Kansas History off the Press

Lindsborg’s historic Brunswick Hotel is being renovated by Mr. and Mrs. Bob Elliott. A two-part series on the hotel which was built in 1887, and the renovation efforts, appeared in the Salina Journal, May 26 and 31, 1977. Part of the hotel’s history was provided by the reminiscences of Mrs. Lester Raymer, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Weddle who operated the three-story hotel for nearly 50 years.

The Howard National Bank celebrated its 100th year as a banking institution and the fourth generation of continuous family leadership in May, 1977. An article written by Debbi McGinn on the history of the bank appeared in the May 27, 1977, issue of the Independence Daily Reporter. James W. Eby, bank president, is the grandson of the founder, A. F. Eby, who in partnership with N. Momma started the bank in 1877 with an initial capital of $10,000.

Linn, first organized in a box car in 1877, was originally called Summit because it was the highest point railroad surveyors found on that branch of the Missouri Pacific. The name was changed to Linn when the town applied for a post office and it was found there were other offices in the state with similar names. Linn celebrated its centennial the weekend of June 3-5, 1977, and a history of the town appeared in the Linn-Palmer Record, June 1, 1977.

One hundred years of Methodism in Scandia were recognized when the United Methodist church there celebrated its centennial June 4 and 5, 1977. A Swedish Methodist church was first started in Scandia in June, 1877, following revival meetings held in the fall of 1876. Later there were mergers with other churches, building programs, and additions, with the most recent remodeling and redecorating done in 1970. A history of the church appeared in the Courtland Journal and Concordia Kansan, June 2, 1977.

Much of the “gingerbread,” brass, hardwood, and other features of the historic E. R. Trenner home in Marion remain the same today, but the entire house has been moved. According to an article, second in a series, appearing in the Marion County Record, Marion, June 8, 1977, the home was moved in the early
1920's to make way for the present Marion High School on that site. Trenner was county clerk in Marion in 1878, and according to county records received a $275 monthly salary, enough in those days writes Ruth Meyer for a “good and expensive home.”

Robidoux creek in Marshall county has been called different names, but officially, it's Robidoux. An article by Oretha Ruetti in the June 9, 1977, issue of the Marysville Advocate tells the story of the various names, and the campaign in 1947 by a local history buff, Otto Wullschleger, to get the name changed from West fork back to the original name. M. Robidoux, a French fur trader from St. Joseph scratched his name on a rock at a one-time ford known as the Lower Robidoux crossing.

The Galena Sentinel-Times marked the city’s 100th birthday with pictures and articles featuring local history in its June 9, 1977, issue. Long-time residents whose families were among the early settlers were interviewed. A front-page article describes the growth of the city from its beginning when the discovery of rich deposits of lead ore attracted speculators and thousands of miners. The city was incorporated June 19, 1877.

Research in early Pottawatomie county newspapers provided material for one of the recent articles in a Wamego Times historical series by Barbara Burgess. The article in the June 9, 1977, issue contains history of local schools, the first of which started in 1866. One of the early school buildings was sold in 1872 to the First Baptist church and used by that congregation until 1910.

An 1888 home, one of the oldest in Wichita, is being restored by Lee and Marion Cone. The restoration project started as a practical project when the interior of the home was gutted by fire before they moved in. The story of how they have searched out and salvaged ornamental and architectural elements of various historic Wichita buildings is told in the Wichita Eagle-Beacon, June 12, 1977.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Young of Garnett were honored as the Anderson county couple of 1977 by the county historical society at a meeting in Harris on June 10, 1977. In response, Young wrote memories of his life in Anderson county from 1910 to 1952. His paper was read at the meeting and printed by the Garnett Review, June 13, 1977.

The Denmark Community Lutheran church and cemetery have been well kept up for some 100 years. Services, including Sunday
school and related activities, have continued at Denmark since before the building of native postrock limestone was completed nearly a century ago. An article on the history of the church and small community was in the Salina Journal, June 15, 1977.

