Kansas History as Published in the Press


A column entitled “Do You Remember When?” composed of brief historical items, has been a regular feature in The Modern Light, Columbus, in recent months.

“The Newspaper Reporter and the Kansas Imbroglio,” by Bernard A. Weisberger, is the title of an article in The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, March, 1950. In the middle and late 1850’s reporters for the large Eastern newspapers were present in Kansas to describe for their readers the contest between freedom and slavery. The article included brief biographical sketches of several of these reporters, including James Redpath, William A. Phillips, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Richard Hinton, Samuel F. Tappan, James M. Winchell, Richard Realf and John Kagi, and a discussion of their work.

A 60-page industrial section was published in the Topeka Daily Capital and the Topeka State Journal, April 27, 1950. Included were articles on the agriculture, industries, mineral deposits, railroads, educational institutions, churches, hospitals and history of Kansas and Topeka.

“Everybody Comes From Kansas,” is the title of an article by Murdock Pemberton, a native Kansan, published in the Pageant magazine, New York, May, 1950. Brief sketches are given of the accomplishments of many Kansans who rank high in their fields of endeavor. The article was printed in the Congressional Record upon the motion of Sen. Harry Darby.

Subjects covered in historical articles by C. D. Smith in recent issues of the Blue Rapids Times included: Churches and news-
papers of Blue Rapids, May 4, 1950; banks and secret orders of Blue Rapids, June 1, and the career of Channing J. Brown, June 22.

A brief historical sketch of Ravanna, dead town of Hodgeman and Finney counties, by A. J. Myers, was printed in the Dighton Herald, May 10, 1950.

A brief sketch of Samuel Joseph Paintin appeared in the Hill City Times, May 18, 1950. Mr. Paintin came from Nebraska to Graham county in 1880 where he has lived ever since. His hobby is collecting Indian relics of which he now has a large number, including several hundred arrows.

“A story of Burlington and Coffey county during the first half of the 20th century, as told in words and in pictures,” was printed in the 184-page, 23-section Mid-Century edition of The Daily Republican, Burlington, May 29, 1950. John Redmond, editor and publisher of the Republican, has been a Burlington publisher since the late 1890’s.

The early history of the Santa Fe trail and its contribution to the national tradition of self-reliance is discussed in the Transactions of the Kansas Academy of Science, Lawrence, June, 1950, by the editor, Dr. Robert Taft. Among other articles in the June number were “Kansas Botanical Notes, 1949,” by F. C. Gates, and “Notes on Mohave Indian Children,” by George Devereux.

Historical sketches of Frankfort and Marshall county were published in the Frankfort Index, June 8, 15, 22, 29, 1950, in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the incorporation of Frankfort.

Among historical articles of interest to Kansans appearing in recent issues of the Kansas City (Mo.) Star were: “William Gilpin Saw the Future as He Faced Challenges of the Early West,” by John Edward Hicks, June 14, 1950; “Stephen Long of the [Steamboat] Western Engineer Agreed With Others the West Was Desert,” by Mrs. Clyde Porter, June 27, and “Great Hand-Dug Well Recalls the Rush to Settle Western Kansas in the 1880’s,” by E. B. Dykes Beachy, July 5. Articles in the Kansas City (Mo.) Times were: “Remnants of Many Ghost Towns Recall Romance of Pioneer Efforts in Kansas,” by E. B. Dykes Beachy, May 25, and “World Wonders From Prehistoric Period to Atomic Age Take Tourists Southwest,” by W. Thetford Leviness, May 27. A special, 252-page edition of the Star was published June 4 in com-
memoration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of Kansas City.

A historical sketch of the early days in Lincoln county, prepared by the late Washington Smith, was printed in the Lincoln Sentinel-Republican, June 15, 1950. Permanent settlers first began arriving in Lincoln county late in 1865, when a group of six built a camp along the river near the east side of the county. Included in the article was a summary of the Indian raids in Lincoln county during the middle and late 1860's.

The history and progress of Wichita in the last half century are told in story and picture in a 156-page, 1950 Mid-Century edition of the Wichita Eagle, published June 18, 1950, in connection with Mid-Century week in Wichita. The week's activities ended June 25 with the burial at the municipal airport of a cylinder containing mementos, art and industrial objects, documents, pictures and many things commemorative of the past half century. The cylinder is to be opened at the centenary of the Eagle in 1972, again in 2000 and every 50 years thereafter.

A brief history of Wayside, Montgomery county, written in 1929 by Mrs. A. L. Blackmore, was published in connection with the 60th anniversary of the Wayside church, in the Caney Daily Chronicle, June 20, 1950.

"Victoria's Remittance Men Made Life Gay in Roaring '70's," by Ernest Dewey, the story of George Grant, an Englishman who founded the colony of Victoria, was printed in the Hays Daily News, June 22, 1950. Also, Raymond L. Welty's articles on old Fort Hays have continued to appear in the News.

A brief biographical note on Joseph G. McCoy, first mayor of Abilene, was included in an article in the Abilene Reflector-Chronicle, June 24, 1950. Some of the furniture and other items which belonged to McCoy have recently been offered to Abilene for display purposes by a daughter, Dr. Florence L. McCoy of Wichita.


A history of the Gove Methodist Church by Mrs. Edith Trustin was published in the Gove County Republican-Gazette, Gove City,
June 29, 1950. The church was organized in September, 1886, the first services being held in a sod building.

The early history of the Belmont post office, Kingman county, by Mrs. John N. Starr, was printed in the Kingman Journal, June 29, 1950.

"The Story of 'Home on the Range'," by Kirke Mechem, appeared in the summer, 1950, number of American Heritage, Harrisburg, Pa., published by the American Association for State and Local History. It is a condensation of an article which first appeared in The Kansas Historical Quarterly.

Some of the early fourth of July celebrations in the vicinity of Atchison were noted by George Remsburg in the Atchison Daily Globe, July 3, 1950. The first celebration in the area—also the first in Kansas—took place July 4, 1804, when Lewis and Clark fired several shots from their boat on the Missouri river.

D. J. Bolejack's reminiscences of Kansas during the Civil War were printed in the Barnes Chief, July 6, 1950. Mr. Bolejack, now 98 years of age, came to Kansas with his father's family in 1862.

A brief history of Oskaloosa and a reproduction of a part of the first issue of the Oskaloosa Independent appeared in the July 6, 1950, number of the Independent. The town was laid out in 1856 by Jesse Newell and Joseph Fittsimons, and the first issue of the Independent was published by J. W. Roberts on July 11, 1860.

A history of the Augusta Journal was sketched in its issue of July 6, 1950. The present paper is a consolidation of the Journal, established in 1887, and the Southern Kansas Gazette, founded in 1873.

Clay Center as it was in 1900 was recalled by L. F. Valentine, co-owner of the Clay Center Dispatch and The Times, Clay Center, in the July 8, 1950, issue of the Dispatch. Many of the changes and some of the historical highlights of the last 50 years in Clay Center were mentioned in the article. Mr. Valentine was recently honored at a meeting of the Rotary club of Clay Center on completion of 50 years of newspaper work. Many prominent newspapermen of Kansas were present.
A brief history of Baxter Springs, by S. A. Douthit, was printed in the Baxter Springs Citizen, July 13, 1950.

A special edition of the Waterville Telegraph was published July 20, 1950, in commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the incorporation of Waterville. Rural life and present-day agriculture, contrasted with the homestead days as illustrated by the story of John Sisco, pioneer, were featured. The town of Waterville is to be the subject of another special edition later this year.