

Kansas historical quarterly

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KANSAS HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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Kansas Historical Markers

UNTIL recent years it was the practice to erect historical markers on the sites where the events occurred. Frequently these places were inaccessible and usually the history consisted of a few words on a plaque or monument. It was assumed that only those already familiar with the facts would be interested. Today, however, with thousands of tourists on the highways, history is being marked where those who ride may read. Inscriptions on roadside markers often tell of events that happened miles away, and the history of a region may be condensed in one text.

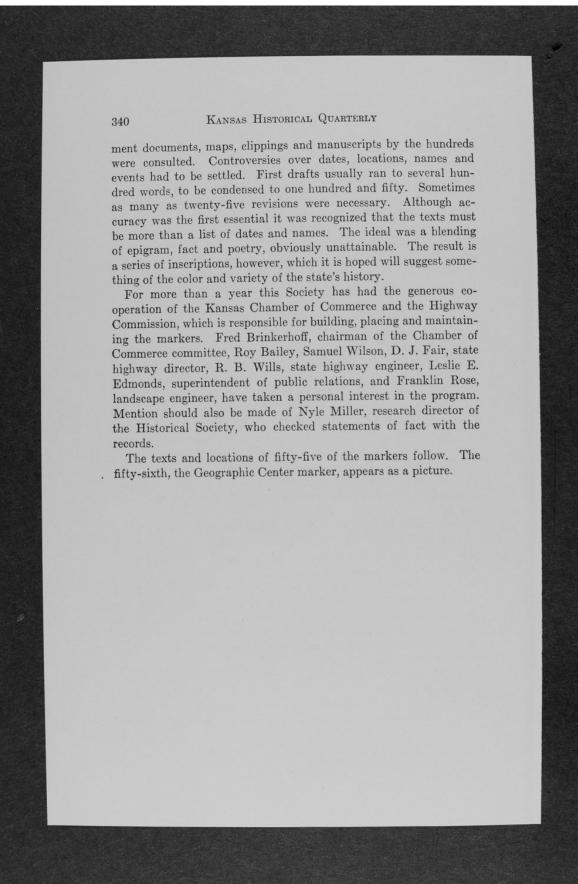
Kansas has recently erected fifty-six of these modern markers. The project was sponsored by the Kansas State Chamber of Commerce when Roy Bailey of Salina was president. It got under way in 1934 at a meeting attended by Mr. Bailey, Fred Brinkerhoff of Pittsburg, Samuel Wilson of Topeka, W. E. Archer of Hiawatha, and Frank Haucke of Council Grove, representing the State Chamber, and Kirke Mechem, secretary of the Kansas State Historical Society. Details of construction were worked out with engineers of the State Highway Commission after a study of similar signs in other states. In 1938, towards the end of Gov. Walter Huxman's administration, one marker was built. In 1940 Gov. Payne Ratner authorized D. J. Fair, director of highways, to erect fifty as the beginning of a program which he hoped would continue until all important sites were marked.

These first fifty were chosen by the state committee from a list of one hundred prepared by the Historical Society. They are not offered as the principal historic sites in Kansas. A few of those selected were not marked because it was impossible to secure rights of way. Among the omissions are Shawnee Methodist Mission, Shawnee Baptist Mission, Leavenworth, Fort Leavenworth and Osawatomie. Many others will be noted. Kansas is so rich in history that several hundred markers could be placed. Continuation of the project rests with the governor and the Highway Commission—and the state of the budget.

Inscriptions for the markers were written by Kirke Mechem, secretary of the Historical Society. Research was done by members of the staff. A vast and often contradictory collection of notes about each site was accumulated. Books, pamphlets, newspapers, govern-

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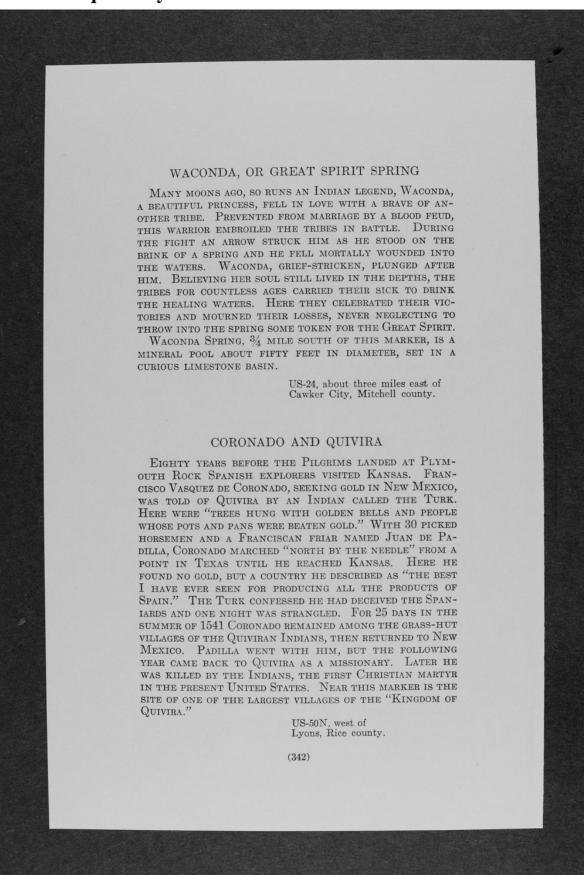




