Kansas Historical Notes

The Beecher Bible and Rifle Church of Wabaunsee held its annual homecoming on August 29, 1948. The church, built in 1861-1862, has been restored and is now in regular use. Attending the homecoming were about 150 persons, many of whom were descendants of members of the original Beecher Bible and Rifle colony. An address by Evan Griffith, Manhattan, and the history of the church given by F. I. Burt, were features of the program.

A total of 344 persons, who were born in Johnson county or moved there before 1910, registered at the fiftieth annual old settlers’ reunion at Olathe, September 10 and 11, 1948. One of the highlights of the celebration was a talk by E. N. Hill, for many years superintendent of schools at Olathe. J. Fred Marvin was elected president of the Johnson County Old Settlers’ Association for the coming year. Other officers are Hal K. Robinson, vice-president; H. E. Julien, treasurer, and Annie Sutton, secretary. Howard McKee was the retiring president.

Mrs. Frank D. Belinder was elected president of the Shawnee-Mission Indian Historical Society at the annual meeting held September 27, 1948. Other officers elected were: Mrs. John Barkley, first vice-president; Mrs. Bessie Cheatum, second vice-president; Mrs. James Glenn Bell, recording secretary; Mrs. J. S. Caldwell, treasurer; Mrs. Paul Green, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Homer Bair, historian, and Mrs. Harry Meyers, curator. The new officers were installed at a luncheon meeting October 25. Mrs. C. F. Terry was the retiring president.

Seventy pioneers and sons and daughters of pioneers were registered at Pawnee county’s annual pioneer reunion held in Larned, September 28, 1948. Mrs. W. K. Yeager of Larned and Mrs. John Wagner of Ash Valley were crowned pioneer queens of the 1870’s and 1880’s, respectively. The principal address was given by Dr. O. E. Webb, of Johnstown, Colo., a pioneer of 1873.

An old settlers’ reunion was sponsored by the Finney County Historical Society at the Finney County Free Fair, September 30, 1948. More than 80 old settlers signed the guest book and many of them joined the historical society. Gus Norton, the society’s president, was chief host. The Finney County Historical Society was or-
ganized in January, 1948, and recently published its constitution and bylaws in an attractive pocket-sized booklet.

Kirwin’s homecoming for old settlers of Phillips county was held October 5, 1948.

At a meeting on October 5, 1948, the mayor and commissioners of Osawatomie agreed to transfer the old church building on Sixth street to the Osawatomie Historical Society for restoration and maintenance as a historical shrine. The church building was one of the first erected in Kansas. The Rev. Samuel L. Adair, in whose home John Brown lived for a time, was one of its early pastors.

The Kiowa County Historical Society had a record crowd of 281 at its Gold Ribbon party and old settlers’ gathering in Greensburg, October 7, 1948. Fifteen couples sat at the golden wedding table, and 82 persons wore gold buttons, signifying that they had come to Kiowa county 60 years or more ago. At the business session Mrs. Bruno Meyer, Haviland, was reelected president. Other officers are Will Sluder, Mullinville, first vice-president; Henry Schwarm, Greensburg, second vice-president; Mrs. Lou Keller, Greensburg, treasurer, and Mrs. Benj. O. Weaver, Mullinville, secretary.

Sam Charlson, Manhattan, was elected president of the Riley County Historical Association at the annual business meeting at the Congregational church in Manhattan, October 12, 1948. Other officers elected were: Walter E. McKeen, vice-president; Clyde K. Rodkey, secretary; Mrs. C. B. Knox, treasurer, and F. I. Burt, curator and historian. Mrs. C. B. Knox, Mrs. F. F. Harrop, and George Filinger were elected directors of the association. Clyde Rodkey was the retiring president.

Mrs. Harry Vincent was elected president of the Protection Historical Society at the annual meeting November 6, 1948. Other officers chosen were: W. T. Maris, Claude Rowland, Pirl Baker and Essie Keltner, vice-presidents; Mrs. Howard Shauber, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Robert Deck, recording secretary; Harry Large, treasurer, and Ida Bare, historian. A committee for assisting the historian consists of Claude Rowland, W. T. Maris and Mrs. T. W. Riner.