Hutchinson "then and now" was the theme of a feature page by Dorothy Melland in the Hutchinson News, June 15, 1977. Illustrated paragraphs were quoted from a booklet, "Pictures of Promise" which promoted Hutchinson in 1912 as the "Queen City of the Prairies." After each paragraph describing Hutchinson as it was then, is a paragraph telling how it is today.

The dedication May 29, 1977, of Rock City as a National Landmark, brought to three the total of National Natural Landmarks in Kansas. At the dedication Randall Pope, deputy regional director of the National Park Service, described and noted the history of the other two landmarks: Monument Rocks in Gove county and the Baker University Wetlands in Douglas county. A report of his speech was in the Minneapolis Messenger, June 16, 1977.

Probably the best example of petroglyphs or rock carvings in Kansas are on Inscription Rock at Lake Kanopolis State Park. An article on these carvings and how they relate to historical study of Plains Indian culture was in the Geneseo Galaxy, June 16, 1977. According to the article, scientists can only speculate on the meaning of the carvings which appear in the central Kansas location on Dakota sandstone outcappings.

A series of articles on "early day couples" continued in the Cawker City Ledger, June 16, 1977, with a history of the Amasa Wright family. Wright, born in 1831 in Pennsylvania, and his wife, Elizabeth McClaskey Wright, born in 1848 in Illinois, came to Kansas in 1872, settling in Cawker City.

A. B. Montgomery, called Goodland's founding father, had varied business interests and moved often from place to place. A biographical sketch and an account of his Goodland connections are included in an article by Ruth T. Erwin in the Goodland Daily News, June 19, 1977. According to the article Montgomery never lived long enough in one town to have a "home town" unless it was Goodland which he helped found in 1887. He moved on to Denver in 1900 and died in Oakland, Cal., in 1926.

Two National Park Service historians are not only involved in research needed for the restoration of historic Fort Larned, but also double as authentically dressed soldiers during weekends so
visitors can better experience life at the National Historic Site as it was in 1868. An article on the history of the fort and report on the massive restoration program there was in the Wichita *Eagle and Beacon*, June 19, 1977.

An article on the origin of names of nearby communities was carried in the June 22, 1977, issue of the Caney *Chronicle*. The communities—Niotaze, Wayside, Tyro, Peru, and Havana—all had early day oil booms that caused population explosions for a time. The article states that some old wells have been revived recently in the search for new sources of oil.

The “little red school house” at the Jefferson County Historical Society’s Old Jefferson Town in Oskaloosa is the subject of an article in the Oskaloosa *Independent*, June 23, 1977. Information for the article was provided by Mrs. Verona McDonald, McLouth, who recalls that the school, known as Wellman School, was originally built on her grandfather’s homestead in 1887. Mrs. McDonald wrote the history of the school house for inclusion in a book on one-room school houses being compiled by Walter Oleksy, Evanston, Ill.

A brief history of Newton from its beginning as a cowtown in 1871 to the present, with a summary of local historic sites in the area, was carried by the Newton *Kansan*, June 23, 1977. Many of the historic sites record the history of the Russian Mennonites who immigrated there in the 1870’s. A picture of one of the sites, the Bernhard Warkentin home, is included with the article. Warkentin, credited with introducing Turkey red wheat to the area, established the Newton Milling and Elevator Company in 1886.

The notorious Bender family was the subject of the June 23, 1977, column in the historical series, “Random Samplings From the Timetable of Labette County” by Wayne A. O’Connell, in the Oswego *Independent Observer*, the Chetopa *Advance*, and the Edna *Sun*. O’Connell based his account on the one in the 1900 history of Labette county edited by Nelson Case.