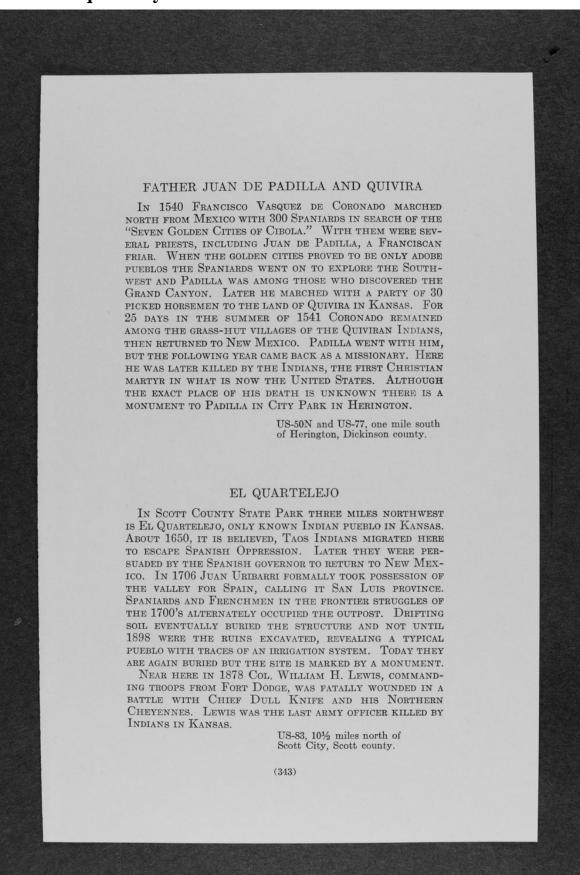
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THE INDIAN AND THE BUFFALO THE BUFFALO WAS THE DEPARTMENT STORE OF THE PLAINS INDIAN. THE FLESH WAS FOOD, THE BLOOD WAS DRINK, SKINS FURNISHED WIGWAMS, ROBES MADE BLANKETS AND BEDS, DRESSED HIDES SUPPLIED MOCCASINS AND CLOTHING, HAIR WAS TWISTED INTO ROPES, RAWHIDE BOUND TOOLS TO HANDLES, GREEN HIDES MADE POTS FOR COOKING OVER BUFFALO-CHIP FIRES, HIDES FROM BULLS' NECKS MADE SHIELDS THAT WOULD TURN ARROWS, RIBS WERE RUNNERS FOR DOG-DRAWN SLEDS, SMALL BONES WERE AWLS AND NEEDLES, FROM HOOVES CAME GLUE FOR FEATHERING ARROWS, FROM SINEWS CAME THREAD AND BOWSTRINGS, FROM HORNS CAME BOWS, CUPS AND SPOONS, AND EVEN FROM GALL STONES A "MEDICINE" PAINT WAS MADE. WHEN THE MILLIONS OF BUFFALO THAT ROAMED THE PRAIRIES WERE EXTERMINATED THE PLAINS TRIBES WERE STARVED INTO SUBMISSION. A FEW SMALL HERDS SAVED THE BUFFALO FROM EXTINCTION AND THERE ARE NOW MORE THAN 22,000 IN NORTH AMERICAN GAME PRESERVES. A HERD MAY BE SEEN JUST SOUTH OF GARDEN CITY. US-50S, at Garden City, Finney county. INDIAN BURIAL PIT SEVERAL HUNDRED YEARS AGO, PERHAPS MORE THAN A THOU-SAND, THIS VALLEY WAS INHABITED BY MEN WHOSE AVERAGE HEIGHT WAS PROBABLY WELL OVER SIX FEET. THESE WERE NOT THE INDIANS OF QUIVIRA, WHOSE "7-FOOT WARRIORS" Coronado described in 1541, but an even earlier people. HERE THEY LIVED IN EARTH LODGES, TILLING THE SOIL, HUNT-ING AND FISHING, AND HERE THEY LEFT RECORDS OF UNUSUAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE. ONE MILE SOUTHEAST OF THIS MARKER IS A BURIAL PIT CONTAINING MORE THAN 140 SKELE-TAL REMAINS THAT DEMONSTRATE THE REMARKABLE SIZE AND STRENGTH OF THESE PREHISTORIC INDIANS. THE PIT WAS DISCOVERED IN 1936. IT HAS BEEN SCIENTIFICALLY EXCA-VATED, WITH THE SKELETONS STILL PRESERVED IN THE SAME FLEXED POSITIONS OF THEIR BURIAL CENTURIES AGO. AMONG THE OBJECTS FOUND IN THE PIT ARE PIECES OF POTTERY, A GRINDING STONE, PARCHED CORN AND BEANS, A STONE TOMA-HAWK, CEREMONIAL FLINT KNIVES, AND CLAM-SHELL BEADS AND EAR PENDANTS. US-40, about four miles east of Salina, Saline county. (341)

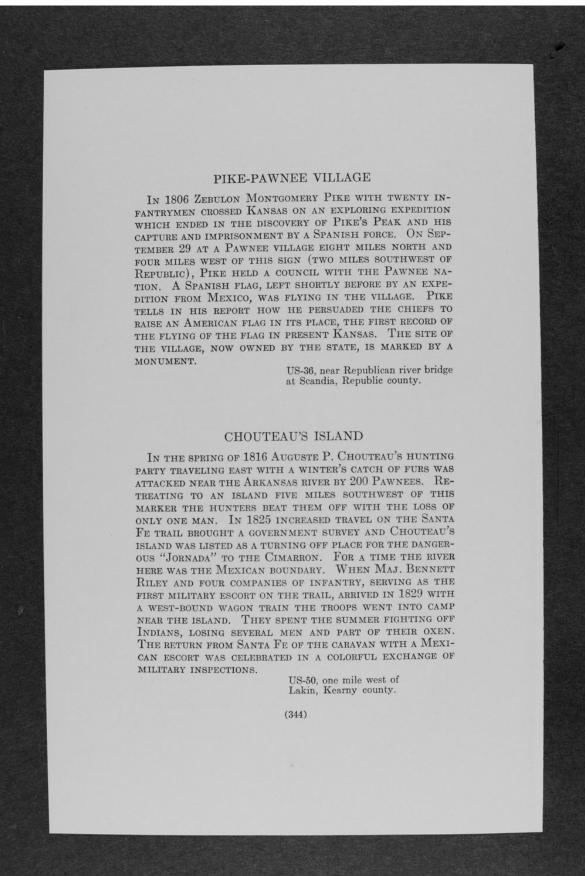
















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OREGON AND SANTA FE TRAILS

AT THIS POINT US-50 IS IDENTICAL WITH THESE FAMOUS TRAILS WHICH FROM THE MISSOURI RIVER FOLLOWED THE SAME GENERAL ROUTE. NEAR HERE THEY BRANCHED, THE WORDS "ROAD TO OREGON" ON A ROUGH BOARD POINTING OUT THE NORTHERN FORK. SO SIMPLE A SIGN, ONE WRITER OB-SERVED, NEVER BEFORE ANNOUNCED SO LONG A JOURNEY.

HERE A SECOND SIGN POINTED SOUTHWEST ALONG THE SANTA FE TRAIL. OF ITS 750 MILES, TWO-THIRDS LAY IN KANSAS. AS EARLY AS 1821 PACK TRAINS HAZARDED THIS ROUTE BETWEEN THE MISSOURI AND SPANISH FRONTIERS. BY 1825 IT HAD BECOME A COMMERCIAL WAGON ROAD.

From 1840 to 1870 thousands of travelers plodded the 2,000 TORTUOUS MILES OF THE OREGON TRAIL, RECORDING WITH FEARFUL MONOTONY THE NEW GRAVES ALONG THE WAY. DOWN THE SANTA FE TRAIL WENT TROOPS BOUND FOR THE MEXICAN WAR OF 1846-1847. OVER THESE TWO ROADS, BRANCHING HERE INTO THE WILDERNESS, TRAVELED EXPLOR-ERS, TRADERS, MISSIONARIES, SOLDIERS, FORTY-NINERS AND EMIGRANTS, THE PIONEERS WHO BROUGHT CIVILIZATION TO THE WESTERN HALF OF THE UNITED STATES.

> US-50, one-fifth mile west of Gardner, Johnson county.

