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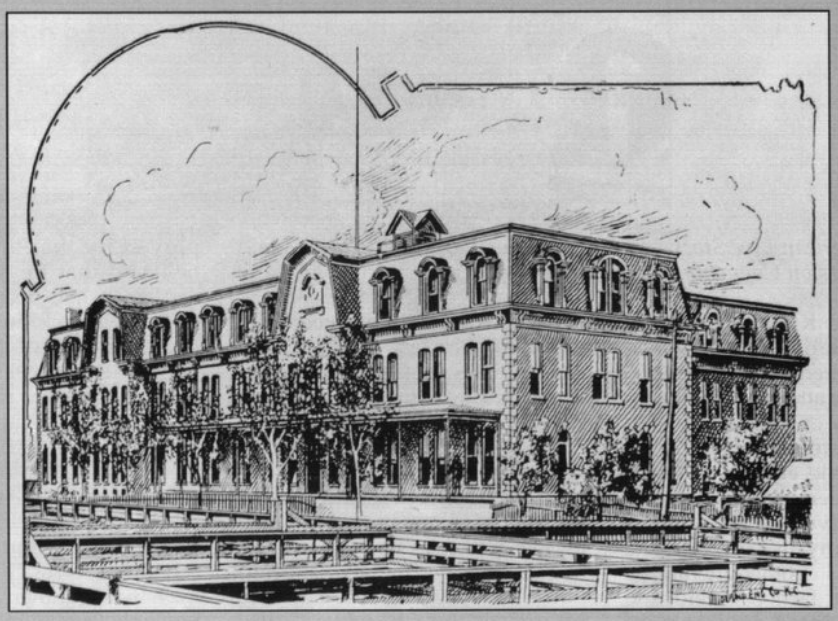

Company "deprecated the cutting of rates." When this evidence was presented at the trial, merchant C. G. Means requested time to find an important witness to refute the charges. When the Exchange board of directors inquired as to the nature of the evidence he expected to obtain, Means replied, "that is my business." The board summarily refused the hear the witness and fined Means four hundred dollars.[41]

The Kansas City Live Stock Exchange set an important precedent in the trials of these three free trader commission firms. It asserted successfully the right to regulate the commission rates and to discipline violators of the rules; it also prevented the powerful commission firms, which traditionally insisted on "going it alone," from undermining the functions of the Exchange.

41. Deposition of Shipper, December 22, 1888, Exchange Records.

In later years, attorneys in Kansas City expressed amazement at the powers and audacity of the Kansas City Live Stock Exchange. Its board of directors controlled the membership of the Exchange and thus determined who could and who could not be a commission merchant; the board conducted commercial courts outside the county or district courts; it fined members enormous sums for violations of the rules. Members could be summoned before the board of directors and investigated upon the report of a rumor that they had violated the rules. The board used anonymous witnesses to convict members, and no attorney for the accused could appear in the commercial courtroom.

The Exchange frequently thumbed its nose at the state legislature in Topeka. The Exchange building was in the stockyards but exactly on the Kansas-Missouri state line, thus making it convenient to ignore Kansas law. When needed, the merchants merely moved their sessions to the Missouri side of the Exchange building. The Missouri legislature rarely interfered with the operation of the Exchange until 1919 and actually encouraged the rebellion against Topeka. Compared with other commercial exchanges, the Kansas City organization was in a class by itself. The Chicago Live Stock Exchange had a similar organization but rarely took aggressive action and was comparatively mild. Even the Chicago Board of Trade, trading in futures contracts for grain, had similar rules but rarely fined members more than five dollars. Chicago grain traders received fines for such benign violations as provoking disorder on the trading floor, pushing, cursing, or throwing sample bags of grain.[42]

42. *Articles of Association and Rules and Bylaws, 1903*, Exchange Records, 1-10; Jonathan Lurie, *The Chicago Board of Trade, 1859-1905: The Dynamics of Self-Regulation* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1979), 35.

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The American Live Stock Commission Company

The Kansas City Exchange never apologized for its conduct, and Exchange attorneys pointed to a long history of private self regulation in western commerce.[43] A death struggle ensued in 1889, however, when the cooperative American Live Stock Commission Company organized. The American was another attempt by the free trader faction to return to the non-regulated environment that had existed prior to 1886. This new commission firm tried to disguise itself as a Farmers' Alliance organization, but they did not fool the regulator faction now in control of the Exchange. Not only would the so-called cooperative commission firm ignore the no-rebate rules of the Exchange, they would also use the Wyandotte County district court and the Kansas legislature to try and force the Exchange out of business.

Historians have generally interpreted the American Live Stock Commission Company as a part of the late nineteenth-century "cooperative crusade." Lawrence Goodwyn, Herbert Myrick, and Keach Johnson described it as an example of a mighty struggle in the stockyards between the grangers and the trusts.[44] Actually the American was the brain child of large cattlemen from the Southwest, not agrarian crusaders, although Kansas Alliancemen later did lend it support.

The firm originated in secret meetings held in the Midland Hotel in Kansas City in early 1889. The Chicago *Daily Drovers Journal* reported that "leading cattlemen of the West" quietly arrived in Kansas City over a period of time in late January. An alert reporter of the *Journal* originally believed that the meeting related to the Cherokee Cattle Company but, as it turned out, that was only a guise to obscure the real purpose of the meeting. The *Journal* reported that "there is something far more important in the wind."[45] And indeed there was. The cattlemen aimed to organize a gigantic commission company for the sale of livestock. Andy Snider, who had fled three years earlier from the stockyards upon the organization of the Exchange, was one of the active promoters of the new company. He, it was rumored, would be the manager of the Kansas City office. The three-day meeting in 1889 gave birth to the American Live Stock Commission Company. Selected as its board of directors were Samuel Lazarus of Texas, A. Gregory of Illinois, and Nicholas T. Eaton and Thomas B. Bugby of Kansas City.[46]

Organizers justified their actions in language later employed by the Populists. They believed that for some time the cattlemen had been "losing out" in the livestock business because of a "combine" of the commission men and large packing houses. This conspiracy had forced the sale of cattle at "ridiculously low" prices. These cattlemen viewed the Exchange as one of the evil interests in the stockyards. In their view, the Kansas City commission merchants coerced the packers into joining their Exchange and then forced them to buy only from members.[47]

The American Live Stock Commission Company was envisioned as a means to break down the power of the Kansas City Live Stock Exchange. Indeed, the American threatened to boycott Kansas City if the commission firms and packing houses discriminated against it. The new organization promised not to ship a head of stock to Kansas City, but instead to ship their cattle to Chicago. Anticipating opposition from the Kansas City combine, the directors of the firm incorporated the American in Illinois.[48]

From the start the new livestock commission company was hampered by internal division. The initial promoters wanted a pledge from every stockholder binding them to transact all of their business through the cooperative. Many objected. E. M. Hewins, president of the Cherokee Strip Live Stock Association in 1889, left the meet-

43. Harold Berman, *Law and Revolution: The Formation of the Western Legal Tradition* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), 333-56.

44. Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise*, 145; Herbert Myrick, *How to Cooperate* (New York: Orange Judd Co., 1912), 220-45; Keach Johnson, "Struggle in the Stockyards: The Rise and Fall of the Cooperative Livestock Commission Company," *Arizona and the West* 18 (Winter 1976):332.

45. *Daily Drovers Journal of Chicago*, February 2, 1889.

46. Ibid., January 31, February 23, 1889.

47. Ibid.

48. Roy V. Scott, *The Agrarian Movement in Illinois* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1962), 75; *Daily Drovers Journal of Chicago*, February 23, 1889.

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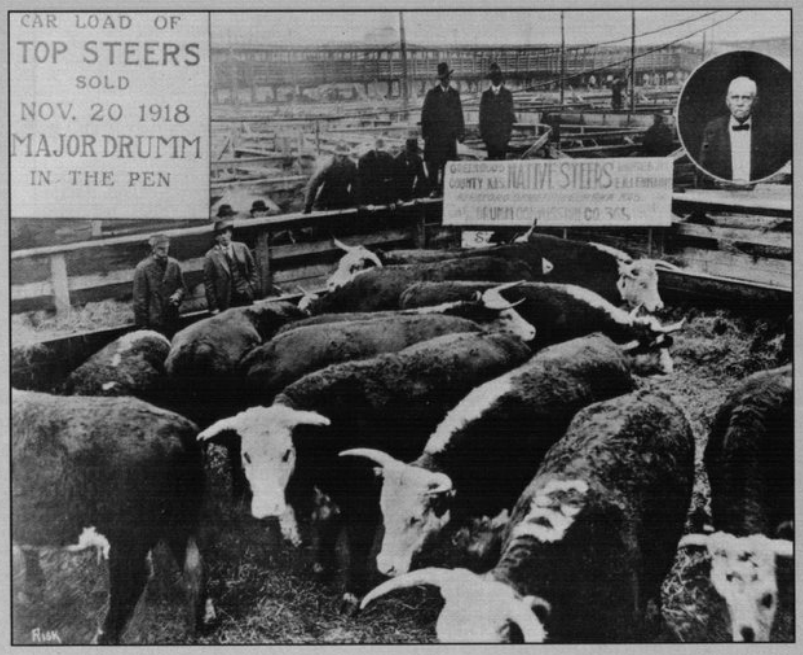

Cattle of Andrew Drumm in the Kansas City Stockyards.

ing in protest and thereafter refused to take part in the organization.[49]

Nor did the rebate practice of the American Live Stock Commission Company endear it to the older Kansas City Exchange. By the terms of its charter, the American rebated 65 percent of the net earnings back to the shippers in proportion to the number of rail cars shipped. The remaining 35 percent was distributed among the stockholders in proportion to the number of shares held.[50]

Controversy swirled more intensely after the Kansas Farmers' Alliance joined the "cooperative" effort. Controlling 9 percent of the stock in the American, the Kansas Alliance sent to Kansas City as its agent Edwin Snyder, vice-president of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture. In time, Snyder also represented the Nebraska Alliance and the Kansas State Grange, both of which also became stockholders in the commission firm.[51]

Despite the Alliance connection, the officers and managers of the American Live Stock Commission Company were not poor farmers, they were free traders in a new disguise. Director Samuel Lazarus was part owner in the huge Pitchfork Land and Cattle Company in the Panhandle of Texas and ranked as one of the wealthiest men in the state.[52] The president of the American, H. W. Creswell, had prospered as a drover and ranch owner in Texas for years; in 1890, he owned a large ranch in Colorado.[53] Nor was Eli Titus, the general manager of the American, a poor man. On the contrary, Titus was the "largest cattle speculator" at the Kansas City Stockyards. He formed a partnership with E. M. Hewins, secretary of the Cherokee Strip Live Stock Association, in the 1870s while Titus was the livestock agent for the Santa Fe railroad. The chattel mortgage records of Sumner County, Kansas, reflected the magnitude of the partnership's capital wealth: ten years before the American organized, the firm of Hewins and Titus had loaned to A. M. Colson $12,000 for eleven months on 1,300 head of Texas cattle.[54]

W. F. Peters was the only member of the American's management team who was not a large cattle dealer. Peters was the commission merchant hired by the cooperative

49. Ibid., February 2, 1889.
50. Myrick, *How to Cooperate*, 222-24.
51. *Kansas City Livestock Indicator*, April 3, 1890; Myrick, *How to Cooperate*, 226.
52. David J. Murrah, *The Pitchfork Land and Cattle Company: The First Century* (Lubbock: Texas Tech University, 1983), 5, 7, 70.
53. *Dodge City Times*, April 19, 1879.
54. *United States Biographical Dictionary: Kansas Volume* (Chicago: S. Lewis and Co., 1879), 632-33; Chattel Mortgage Record, October 7, 1881, v. 5, p. 190, Sumner County Register of Deeds, Sumner County Courthouse, Winfield.