Gen. Joseph Bailey, a hero of the Red river expedition of 1864 and the only general interred at Fort Scott, was the subject of an article in the Fort Scott *Tribune*, June 25, 1977. Occasion for the feature was the acquisition by the Old Fort Governing Board of some of the general’s personal effects presented by his grandchildren. As chief engineer with the 19th Army corps, Bailey constructed a dam on the Red river which enabled the rescue of a marooned 20-gunboat flotilla, and was credited with shortening
the Civil War. Also in the Tribune, June 25, was an article by Mary Beveridge on early efforts to bring education and law to “bleeding Kansas.” The organization of a public academy and the founding of a Methodist congregation at Fort Scott in 1856 were first attempts to sow “good seed among the tares” in that period of border warfare, according to the article. The same newspaper carried a series of six articles by Beveridge on guerrilla warfare in Fort Scott and Bourbon county during 1858, the first article appearing in the July 30, 1977, issue.

A feature page in the June 26, 1977, Pittsburg Morning Sun reports on the continuing restoration work at historic Fort Scott. Built originally in 1842 as one of a chain of showcase outposts along the Indian frontier, the fort was designed under the direction of Capt. Thomas Swords. Pictures accompanying the article include the Greek folly covering the original well site and period furnishings in the restored apartment of the Swords in the Officers’ Quarters No. 1.

Kansas centenarians are usually interviewed in their local newspapers, and their comments on historical events in their long lives are of interest. Jim Muck, 103, was born when Ulysses S. Grant was president. A farmer all of his life, he described the drastic changes in farming he has seen to the Beloit Call, June 28, 1977. Cora Shields, 102, has memories including riding in a covered wagon and being administered a soup of herbal roots by an Indian. The Clay Center Dispatch reported her birthday celebration June 17, 1977. Lettie Pottroff, 102, grew up in a log cabin in the Glenwood community south of Waverly. Her story was told by the Burlington Daily Republican, July 5, 1977. John Plantz, 100, recalled his years as minister and as trustee and professor at Kansas Wesleyan University, Salina, for the Colby Free Press Tribune, July 4, 1977.

Ottawa history beginning with the French trappers who followed the Marais des Cygnes river west, is told in a feature article in the Ottawa Herald, June 30, 1977. Land developed later for Ottawa University and the city’s original townsite was acquired from Indians beginning in 1862. The river through all the history of the town has had its influence—both in its periodic flooding and as a gathering place for people.

“A Century on the Old Home Place” is the title of the essay by seventh grader Karla Shute, which won first place in the Jewell County Historical Society essay contest this year. The story of her
great-grandfather George Emerson Shute, who first built a sod house on his claim in 1881, and his descendants was in the Mankato Jewell County Record, June 30, 1977.

School children waved flags and paraded down the streets of Plainville celebrating the successful school bond election in 1909. An article about the school-building programs was in the Plainville Times, June 30, 1977. The article includes excerpts from the Plainville Gazette, April 29, 1909.

Schoenchen, which in German means “beautiful hidden valley,” celebrated its 100th birthday July 2, 1977. First event of the day was a Mass at St. Anthony’s church which was also 100 years old this year. A brief history of the Ellis county town and a report on the centennial activities planned were printed in the Ellis County Star, Hays, June 30, 1977.

Nicodemus, the all-black community in Graham county, celebrated its centennial July 30 through August 1, 1977. A century ago about 500 blacks, many of them former slaves, came to Kansas as part of a general “Exodus,” to found the colony. An article in the Wichita Eagle and Beacon, July 3, 1977, tells the story of the Exodusters led by Benjamin “Pap” Singleton who urged Southern blacks to migrate to Kansas. Another feature in the same issue is on Nicodemus itself, now a town with a population of about 75, but which has attracted as many as 1,000 blacks to its annual homecoming. Another article on the historic town appeared in the Hiawatha Daily World, July 28, 1977.

The McPherson Opera House, built during the booming days of 1888, was at one time a beacon to the arts for the people of central Kansas, according to a feature article in the Hutchinson News, July 3, 1977. With a population of about 2,000 McPherson was even vying in those days for the relocation of the then-unfinished state capitol. The opera house, opened officially January 28, 1889, and seating 900, was considered to be the finest between Kansas City and Denver. Now it is largely unused, but the Kansas State Historical Society has called it “the best example of opera house architecture in Kansas” and nominated it to the National Register of Historic Places.