COUNCIL GROVE

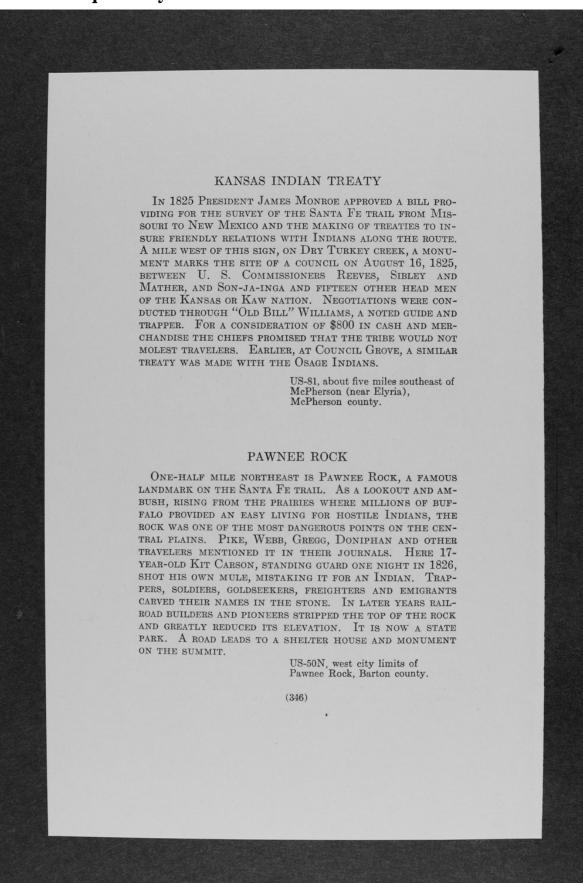
IN 1825 GROWING TRAFFIC OVER THE SANTA FE TRAIL BROUGHT A GOVERNMENT SURVEY AND RIGHT-OF-WAY TREATIES WITH CERTAIN INDIANS. COUNCIL GROVE TAKES ITS NAME FROM AN AGREEMENT MADE HERE THAT YEAR WITH THE OSAGE NATION. INDIANS FARTHER WEST CONTINUED THEIR ATTACKS ON WEAK OR UNWARY CARAVANS. A LARGE GROVE ON THE RIVER HERE BECAME THE RENDEZVOUS WHERE WAGON TRAINS BANDED TOGETHER FOR SAFE TRAVEL AND TO MAKE REPAIRS FROM THE LAST AVAILABLE TIMBER. FREMONT'S EXPEDITION OF 1845 AND DONIPHAN'S TROOPS BOUND FOR THE MEXICAN War in 1846 camped on the site. In 1849 the overland MAIL WAS ESTABLISHED, WITH SUPPLY HEADQUARTERS HERE, FOLLOWED THE NEXT YEAR BY MONTHLY COACH SERVICE. TRAVEL TO SANTA FE THROUGH COUNCIL GROVE ENDED IN 1866 WHEN THE UNION PACIFIC REACHED JUNCTION CITY.

This area became a Kaw Indian reservation in 1846. WITH THE INDIANS CAME THE FIRST WHITE SETTLER WHO BUILT A TRADING POST. THE METHODIST CHURCH ESTAB-LISHED A MISSION AND SCHOOL HERE IN 1850. THE INDIANS IN 1872 SIGNED A TREATY FOR REMOVAL TO INDIAN TERRITORY, NOW OKLAHOMA. THERE ARE SEVERAL PLACES OF HISTORICAL INTEREST IN AND NEAR THE TOWN.

US-50N, one-third mile east of Council Grove, Morris county.

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WAGON BED SPRINGS

Two miles southwest were the Lower Springs of the Cimarron, an "oasis" in dry weather where shortcuts of the Santa Fe trail converged to continue up the river. The most popular cut-off turned southwest from the Arkansas river in present Gray county. The 60-mile stretch between the two rivers, known as the "Jornada," was a perilous route for men and animals in dry seasons when wagon trains often ran out of water. Here also fierce Plains Indians frequently attacked and plundered the caravans. Near here in 1831 the noted Western explorer and fur trader Jedediah Smith, lost four days without water, was killed by Comanches Just as he reached the river.

LATE IN THE HISTORY OF THE TRAIL A WAGON BOX SET IN THE WATER GAVE THE SPRINGS THEIR NAME. LITTLE REMAINS OF THIS FAMOUS CAMPING PLACE, BUT WHEEL RUTS OF THE OLD TRAIL MAY STILL BE SEEN IN NEAR-BY AREAS.

US-270, eleven miles south of Ulysses, Grant county.

MISSION NEOSHO

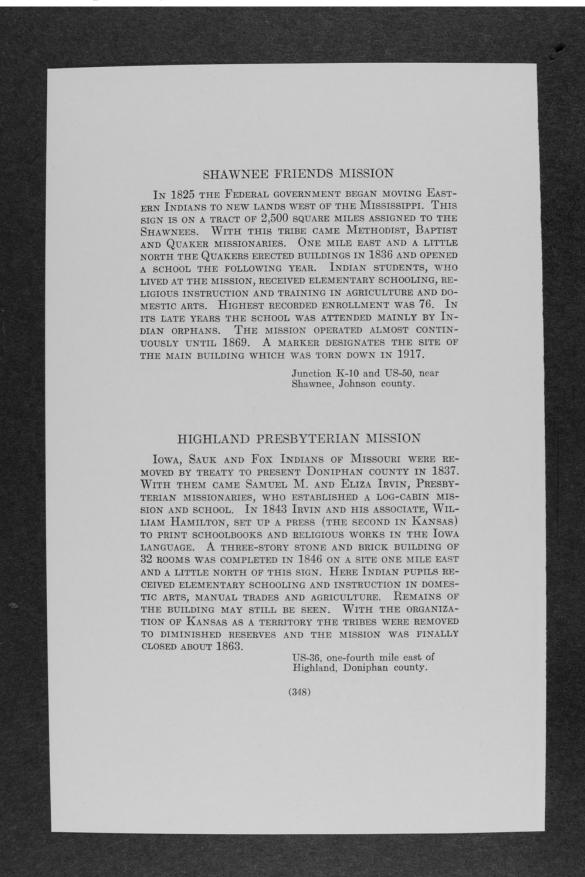
The first Indian mission and school in present Kansas was established in September, 1824, one-third mile west of this marker. Benton Pixley, the missionary, followed Chief White Hair and his band of Great Osages who had migrated from Missouri about 1815. The new "Mission on the Neosho" was a branch of Harmony mission, operated in Missouri by Presbyterian and associated denominations. Several Osage tribes located near by, and some of the chiefs and the Indian agent were antagonistic to Pixley. Indian rowdies often disturbed religious meetings and the school failed to attract pupils. In 1829 the field was abandoned.

IN 1844 A. B. CANVILLE ESTABLISHED A TRADING POST AMONG THE OSAGES A LITTLE SOUTHEAST OF THIS MARKER. HERE ON SEPTEMBER 29, 1865, THE OSAGES SIGNED A TREATY WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AGREEING TO A REDUCTION OF THEIR RESERVE IN KANSAS. A FEW YEARS LATER THEY WERE REMOVED TO OKLAHOMA.

US-59, on Christian church grounds at Shaw, Neosho county.

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FORT SCOTT

This Western outpost, named for Gen. Winfield Scott, was established by U. S. dragoons in 1842 on land reserved for New York Indians. It was midway between Fort Leavenworth and Fort Gibson on a military road that extended from the Upper Mississippi River to Louisiana. By 1853 the Indian frontier had moved west and troops were withdrawn. Two years later the buildings were auctioned to incoming settlers and the city of Fort Scott grew up around them. From 1855 to 1860 the town was in the thick of the territorial struggle over slavery and in 1858 it was raided by Montgomery and his band of Jayhawkers.