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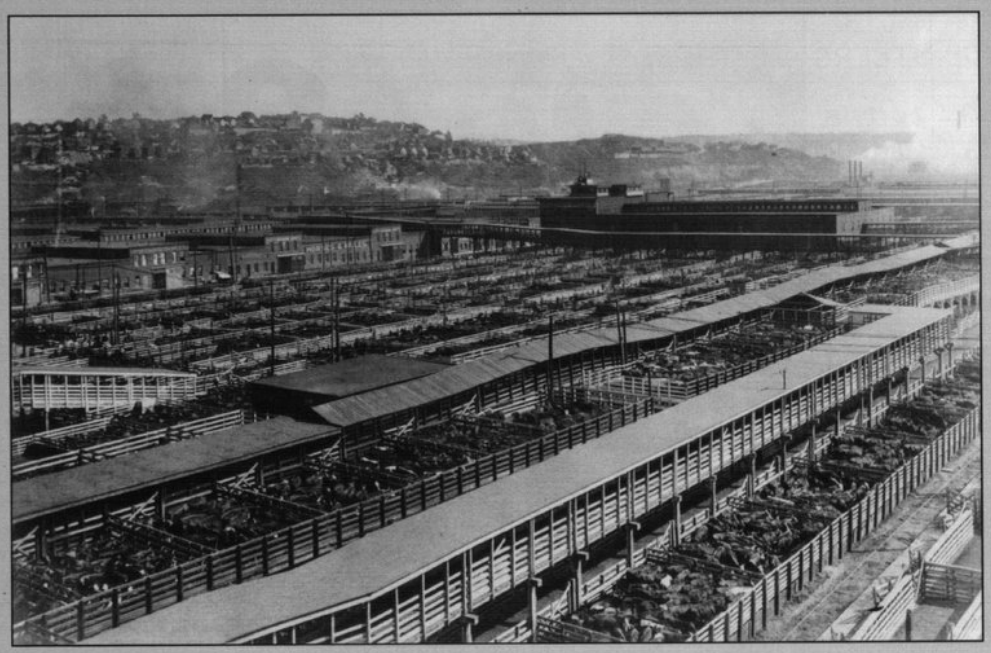

because it needed an agent who was already a member of the Kansas City Live Stock Exchange. In so doing, the American hoped to avoid applying (and being turned down) for a membership. Although the Kansas City Exchange was not aware of the arrangements made in the first months of 1889, the American feared that its mode of operation would be discovered and the cooperative would not be able to function in the stockyards. Hopefully Peters would smooth the way. He had a good reputation in the Kansas City yards; he had been a charter member of the Exchange and a director in 1887.[55]

55. Powell, *Twenty Years of Kansas City's Live Stock Trade and Traders*, 269; *Kansas City Livestock Indicator*, November 29, 1890; Report of Election, February 13, 1887, Exchange Records.

Battle Lines Are Drawn

The Kansas City board began receiving reports of the American's improper business methods late in 1889. Not disposed to let the cooperative go unchallenged, the board on June 11, 1890, instructed the secretary of the Exchange to notify H. W. Creswell, the president of the American Live Stock Commission Company, that charges had been preferred against the American for violating the rules of the Exchange on rebating commissions to shippers.[56] Creswell was requested to attend a hearing on the charges, but he refused to participate. Nevertheless, at the scheduled hearing the charges against the cooperative were read into the record—by none other than Chester A. Snider. Ironically, Chester was the son of Andy Snider, one of the promoters of the American.[57] He cleverly turned the rhetoric of the Alliance movement against the cooperative. The American, he charged, was a combination among various wealthy cattlemen formed to regulate the supply of cattle and control prices. The design of the company was to "oppress and drive from business the smaller independent dealers." As evidence Snider pointed to advertisements of the trust that claimed no railroad would dare dispute its damage claims for fear of reprisals by the large and powerful membership. The American, he said, obviously sought to acquire control of the entire livestock transportation business. Because of the immense number of cattle it controlled and the aggregate wealth of the stockholders, the cooperative, Snider concluded, would regulate the

56. Minutes of the Board of Directors, June 11, 1890, Exchange Records.

57. Powell, *Twenty Years of Kansas City's Live Stock Trade and Traders*, 215.

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The Kansas City Stockyards, cattle section, 1920s.

offerings of cattle on the principal markets and thus steady prices to consumers.[58]

Upon receipt of the charges filed against it, the American Live Stock Commission Company sought assistance from the Kansas legislature. The Kansas Alliance had significant influence in the legislature in 1890 and owned stock in the cooperative. Eli Titus, general manager of the American and large cattle speculator, traveled to Topeka and sought legislation to prevent the Kansas City Live Stock Exchange from expelling the cooperative commission company from the Kansas City market. Titus had enough influence that the legislature of 1891, which was largely controlled by the Populist party, passed the Roe Bill. The bill declared the regulation of commissions on the sale of livestock in the state of Kansas unlawful, and thus, outlawed the Kansas City Live Stock Exchange.[59]

In response, the board of directors of the Exchange revoked the membership of the American Live Stock Commission Company. They also expelled all members of the Exchange associated with the cooperative. The board stood firmly on the Missouri side of the Exchange building and insolently declared that they would have nothing to do with the Roe Bill or with any laws enacted by the Kansas legislature.[60] They further adopted a new rule, Rule 16, that gave them more disciplinary power over members—the authority to black ball. This power was immediately employed against the American. Previously, the board could do nothing more than refuse to dock any of the offending firm's hogs. Now it could prevent commission merchants, traders, packers, and railroads at the Kansas City Stockyards from doing business with an offending party. The implementation of Rule 16 against the American effectively shut it out of the Kansas City market. No packer would buy its livestock, and no trader would buy its animals for speculation.[61]

With the Roe Bill on the statute books, the American Live Stock Commission Company sought an injunction against the Kansas City Live Stock Exchange to prevent the expulsion. Attorneys for the cooperative filed the case of *William G. Peters* v. *Frank Cooper, et. al.* in the Wyandotte County district court in Kansas City on March 2, 1891. They challenged the membership rules of the Exchange on the grounds that the Kansas City market was a public market and therefore not subject to interference or regulation by a private agency. They further claimed that since livestock shipped to Kansas City was an interstate trade from various states in the West, charges levied upon shippers by the Exchange constituted a restraint. The American believed that the Exchange rules were an injury to the shippers and the public at large. Furthermore, they were in violation of the Roe Bill recently passed by the Kansas legislature.[62]

Attorneys for the American also cited the 1876 case of *Munn* v. *Illinois* in which the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of state regulation of grain elevators in the Midwest. Grain elevators stood at the gateway to commerce and the elevator warehousemen took a toll from all who passed. As this system tended towards conspiracy and monopoly, the court affirmed the appropriateness of placing the warehousemen in the grain trade under public regulation so "that they take but a reasonable toll." The same principle, the attorneys argued, should be applied to the stockyards. The yards stood at the gateway to commerce to the Southwest, and these commission merchants took a toll on livestock in the guise of a commission. As a consequence, public interest should be entitled to protection via the power of the state and the courts.[63]

The attorneys of the Kansas City Live Stock Exchange challenged all of the arguments made

58. Speech of Chester A. Snider, March 2, 1891, Exchange Records.

59. Minutes of the Board of Directors, March 31, 1891, Exchange Records; *Kansas Farmer*, March 11, 18, 1891; *Kansas Session Laws of 1891* (Topeka: Kansas Publishing House, 1891), 294-95. For background on the Kansas Farmers' Alliance and the People's (or Populist) party, *see*, among others, O. Gene Clanton, *Kansas Populism: Idea and Men* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1969); and W. F. Rightmire, "The Alliance Movement in Kansas—Origin of the People's Party," *Kansas Historical Collections, 1905-1906* 9 (1906):1-8.

60. Minutes of the Board of Directors, March 2, 1891, Exchange Records.

61. Ibid., March 14, 1891.

62. Petition and Precipe, *William G. Peters* v. *Frank Cooper et. al.*, March 2, 1891, Wyandotte County District Court, Kansas City, Kansas, 1-14.

63. Ibid., 15-17.

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by the plaintiffs. The Kansas City market was not affected with a public interest because all of the sales were private affairs between the individual buyer and seller. They argued also that the Exchange had a right to regulate its own members. Since the officials of the American Live Stock Commission Company had signed an agreement to abide by the rules and bylaws of the Exchange when they became members, failure to comply was grounds for expulsion. Rather than meet their good faith commitments, the American had actually launched a secret conspiracy to undermine the Exchange. Its representatives had made false and defamatory statements about the Kansas City market and brought discredit upon it. The Exchange, argued its lawyers, had the constitutional and civil rights to be left at "liberty to refuse business relations with the American without being required to assign any reason whatsoever." And as the Kansas City Exchange had rules that allowed it to expel any member who was guilty of extortion, the "dishonorable, deceitful, and fraudulent" acts of the American justified expulsion.[64]

The livestock exchanges at Chicago and Omaha also brought suit against the American Live Stock Commission Company. Both the Kansas City and Omaha cases were dropped so that the case in Illinois could be taken to the state supreme court. The Illinois court ruled in favor of the exchanges on October 31, 1892. It acknowledged that the exchanges had the right to regulate their own memberships, a right that legalized expulsion. However, the court conceded that there was good basis for declaring the stockyards a public market by reason of their magnitude and far reaching influence on the consumer. Nevertheless, the court declared that until legislatures specifically determined that the stockyards were public markets, the exchanges had the right to regulate the livestock trade. On the question of the membership in a private organization, the court agreed that the exchanges could discipline their memberships.[65]

The American Live Stock Commission Company never recovered from the death struggle with the Kansas City Live Stock Exchange. The regulators had defeated the free traders soundly, and the Exchange regulated the commission trade in Kansas City for another thirty-two years without interference. Tragically the U.S. Congress passed the Packers and Stockyards Act in 1921 and declared the stockyards a public market. This new federal legislation was the result of agitation from twentieth-century free traders such as the American Farm Bureau and the National Farmers Union. These groups had lost confidence in the free market and wanted interference from the federal level. Beginning in the 1920s, federal officials assumed the function of a regulator in the stockyards. Ironically, they mostly copied the work already institutionalized by the Exchange. The new federal officials innovated very little beyond what the Exchange had implemented over the previous decades with one exception: they allowed the cooperative commission firms back into the stockyards.[66]

Conclusion

The commission merchants in Kansas City were not laissez faire individualists. The chaotic nature of the livestock trade and the problems it brought about begged for some kind of regulation. In the absence of a strong positive government in the late nineteenth century, the Exchange took upon itself the right of self regulation based upon a long tradition in western commerce. They coerced their wayward members into joining the organization and ensured that the rules of the commercial body were obeyed. When attacked by the American Live Stock Commission Company, the Exchange organizers fought back and won. These merchants were not twentieth-century progressives screaming for federal regulation of the market place. From 1886 to 1921, they demonstrated that it was possible to have regulation in a free economy without the heavy hand of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Packers and Stockyards Administration. KH

64. Ibid., 1-11.

65. *American Live Stock Commission Company* v. *Chicago Live Stock Exchange*, *Northwest Reporter* (1892), 174-283.

66. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Packers and Stockyards Administration, *Annual Report* (1922), 1.

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BOOK REVIEWS

The Sternberg Fossil Hunters: A Dinosaur Dynasty

by Katherine Rogers

xiii + 288 pages, illustrations, maps, notes, index.
Missoula, Montana: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 1991, paper $10.00.

One of the best-kept secrets in Kansas is the outstanding Sternberg Memorial Museum at Fort Hays State University, a museum probably better known outside the state (even outside the nation) than among Kansas' citizens for its paleontology exhibits. One of the displays, the famous "fish within a fish" found in western Kansas and mounted by George F. Sternberg in 1952, is believed to be the most photographed fossil in the world.

The story of the Sternberg fossil hunters, men who supported their families by finding and selling the remains of ancient land and marine life, is extremely well told for the first time by Rogers, emeritus professor of English and journalism at Fort Hays State. Much of the Sternberg collecting was done in the rich fossil beds of Kansas, where some family members spent most of their lives (particularly near Ellsworth, at Lawrence, and in Hays). They also pursued their quarries in several western states, Canada, and South America.

Rogers's finely crafted narrative (based largely on the journals, field notes, and memoirs of the subjects, and enhanced with more than 140 black-and-white photographs and eight maps), like the Sternbergs' excavations, cuts through the overburden to reveal the essential remains of the characters—the personalities, intellectual curiosity, determination, disrupted family situations, hard work, adventures, failures, and achievements of this remarkable family. The central subjects are Charles H. Sternberg and his sons, George F., Charles M., and Levi. A brother of Charles H., George M. Sternberg, was a medical doctor who served at Forts Harker and Riley in Kansas and later became surgeon general of the United States. Dr. George was not a fossil hunter, but he had contacts with scientists which aided the careers of his brother and nephews.

In an introduction, providing perspective on the Sternbergs' contributions to science, Charles R. Crumly describes the talented family as "fossil-finding fanatics." (p. vii) They possessed uncanny abilities to find, and developed exceptional techniques to "harvest" and display, what lay concealed from the general public.

Even though none of the Sternberg fossil hunters received much formal education (George F. never finished grade school), they were highly respected among the nation's and world's leading paleontologists and museum curators (including the Smithsonian Institution and the American Museum of Natural History). The thousands of artifacts they discovered and sold are on display in museums in more than twenty states and at least a dozen foreign countries. George F. was curator of what became the Sternberg Memorial Museum from 1927 until his retirement in 1961. He developed, promoted, and conducted fossil-hunting field trips and was a pioneer in placing fossil exhibits in public schools and other institutions for the general population to appreciate and learn about life on earth millions of years ago.

When George F. retired, Myrl Walker (who had begun hunting fossils with Sternberg while a student at Fort Hays) became the curator. He gathered much of the material and assisted with the early phases of this book. Walker died several years before the book was completed.

With the death of George F. Sternberg in 1969, the dinosaur dynasty came to an end. Other Sternbergs had chosen different careers. Thanks to the dedicated research and storytelling talents of Katherine Rogers, the Sternberg chronicle, an important chapter in the history of Kansas as well as the natural history of the earth, is now available to inform and inspire present and future generations who will benefit from reading this family biography and visiting the Sternberg Memorial Museum.

Reviewed by Leo E. Oliva, *former chairman of the history department at Fort Hays State University.*

Creating the West: Historical Interpretations, 1890-1990

by Gerald D. Nash

xi + 318 pages, notes, bibliography, index.
Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991, cloth $29.95, paper $15.95.

On the centennial of the much-heralded closing of the western American frontier, Prof. Gerald D. Nash has undertaken a sweeping analysis of how historians of the West have viewed their field of specialization. Appearing at a time of significant reappraisal regarding the meaning of the West in our national historical fabric, this volume is timely. Indeed, it may be the one best work in print for positioning the so-called "New Western History" in a context understandable to professionals and non-professionals alike.

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Taking cues from his academic mentor, John D. Hicks, and to a lesser degree those of Carl Degler, James C. Malin, Carl Becker, and the theologian Martin Marty, Nash centers on ecological context as a powerful device for discerning relationships between contemporary environmental settings and the changing views of western historians since the last decade of the nineteenth century. Not intractably determinist, however, Nash also recognizes the creative urge of individual scholars and the seemingly ubiquitous impact of myth on professional analyses of the American West. But ecology stands as the dominant theme of this study.

First presented as the Calvin P. Horn Lectures in Western History and Culture at the University of New Mexico, the first two chapters are developed chronologically: "The West as Frontier, 1890-1945" and "The West as Frontier, 1945-1990." The transitional years, 1920-1945, were especially significant, for prior to 1920 a small closely associated fraternity of historians with essentially WASP, rural, small-town/middle western backgrounds was profoundly conditioned by the common experience of frontier maturation in the Middle West, burgeoning industrialization, often explosive agrarian unrest, and overseas expansion. But by the end of World War II the essential ecology had changed, and with it most historians. Those with a professional interest in the West were now more diverse and certainly more urban in background. They consequently turned away from Turner and, in the face of the Great Depression and massive American involvement in World War II and its aftermath, were much less optimistic than their patrician predecessors. A more acute awareness also of their European backgrounds prompted greater deference to more diverse influences on American culture, including that from persons of Native American, Hispanic, and African-American descent. In short, by mid-century the West was more diverse, more complicated, and clearly no longer "an unbroken story of heroic deeds" of the past. (p. 261)

The last three chapters, each covering the entire century after 1890, are topically designed: "The West as Region, 1890-1990"; "The West as Urban Civilization, 1890-1990"; and "The West as Utopia and Myth, 1890-1990." Basic themes that emerge from these essays are that by 1960 western historians no longer viewed the region and regionalism as positive forces in American civilization; that in 1990 the symbolic western figures of the miner, the cattleman, the rancher, and the cowboy had given way to bankers, corporate executives, railroad magnates, and businessmen who in towns and cities had dominated the West almost from the start; and that through the course of several intellectual metamorphoses, the mythic West—however imperfect—still served as a mirror to most Americans as they sought to explain the West to themselves. And this despite a host of western historians who sought to attack the myth as a reflection of "wrongs of their own era, whether racism, sexism, class conflict, or environmental despoliation." (p. 256)

In a particularly poignant conclusion, surely for inflexible devotees of "The New Western History," Nash cautions that given the cadence of biological existence those western historians who imagine they have discovered the ultimate understanding of their subject may in fact be engaging in self-deception, for as Nash insists, "these myths usually enjoyed some currency for about one generation before they were replaced." (p. 259) Judicious advice from the pen of a scholar whose historiographical insights should be required reading for anyone interested in the American West.

Reviewed by William E. Unrau, *professor of history, Wichita State University.*

Land in Her Own Name: Women as Homesteaders in North Dakota

by H. Elaine Lindgren

viii + 300 pages, illustrations, tables, notes, index. Fargo: North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies, North Dakota State University, 1991, cloth $25.00.

Hilda Krueger's decision to homestead was "a bit of a lark" and she added, "I did it to see if I could win something." Pauline Shoemaker said, "I've done everything else; I might as well try homesteading." Kirsten Knudsen came from Norway planning to make a fortune and return home. Hilda Paulson remembered, "I thought, well, I'd just take and file on a homestead, and if I liked it, I'd stay there." Others came with family members, or seeking a job and settled for land; others came to escape family connections and found jobs as part of homesteading the land. A few filed as a dutiful daughter or wife to add to the family's holdings, but the majority homesteaded for their own sense of accomplishment and self-worth. They came as widows, divorcees, mothers, single or married ladies, with and without children. They were all unique. Yet the same thread of desire to do something on their own, the same initiative required to undertake such a venture, and the practical approach with which the women carried out their plans are evident.

The experiences of these women homesteaders, told in a clear, unadorned style by H. Elaine Lindgren, reveal the joys and the difficulties facing the 306 women in her case study files who staked claims in North Dakota between 1883 and 1916. The most revealing section is the discussion of the question: "Did women 'really' homestead?" The answer is a definite: "Yes!" In doing so, some assumed the full burden, laboring in the fields, but more to the point, 94 percent "oversaw the operations of their land." Each "really" did hold the responsibility for the homestead's success or failure.

Their ingenuity in coping with the frontier experience was essential in meeting the challenge. Josephine Thedin took her bread dough to bed with her to keep it from freezing. Gertrude Stenehjem skied into Arnegad some five miles away for supplies. Nancy Smith dug an eighteen-foot well with a posthole auger but

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had no pump, so she attached a wire to a tomato can, rigged it to tip so as to fill up with water, and hoisted it to the surface. It must have taken great patience to fill a teakettle, let alone draw a bath.

This is a delightful book with an almost encyclopedic coverage of the process of homesteading on the prairie. It is filled with unexpected insights and information. For instance, the discussion of the ever-changing homestead laws is as clear and succinct a coverage as can be found. The least rewarding chapter is that dealing with the "gender factor." The period covered was one of transition for young women in the United States. The changed motivations, lifestyles, and values that preceded World War I were preludes to the burst of feminine independence, freedom, and rebellion that characterized the "Roaring Twenties." The relationship to acquiring land in her own name to that of changing psyche could be a profitable study, and would be more important than the emphasis on broader gender roles.

The illustrations with contemporary photographs, both formal and informal, which are included in profusion, are special. Any doubt that these handsome, confident, and poised ladies could and did "settle the West" is dispelled by even a casual review. This is a handsome book portraying an important segment of the history of prairie culture. No account of the homesteading process will be complete in the future without reference to *Land in Her Own Name.*

Reviewed by C. Robert Haywood, *retired professor of history, Washburn University, Topeka, and current president of the Kansas State Historical Society.*

Bloody Dawn: The Story of the Lawrence Massacre

by Thomas Goodrich

207 pages, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index.
Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1991, cloth $26.00.

In this well-researched and ably-written study of William Clarke Quantrill and the Lawrence massacre, Thomas Goodrich, historian and writer and native of Lawrence, Kansas, writes that terrible as the Civil War had been prior to August 21, 1863, "nothing even approached this Lawrence butchery, either in numbers or grim barefaced brutality. . . . But perhaps even more sobering was the realization that the 'cruel war' had become by tenfold even crueler." (p. 151) From 150 to 200 men and boys were killed and a score or more seriously wounded. Homes and business and public buildings were plundered and burned with the damage in millions of dollars. What might have been regarded "as the most astonishing and dazzling light cavalry raid of the war" was transformed into "one of the blackest pages in American history." (p. 149)

Goodrich contends that Quantrill's raid on Lawrence had its origin in May 1856 when John Brown and his men massacred five proslavery settlers on Pottawatomie Creek. The score was evened in May 1858 on the Marais des Cygnes River when a group of proslavery Missourians massacred five antislavery Kansans. But by this time, it is contended, the border war was virtually at an end as the influx of free-soil settlers ensured that Kansas Territory would become a free state. Nevertheless, the legacy of hatred and violence had not ended, and with the coming of the Civil War, and Missouri in virtual revolt, bands of Kansans known as Jayhawkers took advantage of turbulent conditions to make guerrilla raids into the neighboring state to settle old scores. Foremost among the Jayhawker leaders were Colonel Charles R. Jennison and General (and U.S. Senator) James H. Lane.