Jim Phelps, English teacher at Wakefield, wrote a history of Wakefield which was carried in installments in the “Historically Speaking” column of the Summerfield Sun, beginning in the July 7, 1977, issue. The town was named for Rev. Richard Wake, one of a group of founders in the Kansas Land and Emigration
Company who laid out the townsite August 26, 1869. The name also honored the secretary of the company whose hometown was Wakefield, England. The articles were illustrated by pictures of the community provided by the Wakefield Museum.

The first flour mill in Kansas was built by Perry Hutchinson at Marysville in 1862. An article on the history of the old native stone structure was in the Marysville Advocate, July 14, 1977. The mill, rebuilt after a fire in 1905, was owned by a succession of companies and most recently was part of a complex of buildings that made up Marysville Agri Services, Inc. According to the article the mill was to be torn down for future expansion of Agri Services.

Church historians in Sterling are trying to locate the first meeting place of the Reformed Presbyterian church which observed its centennial in October, 1977. An article in the Sterling Kansas Bulletin, July 14, 1977, includes photographs which are being studied in an effort to determine whether or not the church, which has formed a nucleus for the local W. C. T. U. chapter, held its first meetings upstairs in a downtown building which downstairs served as a saloon and billiard hall.

The former First Congregational church at Clay Center, built in 1886, has been dismantled, and an article on its history and the contents of its cornerstone appeared in the Clay Center Dispatch, July 15, 1977. First established as a mission church, it was called the Clarence Eastman Memorial Congregational church. Located at Seventh and Lincoln, the building was a prominent landmark of early Clay Center.

Olpe, a Flint Hills town with population of 461, celebrated its centennial July 23, 1977. Founded by 19th century German immigrants, the town has thrived as a livestock-producing and hay-growing area. An article on the town and its 100th birthday celebration plans was in the Manhattan Grass and Grain, July 19, 1977.

Arma, whose history goes back to the mid-1800’s when it was a small mining camp, has had an annual homecoming and VJ-Day celebration since 1947. According to John Hay in his article on Arma’s history in the Pittsburg Morning Sun, July 21, 1977, the town is believed to be the only one in the nation which has had a VJ-Day so many years running. First known as Rust, the town was platted in 1886.
Fort Harker was one of the strongest of the western Kansas forts, bulwark of defense against hostile Indians. Today the Fort Harker Guard House Museum in Kanopolis is a privately funded military museum. An article in the Ellsworth Reporter, July 21, 1977, tells the history of the fort where from 1866 through 1873 up to 700 soldiers were stationed. The museum is operated by the Ellsworth County Historical Society.

Abilene's Plaza Theater, first built as an opera house by J. E. Bonebrake in 1879, has gone through two remodelings and is still in use as a movie theater. An article in the Abilene Reflector-Chronicle, July 22, 1977, gives the history of the theater which has been named to the National List of Historic Theatre Buildings.

The foundation of Lane University at Lecompton was originally built for a territorial capitol. Later a church-related college named for Sen. James Lane was built on that foundation and among the first students were the parents of Pres. Dwight D. Eisenhower. An article on the history of the university building which is now being restored, by Lew Ferguson, appeared in the July 23, 1977, issues of the Abilene Reflector-Chronicle and the Parsons Sun.

The Atchison County Historical Society newsletter is publishing a series of local history articles. One of the articles on early stage lines was reprinted by the Atchison Daily Globe, July 24, 1977. According to the article, the first coach of the first stage line operating out of Atchison left the city July 1, 1861. The fare was $300 for the 11-day trip to Salt Lake City.

George Mack is the writer of a series of articles on historic homes appearing in the Topeka Sunday Capital-Journal. Featured on July 31, 1977, was the house built in 1884 by Albert Ward Tinkham at 827 Topeka avenue. According to the article the house is one of the best preserved of the many beautiful homes which graced Topeka avenue in the days when this main street was the finest residential area in Topeka.

