Kansas History as Published in the Press

“What’s the Matter With Kansas” by Kenneth S. Davis, was published in the New York Times Magazine, June 27, 1954. Davis points out the state’s colorful history but feels Kansas is now hog-tied by conservatism.

An article on Belle Starr by Fayette Rowe was printed in the Independence Daily Reporter, December 12, 1954. On January 30, 1955, the Reporter published a six-column history of Kansas, Montgomery county, and Independence, by Mrs. Fred Colburn.


Robert G. Sprague, San Angelo, Tex., presents another slant on the history of the Quantrill guerrilla band in an article in the Cherryvale Republican, December 28, 1954. He says “William Clark Quantrill . . . never at any time was leader of the officially accepted ‘Quantrill’s Guerrilla Band,’” and he attributes the leadership to an “Uncle John,” a distant relative of Sprague’s.

In 1857 John Brown and three of his sons camped for two days near present Nortonville according to an article by Frank Ferris in the Nemaha County Journal-Leader, Centralia, January 6, 1955, and in the Nortonville News, January 14. One of Brown’s sons cut his initials and the date in a rock near by.

The history of early Horton was recalled by Jules Bourquin in a talk before the Horton Kiwanis club, January 3, 1955, and printed in the Horton Headlight, January 6.

Historical articles by Gordon S. Hohn appearing in late issues of the Marysville Advocate included: “50 Years Ago in Marysville—1905 Opened as Prosperous Year,” January 6, 1955; “Only One Surviving Member of City’s Oldest Band, Organized 70 Years Ago,” and “Rare Group Picture of Last Civil [War] Veterans Found in Burned Studio,” January 20. On January 13 the Advocate printed a history of the now deserted Marshall county town of Schroyer.

The Council Grove Republican is publishing a series of local historical stories. Included have been biographical sketches of the
following: David Head family, January 7, 1955; Henry Axe family, January 14; C. E. Skinner, January 18; Samuel Bowman family, January 26; Joseph Rogers family, February 11; and Emmanuel Sanford, February 24. On January 25 the Republican printed from the diary of Sam Wood the account of a journey along the Santa Fe trail in 1854.


Some of Lane county’s early history, by Willetta Dickinson, was printed in the Dighton Herald, January 19, 1955.

A review of Zebulon Pike’s visit to the Pawnee Republic in 1806 when the U. S. flag was raised in present Kansas for the first time, appears in a letter by R. G. Nystrom, published in the Belleville Telescope, January 20, 1955.

Historical articles appearing in the Emporia Gazette in recent months included: “School Days in Early Americus,” by Clarence A. Grinell, in two installments, January 21, 25, 1955; another article by Grinell, “The Old Lyceum Reigned Supreme,” February 3; also in two parts, a history of Emporia by E. T. Lowther, based on interviews with Mrs. L. J. Buck, a native of Emporia now in her 80’s, February 10, 11; and an article by Tom S. Howell on the establishment of Breckenridge (now Lyon) county, February 23.
Oberlin's First Presbyterian church was organized January 11, 1880, according to a brief history of the church in the Salina Journal, January 21, 1955. Founder of the church was the Rev. John Wilson.


Clarence W. Moody's reminiscences of life in Ottawa in the early 1900's were published in the Ottawa Herald, January 27, 1955. Moody, now editor of an Iowa newspaper, grew up in Ottawa.

Included in the February, 1955, issue of American Heritage, New York, was "An Eyewitness Describes the Hanging of John Brown," by Boyd B. Stutler: a lost article written in 1859 by "Porte Crayon" for Harper's Weekly is printed with an introduction by Stutler, who discovered the original manuscript.

An article by Fayette Rowe on Abraham Lincoln's visit to Kansas in 1859 appeared in the following newspapers on the dates indicated: Girard Press, February 3, 1955; Columbus Daily Advocate, February 5; Wichita Eagle, Independence Reporter, and Joplin (Mo.) Globe, February 6.

A brief sketch of the Alta Vista Baptist church was printed in the Alta Vista Journal, February 10, 1955. The church had its origin in 1872 under the leadership of the Rev. John Fechter, but formal organization did not take place until 1880.