Missourians, especially those who were slaveholders and supporters of the Confederate government, were quick to form local defense units of guerrillas or bushwhackers. In time, these bands developed into a combined force of several hundred guerrillas to make lightning strikes against civilians and Union military units stationed in Kansas border towns. Rising to the leadership of the combined force was William C. Quantrill, a bold and fearless fighter, skilled in light cavalry strategy and tactics. He had lived in Lawrence, Kansas, for a time in 1859 and 1860, and had taken flight to Jackson County, Missouri, after charges had been brought against him for theft and arson.

It is Goodrich's thesis that after "Lane, Jennison, and their jayhawkers had turned western Missouri inside out," it was Quantrill and his guerrillas who "had their revenge" by sacking Lawrence. (p. 131) Compared with other towns in Kansas, Lawrence was especially hated by Quantrill and his guerrillas and their supporters in Missouri. It was the center of free-state politics, the abolitionist capital of the West, the chief station on the Underground Railroad, a recruiting ground for Jayhawkers and Union troops, and the home of Jim Lane. Convincing his guerrilla chieftains to join the expedition to Lawrence was no easy task for Quantrill. However, a series of events in the summer of 1863 tilted the feasibility of the raid in a favorable direction. These events included Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg which led to relaxed vigilance against guerrilla attacks by military and civilian leaders in Kansas, resentment by guerrillas against a Union military order to banish the families of their supporters in western Missouri, and the collapse of a Union military prison in Kansas City with the death of five women prisoners who were related to several guerrilla leaders in Quantrill's combined force.

Coming to the Lawrence massacre, the core of the book, the author helps the reader to comprehend the enormity of the tragedy by detailing the numerous confrontations between the bushwhackers and their victims. In all, the carnage and destruction of the August 21, 1863, raid lasted four hours. Then, with their packhorses piled high with plunder, the raiders rode south out of Lawrence leaving behind only one comrade shot to death in the feeble resistance. While large numbers of soldiers joined in pursuit, as Goodrich writes, "Quantrill 'dodged,' 'bewildered,' and 'baffled his pursuers,' all with the loss of only a handful of men." (p. 149)

Bloody Dawn offers a detailed and well-written account of the war on the Kansas-Missouri border from 1861 to 1865, giving par-

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ticular attention to the nature and significance of the Lawrence massacre, and to the legacy of hatred on both sides of the border to which it contributed. It is a welcome and valuable addition to the literature, drawing on primary and secondary sources to produce a work of intense interest. But some of Goodrich's arguments, notably the view that the chief cause of the Lawrence massacre was the Jayhawker attacks on western Missouri in 1861, is not convincing. The roots of this partisan conflict go much deeper, and, while ideology has its place, as James M. McPherson writes in *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), "The motives of guerrillas and Jayhawkers alike sometimes seemed nothing more than robbery, revenge, or nihilistic love of violence."

Goodrich recognizes that the war in Kansas and Missouri was, to a large extent, an "inside war," that is, "a very personal war, a war among neighbors, a war of theft and arson, a war of midnight murder and torture—a vendetta." (p. 4) However, he does not make the point, as does Michael Fellman, *Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict in Missouri During the American Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), that "inside war" was at least as important as jayhawking in bringing about guerrilla warfare.

It is disappointing that Goodrich confines his account of the raid's victims largely to Lawrence business and professional men, born in the northeastern states. Brief mention is made of fatalities among German and African-Americans, but the stories of their tragic fate has yet to be told.

The author's disturbingly one-sided depiction of Quantrill's character is also disappointing. The guerrilla leader is described as the "refined former schoolteacher" who was "brave, intelligent, affable," a man who had fashioned a "rugged, resilient character" from his years in the Rocky Mountains and Utah; "a bold and fearless fighter;" a man who despite "no quarter" edicts from Union commanders, "managed to preserve a degree of humanity, even gallantry." (p. 67-69, 74, 76, 79, 90, 149, 185) Other historians, like Albert Castel, *William Clarke Quantrill: His Life and Times* (New York: Frederick Fell, 1962), offer more balanced assessments: "Quantrill, like all men, was an incalculable mixture of good and bad, of the admirable and the detestable. . . . All in all, the latter tend to obscure the former." (Castel, p. 215) It is ironic that Goodrich judges Quantrill to be almost benign by comparison with Senator Lane and Colonel Jennison whom he persistently denigrates.

In spite of these criticisms and caveats, the reviewer recommends *Bloody Dawn* especially to the general reader. Goodrich's book is a History Book Club Alternate Selection.

Reviewed by Richard B. Sheridan, *professor emeritus of economics, University of Kansas.*

The Upstream People: An Annotated Research Bibliography of the Omaha Tribe

by Michael L. Tate

xvi + 506 pages, maps, index.
Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1991, Native American Bibliography Series, No. 14, cloth $62.50.

Most readers are likely to associate the name Omaha with the city in Nebraska (or with an insurance company) and have only a vague notion of the Indian tribe whose name the city bears. Unlike well-known Plains Indians such as the Kiowas, Comanches, and Sioux, Omaha warriors engaged in few skirmishes with white soldiers and, thus, the tribe earns rare mention in modern history books. But as Michael L. Tate makes clear in his preface to this annotated bibliography, the Omahas should rate a more prominent place in American history.

Generally peaceful toward whites, the Omahas played an integral role in the nineteenth-century Missouri River fur trade, and, after 1854, assisted, protected, and bartered with the hordes of Euro-American settlers, entrepreneurs, and travelers making their way west. Settled on a small reservation in northeastern Nebraska following the Civil War, in 1882 the Omahas had the dubious distinction of being among the first tribes subjected to the governmental experiment called land allotment. Part of the effort to "civilize" and assimilate Indians, land allotment gave Indian families and individuals title to farms on reservation land; the tribal bond could then be broken and "surplus" Indian holdings sold to whites. The allotment experiment had earlier been applied to the Potawatomis and other tribes in eastern Kansas; the result had been lost lands, poverty, and forced removal to Indian Territory (Oklahoma).

Allotment placed similar pressures on the Omahas. Despite the subsequent loss of territory and great hardship imposed on the tribe, eastern philanthropists and politicians cited the Omahas' experience as "proof" that all Indians should be subjected to the process, and in 1887 the General Allotment Act became law. As a result, by 1934 the nation's tribes had lost over ninety million acres, and many Indians, including the Omahas, suffered poverty and deprivation. But the Omahas struggled mightily to survive; they defended their Indian customs, clung to a portion of their Nebraska lands, and in recent decades have won back a measure of tribal sovereignty.

The purpose of this bibliography is to create renewed scholarly interest in those determined people, and the chances are excellent that it will accomplish its goal. This is Tate's second contribution to the Scarecrow Press, Native American Bibliography Series; his first, published in 1986, is a comprehensive annotated bibliography of the Indians of Texas. Like that volume, *The Upstream People* is a major accomplishment. Its 1,836 entries include references on the Omahas from books, journal and magazine articles, newspaper accounts, government documents, and numerous other sources. Its detailed, analytical anno-

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tations, its logical arrangement (roughly divided into topical and historical categories), and its thorough index, make this a superb reference tool for scholars and students interested in the tribe.

The volume is divided into thirty-two chapters, or categories; sections focus on Omaha culture and religion, social organization and kinship, reservation life, treaties and land cessions, education and the boarding school experience, health conditions, urban Indians, and tribal economic development. Another section examines the La Flesche family, acculturated Omahas who first gained national notoriety in the 1880s for championing the Indian cause. The concluding section, listing archival collections, should prove an especially valuable guide for the serious researcher.

Those wanting to learn more about the Omahas would do well to consult this work; those interested in scholarly research will find this an indispensable resource. Once again, Professor Tate deserves the highest commendation for producing a work that will serve for years as the primary source for information on an important American Indian tribe.

Reviewed by Joseph B. Herring, *program officer, Division of Public Programs, National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C.*

Midwest at Noon

by Graham Hutton

xiv + 351 pages, illustrations, index.
DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1990, paper $12.50.

In 1941, Graham Hutton, a member of the British Foreign Office, was assigned to head the British Information Service in Chicago. His assignment: to explain the British role in its fight against Nazism to Americans living in perhaps the most isolationist region of America, the Midwest.

For his successful efforts he received an Office of the Order of the British Region award from his government. A second tangible result of his assignment was the publication of *Midwest at Noon* in 1946. Northern Illinois University Press has reprinted Hutton's impressions of an area whose people he described as "largely unknown, widely misinterpreted, and greatly misunderstood."

Hutton's personal observations derived from his travels throughout the Midwest between 1941 and 1945, when this region stood at its "noon" or midpoint of its culture. His volume includes few footnotes, but comprises a well-researched snapshot of the people, places, and Midwest society during the early twentieth century. Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Missouri constitute the physical area of this region which strikes the author as a place of extremes: frigid winters and stifling summers; industrialized cities and agrarian farmlands; conservative social values, and radical politics; much tolerance for individuality, yet strong conformity to "family values" and to what the author labels as the "standardized average." This paradox of extremes perhaps accounts for what Hutton characterizes as cultural "hallmarks of the Midwest": change, restlessness, movement, scrapping the old, inventing and installing the new. These paradoxical features characterize Hutton's version of the midwestern persona.

Frenchman Alexis de Toqueville and Englishman James Bryce provided earlier foreign perceptions which allowed them to capture the contradictions and quirks that Americans assume as normal.

Today, we have experienced the redistributing of America's population growth on both the South and the West coasts. The cities of Hutton's Midwest—Detroit, Michigan; Gary, Indiana; Youngstown, Ohio, and others—have been identified as "Rustbowl" victims. Many family farms have disappeared into corporate entities or into urban development. Thus, Hutton's prediction that the region's future will be bound much more closely to the future of America seems to be accurate. His forty-five-year-old predictions concerning such issues as "farm surpluses" and "the Negro problem" are both ominous and accurate. The traditional, strong family structure of the Midwest has been transformed in the "nuclear family" spread from coast to coast.

However, the values and the character of the Midwest, as described by Graham Hutton, remain constant: the true test of any chronicler's perception and vision. He predicts that the Midwest, which borrowed so heavily from Europe and the East, will "pay back" the interest of this human investment. Recent attempts to return to the "habits" of our "heartland" may indeed indicate that Hutton was correct.

Reviewed by Gregory S. Sojka, *academic vice-president, Lewis-Clark State College, Lewiston, Idaho.*

Menninger: The Family and the Clinic

by Lawrence J. Friedman

xix + 472 pages, illustrations, notes, bibliographical note, index.
New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1990, cloth $29.95.
Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1992, paperback reprint of book originally issued in cloth, $14.95.