During the Civil War the fort was reëstablished. It became Union headquarters and supply depot for southeast Kansas and was under constant threat of attack until 1865. Several of the old fort buildings may still be seen on the Plaza.

US-69, at north city limits of Fort Scott, Bourbon county.

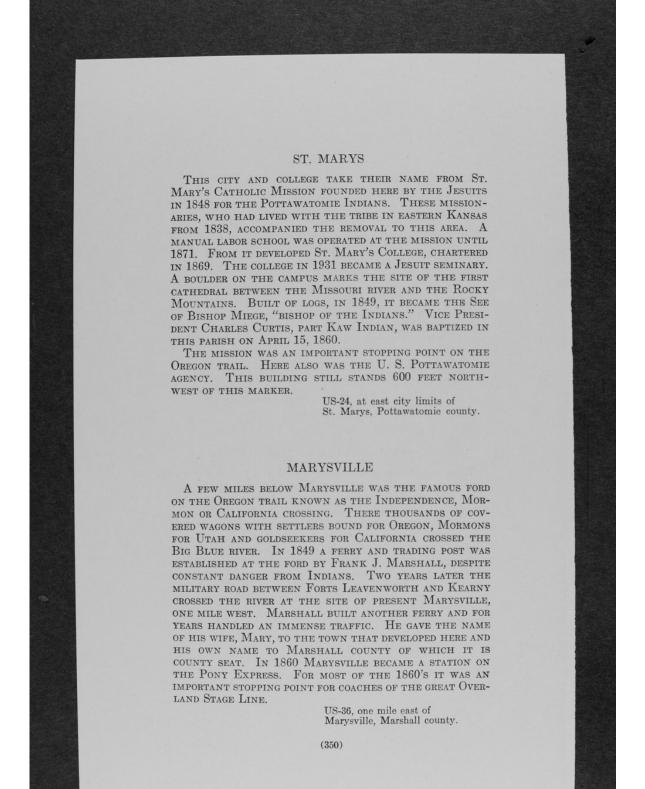
OSAGE CATHOLIC MISSION

This mission was founded in 1847 for Osage Indians LIVING ALONG THE NEOSHO AND VERDIGRIS RIVERS. A MAN-UAL LABOR SCHOOL FOR BOYS WAS ESTABLISHED BY THE JES-UITS AND A DEPARTMENT FOR GIRLS BY THE SISTERS OF LO-RETTO. HIGHEST RECORDED ENROLLMENT WAS 239. IN 1848 THE FIRST CATHOLIC CHURCH IN SOUTHERN KANSAS WAS BUILT. DURING THE CIVIL WAR WHEN PROPERTY WAS LAID WASTE THROUGHOUT THE BORDER THE MISSION WAS ALWAYS SPARED AND SCHOOL WAS NEVER SUSPENDED. WHEN THE OSAGES MOVED TO INDIAN TERRITORY IN 1870 WHITE CHIL-DREN GRADUALLY REPLACED THE INDIANS. THE SCHOOL BE-CAME ST. FRANCIS INSTITUTION FOR BOYS AND ST. ANN'S ACADEMY FOR GIRLS. St. Francis closed in 1891 and St. Ann's was destroyed by fire in 1895. Notable in service HERE WERE MOTHER BRIDGET HAYDEN AND FATHERS JOHN Schoenmakers, John Bax and Paul Mary Ponziglione, THE LATTER AN ITALIAN NOBLEMAN. A TOWN, OSAGE MIS-SION, ORGANIZED IN 1867, BECAME ST. PAUL IN 1895.

K-57, at east city limits of St. Paul, Neosho county.

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FORT RILEY

Fremont's expedition camping here in 1843 reported great numbers of elk, antelope and Indians where the Republican and Smoky Hill rivers unite to form the Kansas. In 1853 Fort Riley became an outpost for the Defense of the Santa Fe and Oregon trails. For years it was an army headquarters on the Indian frontier. Here in 1866 the famous 7th cavalry was organized with Lt. Col. George A. Custer second in command. In 1884 Gen. Philip Sheridan recommended the present training school, though classes were not held until 1893. The cavalry school is believed to be the largest in the world.

The original fort was built by Maj. E. A. Ogden and named for Gen. Bennett Riley. Camp Funston, named for Gen. Frederick Funston, was established east of the fort in 1917. Here more than 140,000 men were inducted into World War service. Construction of the second Camp Funston began in 1940.

US-40, east of Junction City, in Fort Riley military reservation.

ATCHISON

On July 4, 1804, Lewis and Clark, exploring the new Louisiana Purchase, camped near this site. Fifty years later the town was founded by Proslavery men and named for Sen. David R. Atchison. The Squatter Sovereign, Atchison's first newspaper, was an early advocate of violence against Abolition. Here Pardee Butler, Free-State preacher, was set adrift on a river raft and on his return was tarred and feathered. Here Abraham Lincoln in 1859 "auditioned" his famous Cooper Union address—unmentioned by local newspapers.

During the heyday of river steamboating in the fifties Atchison became an outfitting depot for emigrant and freighting trains to Utah and the Pacific coast. It was a base of supplies for the Pike's Peak gold rush and in the early 1860's was a starting point for the Pony Express and Overland Stage Lines. In this pioneer transportation center the Santa Fe railway was organized in 1860, modestly named the Atchison & Topeka.

US-59, at southwestern city limits of Atchison, Atchison county.

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LAWRENCE

Lawrence was established in 1854 by the Emigrant Aid Company, a New England organization formed to prevent the new Kansas territory from becoming a slave state. When the first legislature enacted the so-called Bogus Laws with severe penalties for opposing slavery Lawrence was the center of Free-State resistance. Free-State newspapers here further antagonized Proslavery officers. Late in 1855 1,500 Proslavery men gathered to attack the town. Free-State men came to its defense, among them John Brown. Bloodshed was averted by a "peace treaty." The next spring, however, a "sheriff's posse" of several hundred Missourians burned houses, destroyed two newspaper presses and fired a cannon into the Eldridge Hotel on the pretext that it was an Abolition fort.

During the Civil War Lawrence was a haven for runaway slaves and was held responsible for Union raids into Missouri. On August 21, 1863, Quantrill and a band of guerrillas ravaged the town and killed nearly 150 men. Monuments to these victims and other historical markers may be seen in the city. Lawrence is the home of the University of Kansas and Haskell Indian Institute.

US-24, three and one-half miles northeast of Lawrence, Douglas county.

