

Kansas: The 34th Star



Kansas became a state on January 29, 1861. It was the 34th state to enter the Union. This made Kansas the 34th star on the United States flag.

When Kansas became a state the Atchison newspaper *Freedom's Champion* wrote,

Hurrah for us, we, ourselves!
Hurrah for the new Star!
And three times three again for the
NEW STATE OF KANSAS!!

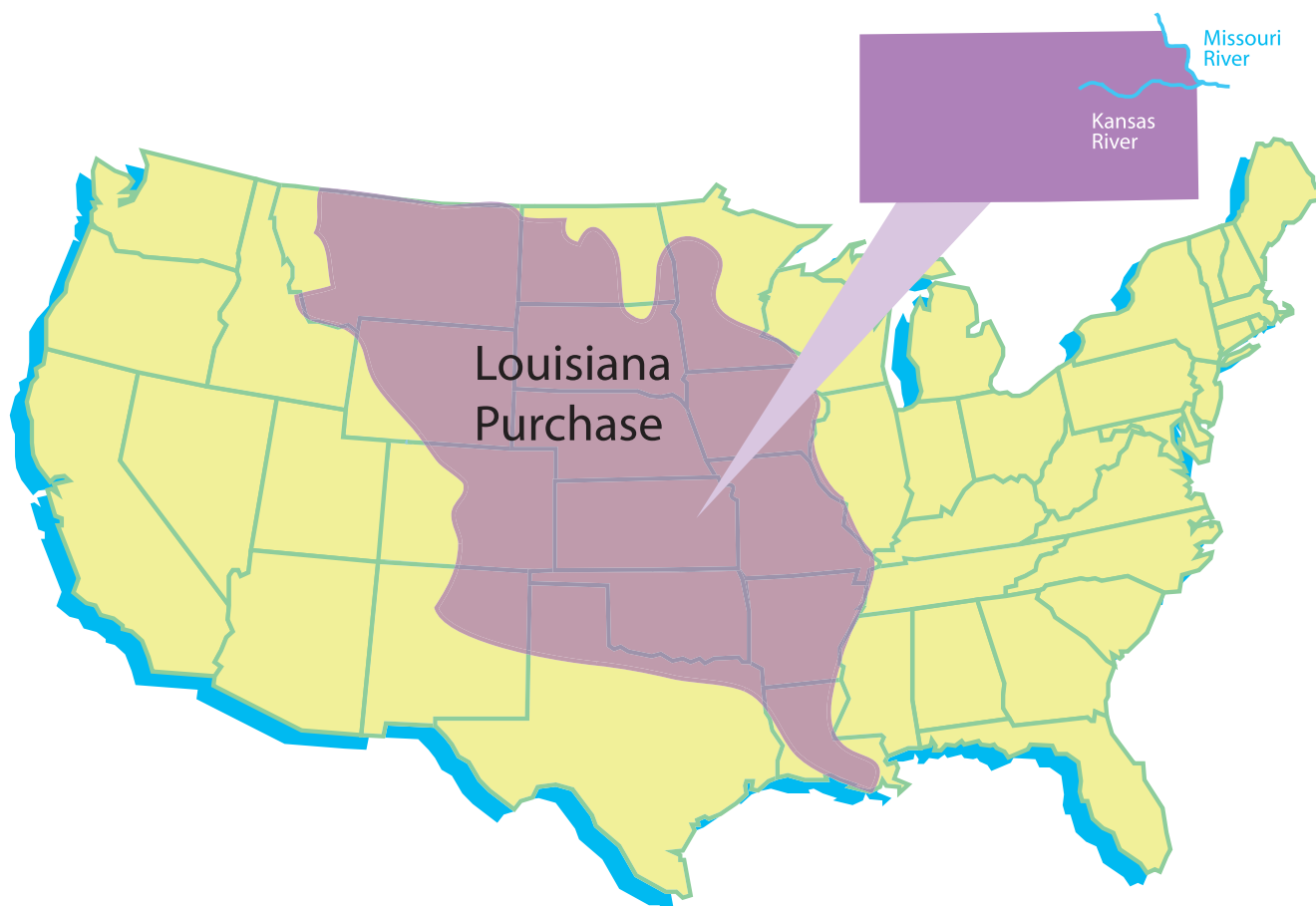
How Did Kansas Become a State?

Many people lived in Kansas before it became a state. American Indians lived here for a long, long time. Spanish and French explorers traveled through the Indian lands. They wrote about what they saw and claimed the land as their own.

The United States was still a young country when people felt they needed more land. Many people wanted the United States to expand to the west. The U.S. President, Thomas Jefferson, bought a large piece of land from the French. This land included Kansas and was called the "Louisiana Territory."

Soon Americans wanted to organize the lands of the Louisiana Territory into states. This is how Kansas became the 34th state in the United States of America.

President-elect Abraham Lincoln raising a U.S. flag with the 34th star representing Kansas.



The United States in 1803.

How Did Kansas Get Its Name?

The state was named for the Kansa Indians. In the English language they were known as the "People of the South Wind." The Kansa simply referred to themselves as "the people" like many other American Indian tribes.

The name Kansas first appeared in print a long time ago. The French explorers were the first to write down the name of the Kansa Indians. They also named a river after them. One French explorer put the name "Kansas" on a map. Soon everyone called this place Kansas, after the people who lived here.