Few social geographers would select Topeka, Kansas, as the most logical place to build a world-class psychiatric center. But history has a logic of its own that is not always consistent with the models of social science. Thus, "In 1919," writes Lawrence Friedman, "Karl Menninger of Topeka founded one of the most significant and innovative psychiatric institutions in America." (p. 4) According to Friedman, the moving force behind the creation of the Menninger Clinic and its influential role in the

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development of American psychiatry was not primarily the reformist spirit that swept Kansas and the nation during this period, but the sense of shared values and commitments that Karl and his younger brother Will learned from their parents, Charles and Flo Menninger. By precept and example the Menninger parents taught their sons to be ambitious and hard-working and to be concerned about the welfare of others in their community. Flo and Charles were very active in humanitarian endeavors and opened their home to a continuing series of young relatives and others who were in need of emotional or financial support. At times, says Friedman, the Menninger household resembled "a public orphanage." (p. 22) In this sense, the Menninger Foundation represents an institutionalization of what Karl and Will experienced in their parents' home.

This "family spirit," which encouraged family solidarity, altruism, and personal ambition, left its indelible stamp on both Karl and Will and the institution they created and developed. Indeed, Friedman states that the "connection" between the Menninger family and the organization that bears their name "lies at the heart" of his book. (p. xii) Unfortunately, this connection was not always beneficial to either family or organization. Karl and Will institutionalized their family's weaknesses as well as its strengths. The family's problems were sometimes acted out in the daily life of the institution, and the heavy demands of time and energy imposed on Karl and Will by their work kept them from their own families and undermined the foundations of the family spirit they sought to emulate in their institution. Friedman describes a series of events including extramarital affairs, separation and divorce, and a growing estrangement between Karl and Will leading eventually to the "palace revolt" in 1965 that effectively deprived Karl of administrative control of the organization.

Although Friedman correctly emphasizes the close connection between family and organization, he does not assume that the organization's history and the family's experience are synonymous. On the contrary, his book can be read as a rich institutional history encompassing a wide range of issues that to some extent transcend the concerns of the Menninger family. The development of clinical theory, the emergence of specialization and bureaucracy, the reform of mental health care and education, the influence of European emigres on American psychiatry, the effects of World War II on psychiatric care and training, and the growing importance of psychotropic drugs are just a few of the topics that Friedman discusses at length.

This valuable and well written book has one serious weakness, which, it should be clear, cannot be attributed to the author. Although Professor Friedman had access to virtually all the documents he requested, including many from Karl's personal papers, legal restrictions prohibited him from examining patient records. Thus, Professor Friedman was unable to develop a reliable picture of the experience of the thousands of persons who came to Menninger for treatment over the years. Professor Friedman did manage to glean some useful information about patients and their treatment from statistical studies and summaries, but in the final analysis, he could not provide his readers with any real sense of the extent to which Menninger was able to alleviate the human suffering caused by mental illness. Without access to patient records, no scholar, not even one as able and discerning as Professor Friedman, could expect to illuminate this vital element in Menninger's development as an institution and its place in the history of mental health. Even so, Professor Friedman has written a very important book that should be of great interest to anyone concerned with the history of Kansas.

Reviewed by N. Ray Hiner, *professor of history, University of Kansas.*

Settlers' Children: Growing Up on the Great Plains

by Elizabeth Hampsten

xii + 252 pages, illustrations, notes, selected bibliography, index.
Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991, cloth $22.95.

The geographical setting of Elizabeth Hampsten's new book on frontier childhood is the northern Plains, particularly North Dakota. The emotional setting is that terrain where myth and reality blend and shape one another. The result is a significant contribution to the growing historical literature on frontier families and the insights they hold about the emergence of a modern western region.

Hampsten uses the same approach that served her so well in her excellent study of the private writings of midwestern farm women. With the trained eye of a literary scholar, she closely examines diaries, letters, and reminiscences of children and parents who settled the Plains late in the last century and early in our own. She looks beyond the explicit for other, less obvious clues to the thoughts and feelings of the authors—their perspectives, choices of details, incongruences, what is *not* said. This method is not especially suited, in the usual sense, to recreating the past, but it works well in suggesting the subtle and ambiguous legacy left within the western personality by the pioneering experience.

To be sure, a few points are clear enough. Most children worked damn hard. Except in a small minority of middle class families, boys and girls shouldered a heavy portion of the many labors needed to start and maintain a farmstead. That in turn meant that parents often had to hold their youngsters out of school, thus contradicting the frequently stated dedication to a common school education. Hampsten argues that the evolution of child labor legislation in this region—and by implication in much of the rural West—was shaped by this conflict between aspirations and needs.

Within that load of labor, however, the quality of children's lives varied considerably. There are plenty of cases of appalling

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abuses and deprivations, some of the worst brought together in a chapter on "Children in Danger." Yet in other families, many of them bruised by trying times, children enjoyed seemingly happy lives. Hampsten is most interested in the ambivalent memories these children carried to adulthood. Almost universally they memorialized the accomplishments of their parents' generation and the virtues supposedly produced by pioneering; yet between (and sometimes on) the lines is a recurring resentment of hardships and the often stifling effects of Plains life. That contradiction tells of a clash between a deep national homage to the agrarian life, especially in a heroic frontier setting, and the hard truths and anger and self-doubt that could be the region's real bumper crops.

Hampsten does not do much to place her subject within the large literature on the history of childhood, and she relies heavily on the rather simplistic interpretations of Lloyd de Mause. Occasionally the reader will wish she would make her points straight-out. But these complaints aside, this book gives us useful insights into subtle subjects that have barely begun to get the attention they deserve.

Reviewed by Elliott West, *professor of history, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.*

A Frontier State at War: Kansas 1861-1865

by Albert Castel

viii + 251 pages, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Lawrence: Kansas Heritage Press, 1992, paper $15.95.

The publishers of Kansas Heritage Press are to be commended for reprinting Albert Castel's study of Civil War Kansas. Although nearly two generations old, the book stands up remarkably well as a thoroughly researched, well-written guide to events and characters during the earliest years of Kansas statehood.

Kansas in 1861, as Castel pictured it, was a frontier state recovering from several years of its own civil war. "A more poverty-stricken state than Kansas probably never entered the Union" (p. 13) declared the author. Nevertheless, the Kansas frontier was home to a wide range of competing economic and political interests which Castel skillfully weaved into a comprehensive whole.

Standing at the center of the story is the dominant political figure of the age, Sen. James H. Lane. It would only be a slight exaggeration to suggest that the book is a political biography of that most fascinating character whom, wrote Castel, "Very likely . . . was mentally unbalanced and a paranoid." (p. 21) Lane's influence found its way into virtually all things political and military. Lane's struggles with Gov. Charles Robinson dominate much of the earlier pages. Once Robinson was out of the way, Lane's battles with his successor, Thomas Carney, occupy much of the balance. In addition, Lane found his way into the affairs of those who would control the military. Lane sought to pull the strings of James G. Blunt, Samuel R. Curtis, John M. Schofield, and anyone in charge of the army. Lane's ambitions included both the control of the political power associated with the army and the wealth that would flow to whomever supplied it.

The story of Kansas during the Civil War is the story of an area neglected by both historians and contemporary military leadership. As Castel pointed out, "Kansas was part of the largest and least important military theater of the Civil War." (p. 96) If Union armies prevailed in the East, Confederate strength west of the Mississippi would inevitably fall. Hence the story of the Union efforts in that theater was often the story of ineptitude and neglect. Castel did an excellent job of bringing out the complex story of how Kansans played their roles.

An excellent book written in 1958 is still, however, a book that is thirty-five years old. Were Castel to rewrite the book today he doubtless would take advantage of Michael Fellman's *Inside War*, a fine account of guerrilla warfare in Missouri, or Thomas Goodrich's superb account of the Lawrence massacre, *Bloody Dawn*. Both of these recent studies draw upon Castel's subsequent life of the guerrilla leader, William C. Quantrill. Other parts of the book bear the look of a study written before the two great revolutions of the 1960s and 1970s—civil rights and feminism. It is unlikely that a contemporary historian would write: "Many of the former slaves, however, were reluctant to work. To them slavery and work were synonymous and initially, at least, they adopted the attitude that when one ended so should the other." (p. 209) Nor would one refer to "the savage desire of the Indians for plunder and excitement." (p. 218) Likewise, a history of Civil War Kansas written today would have to include an account of the women who were left behind after the men had gone to war.

These shortcomings, however, should not change the overall assessment of the book. When it was first published it received an honorable mention for the distinguished Albert Beveridge award. Looking back at it after thirty-five years, it is easy to see why.

Reviewed by Bill Cecil-Fronsman, *assistant professor of history, Washburn University, Topeka.*

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BOOK NOTES

Protestantism in the Sangre de Cristos, 1850-1920. By Randi Jones Walker. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991. x + 163 pages. Cloth, $27.50.)

This study of Protestant missionary activity in north-central New Mexico and southern Colorado contrasts the divergent denominational approaches, especially those of Methodism and Presbyterianism, and asks the question: "what was it that appealed to the number of Hispanic people who responded to the Protestant invitation and what has been their lasting impact?" Generally, according to Walker, a Congregational minister, these missions did not attain "numerical success," at least partially because of Protestant ethnocentrism; the schools they established were popular but won few converts to the Protestant alternative.

The Great Migration in Historical Perspective: New Dimensions of Race, Class, and Gender. Edited by Joe William Trotter, Jr. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991. xiv + 160 pages. Cloth, $10.95.)

"The Great Migration of the early twentieth century," writes Nell Irvin Painter, author of *Exodusters: Black Migration to Kansas after Reconstruction*, in a brief but insightful forward, "represents for African-Americans both immigration and freedom." This volume, which explores several dimensions of this critical demographic event and includes essays by six different scholars, "examines black migration to Norfolk, Pittsburgh, Chicago, Richmond, California, southern West Virginia, and, accenting the gender dimension, to a variety of cities in the urban Midwest."

The Explorations of William H. Ashley and Jedediah Smith, 1822-1829. By Harrison Clifford Dale with an introduction by James P. Ronda. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991. 360 pages. Paper, $11.95.)

If fur traders, trappers, and mountainmen were indeed the "vanguard" of frontier settlement, then William Ashley and Jedediah Smith can be considered generals in a relentless campaign of western conquest. Ashley was an "astute frontier entrepreneur," "fur-trade innovator," and explorer; Jedediah Smith is remembered as the quintessential mountainman; both men have become western "figures of epic proportions." This "Bison Book" edition of Harrison Dale's "pioneering study" of 1941, includes an edited version of Smith's original journals and those of Harrison G. Rogers, Smith's clerk on the momentous California expedition of 1826-1828.

Myles Keogh: The Life and Legend of an "Irish Dragoon" in the Seventh Cavalry. Edited and compiled by John P. Langellier, Kurt Hamilton Cox, and Brian C. Pohanka. (El Segundo, Calif.: Upton and Sons, 1991. 206 pages. Cloth, $75.00.)

This ninth volume in the "Montana and the West Series" is a collection of scholarly essays, focusing on the life of possibly the second most famous man, and probably the most "heroic" figure, to emerge posthumously from the Little Big Horn valley. Among others, Kansans will be interested in the first essay about the battle's "sole survivor," who has for many years occupied an exhibit case at the Natural History Museum in Lawrence, "Comanche—The Horse Who Conferred Fame On His Rider." Keogh's family life and background, Civil War experiences, and ill-fated but legendary history with Custer's Seventh are also covered.