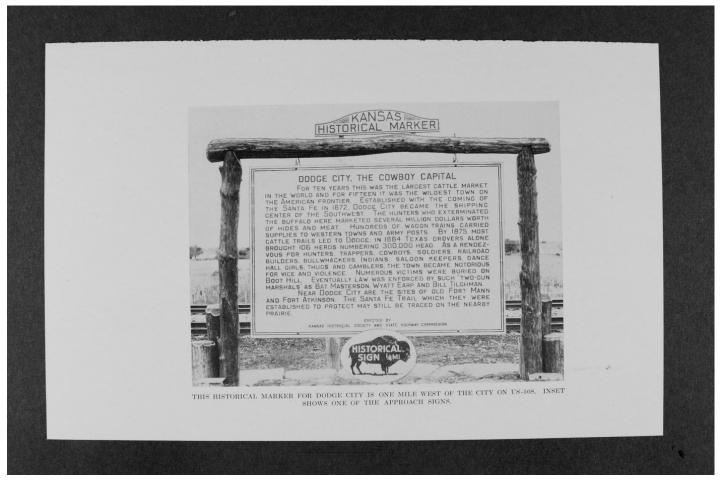
FIRST CAPITOL OF KANSAS

This building was erected in 1855 in the now extinct town of Pawnee for the first legislature of the territory of Kansas. The members were mostly Missourians, fraudulently elected in an effort to make Kansas a slave state. They came in wagons and on horseback, well armed, and camped out on the prairie. The session lasted from July 2 to 6. The Missourians were determined to legislate nearer home and passed a bill to move to Shawnee Methodist Mission near Kansas City. Governor Reeder vetoed the bill, it was passed over his veto, and this ended the session here. All other acts, including the so-called Bogus Laws, were passed at Shawnee mission. This building stood in partial ruin until its restoration in 1928 by the Union Pacific railroad.

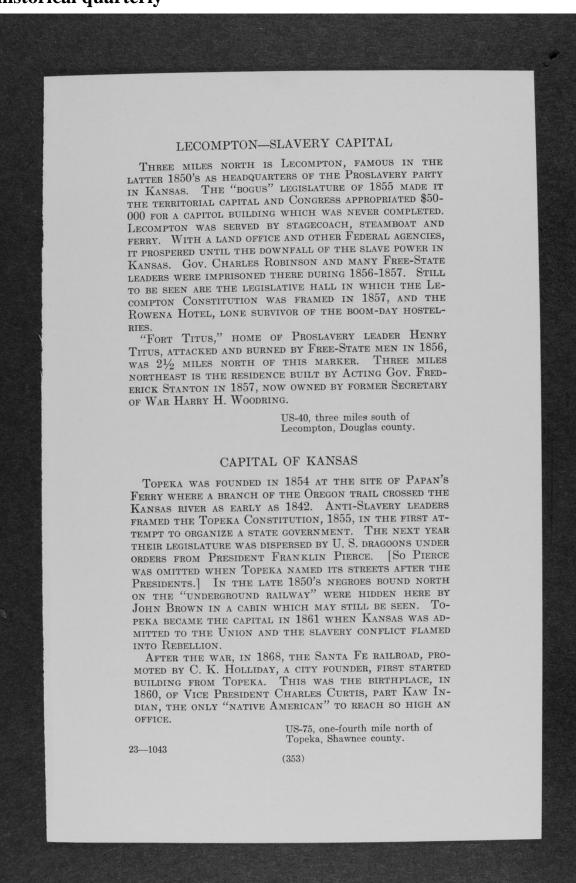
US-40, east of Junction City, in the First Capitol grounds, Fort Riley military reservation.

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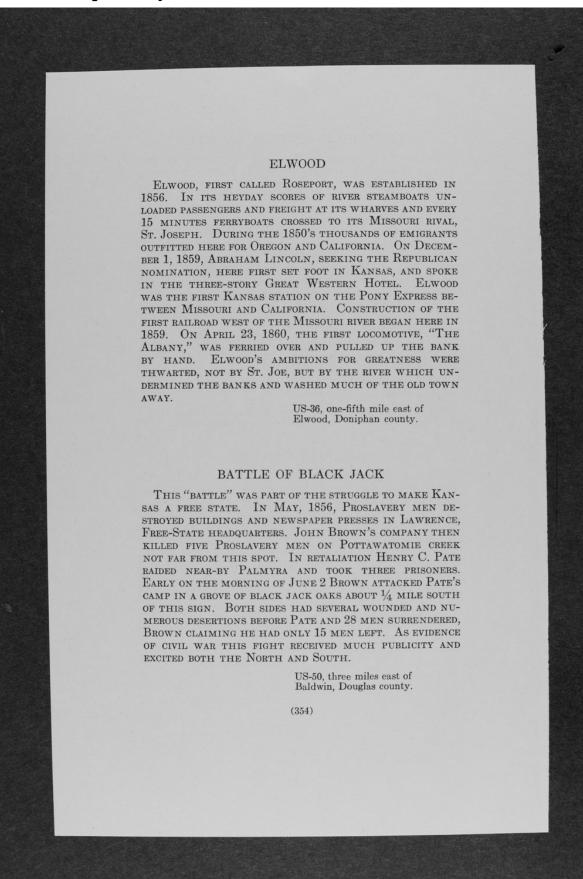




