Kansas History as Published in the Press

A series, “Early Days of Towanda Area Are Graphically Recounted,” by Evalina Edmiston, has appeared frequently during the past several months in the Butler Free-Lance, El Dorado.

Hays and Ellis county history has continued to appear regularly in recent issues of the Hays Daily News and the Ellis County News, Hays.

With the issue of January 7, 1954, the Gypsum Advocate began the publication in weekly installments of a history of the Gypsum valley by Mildred Karber.

The January-February, 1954, issue of To the Stars, Topeka, publication of the Kansas Industrial Development Commission, was the annual tourist edition. The following number, April-May, was the Kansas centennial issue. Featured were Kansas historical articles, dealing particularly with the territorial period.

Wayne A. O'Connell’s series on the origin of names in southern Kansas was continued in the Chetopa Advance, February 4, 1954, and the Oswego Independent, February 5. Included were the names Oswego, Hopefield, Old Cherokee, Jacksonville, Neola, Dayton, Kingston, Timber Hill, Deerton, and Big Hill.

An article entitled “Arkansas City This Year Reaches Its 85th Birthday Anniversary,” by Walter Hutchison, was published in the Arkansas City Daily Traveler, February 9, 1954. Settlers began arriving in 1869 and the town of Creswell was laid out in 1870, becoming Arkansas City in 1872.

A history of Americus, established in 1857, was printed in the Emporia Weekly Gazette, February 11, 1954. Recent articles in the daily Gazette were: “The Story of Old Madison County,” by Lucina Jones, March 29-31; and “[Congregational] Church Is Celebrating Its Own Centennial in Kansas This Year,” May 5. The Gazette has continued to print the historical column, “When Emporia Was Young.”

Articles of historical note in recent issues of the Coffeyville Daily Journal included: a biographical sketch of Charley Auld, an old-time cowman in the Indian territory, now of Cedar Vale, by Jim Colegrove, February 14, 1954; biographical sketch of Samuel O. Witwer, West Coffeyville pioneer, by Oren “Bud” Wright, March 7; “Battle
for [Montgomery] County Seat Saw Rise and Fall of Communities.” also by Wright, April 4; and a brief history of the Coffeyville First Presbyterian church, May 7.

John Watson’s “See Kansas” series on historical spots in Kansas has continued to appear in the Wichita Evening Eagle. Some of the places included were: Shawnee Mission, February 18; old Oregon trail roadhouse, Atchison, March 4; Planters’ House, Leavenworth, March 11; Lane University, March 18; Atchison, the scene of a speech by Abraham Lincoln in 1859, April 15; and the Chilocco Indian School, south of Arkansas City, May 20. Also appearing in the Evening Eagle were “Monument to ‘Buffalo Bill’ Mathewson Advocated,” a letter from William H. Owen, Leavenworth, March 3; and “City’s First Church [First Presbyterian] Organized in Dugout 84 Years Ago,” March 20. The following stories were printed in the Sunday Eagle: “Wichita Century Ago Was Village of Indian Tribe,” by Myra Lockwood Brown, February 28; “Council Grove Relives Colorful History,” by John Watson, May 9; “49 Settlements Sought Honor as Capital of Kansas,” by Jonathan M. Dow, May 23; and “Kansas Born in Tragedy 100 Years Ago,” by Bob Tonsing, Sr., May 30.


St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran church, near Cheney, observed its 70th anniversary in late February, 1954. A short history of the church appeared in the Cheney Sentinel, February 25. The congregation was organized February 24, 1884, in a school building under the guidance of the Rev. A. Luebbemann.

Grellet Academy, organized in 1878 in the Solomon valley near Cawker City by the Friends church, was the subject of a brief historical article by Henrietta Boyd, in the Cawker City Ledger, February 25, 1954. The building burned in 1895 and the school was not rebuilt.

Two articles of historical note were published in the Wichita Beacon, February 28, 1954: “Kansas Indian Nations Are Dying,” by H. E. Bruce, Horton, and a biographical sketch of John Bogart, 94, who came to Wichita in 1879 and later lived in Sumner and Greenwood counties.
Efforts to create Nebraska territory during the ten years prior to the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska act, and the motives behind the efforts, are reviewed by Dr. James C. Malin in “The Nebraska Question: a Ten-Year Record, 1844-1854,” published in Nebraska History, Lincoln, March, 1954.

Some early history of Burlingame appeared in the Burlingame Enterprise-Chronicle, March 4, 1954. Biographical notes on natives of Burlingame and long-time residents of that community were printed May 6. The information was gathered from registrations at the city’s recent centennial celebration.

Histories of Paola, Osawatomie, and other parts of Miami county were included in an article by Mrs. Anna Krumshick in the Paola Western Spirit, March 5, 1954.