A Scattered People: An American Family Moves West. By Gerald W. McFarland. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1991. xxii + 280 pages. Paper, $12.95.)

First published by Pantheon Books in 1985, this nicely-written study is family history at its scholarly best, of interest to anyone fascinated by nineteenth-century population movement and frontier settlement. In many respects McFarland's story of "common folk" seeking "the American dream" by "pulling up stakes and heading west," is quite typical, but the author's family also happens to include abolitionist John Brown, of Bleeding Kansas and Harper's Ferry fame, and his brother-in-law, the Reverend Samuel Adair of Osawatomie, Kansas.

The Ancient Memory & Other Stories. By John G. Neihardt; and *The Giving Earth: A John G. Neihardt Reader.* Edited and with an introduction by Hilda Neihardt Petri. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991. xi + 230 pages. Cloth, $19.95; xviii + 311 pages. Cloth, $25.00.)

Perhaps best-known for his *Black Elk Speaks,* the late John G. Neihardt wrote in a wide variety of literary genres. *The Ancient Memory* is an example of his short fiction, with a frontier setting and theme, and *The Giving Earth* is a diverse collection of Neihardt literature, produced from youth through old age. The latter includes a lengthy passage from his classic story of the Lakota visionary, Black Elk, plus additional Indian and frontier stories.

Goin' Railroading: Two Generations of Colorado Stories. By Margaret Coel, as told by Sam Speas. (Boulder, Colo.: Pruett Publishing Co., 1991. xiii + 180 pages. Paper, $15.95.)

According to Margaret Coel, daughter of railroader Sam Speas, Jr., "This is the story of a unique group of Colorado pioneers" for whom "making sure that the trains got through was more than a job. It was an adventure—the great adventure of the age, just as space is the great adventure of today." First published in 1985, Speas' recollections span nearly a century, beginning with his engineer father and covering his own forty-six-year career as a fireman and engineer for the Colorado and Southern Railway. Brief notes for each chapter and a bibliography of the numerous sources used to assist and supplement the author's memory are included at the end of this nicely crafted and written volume.

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KANSAS HISTORY

A Journal of the Central Plains

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Soldiers' Recreation Center, Junction City, ca. 1942.

The prevailing attitude of white society in the 1940s dictated a separation of the races which made segregation the norm throughout America on the eve of the Second World War. Nevertheless, when the United States joined the battle against fascism, the African American community supported the war effort; the "Negroes Of Kansas" were, according to the Topeka Daily Capital, *a "Big Part of [the] War Program," contributing mightily to state and local civilian defense efforts and to the armed forces.*

As troops began to congregate at the various military facilities within the state in 1941 and 1942, Kansans, white and black alike, made plans for their entertainment. The first black servicemen's club (pictured above) was opened at Junction City, near Fort Riley, in late summer 1941. Thousands of young men and their female civilian companions frequented this "splendid idly-equipped recreation" center where they enjoyed snacks, music, dancing, ping-pong, reading materials, and many other services.

Manhattan, Topeka, and Wichita were among the other Kansas communities to establish similar centers under the sponsorship of the Work Projects Administration (WPA) and the United Service Organizations (USO). These cities took considerable pride in the services they were able to render the nation's "fighting men." Community leaders sought to make the separate "colored" centers equal in the opportunities they provided for relaxation and recreation.

No matter how sincere their motives or efforts, something was "inherently unequal" about this racially motivated practice. Increasingly, African Americans questioned the viability of a society that maintained a separation among its races; how could such a nation "fight Nazism," they asked. "America," argued the editor of Kansas City's Plaindealer, *would "have to become stronger in its national defense and its practice of democracy" if it was to confront successfully the current world crisis. "We hope that when the smoke is over and the guns cease to roar and the hostile nations lay down their bombs that Democracy will rise above the storm and be allowed by the people of America to become a reality regardless of race, color or creed."*

Our photo essay "Kansas At War" continues in this issue with "At Ease" which takes a closer look at the activities within the USO and WPA recreation centers.

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Cover: *A young, midwestern family struggles against poverty during the Great Depression. Poor relief in southwestern Kansas from 1930-1933 is the subject of this issue's "Hard Times—Hungry Years."* Back cover: *World War II poster promoting the USO. "At Ease," part 3 of "Kansas At War," focuses on USO and WPA centers which served U.S. military men and women.*

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Hard Times Hungry Years

Failure of the Poor Relief in Southwestern Kansas 1930-1933

by Pamela Riney-Kehrberg

For millions of Americans, the decade of the 1930s meant hard times.[1] A massive economic downturn brought unemployment, underemployment, and general belt-tightening to most American families. In Kansas, and indeed, most of the Great Plains, those years also brought a severe drought. The people of southwestern Kansas were particularly hard hit, suffering blinding dirt storms in addition to eight years of abnormally dry conditions.[2] Many farmers harvested a bumper crop of wheat in 1931, only to find that terribly depressed prices had rendered it hardly worth the cost of cutting. Throughout the remainder of the decade, area farmers produced crops that ranged from disappointing to disastrous.

Pamela Riney-Kehrberg *received her M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in American history from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and is currently an assistant professor of history at Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois. Dr. Riney-Kehrberg's interest in the 1930s was inspired by her grandparents who endured the Great Depression in the "heart" of the Dust Bowl in Liberal, Kansas.*

This paper was presented by the author at the Social Science History Association's Fifteenth Annual Meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota, October 21, 1990, and is included in Dr. Riney-Kehrberg's, "In God We Trusted, In Kansas We Busted . . . Again: A Social History of Dust Bowl Kansas" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1991). The author wishes to thank the Kansas State Historical Society for its aid in this project, and for providing the Alfred M. Landon Historical Research Grant.

1. For further information on the Great Depression and Dust Bowl on the Great Plains *see* Paul Bonnifield, *The Dust Bowl: Men. Dirt, and Depression* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1979); R. Douglas Hurt, *The Dust Bowl: An Agricultural and Social History* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1981); and Donald Worster, *Dust Bowl: The Depression on the Southern Great Plains* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979).

2. For the purposes of this article, southwestern Kansas includes sixteen contiguous counties in the southwestern corner of the state that suffered extreme drought conditions throughout the 1930s. They include Clark, Finney, Ford, Grant, Gray, Hamilton, Haskell, Hodgeman, Kearny, Meade, Morton, Ness, Seward, Stanton, Stevens, and Wichita counties.

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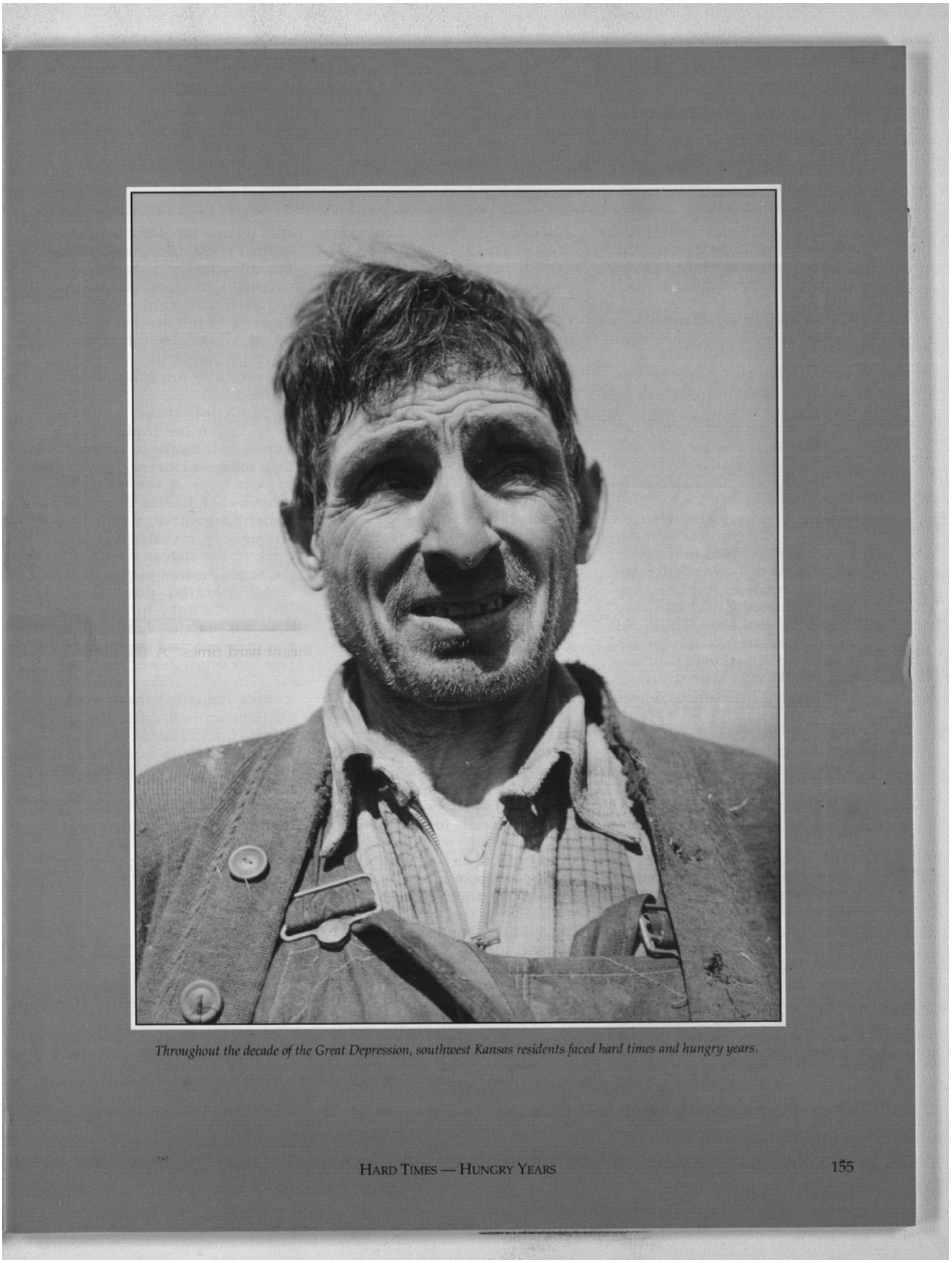

Throughout the decade of the Great Depression, southwest Kansas residents faced hard times and hungry years.

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What resulted was widespread poverty and hopelessness that drained the area of one quarter of its population between 1931 and 1940.

The lack of organized welfare administration in most rural Kansas communities compounded this poverty and hopelessness. At the onset of the Great Depression, southwestern Kansas was an accumulation of towns of small to moderate size with their rural hinterlands, and a population almost entirely dependent upon farm income for its livelihood. These were also relatively new and prosperous communities, largely peopled in the boom years of the early twentieth century. Their residents had little experience of widespread hardship, other than that attendant to pioneering, and their county governments had virtually no structures designed to cope with the conditions created by a serious depression and drought. As a result, local relief efforts, both public and private, crumbled in the face of the disasters of the 1930s.