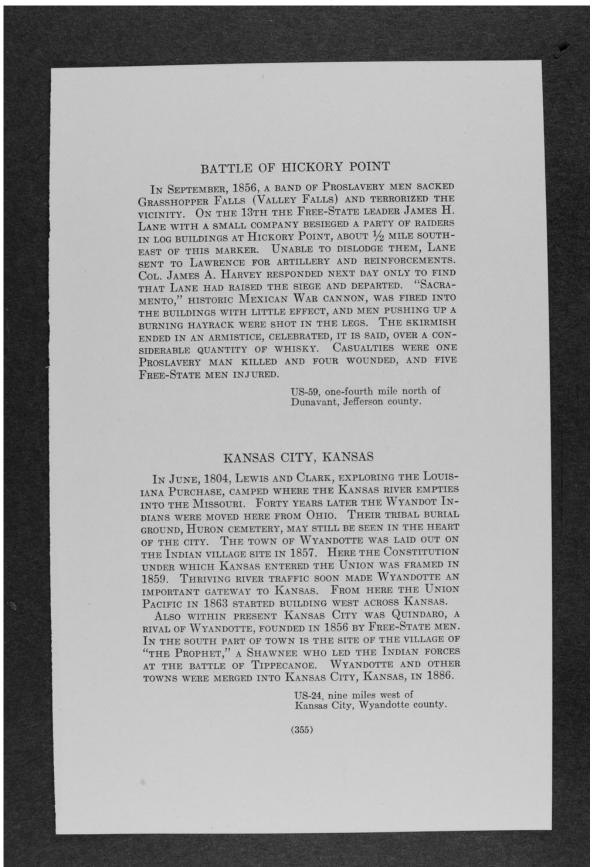




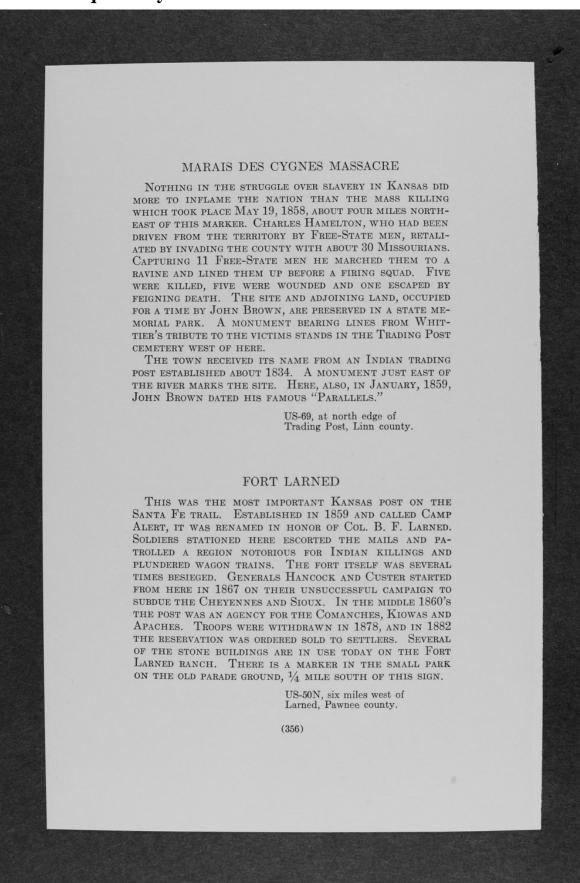




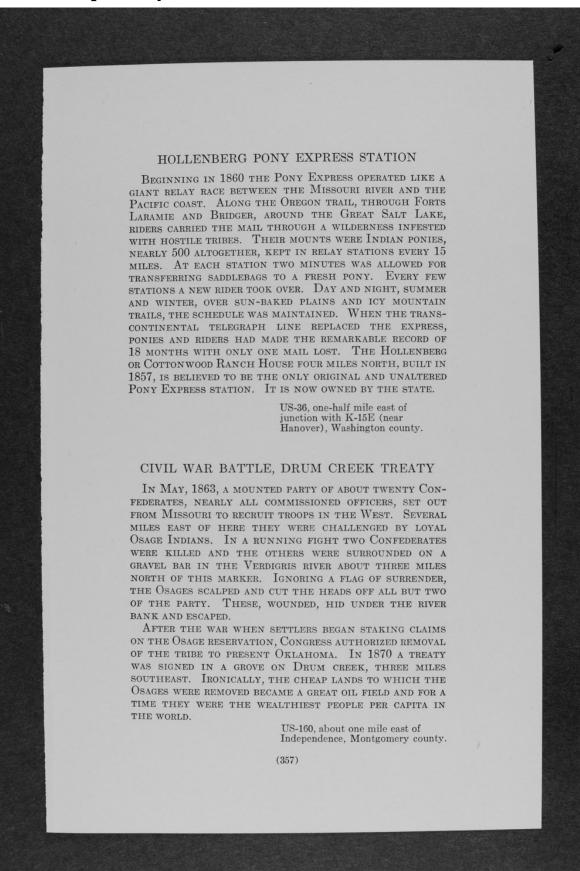










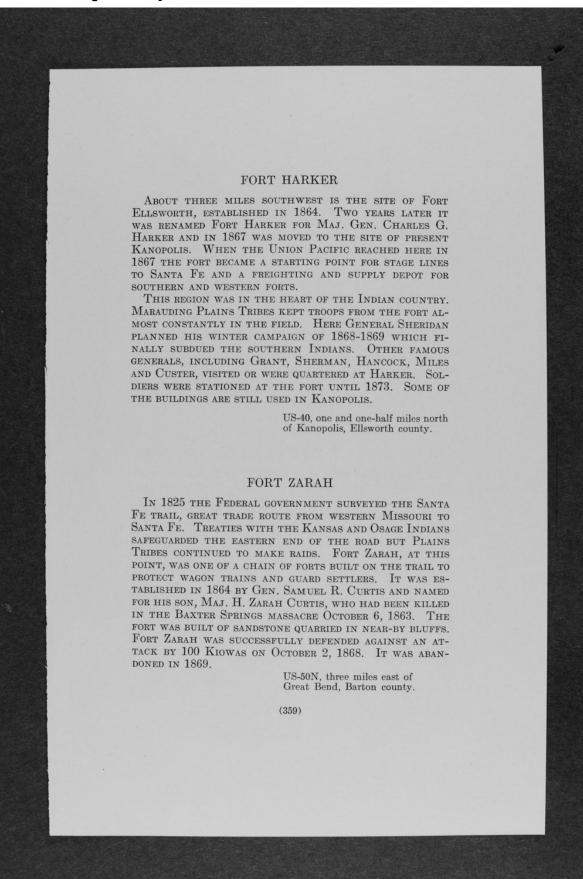




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BAXTER SPRINGS MASSACRE ON OCTOBER 6, 1863, GEN. JAMES BLUNT AND ABOUT 100 MEN WERE MET NEAR BAXTER'S SPRINGS BY WILLIAM QUAN-TRILL AND SEVERAL HUNDRED CONFEDERATES MASQUERADING AS UNION TROOPS. AS BLUNT'S BAND WAS PREPARING A MUSICAL SALUTE THE ENEMY FIRED. THIS SURPRISE ATTACK PREVENTED ORGANIZED RESISTANCE, AND THOUGH BLUNT ES-CAPED NINE-TENTHS OF HIS MEN WERE KILLED. THE RAIDERS ALSO ATTACKED LT. JAMES POND AND 95 MEN ENCAMPED AT THE SPRINGS. THIS FORCE WAS LIKEWISE CAUGHT OFF GUARD BUT RESISTED UNTIL THE ENEMY RETIRED. THESE BATTLE SITES ARE IN PRESENT BAXTER SPRINGS. A NUMBER OF THE VICTIMS ARE BURIED IN THE NATIONAL CEMETERY ONE MILE WEST OF TOWN. BAXTER SPRINGS WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1866 ON THE FORT LEAVENWORTH-FORT GIBSON MILITARY ROAD. FOR SEVERAL YEARS IT WAS IMPORTANT AS A TRADING CENTER FOR TEXAS CATTLE. US-66, at Baxter Springs, Cherokee county. BATTLE OF MINE CREEK IN OCTOBER, 1864, A CONFEDERATE ARMY UNDER GEN. STERLING PRICE WAS DEFEATED NEAR KANSAS CITY. HE RE-TREATED SOUTH, CROSSED INTO KANSAS, AND CAMPED AT TRAD-ING POST. EARLY ON THE MORNING OF OCTOBER 25 UNION TROOPS UNDER GENERALS PLEASONTON, BLUNT AND CURTIS FORCED HIM FROM THIS POSITION, AND A FEW HOURS LATER THE BATTLE OF MINE CREEK WAS FOUGHT OVER THESE FIELDS. CONFEDERATE FORCES WERE THROWN INTO CONFU-SION AS THEY TRIED TO CROSS THE STEEP, SLIPPERY BANKS OF THE STREAM. IN THE CLOSE FIGHTING ON THE BOTTOMS HUN-DREDS OF REBEL SOLDIERS WERE CAPTURED, INCLUDING GEN-ERAL MARMADUKE, WHO WAS TAKEN BY A 20-YEAR-OLD PRIVATE. ALTHOUGH UNION FORCES MISSED A CHANCE TO DESTROY PRICE'S ARMY THE DEFEAT WAS DECISIVE ENOUGH TO END THE THREAT OF A REBEL INVASION OF KANSAS. ABOUT 25,000 MEN WERE ENGAGED, MORE THAN IN ANY OTHER KAN-SAS BATTLE. US-69, about two miles south of Pleasanton, Linn county. (358)







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FORT DODGE

Fort Dodge was established here in 1864 by Maj. Gen. Grenville M. Dodge. It was a supply depot and base of operations against warring Plains Tribes. Custer, Sheridan, Miles, Hancock, "Wild Bill" Hickok and "Buffalo Bill" Cody are figures in its history. The site was an old camping ground for wagon trains at the western junction of the "Dry" and "Wet" routes of the Santa Fe trail. The first buildings were of sod and adobe although some of the troops lived in dugouts. Several of the stone buildings erected later are in use today. The fort was abandoned in 1882 and is now a state soldiers' home.

