Kansas History as Published in the Press

Heinie Schmidt's column, "It's Worth Repeating," has continued to appear in The High Plains Journal, Dodge City. Among subjects discussed in recent issues were: Ravanna, Finney county; the holy man of the trails, Jedediah Strong Smith, and the passing of the rural schools.

"Neosho Valley Facts and Legends," a historical series by Audrey Z. McGrew, has continued to be published regularly in the Humboldt Union.

"The Legacy of Populism in the Western Middle West," by John D. Hicks, an article "primarily concerned with the contributions that nineteenth-century agrarians made to the later radicalism of what is sometimes called the western Middle West . . . .," was published in Agricultural History, Baltimore, October, 1949.


Several articles of historical nature have been published in the Oakley Graphic in recent months. On November 4, 1949, notes on a number of historical items appeared under the title, "Have You Looked at Kansas, Lately," "Christmas in a Sod Mansion," by Myrtle Emms Sim, and "Only Grazing Land," by Mrs. Floy Finley Smith, were printed December 2. "Memories of Oakley Pioneer Days," by Clarence Mershon, and the history of the Oakley Masonic lodge appeared December 9. On January 13, 1950, "Pioneer Graves," by Mrs. E. S. Holmberg was printed.

Brief biographical sketches of Samuel D. Lecompte, for whom Lecompton was named, John S. Halderman and Dr. Charles R. Jennison, early residents of Leavenworth and Civil War leaders, appeared in Harry Seckler's column, "Early Leavenworth," in the Leavenworth Times, November 27, 1949. Other prominent men were briefly sketched in the issue of February 26, 1950.

A history of Centralia, prepared by Mrs. Maude Armstrong and H. L. Wait, was printed in the Atchison Daily Globe, December 4, 1949. The town was organized in 1859 and several buildings erected,
but about ten years later it was moved to a site on the railroad. The *Globe*, December 25, published a history of St. Nicholas, dead Atchison county town, by George Remsburg. St. Nicholas was marked out and the plat was filed in 1858.

Many of the early residents of Jackson county were mentioned by Dr. J. C. Shaw in “Early Memories of Jackson County,” printed in two installments in the Holton *Recorder*, December 8, 12, 1949. The Shaw family arrived in Kansas in February, 1878, and settled on a farm near Larkin, now Larkinburg. Also mentioned in Dr. Shaw’s reminiscences were Campbell College and early schools and churches.


The Atchison Daily Globe, December 11, 1949, printed a brief historical sketch of the site of Doniphan. Several centuries ago a large Indian village occupied the site, and just prior to the Civil War a frontier town sprang up at that location. The village now has about 50 inhabitants.


The Parsons Sun, December 17, 1949, printed a brief story of the infamous Bender family. The four Benders lived on a farm in Labette county in the early 1870's. After they left the farm, eight bodies were discovered buried near the house—murder victims of the family. Several pictures of the murder scene and weapons accompanied the article. The Pittsburg Headlight and Sun reprinted the story December 24, 1949. The Headlight, December 30, published an article by Harold O. Taylor stating that Lee T. Robison had stopped at the Bender home and had been treated with hospitality.

The early history of Lakin as recalled by Mrs. Lenora Boylan Tate, the town's oldest resident, was published in the Garden City Telegram, December 19, 1949. Mrs. Tate's father, A. B. Boylan, first station agent at Lakin for the Santa Fe railroad, brought his family to Lakin in 1874.

A short article by James A. Clay on the first city election and the first police court case in Douglass appeared in the Douglass Tribune, December 22, 1949. According to Mr. Clay, the election was held in December, 1879, and the police court case involved a disappointed office seeker.

The reminiscences of Mrs. L. H. Turner, written by Duana Boswell, were published in the Arkansas City Daily Traveler, December 24, 1949. Mrs. Turner arrived in Arkansas City with her father's family in November, 1870. The family settled on a claim about four miles north of town.
“History of Aurora Settlement Demonstrates Pioneer Courage,” is the title of an article by Dorethea Smith in the Salina Journal, December 25, 1949. The first settlers, a group of French-Canadians, reached the vicinity of Aurora in 1870. However, the town was not established until several years later.

“An Airline Pilot Rides the Wagon Trail,” in Popular Mechanics Magazine, Chicago, January, 1950, was written by Heath Proctor who sighted the Santa Fe trail from the window of his DC-6 and later explored it by jeep.

The January, 1950, issue of To the Stars, published by the Kansas Industrial Development Commission, commemorated the 89 years of progress of Kansas as a state. Some of the phases of Kansas life and history discussed were: Kansas day 1861 and 1950, minerals, farming, education, livestock, government and industry.

A brief article recalling Lane county events and people of 50 years ago appeared in the Dighton Herald, January 4, 1950.

A three-installment history of Pennsylvania Avenue, Brown county, by D. W. Spangler, was published in the Hiawatha Daily World, January 7, 10, 11, 1950. Pennsylvania Avenue was an 8-mile stretch of road near Morrill along which so many people from Pennsylvania settled in the 1870’s and 1880’s that it became known by that name.

A letter written by J. M. Elkins which stated that the Chisholm trail was blazed when Black Beaver, a Delaware Indian, led Colonel Emory’s command of Union troops to Kansas at the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, was printed in the Caldwell Messenger, January 9, 1950.

A history of Wilson county, by Charles W. Lafferty, being published in the Wilson County Citizen, Fredonia, began January 10, 1950. The first white settler in Wilson county was John Ross who arrived in 1855. Other settlers had appeared by 1857, and Albert Hagan established a trading post in 1859.

A historical sketch of the Chesterman family as told to Lois Victor by Frank Chesterman appeared in the Tiller and Toiler, Larned, and the Larned Chronoscope, January 12, 1950. It was printed in the Daily Tiller and Toiler, January 13. Mr. Chesterman’s father came to Pawnee county in 1875 and took a claim south of Larned. His mother, then Julia Ann Johnson, came to Kansas in 1878.
A five-column history of the Pottawatomie Indians was published in the Topeka Daily Capital, February 5, 1950. The Pottawatomies assembled on their 30-mile-square reservation near Topeka in 1846 and 1847. A treaty was made in 1867 under which the government sold a large portion of the reservation for $1 an acre. In a lawsuit against the government, filed recently by Robert Stone, Topeka attorney, on behalf of the Pottawatomies, it is alleged that the land was worth $11 an acre and that the Indians were victims of fraud and chicanery under the treaty. The tribe still occupies a part of the reservation in Jackson county. A three-volume work, prepared in connection with this suit, Valuation Study of the Pottawatomie Reserve Lands, by W. D. Davis, has been presented to the Historical Society by Mr. Stone.


Some of the early experiences of the R. L. Hall family in Kansas were related by Clayton Hall, a son, in the Minneola Record, February 9, 16, 1950. R. L. Hall first came to Kansas, stopping in Sumner county, in 1881. In 1883 he brought his wife to Sumner county, and a year later they moved to Clark county.