On November 16, 1948, school children in about 240 schools in Missouri, Kansas, Colorado and New Mexico dedicated Santa Fe trail markers on school grounds nearest the old trail. This was a project of the Greater Kansas City council of the American Pioneer
Trails Association. The markers, a gift of Blevins Davis of Independence, Mo., are approximately two feet long and show a covered wagon being drawn by six mules, with a man riding one of the mules. Distribution of the markers to the schools was made by Col. E. P. H. Gempel, United States army, retired, and Clyde H. Porter, Kansas City, Mo.

Flying Farmers from nine Great Plains states flew the route of the old cattle trail from Texas to Dodge City on November 17, 1948, honoring one of its members, Starr Nelson, of Delta, Colo., who drove cattle from Gainesville, Tex., to Dodge City in 1884. The 83-year-old Nelson, piloting his own plane, led the 100-plane contingent in high wind and dust to El Reno, Okla., for luncheon, and on to Dodge City for a chuck-wagon dinner and program. On the ground in 1884, Nelson spent four months on the route which was covered by air in 1948 in four hours. Officers of the Kansas Flying Farmers, including Ailiff Neel, Windom, president; William Janssen, McPherson, national delegate, and Charles Howes, of the Kansas Farmer, Topeka, publicity director for the club, coöperated with U. G. Balderson of the Dodge City Chamber of Commerce and city officials in the planning and entertainment. Judge Karl Miller, of Dodge City, a director of the Kansas State Historical Society, was master of ceremonies at the dinner. Lt. Gov. Frank L. Hagaman officially welcomed the visitors for Kansas, and Nyle Miller for the State Historical Society.

Sixty members were present at the annual meeting of the Lawrence Historical Society, December 3, 1948. Principal feature of the program was an illustrated lecture by Dr. Robert Taft of the University of Kansas on the development of Lawrence. Officers for the coming year were elected as follows: Walter Varnum, president; Dolph Simons, vice-president; Mrs. L. H. Menger, secretary, and Tom Sweeney, treasurer. The directors are George L. Anderson, J. L. Constant, Corlett J. Cotton, Agnes Emery, Mrs. Robert Haggart, Justin D. Hill, Prof. H. H. Lane, Ida Lyons, Mrs. E. M. Owen, M. N. Penny, O. K. Petefish, Robert Rankin, Irma Spangler, R. B. Stevens and A. B. Weaver. R. B. Stevens, the retiring president, presided at the meeting.

Dr. H. M. Grandle, Pittsburg, was elected president of the Crawford County Historical Society at a meeting in Pittsburg December 6, 1948. Other officers are Ralph Shideler, Girard, vice-president; Mrs. C. M. Cooper, secretary, and Dr. Elizabeth Cochran, treasurer.
Newly-elected directors are George F. Beezley of Girard, Mrs. L. H. Dunton of Arcadia, and Mrs. T. T. Gillihan of Cherokee. The meeting was a “Christmas party,” and the program consisted principally of reminiscences of past Christmas. Dr. O. P. Dellinger of Pittsburg was the retiring president.

The Cyrus K. Holliday Memorial Association of Topeka was chartered on December 7, 1948, as a nonprofit corporation to sponsor a memorial honoring this outstanding pioneer citizen of Kansas. The organization resulted after several meetings of representatives of the Shawnee County Historical Society, the Junior Chamber of Commerce of Topeka, and others.

Cyrus Kurtz Holliday (1826-1900) was one of the organizers and the first president of the Topeka town association. He was instrumental in securing the state capitol for Topeka and was the chief organizer of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railroad whose general offices are located in Topeka. During 1864-1865 he was adjutant general of Kansas, and was several times a member of the Kansas legislature.


Funds for the memorial are being solicited under the supervision of the Topeka Junior Chamber of Commerce with the support of state, county, city and railroad officials.

Santa Fe officials are making plans to dedicate their new railroad station at Topeka on April 3, Holliday’s birthday. The year 1949 also marks the eightieth anniversary of the operation of the first regular trains over the Santa Fe system which in 1869 “stretched” from Topeka to Carbondale!

An attractive 11-page illustrated booklet featuring the history of the Iowa, Sac and Fox mission, located near present Highland in 1837, was recently issued by the Northeast Kansas Historical So-