Between the onset of the Great Depression and the early months of 1933, most of the burden of providing relief fell upon the unready shoulders of local government officials. They faced problems of staggering dimensions. By early 1931, many southwestern Kansans were barely surviving. The wheat price crash devastated the area's economy, and then the drought set in. Officials of local governments were entirely unprepared to administer relief on a large scale. Traditionally, county commissioners had provided what little aid they dispensed on a haphazard, case-by-case basis. In January of 1930, for example, the Haskell County commissioners presided over a welfare program that consisted of only a few dollars that they allowed for rent on one woman's home. By July of 1931, their disbursals had risen to only $3.57, allocated for supplies for the poor. Not until December of 1931 did the commissioners create a Poor Fund, and then they allocated only $23.97 in aid of two families.[3]

Once commissioners recognized the need for welfare programs and created poor funds, they were still unsure how to manage the day to day business of providing relief. Only after local grocers began handling relief cases did Stevens County commissioners realize that they had to limit allowed food aid to a few staple goods. Instead of allowing clients to purchase anything that they wanted, the board limited them to basic items such as flour, salt meat, beans, rice, coffee, lard, sugar, and potatoes.[4] In Stanton County, officials found it impossible to keep up with the expense of grocery orders, and instead created a storeroom in the basement of the courthouse, hoping to reduce costs through bulk buying.[5] While they experimented with ways of providing necessities to their constituents, most counties still relied on a cumbersome investigation procedure that required the commissioners, meeting in full session, to vote on each case. They had yet to discover the virtues of, or feel the necessity for, full-time case workers.[6]

Most of these counties lacked even the traditional, if unpleasant, means of caring for their indigent citizens, the county poor farm. A survey undertaken by the Kansas Emergency Relief Committee, a state welfare agency, revealed that only three of the sixteen counties in the southwestern corner of the state operated poor farms. Wichita County housed less than ten inmates, Ford County between ten and twenty, and Finney County fewer than thirty.[7] Finney County's commissioners lamented these inadequate facilities because the lack of beds forced the county to pay more than $125 a month in rent for families unable to pay for their own housing. The commissioners made plans, never carried out, to shelter their relief families. Only the advent of federally funded housing programs forestalled disaster.[8]

3. Commissioners' Journal, Haskell County, v. C, January 6, 1930, p. 437; July 6, 1931, p. 477; December 7, 1931, p. 485, Haskell County Clerk's Office, Sublette.

4. Commissioners' Journal, Stevens County, v. E, November 2, 1931, p. 559, Stevens County Clerk's Office, Hugoton.

5. Commissioners' Journal, Stanton County, December 7, 1931, p. 89, Stanton County Clerk's Office, Johnson.

6. Commissioners' Journal, Hamilton County, v. 5, April 4, 1932, p. 163, Hamilton County Clerk's Office, Syracuse.

7. Kansas Emergency Relief Committee, "A Study of Kansas Poor Farms," Bulletin KERC no. 307 (October 1935), x.

8. "County Will Build Homes for the Poor," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, November 7, 1931, 1; Commissioners' Journal, Finney County, v. G, January 5–6, 1932, p. 532, and December 6–7, 1932, p. 592, Finney County Clerk's Office, Garden City.

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Years of drought and depressed prices resulted in widespread poverty and hopelessness.

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Throughout the 1930s, southwest Kansas farmers produced crops that ranged from disappointing to disastrous.

Inexperience, the growing number of jobless workers, and worsening drought conditions soon bankrupted most local governments in southwestern Kansas. By mid-1932 and early 1933, county commissioners throughout the area presided over empty Poor Funds. Suffering this affliction, Hamilton County's Board of Commissioners issued the following statement, effectively abandoning its relief program: "Whereas the Poor Fund of Hamilton County has long since been exhausted, further pauper aid must of necessity be discontinued from and after this date." This situation still existed in the summer of 1933, when the board informed the township trustees that it would endorse orders against the Poor Fund "only in extreme emergency."[9] Empty coffers such as those of Hamilton County were common to most local governments throughout southwestern Kansas.

These illustrations highlight the problems that county government officials faced during the 1930s. The case of Finney County provides a particularly clear example of the inadequacy of county-based efforts to meet effectively the challenge of providing consistent and adequate relief to impoverished residents before the advent of large-scale federal relief in 1933. In 1930, Finney County was one of the most "urban" counties in southwestern Kansas. Over ten thou-

9. Commissioners' Journal, Hamilton County, v. 5, July 5, 1932, p. 168, and June 5, 1933, p. 189.

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sand people lived in Finney County in 1930, and more than six thousand of them resided in Garden City. Nevertheless, the economy of Finney County, like the economies of all southwestern Kansas counties, rested on an agricultural base. Even the county's major industry, the Garden City Company's sugar plant, grew out of the production of sugar beets in irrigated fields along the Arkansas River.

If greater size had meant greater preparedness and resources, local government officials in Finney County would have managed the drought and economic downturn better than their contemporaries in other southwestern Kansas counties, such as Grant, Morton, or Seward counties. Finney County's struggles with problems of relief administration, however, were a larger, and perhaps more confused, version of the problems that plagued county commissioners all across the region. Every community's resources were limited and becoming less adequate with each passing month, and Finney County's greater population also meant a larger burden in relief payments. The problems that administrators in Finney County confronted occurred on a similar or smaller scale throughout southwestern Kansas between 1930 and 1933.

Finney County began the 1930s with a minimal, rudimentary relief system. The county commissioners distributed aid on an individual basis. They provided mothers' pensions to a few widows, and old age pensions to a few of their indigent elderly, but they operated no formal welfare system.[10] In 1930, members of the Provident Association, a private organization coordinating all of the charitable associations in the county, worked with the county to supply food and clothing to the needy, and operated out of a room at the old courthouse. The county was equipped to meet the most basic needs of only a small number of destitute people. By the early spring of 1931, it was becoming evident that this very limited welfare system was inadequate to the dimensions of the situation. The county commissioners were spending more than two thousand dollars per month on poor relief, not including the aid given by the Provident Association, and their funds were running low. In June, the Provident Association was no longer able to meet growing demands, and relinquished its responsibility for local relief to a national organization, the Volunteers of America. With a regional office in Denver, the Volunteers operated much like the Salvation Army, offering the needy shelter, food, and guidance based on Christian principles. Workers drew no salary from the organization and lived on donations. The Volunteers were to cooperate with the Red Cross and Salvation Army as well as the county commissioners.[11] Despite the adoption of this new and fairly inexpensive expedient, the members of the Finney County Board of Commissioners were none too sure of their ability to continue to care for the poor. They had more than exhausted the allowable levy for the poor fund, and there were still more demands to meet.

The commissioners attempted to explain their way out of their predicament, searching for individuals and groups upon whom they could place the blame for the county's bankruptcy. Bootleggers and their families drew the commissioners' ire. Jailing violators of the Volstead Act and feeding their indigent families while they were incarcerated was an expensive proposition. Officials began to wonder if they should enforce liquor laws in the county. The people of Finney County approved of prohibition, but "what the commission would like is for Mr. Volstead [to] arrange to take care of the families while the violator is serving his sentence."[12] The Mexican population of Finney County, drawn to the area by jobs with the rail-

10. The State of Kansas defined mothers' pensions as "Mothers Pensions. Granted to women with children under 14, who are widowed, divorced, or deserted, or whose husbands are unable to support them; total sum not to exceed $50 a month; administered by board of county commissioners, assisted by an investigating board of three reputable women of the county or the board of public welfare, if there be such a board." Commissioner of Labor and Industry, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor and Industry of the State of Kansas* (1932), 56.

11. "Provident Association Aid," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, April 15, 1931; "Approval for New Charity Organization," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, June 9, 1931.

12. "It's the Poor That Worries Commission," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, July 8, 1931.

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roads and in the sugar beet fields, also received a good deal of criticism. An editor for the local newspaper commented, "they cannot be deported, it is said, and the only thing for the county to do is support them or let them starve." Whatever the degree of justice in these accusations, the commissioners saw a large part of their problem stemming from the needs of these marginalized members of the community, and although they thought they understood the source of the county's problems, they were at a loss for a cure. The board meeting of July 7, 1931, went on for more than a day and ended without the commissioners formulating any new plans.[13]

Despite these troubles, relief administered through the combined efforts of private agencies and the local government allowed the people of Finney County to limp along for the next eleven months. The Volunteers of America took over an increasing share of welfare work in the community, with a portion of their funds provided by the local government, in addition to donations. Between July and October of 1931, the Volunteers gave out 2,864 free meals, 444 nights lodging, aided nearly 400 families with grocery purchases, gave out 700 pieces of clothing, and found jobs for nearly 400 people, both men and women. When hungry people came begging for food at homes and businesses, the Volunteers asked that they not be fed, but sent to their headquarters.[14]

Other local organizations also helped to shoulder the relief burden. Members of the Finney County Junior Red Cross collected empty jars, cans, fruit, and vegetables for a canning project, and girls in the public school's home economics classes did the work. Through this joint effort they donated ninety quarts of food to the local relief committee. Boy and Girl Scouts sold tickets for a movie showing at the State Theater to benefit the Volunteers. The Elks cooperated with the Volunteers in distributing Christmas baskets to the needy.[15]

County efforts, however, garnered less praise and seemed to work less smoothly than private relief measures. In June of 1932, more than one hundred residents came to the county courthouse to protest the county's handling of poor relief. They criticized how the commission was handling the situation and suggested "that the county officers contribute ten per cent [*sic*] of their monthly wages to the county poor fund."[16] The final outcome of the meeting was an attempt to move relief further into the private sector by forming a committee of church and civic leaders to raise funds for relief. County officials were increasingly uneasy about their ability to continue providing publicly funded aid to the poor.

Four days later, the county commissioners gave up. During their meeting of June 7 and 8, 1932, they conceded the bankruptcy of the poor relief fund and resolved to let someone else deal with the situation:

> Ways and means were discussed as to the handling of the poor situation, and it was decided that the county could not support the poor any longer as the funds were far overdrawn, and that it would be compelled to let the community handle the poor for the balance of the current year.[17]

The county poor relief budget had accumulated an overdraft of more than nine thousand dollars, and the Board of County Commissioners was no longer willing, or able, to release more funds. Garden City and Finney County were entirely without a public relief program.

In response, a group of civic minded individuals created a new relief agency, christened the Emergency Relief Committee, to work under the board of directors of the old Provident Asso-

13. Ibid.

14. "Volunteers of America Doing Community a Good," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, October 14, 1931; "Send Hungry to Volunteers," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, July 6, 1931.

15. "Local Junior Red Cross to Aid Needy By Canning Food," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, November 17, 1931; "Relief Show Will Feature Miss Bennett," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, November 17, 1931; "None Will Go Hungry Here on Christmas," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, December 24, 1931.

16. "Plan Drive to Get Funds for Poor in County," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, June 3, 1932.

17. Commissioners' Journal, Finney County, v. G, June 7–8, 1932, p. 561; "A Problem, Not Experiment," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, June 14, 1932.