A history of the First Baptist church of Stafford appeared in the Stafford Courier, August 3, 1977. Originally called "Friendship Church," it was first constituted in a deacon's home by a Baptist circuit-riding preacher in 1877. Later the Friendship church merged with the local Baptist church and also with a Goshen congregation. The church's centennial celebration was held as part of the annual Harvest Festival August 14, 1977.
Members of the Osborne County Historical Society are researching the history of rural school districts in the county. Articles and pictures of schools in District No. 1 and District No. 67 (Grand Center) were published in the Osborne County Farmer, Osborne, August 4, 1977. In the July 14, 1977, issue of the same newspaper there are brief histories of Ise School (District No. 37) and Bloomington (District No. 10).

The Halstead Independent, August 4, 1977, was the biggest edition in the newspaper’s history—40 pages filled with Halstead history in salute to the city’s 100th birthday. It contains many pictures as well as articles on the town’s founders and early settlers, histories of churches, clubs, and organizations, and an account of the growth of the clinic and hospital founded by pioneer doctor Arthur E. Hertzler. The city held its Old Settlers celebration August 4 through 7, marking the day in 1877 when Halstead was incorporated as a third class city.

Heritage, the Magazine of Wyandotte County History which is a supplement to Wyandotte West, Kansas City, in its mid-September, 1977, issue included an article by Cathy Gripka on the history of the Kansas Correctional Institute for Women at Lansing, and a feature by Mary Flanagan on Kansas City, Kansas, Community College whose roots go back to 1923.

Lois Winter is the compiler of Kanorado Kansas, a 159-page, paperbound book, published in 1976. Kanorado, in Sherman county almost on the Colorado border, was first called Lamborn. The railroad came through in 1888 and the first postmaster was appointed in 1889. The city of Kanorado was incorporated in 1907. The book has many black and white photographs and local history gleaned from early newspapers.

A post office was established at Bancroft in Nemaha county in 1891; it closed in 1941. At one time there were a number of businesses, a school, and a union church. Now there are just five families in Bancroft. Cletamae and Gary Brown of Goff have compiled a 122-page, paperbound, pictorial volume, That’s the Way It Was Around Bancroft, as their contribution to the bicentennial year.

Goddard 1876-1976, an 86-page, paperbound book, was a bicentennial project of the Goddard Woman’s Club. It is well illustrated with many black and white photographs, and in addition to a general history of the town, there are sections on
churches, schools, community organizations, and biographical sketches of many early residents.

J. Earl Endacott of Lawrence, executive-director of the Eisenhower Foundation for 19 years, is the author of *The Ike I Remember and Other Stories*, a collection of his experiences with the Eisenhower family over many years. The new 178-page, paperbound book was a "personal project" by the author, written for circulation to relatives and friends and was not placed on sale for public distribution.

Hesston in Harvey county has grown from a pioneer settlement in the late 1800's to a thriving community with industries and a college; from a population of 400 in 1920 to 2,000 in 1975, while many country towns were declining. Mary Hess, daughter of one of the town's founders has chronicled this progress in her *Anatomy of a Town: Hesston, Kansas*. The 299-page, hardbound book was published by Carlton Press, Inc., New York, in 1976.

Photographs taken from 1884 to 1904 by F. M. Steele are reproduced in *Kings and Queens of the Range, a Pictorial Record of Early Day Cattlemen of Clark County, Kansas*, compiled by Florence E. Hurd. The 90-page, hardbound book is a recent reprint sponsored by the Clark County Historical Society and the Pioneer Museum. The pictures taken by Steele, self-styled "tourist photo artist," are of cattle drives, ranch life, and farming operations in southwest Kansas and Oklahoma territory.

*The Johnnie Heritage* is a history of St. John's College, Winfield, published by the college and its alumni association as a bicentennial project in 1976. The Lutheran junior college was founded in 1893, with a two-year preparatory school and a four-year college. The hardbound book of 284 pages is well illustrated with photographs and reprints of student newspaper and yearbook pages.

