The Great Seal is a symbol of Kansas. The rising sun represents the east, the steamboat and river are symbols of commerce, the settler’s cabin and the man plowing show agriculture, the buffalo and American Indians represent the long history of Kansas, and covered wagons pulled by oxen show westward movement. Near the top are 34 stars and the state motto Ad astra per aspera. The motto means “To the stars through difficulties.” Around the outer edge of the seal are the words “Great Seal of the State of Kansas” and the date Kansas became a state, January 29, 1861.