A six-column history of St. Patrick’s Catholic parish in Florence, by the Rev. Francis J. Hughes, present pastor, was published in the Florence Bulletin, March 11, 1954. The first church building was completed late in 1878 but Catholic services were held in the community as early as the 1850’s.

A biographical sketch of Fred V. Pargeter, 90-year-old painter of Pretty Prairie, by Jim Skinner, appeared in the Hutchinson News-Herald, March 20, 1954. Pargeter was born in England and came to Kansas in 1884. He began painting at the age of 68.

“Early Days in Ashland Were Colorful,” an article by Ruth McMillion, was published in the Clark County Clipper, Ashland, March 25, 1954. Ashland was established in 1885.

Tom Finley, who came to Thomas county in 1885, has recorded some of his early experiences in an article in The Western Times, Sharon Springs, March 25, 1954. Among the incidents recalled by Finley was the fight over land between the settlers and the ranchers.

Recent historical articles in the Hope Dispatch included: a history of the Hope Baptist church, March 25; an early history of Hope by the late Mrs. T. H. Palmer, April 1; and a letter from Dr. Frank J. Klingberg, professor of history at the University of California, who spent his youth in Dickinson county, April 8.

A column-length history of Winchester, from material collected by Mrs. Cora Coppinger Charles, was printed in the Winchester Star, March 26, 1954. The town’s history began in 1854 when William M. Gardiner staked a claim in the vicinity, but the townsite was not surveyed until 1857.
“Cabin of Death,” the story of the “Bloody” Benders of southeastern Kansas, by Warren Kuhn, was printed in the Spring, 1954, issue of True West, Austin, Tex.

Of interest to Kansans, particularly in this centennial year, are three articles by Floyd C. Shoemaker, “Missouri’s Proslavery Fight for Kansas, 1854-1855,” which began in the Missouri Historical Review, Columbia, April, 1954.

The front page of the Atchison Daily Globe, April 1, 1954, was dated April 1, 1854, and was made up of news that might have appeared on the front page of an Atchison newspaper of that date. Items concerning slavery, a new Missouri river bridge, the new Republican party, border ruffians, and a school teacher for Atchison were included. Also in the April 1 issue was an article entitled “Pro-Slavery Party Had Atchison Headquarters,” by Elizabeth Wohlgemuth. The history of the Round Prairie church, south of Atchison, by Mrs. George Pennington, appeared in the Globe, April 11. Articles on the political, industrial, and educational history of Atchison were published in a centennial edition of the Globe, June 20. Atchison, named after Sen. David R. Atchison of Missouri, was founded July 27, 1854, by a group from Platte county, Missouri. The city was incorporated by the territorial legislature of 1858, and Samuel C. Pomeroy was the first mayor.

A historical essay contest was sponsored in the early months of 1954 by the Kansas Home Demonstration Council. A number of the contest stories were published in various newspapers. Among them were: experiences of early residents of Cunningham and Kingman county, by Mrs. Jessie Nossaman, in the Cunningham Clipper, April 1; “Early Day Herington,” by B. L. Smith, and “An Indian Story,” by Dianna Dolan, in the Herington Advertiser-Times, April 8 and 15; early Kansas history, by Arlene O’Dell, and early Sheridan county history, by Mrs. C. E. Toothaker, in the Hoxie Sentinel, April 15 and 22; a history of the Clark’s creek settlement near White City, by Mrs. Phyllis Kohler, in the White City Register, April 22; a sketch of the Charles Peterson family who homesteaded near Bushton, by Mrs. Abbie I. Peterson, in the Bushton News, April 29; some history of Woodson county, by H. A. Mann, in the Toronto Republican, May 13; and the reminiscences of Mrs. Leon Cover, in the Oskaloosa Independent, May 27.

Appearing regularly in The High Plains Journal, Dodge City, for several years has been Heinie Schmidt’s column, “It’s Worth Re-

H. B. Oesterreich’s story of his grandfather’s early experiences in Kansas was printed in the Herington Advertiser-Times, April 8, 1954. The grandfather, Herman Oesterreich, arrived in Dickinson county in 1857, walking from Fort Leavenworth. The ceremony attending an Indian chief’s funeral and the early life in the Clark’s creek area northeast of Herington were recalled by Jay Baxter in an article in the Advertiser-Times, April 15.

Barker, May 13; “The Lure of Land Ownership Was a Strong Factor in Early Settlement of Kansas,” by Dr. Ina Hunter Ungleby, May 28; and “Travel to Colorado Was Different in Gold Rush 95 Years Ago This Summer,” a review of the diary of John H. Ewing, by Myra Lockwood Brown, July 13.

Westmoreland’s history was sketched briefly in the Westmoreland Recorder, April 22, 1954. The town was incorporated in April, 1884. A longer article on the history of Pottawatomie county was printed June 3.