THE SPANISH EXPLORER, CORONADO, IS BELIEVED TO HAVE CROSSED THE ARKANSAS RIVER A FEW MILES EAST OF HERE IN 1541.

US-154, at State Soldiers' Home, four miles southeast of Dodge City, Ford county.

INDIAN TREATIES ON THE LITTLE ARKANSAS

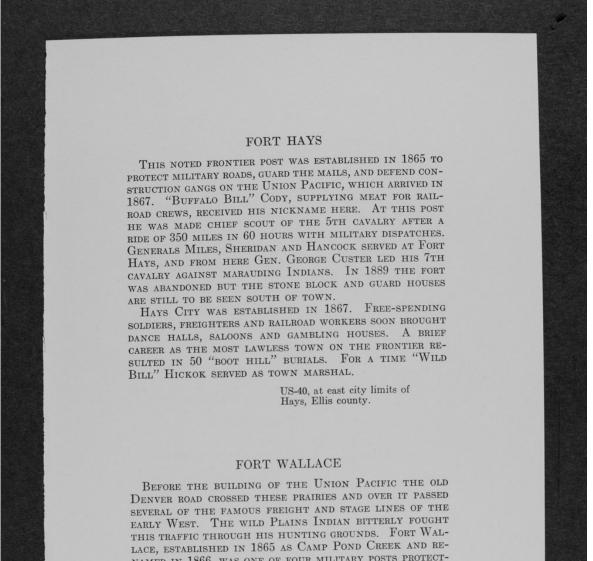
IN 1865 HUNDREDS OF PLAINS INDIANS CAMPED ON THESE PRAIRIES TO TALK PEACE WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. Among them were Chiefs Black Kettle and Seven BULLS (CHEYENNE), LITTLE RAVEN AND BIG MOUTH (ARAPAHOE), RISING SUN AND HORSE'S BACK (COMANCHE), POOR BEAR (APACHE), SATANTA AND SATANK (KIOWA). FED-ERAL COMMISSIONERS WITH GREAT PRESTIGE AMONG THE IN-DIANS WERE GENERAL HARNEY, COLONEL LEAVENWORTH, KIT CARSON AND WM. BENT. THE WHITES WANTED PEACE, UN-MOLESTED TRAFFIC ON THE SANTA FE TRAIL AND LIMITATION OF INDIAN TERRITORY. THE INDIANS DEMANDED UNRE-STRICTED HUNTING GROUNDS AND REPARATION FOR THE CHIV-INGTON MASSACRE OF BLACK KETTLE'S BAND. TREATIES MADE HERE GAVE THE INDIANS RESERVATIONS SOUTH OF THE AR-KANSAS, EXCLUDED THEM NORTH TO THE PLATTE, AND PRO-CLAIMED PEACE. SEVERAL WHITE CAPTIVES WERE RELEASED, AMONG THEM A WOMAN AND FOUR CHILDREN FROM TEXAS. LATER BOTH SIDES CHARGED VIOLATIONS AND WARFARE CON-TINUED UNTIL THE MEDICINE LODGE TREATIES OF 1867. THERE IS A MONUMENT ONE MILE WEST.

US-81, four miles north of Wichita, Sedgwick county.

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LACE, ESTABLISHED IN 1865 AS CAMP POND CREEK AND RENAMED IN 1866, WAS ONE OF FOUR MILITARY POSTS PROTECTING THE ROUTE. FROM 1865 TO 1878 IT WAS THE MOST ACTIVE POST ON THE INDIAN FRONTIER. TROOPS WERE ALMOST CONSTANTLY IN THE FIELD AND THE FORT WAS SEVERAL TIMES BESIEGED. IN JUNE, 1867, 300 CHEYENNES UNDER CHIEF ROMAN NOSE RAIDED AN OVERLAND STATION NEAR BY AND ATTACKED THE FORT, KILLING SEVERAL SOLDIERS. THE POST WAS ABOUT TWO MILES SOUTHEAST. IT WAS ABANDONED IN 1882 AND NOTHING NOW REMAINS OF THE STONE AND WOOD BUILDINGS WHERE ONCE AS MANY AS 500 MEN WERE STA-

TIONED.

US-40, at Wallace, Wallace county.

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THE CHISHOLM TRAIL

AT THE END OF THE CIVIL WAR WHEN MILLIONS OF LONG-HORNS WERE LEFT ON THE PLAINS OF TEXAS WITHOUT A MARKET THE UNION PACIFIC WAS BUILDING WEST ACROSS KANSAS. JOSEPH McCoy, AN ILLINOIS STOCKMAN, BELIEVED THESE CATTLE COULD BE HERDED OVER THE PRAIRIES FOR SHIP-MENT BY RAIL. HE BUILT YARDS AT ABILENE AND SENT AGENTS TO NOTIFY THE TEXAS CATTLEMEN. THE TRAIL HE SUGGESTED RAN FROM THE RED RIVER TO ABILENE BUT TOOK ITS NAME FROM JESSE CHISHOLM, INDIAN TRADER, WHOSE ROUTE LAY BETWEEN THE NORTH CANADIAN RIVER AND THIS VICINITY. IN 1867 THE FIRST DRIVES WERE MADE AND DUR-ING THE NEXT FIVE YEARS MORE THAN A MILLION HEAD MOVED NORTH PAST THIS PLACE. EVENTUALLY THE RAILROADS AND THE BARBED WIRE OF SETTLERS CLOSED THE LONG TRAILS. BUT THE COWBOYS OF THESE GREAT DRIVES, LIVING IN THE SADDLE FOR MORE THAN A MONTH, SWIMMING FLOODED RIVERS, FIGHTING NIGHT STAMPEDES, HAVE BECOME THE HEROES OF AN AMERICAN EPIC.

US-81, one and one-half miles north of Wichita, Sedgwick county.