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ciation. The members of this committee planned to carry on relief work in the county, in conjunction with the Volunteers of America. The Volunteers were to take care of emergency cases and transients, while the committee undertook the distribution of general relief.[18]

The largest problem facing the members of the newly formed committee was fund-raising. They called for all salaried workers and professionals in Garden City to contribute 3 percent of their incomes to the relief fund. They asked retired farmers and businessmen to contribute an unspecified lump sum. To stretch these funds further and build public confidence, the committee pledged to distribute its money only to "bona fide relief organizations," and to require those organizations to screen applicants very carefully:

> The applicant must sign that he fully acknowledges his obligation both moral and financial and agrees to tender a first lien on any and all property owned by himself, as security for the payment of the funds expended on his behalf. He further pledges that he is willing to perform such labor as the committee may prescribe at such rates of pay as prescribed by them.[19]

18. "Concentrated Effort to Aid Unemployed," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, June 14, 1932.
19. "A Problem, Not Experiment," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, June 14, 1932.

By early 1931, many southwestern Kansans were barely surviving. The wheat price crash devastated the area's economy, and then the drought set in.

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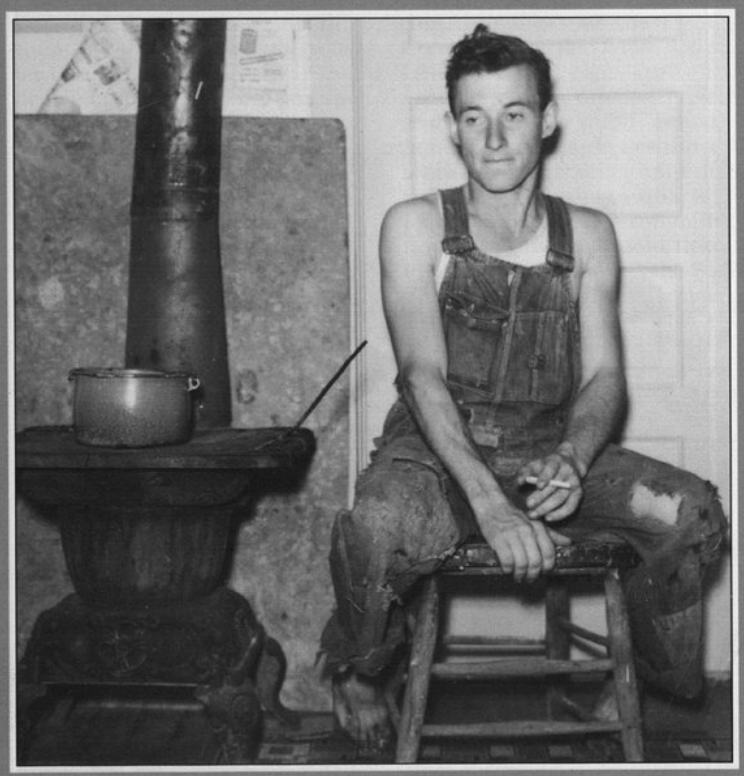

Area residents made do on virtually nothing as county governments in southwestern Kansas continually failed to shoulder the dual burdens of economic and environmental disasters.

The Volunteers also established more stringent rules for aid recipients. Captain Boone, head of Garden City operations, explained that the Volunteers would require transients who were physically able to work two hours for supper, lodging, and breakfast, and to work eight hours to receive a second day's aid. To encourage contributions, the committee promised that "there will be no aid for the drone or the family which is not worthy," and that the committee, composed of "eleven Garden City business men," would keep a close eye on the funds and the storeroom from which supplies would be issued.[20] Hoping that these measures would encourage charitable giving, the Emergency Relief Committee began operations in the summer of 1932.

The committee's members carried out the relief obligations of Finney County on a small scale through the summer and fall of 1932. By August, they had collected more than $400, and out of that, passed $150 on to the Volunteers. An agreement with area grocery stores allowed the committee to purchase food at reduced prices and stretched charity dollars further.[21] In September, the committee aided thirty-three families and eighty-six individuals.[22] In October, the committee reported that it had received enough contributions for the time being but that the funds on hand would proba-

20. "Schulman to be Leader of Charity Board," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, June 18, 1932.

21. "Welfare Group Hears Reports," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, August 3, 1932.

22. "Committee Aids Needy Families," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, September 2, 1932.

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bly be inadequate for the winter months. Whether aid came through private or public organizations, the cold winter months posed special problems in relief distribution because of increased food, clothing, and fuel needs.[23]

In the fall of 1932, city and county government officials, as well as members of the local relief committee, began to explore the possibility of the county obtaining federal relief funds. In July, President Hoover had signed into law the Relief and Construction Act which allowed the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) to loan money to states for public works projects. The state of Kansas had secured $2,750,000 in RFC funds, and local government officials, including Mayor Fred Evans and relief committee chairman R. N. Downie, immediately went to work to secure for Finney County its fair share. In anticipation of the plan's approval, the city clerk began registering the unemployed for relief work. Everyone rejoiced when the state awarded Finney County $3,456. According to plan, county officials used the money to widen a storm sewer in a Garden City park and eventually hired about sixty men to work on the project. This money, however, was only a drop in the bucket; nearly two hundred men applied for the jobs.[24] Finney County, along with the rest of the country, faced a grim season.[25]

Either through apathy or hopelessness, it appeared that the people of Finney County were willing to let the Emergency Relief Committee die in the winter of 1932–1933. Following a "poorly attended and disapproving meeting" in early December, R. N. Downie, chairman of the committee, announced that it would be suspending operations:

> It appeared that people were not interested enough to attend the meeting to express a willingness that the organization continue with its work or even ask it to cease, and that the committee was not going to force itself upon the people unless it was really desired.[26]

The announcement precipitated an appeal from the editor of the *Garden City Daily Telegram*. He placed no blame for the collapse of the program with the Emergency Relief Committee. The committee had done good work. The fault instead lay with the people of Garden City and Finney County. The county government was still very low on funds and the best way to continue to provide relief to the needy was through private, community-wide effort. "The time for action has arrived," the editor proclaimed.[27] Most Finney County residents saw little option but to push for the continuation of privately sponsored relief; the county poor fund was overdrawn by more than ten thousand dollars.[28]

By the beginning of January, the Emergency Relief Committee was back in business but still operating on the most minimal of funding. The *Garden City Daily Telegram* published a pledge form in the paper so that "everyone [would] have a chance to aid in furnishing funds to take care of the needy."[29] The committee had already mailed the forms to some local firms and individuals and was desperate for funds. Although the RFC loan still provided workers with jobs, the unemployed outnumbered the jobs, and cold weather limited the feasible amount of outdoor relief work. The county commissioners responded by cutting relief wages

23. "Hear Relief Report," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, October 5, 1932.

24. "Officials Map Proposed Plan for Unemployment Relief Here," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, September 10, 1932; "Relief Group Approves $3,456 Fund for Work on Local Improvement," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, October 13, 1932; "25 Are Working at Relief Jobs," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, October 19, 1932.

25. Not all counties were as fortunate as Finney County in securing RFC funds. In Stanton County, for example, the editor of the *Johnson Pioneer* lamented the fact that "so far as this office is able to learn, there is nothing definite being done in regards to pushing local projects which would come under the $3,000,000,000 public works program as outlined in the last session of congress." The county had registered the unemployed, but no "livewire volunteer" or county official had taken it upon him or herself to secure any federal funds for Stanton County. "Livewire Volunteer is Needed in Johnson Public Works Program," *Johnson Pioneer*, October 5, 1933.

26. "Lack of Interest in Relief Work is Shown Last Night," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, December 9, 1932.

27. "It Cannot Die," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, December 12, 1932.

28. "County Board Gives $150 Monthly for Relief Organization," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, January 4, 1933.

29. "Help Needed," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, February, 11, 1933.

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from twenty-five cents an hour to fifteen cents an hour to employ more men, and the Emergency Relief Committee contemplated a house-to-house canvas for subscriptions.[30] The committee, with the few dollars collected early in its existence, could not bear the weight of a growing number of very poor people.[31]

In response to this growing burden, the committee voted to create a subcommittee to present the names of nonresident families that had applied to the Finney County attorney for relief. They requested that these newcomers "be sent back where they came from according to state law."[32] Neither the members of the Emergency Relief Committee nor the members of the county government wanted to be responsible for incoming, indigent outsiders. To further discourage this migration, they voted to reduce the rations for the transients at the Volunteers' mission to Mulligan Stew and coffee.[33] Relief officials in Finney County had little to offer to their own people, and even less for migrants and transients.

By the winter of 1933, the situation in Finney County, and across the entire nation, had become grim. The level of funding provided under the RFC was relatively low, the state had scanty provisions for the poor, the county budget was clearly inadequate, and the Emergency Relief Committee could do very little relying on voluntary contributions in a time of great scarcity. One indicator of the severity of the situation was that the commissioners were even refusing to allow mothers' pensions, or as they put it, "Mothers Aid." In March, they tabled two requests for mothers' pensions "due to the fact that the poor fund was far overdrawn, but suggested that if necessary, help in the way of food and clothing would be provided."[34] Clearly, they hoped that such aid would prove unnecessary.

Fortunately for the people of Garden City and Finney County, lawmakers in Washington were beginning a massive response to the problems of unemployment and poverty. Franklin Delano Roosevelt's inauguration in March of 1933 marked the beginning of a flurry of legislative action. In his first one hundred days in office, Roosevelt signed into law a number of measures providing aid to city and county alike. When these federal relief funds became available to Finney County in the summer and fall of 1933, the members of the committee breathed a sigh of relief and ceased operations.[35] As the drought worsened in 1934 and 1935, the needs of the county increased, and the county's dependence upon federal relief increased likewise. By the summer of 1934, ten people per day were making applications for funding through the county.[36] Many of these people received relief only because the federal government had largely taken over the burden of funding welfare. In September, officials in Finney County distributed $14,252.44 in aid, of which $12,143.48 was federal money allocated by the Kansas Emergency Relief Committee.[37] Try as they might, the people of Finney County lacked the resources to fight this battle by themselves.

Many of the residents of Finney County, like the residents of all southwestern Kansas counties, came to rely on the federal government for the maintenance of their families, homes, and communities. It was a reliance that showed no sign of diminishing well into 1940. County officials allocated more money for relief in that year than they had in any year previously.

What happened to the people of Finney County was repeated all across the southwestern corner of the state. Evidence of southwestern Kansas' failure to recover from the early shocks of the depression, as well as the onset of the drought, was the repeated budget slashing by county officials, their continual inability to collect more than a small portion

30. "Relief Association Pledges, Donations Not Coming in Fast," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, February 3, 1933; "Relief Association Plans to Sponsor Community Garden," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, February 21, 1933.
31. "Demands for Relief Double During Month of February," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, March 3, 1933.
32. "Cut Relief to Allow More Laborers a Job," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, April 13, 1933.
33. "Volunteers to Cut Transient Menu," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, June 13, 1933.
34. Commissioners' Journal, Finney County, v. G, March 7, 8, 10, 1933, p. 610.
35. "Relief Association Votes to Wind Up Its Work and Quit," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, September 13, 1933.
36. "Number of Relief Cases in a Rapid Increase of Late," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, June 27, 1934.
37. "Uncle Sam Bears Bulk of County's Poor Relief Load," *Garden City Daily Telegram*, October 3, 1934.

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