A short history of Junction City was printed in the Junction City Union, May 1, 1954. About May 1, 1855, John Pipher, A. J. Mead, Hiram Palmer, and others settled at the site of present Junction City and called the place Manhattan, according to the article. A short time later that settlement moved down the river to present Manhattan. Other parties then undertook the development of Junction City. Two articles of historical note appeared in the special edition of the Union published June 11, 1954: “Men of Fort Riley Have Served Nation a Century,” and “Junction City and Fort Riley History Linked for 100 Years.” The special edition was published as a welcome to the 37th Division to Fort Riley. A history of the Brookside school, near Junction City, by Alfred P. Hotten, was published in the Junction City Republican, May 30.

Some early history of Coffey county is included in an article, “Memoirs of a Pioneer,” by Landy Dison Carman, published in The Daily Republican, Burlington, May 5, 1954, and in the LeRoy Reporter, May 14. Carman came to Kansas with his father’s family late in 1865 when he was five years of age.


The history of Meeker School District, Sumner county, compiled by Howard Hunt, appeared in the Belle Plaine News, May 6, 1954. Efforts toward the organization of the district were begun March 10, 1873.

In 1880 the Butler county village of Keighley was platted by Moses Turpen, according to a history of the now “dead” town by Olive Eastin Payne, published in the El Dorado Times, May 12, 1954.
A 16-page historical section was published by the Garden City 
*Daily Telegram*, May 14, 1954. Included were a tracing of the 
Garden City area's early history, a history of Finney county news-
papers, and an article entitled "An Empire [Southwest Kansas] 
Born on the Glory Road [Santa Fe Trail]," by F. L. Charlton. In 
the regular section of the *Telegram* were a sketch of Charles Crow, 
who came to Garden City in 1879, and "Indian Attacks Were 
Hideous," by Ruby Basye.

A 32-page 50th anniversary edition was published by the Great 
Bend *Herald-Press*, May 15, 1954. The newspaper began as the 
Pawnee Rock *Herald*, July 21, 1904. A section of the anniversary 
edition was devoted to Barton county golden wedding anniversaries, 
with pictures and biographical notes. Other features were: a his-
tory of the *Herald-Press*; "Slaughter by Quantrill," a prize-winning 
essay by 14-year-old John T. Rhoads of Heizer; another prize-
winning essay on the state's early history, by Jean Otte; "An Old-
Timer [Adam Krause] Recalls Life as a Ct. Bend Lad During 90's"; 
and "Life in Kansas Pioneer Days Was Rough, Uncompromising," 
by Velma Wells.

Daily installments of Prof. Allen Crafton's new work on the first 
decade in the history of Lawrence, "Free State Fortress," were pub-
lished from May 18 to June 21, 1954, in the Lawrence *Daily Journal-
World*, as a special feature of the centennial year.

A story on the founding of Hill City by W. R. Hill and the county-
seat fight in Graham county, by Lulu S. Craig, was published in the 
Hill City *Times*, May 27, 1954.

The first number of *Pride*, Pratt's annual progress publication, 
was issued in June, 1954, by the Pratt *Daily Tribune*. The following 
historical articles were included in the 128-page, magazine-type 
edition: "County, Then City Was Named for Young Civil War 
Hero," "Pratt Now 70 Years Old," "Indian Scare of 1885," "First 
County Move a Fraud," and "Violent County Seat Fight." Much of 
the historical material and many pictures were provided by J. Rufus 
Gray.

The plan of a Mullinville church to raise money for a new building 
was the subject of an article, "They Call It 'God's Acres,'" by Mari-
etta Weaver, in *Coronet*, Chicago, June, 1954. Farmers set aside a 
portion of their crops and livestock and the townspeople likewise 
shared their income toward the project.
J. C. Ruppenthal’s first article on the banks of Russell county, “Beginnings of Banking at Lucas,” was published in the Natoma-Luray Independent, June 3, 1954. The first Lucas bank was organized in 1887.

To celebrate its 75th anniversary, the Topeka Daily Capital published a 220-page edition, June 6, 1954. Historical sections of the edition were: “Wholesale and Retail Trade”; “Society, Families and Fashions”; “Sports and Recreation”; “Topeka, the First 100 Years”; “Health, Education and Religion”; “Topeka Welcomes Industry”; “Topeka Living”; “Finance and Insurance”; “Growth of a Newspaper”; “Kansas Is America’s Breadbasket”; “Topeka, Crossroads of the Nation”; and “Kansas, the First 100 Years.”

A two-column history of the Banner church in Trego county appeared in the Gove County Advocate, Quinter, June 10, 1954. The first building was of sod, erected in 1879 about two miles north of the present church. In following years the church services were held in the schoolhouse. The present building was completed in 1904.