Kansas Court of Industrial Relations”; Mary Belle Tillotson, Washburn University, Topeka, “Kansas’ First Democrat”; Homer Socolofsky, Kansas State College, Manhattan, “Scully Landlordism in Kansas,” and William B. Stanton, Emporia State Teachers College, “A Swedish Settlement in Marshall County, Kansas.” Gov. Frank Carlson addressed the group at a luncheon on “Cultural Contributions of the Swedish People in Kansas.” Another feature of the program was a panel discussion on “Recent Changes in Social Science Curriculums.” Officers elected were: John W. Heaton, Baker University, president; Della A. Warden, Emporia State Teachers College, vice-president, and Elizabeth Cochran, Pittsburg State Teachers College, secretary-treasurer. Verne S. Sweedlun, of Kansas State College, Manhattan, was the retiring president.

C. C. Kilker addressed the members of the Riley County Historical Association at a picnic in Manhattan, June 15, 1948. Mr. Kilker mentioned that 1948 will be the centennial date of the founding and settlement of Manhattan. Clyde K. Rodkey, president of the society, presided at the meeting.

The administrative council of the Republic County Historical Society met in Belleville, June 29, 1948, and elected the following officers: Mrs. O. E. McMullen, Courtland, president; Mrs. E. E. Conzelman, Scandia, vice-president; Mrs. V. A. Berggren, Republic, secretary, and Mrs. Gilbert H. Faulkner, Belleville, treasurer. Mrs. H. J. Adams, Belleville, was the retiring temporary president.

A memorial postage stamp honoring the late William Allen White went on sale for the first time at Mr. White’s home post office at Emporia, July 31, 1948. In writing of the memorial issue, James Waldo Fawcett, of the Washington (D. C.) Star, said in part:

The 80th Congress authorized many inconsequential postage stamps, but its instruction to the Postmaster General to issue a “commemorative” for William Allen White, editor of the Emporia Gazette, certainly merits public approval.
Few of his contemporaries more notably deserve the country’s gratitude. The months that have passed since his death on January 29, 1944, have proved his worth to the world at large. . . . Mr. White’s stamp will symbolize his value. It will remind people that he was a master of modern English prose—with a native American flavor; that he was a practical idealist, profoundly believing in the capacity of the human race to seek freedom and to pursue happiness successfully—remembering always that God makes us individuals from the start; and that he had faith in the efficacy of labor—as opposed to any scheme for achievement without honest toil. His heart was generous. He hated nobody. His mind was libertarian rather than merely liberal. The goal of his endeavor was a durable progress in which all could share. . . .

Mr. White was president of the Kansas State Historical Society in 1937-1938.

The Cowley County Historical Society was revived at a meeting held in Winfield, August 6, 1948. Mrs. W. G. Anderson was elected president pro tem and Prof. G. A. Kuhlmann secretary pro tem to serve until the annual meeting in October. The society’s museum which has been located at St. John’s college is being moved to a room at Stevenson school. Honor was paid at the meeting to Miss Mary Jane Brock who has been active in gathering a considerable part of the museum’s collection.

A historical pageant was presented by the residents of Morganville, August 27, 1948, to raise funds for the French village Feves which was badly damaged in World War II. The founding of Morganville in 1870, by the retired Yankee whaler Ebenezer Morgan, was the high light of the pageant.

E. C. Bussing was elected president of the Douglas County Old Settlers Association at the annual meeting, September 11, 1948, at the First Baptist church in Lawrence. Other officers elected were: Dr. Will Gorrill, vice-president; I. F. Eberhart, secretary; Mrs. I. F. Eberhart, assistant secretary; Mrs. Nellie Colman Bigsby, treasurer, and Miss Eleta Ernst, historian. Dean H. G. Barr of the Kansas Bible college at the University of Kansas gave the main address. Stories of pioneer life, as told in their families, were related by Dr. Edward Bumgardner and Dr. A. R. Kennedy. Mrs. Ralph Graber, the retiring president, presided.

A muzzle-loading shotgun was recently presented to the historical museum at the Hollenberg Ranch Pony Express Station State Park near Hanover by Herman Rippe. The gun was made by the Springfield company in 1833 and is stamped with the initials U. S. and the Spread Eagle emblem.
The story of “No Man’s Land,” now the present Oklahoma Panhandle—a narrow rectangular strip which lies off the southwest section of Kansas, was told by Dr. Carl Coke Rister in his new book No Man’s Land, published August 20, 1948, by the University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Okla. Of particular interest to Kansans is a chapter on the Haymeadow massacre or Wild Horse Lake tragedy, an incident of the Woodsdale and Hugoton fight for the county seat of Stevens county in 1888, in which four Woodsdale men were killed about eight miles south of the Stevens county line.

Kansas weather! Everyone has talked about it, now there’s a 320-page book about it. It is entitled Climate of Kansas, was compiled by Snowden D. Flora, veteran meteorologist at the Weather Bureau Office in Topeka, and is one of a series on Kansas issued by the Kansas State Board of Agriculture in recent years. Climate of Kansas consists largely of charts, tabulations and graphs giving the data on all phases of the weather in every section of the state since records have been kept. The subject has been broken down into the following subtitles: Dry periods, dust storms, evaporation, floods, flying weather, frost, hailstorms, precipitation, relative humidity, snowfall, sunshine and cloudiness, temperatures, thunderstorms, tornadoes, winds and winter storms.

The history of John Morrell & Co., meat packers, which began in England in 1827, branching out to New York in 1864, and to other American cities including Ottumwa, Iowa, in 1877, and Topeka in 1931, was reviewed in a 303-page illustrated book, The House of Morrell, by Lawrence Oakley Cheever, recently published by The Torch Press of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The Morrell company bought the old Wolff packing plant in Topeka in 1931. Robert Morrell Owthwaite, transferred from the Philadelphia branch, has been manager of the Topeka plant from the time of its purchase.

Dr. Samuel J. Crumbine of New York, long identified with public health in Kansas, has told the story of his life and work in a 284-page book, Frontier Doctor, published by Dorrance & Company, Philadelphia, September 15, 1948. Doctor Crumbine, now 86 years old, practiced medicine in the frontier town of Dodge City in the 1880’s and 1890’s, and served as secretary of the Kansas State Board of Health in Topeka from 1904 to 1923, where he became famous nationally through his efforts to improve public health. “Swat the Fly,” “Don’t Spit on the Sidewalk,” and the abolishment of the
public drinking cup were early Crumbine campaigns. On July 17 and 24, 1948, Doctor Crumbine was featured in a lengthy and interesting article in the popular "Profiles" section of The New Yorker magazine.

A history of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Concordia, Kansas, by Sister M. Evangeline Thomas, professor of history at Marymount College, Salina, was published recently by the Newman Press, Westminster, Md., under the title Footprints on the Frontier. The book, of 400 pages, gives a detailed history of the Sisters who began their work in Kansas in 1883. It commemorated the silver jubilee of the establishment of Marymount College for women at Salina.

The Men and Women in World War II From Shawnee County (Topeka, 1947) is the title of a 151-page book recording the names of those who gave their lives in World War II and the names and pictures of others serving in the armed forces.

Friends University, The Growth of an Idea is the title of a recently published 326-page history of Friends University at Wichita by Juliet Reeve. The book was issued in the spring of 1948 as part of the fiftieth anniversary observance of the founding of Friends University.

A 32-page illustrated pamphlet featuring past and present Garden City was recently printed by the Cattlemen's Carnival Rodeo Association of Garden City.