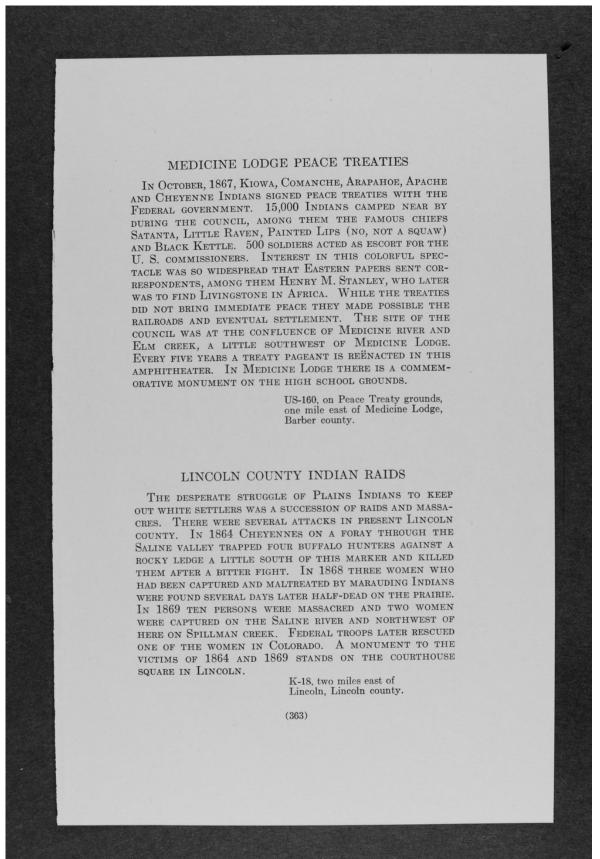
ABILENE, END OF THE CHISHOLM TRAIL

AT THE END OF THE CIVIL WAR WHEN MILLIONS OF LONG-HORNS WERE LEFT ON THE PLAINS OF TEXAS WITHOUT A MARKET THE UNION PACIFIC WAS BUILDING WEST ACROSS KANSAS. JOSEPH McCoy, AN ILLINOIS STOCKMAN, BELIEVED THESE CATTLE COULD BE HERDED NORTH FOR SHIPMENT BY RAIL. HE BUILT YARDS AT ABILENE AND SENT AGENTS TO NOTIFY THE TEXAS CATTLEMEN. IN 1867 THE FIRST DRIVES WERE MADE AND DURING THE NEXT FIVE YEARS MORE THAN A MILLION HEAD WERE RECEIVED. ABILENE BECAME THE FIRST OF THE WILD CATTLE TOWNS WHERE GAMBLING PLACES, SA-LOONS AND DANCE HALLS COMPETED FOR THE COWBOYS' WAGES. Gun fights were frequent and several peace officers RESIGNED. THE FIRST TO BRING ORDER WAS TOM SMITH WHO WITH BARE FISTS ENFORCED THE ORDINANCE AGAINST CARRY-ING FIREARMS. MORE FAMOUS WAS "WILD BILL" HICKOK WHO BECAME KNOWN AS THE DEADLIEST "TWO-GUN" MARSHAL ON THE WESTERN FRONTIER. THERE ARE SEVERAL HISTORICAL MARKERS IN THE CITY.

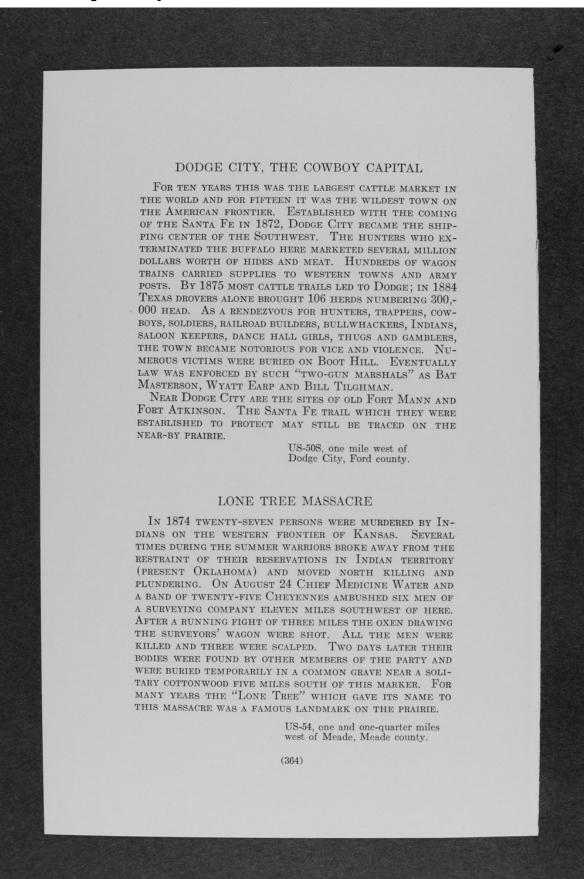
US-40, two and one-half miles west of Abilene, Dickinson county.

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RED TURKEY WHEAT

CHILDREN IN RUSSIA HAND-PICKED THE FIRST SEEDS OF THIS FAMOUS WINTER WHEAT FOR KANSAS. THEY BELONGED TO MENNONITE COLONIES PREPARING TO EMIGRATE FROM THE STEPPES TO THE AMERICAN PRAIRIES. A PEACE-LOVING SECT, ORIGINALLY FROM HOLLAND, THE MENNONITES HAD GONE TO THE CRIMEA FROM PRUSSIA IN 1790 WHEN CATHERINE THE GREAT OFFERED FREE LANDS, MILITARY EXEMPTION AND RE-LIGIOUS FREEDOM. HERE THEY PROSPERED UNTIL THESE PRIV-ILEGES WERE THREATENED IN 1871. THREE YEARS LATER THEY EMIGRATED TO KANSAS, WHERE THE SANTA FE RAILROAD OFFERED THOUSANDS OF ACRES ON GOOD TERMS IN MARION, HARVEY, RENO AND McPHERSON COUNTIES, AND WHERE THE LEGISLATURE PASSED A BILL EXEMPTING RELIGIOUS OBJECTORS FROM MILITARY SERVICE. WITHIN A MONTH AFTER LANDING IN NEW YORK THE MENNONITES PLANTED THE RED-GOLD GRAINS THEIR CHILDREN HAD SELECTED. THE HARVEST WAS THE FIRST OF THE GREAT CROPS OF HARD TURKEY RED AND ITS DERIVATIVES THAT HAVE MADE KANSAS THE GRANARY OF THE NATION.

US-50S, one-half mile east of Walton, Harvey county.

LAST INDIAN RAID IN KANSAS

IN SEPTEMBER, 1878, A BAND OF HOMESICK NORTHERN CHEYENNES, CONSISTING OF 89 MEN, 112 WOMEN AND 134 CHILDREN, STOLE AWAY FROM THEIR OKLAHOMA RESERVATION UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF CHIEF DULL KNIFE. ATTACKED BY SMALL TROOP DETACHMENTS AND COWBOYS THEY MOVED THROUGH KANSAS KILLING AND PLUNDERING. WESTERN COUNTIES WERE TERRORIZED, BUT FORT LEAVENWORTH DIS-COUNTED REPORTS AND DELAYED HELP. WEEKS LATER 149 OF THE INDIANS WERE CAPTURED IN NORTHERN NEBRASKA. Most of them were afterward killed in prison breaks AND FEW WERE RETURNED TO OKLAHOMA. THEIR ESCAPE ACROSS THREE STATES PURSUED BY TROOPS FROM THREE MILI-TARY DEPARTMENTS WAS CONSIDERED A REMARKABLE FEAT. Innocent victims were forty Kansas settlers murdered ON THEIR FARMS. HERE IN DECATUR COUNTY NINETEEN WERE KILLED ON SAPPA CREEK. A MONUMENT STANDS IN THE CEMETERY ONE MILE EAST OF THIS MARKER.

> Junction of US-36 and US-183, at northern city limits of Oberlin, Decatur county.

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