Gerald O. Kelver is the compiler of *15 Years on the Western Frontier, 1866-1881*, recently published by Robinson Press, Inc., Ft. Collins. The first-person account is taken from the journals of an army lieutenant and a civilian army scout whose identities are unknown. The 98-page, paperbound book has black and white illustrations many of which are from the Western History Collection of the Denver Public Library.

Mildred Lowry of Pittsburg has published a second volume of her *Who . . . When . . . Where in Kansas*. The paperbound,
mimeographed book of 40 pages was copyrighted in 1976. It includes Baxter Springs cemetery records, early Neosho county marriages, Crawford county mortgages, an index of biographical listings in a 1904 Cherokee county history, and "items of interest" taken from the Girard Press for two months in 1875.

Local historical societies and preservation organizations will find Striving Backwards a source of inspiration and an outline of specific suggestions for developing a successful local history and preservation program. The recently published paperbound, 30-page book by Frank A. Ward, II, describes the organization of the Galesburg (Ill.) Historical Society and includes a list of goals of that organization which have general applicability.

Chaff in the Wind, historical novel of the wheatlands by Edna Walker Chandler, has been out of print for some time. A new paperbound edition published by Sierra Printing and Publishing Company of Sacramento, has been issued in agreement with the author who lives in Fair Oaks, Cal., and her brother, Harold G. Walker, WaKeeney. Although the story begins in 1899, it covers the era from the early 1880's to 1918.

Two Englishmen who are ardent buffs of the American West, are the authors of Gunsmoke, published by the New English Library, Times Mirror, London. Joseph G. Rosa and Robin May have written of many Western personalities, including some well-known gunfighters of the Kansas scene. The book by the above title is available only in England, but an American edition is expected later in 1977, probably to bear the title, Gun Law.

Wilderness Calling by Nicholas Perkins Hardeman, was published by the University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, in 1977. The 357-page book, subtitled The Hardeman Family in the American Westward Movement, 1750-1900, is the story of a family involved in each successive movement of the American frontier from colonial Virginia to California.

Twelve Kansas State University architecture students have compiled a report, Ottawa, Kansas: Historic Conservation. After a semester's study of the community, working with city officials and organizations, they identified the historical elements that make Ottawa distinctive, and recorded their findings and recommendations in the 42-page booklet published by K.S.U. in 1977.

Mulvane: City of the Valley, edited by Madeline K. Farber, was published by the Mulvane Historical Society in 1977. A hard-
bound book of 240 pages, this history includes information on surrounding towns and townships, as well as chapters on local schools, churches, organizations, and businesses. The last two sections, memories and biographies, include material contributed by former residents and family histories.

An intensive archeological and historical survey by Iroquois Research Institute in the Clinton lake area of eastern Kansas was completed during 1976 for the Kansas City District of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. Mary Elizabeth Chambers and Sally Kress Tompkins were the principal investigators and authors of the 270-page, paperbound book, *The Cultural Resources of Clinton Lake, Kansas: An Inventory of Archaeology, History and Architecture*, that is the result of this survey. The report was published by the Iroquois Research Institute, Fairfax, Va., in 1977.

*Argentine, Kansas: The Evolution of a Mexican-American Community, 1905-1940* is a dissertation by Judith Fincher Laird, submitted in 1975 to the department of history, University of Kansas. The 246-page volume was produced in 1977 by University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Mich., by microfilm-xerography. The study examines the development of a Mexican-American *barrio*, or neighborhood, in the Argentine section of Kansas City, in the pre-1940 period. The Argentine *barrio* serves as a microcosm through which to examine Mexican immigration and settlement in the Midwest from 1905 to 1940.

In 1856 the Lane trail was opened connecting Kansas territory with railroads in Iowa, and along this trail James H. Lane’s “army” came south to bolster Free-State forces while blacks traveled the route north to freedom. Glenn Noble tells the story in *John Brown and the Jim Lane Trail*, a hardbound book of 210 pages published in 1977 by Purcells, Inc., Broken Bow, Neb.