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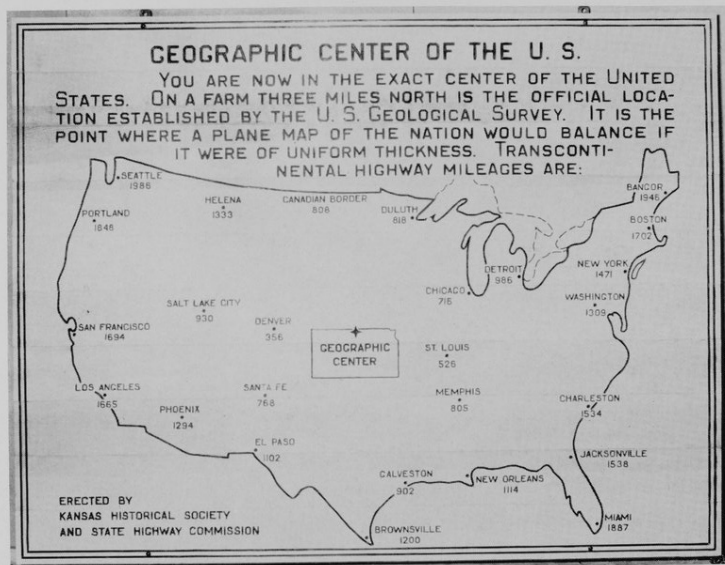


## GEODETIC CENTER OF NORTH AMERICA

ON A RANCH 18 MILES SOUTHEAST OF THIS MARKER A BRONZE PLATE MARKS THE MOST IMPORTANT SPOT ON THIS CONTINENT TO SURVEYORS AND MAP MAKERS. ENGRAVED IN THE BRONZE IS A CROSS-MARK AND ON THE TINY POINT WHERE THE LINES CROSS DEPEND THE SURVEYS OF A SIXTH OF THE WORLD'S SURFACE. THIS IS THE GEODETIC CENTER OF THE UNITED STATES, THE "PRIMARY STATION" FOR ALL NORTH AMERICAN SURVEYS. IT WAS LOCATED IN 1901 BY THE U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY. LATER CANADA AND MEXICO ADOPTED THE POINT AND ITS SUPPORTING SYSTEM AS THE BASE FOR THEIR SURVEYS AND IT IS NOW KNOWN AS THE "NORTH AMERICAN DATUM." WHAT GREENWICH IS TO THE LONGITUDE OF THE WORLD, THEREFORE, A KANSAS PASTURE IS TO THE LINES AND BOUNDARIES OF THIS CONTINENT. IT MUST NOT BE CONFUSED WITH THE GEOGRAPHIC CENTER OF THE U. S. WHICH IS 42 MILES NORTH, IN SMITH COUNTY.

US-24 and US-281, one-fourth mile  
north of Osborne, Osborne county.

(368)



THE GEOGRAPHIC CENTER OF THE UNITED STATES IS IN SMITH COUNTY, ABOUT TWO MILES NORTHWEST OF LEBANON. THIS MARKER IS ON US-36, ONE-THIRD MILE WEST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH US-281.



## Letters on the War in Kansas in 1856

Edited by V. E. GIBBENS

### I. INTRODUCTION

THREE letters of John Lawrie, who fought with the Free-State men in the troubles in Kansas in 1856, were carefully copied by his brother Arthur in the latter's diary, and have just come to light. The letters, as will be observed, were written after John Lawrie had returned to Indiana in 1857.

Only a few facts are known of John's life. He was born in New York City on August 8, 1824, being one of a family of four boys and two girls born to Alexander Lawrie, Scottish immigrant, and Sarah Coombe Lawrie. Of the children the most noted was Alexander, Jr., a popular portrait and landscape painter in Philadelphia and New York during the 1860's and 1870's.<sup>1</sup> The father was a merchant, but perhaps a none too successful one, for in 1852 he and his wife, accompanied by their son Arthur and daughter Mary, settled on a farm near Chalmers in White county, Indiana.

By February, 1854, John had joined his parents, and probably remained with them until he left in 1856 for a ten months' sojourn in Kansas. Whether he made a return trip to Kansas is merely conjectural.<sup>2</sup>

He served throughout the Civil War with the troops from Indiana—from April 23 to August 6, 1861, with the Tenth infantry regiment, Indiana volunteers, Company E, on a three-months' enlistment; and with Companies B and G, from September 19, 1861, to September 19, 1864, on a three-year enlistment.<sup>3</sup> According to his application for admission to the Indiana State Soldiers' Home, he reënlisted in December, 1864, and served until May 15, 1865, company and regiment not being given.<sup>4</sup> He held variously, as stated in the application, the ranks of private, corporal, and second lieutenant.

A nephew's diary, which on May 19 referred to his having returned from the army on the day before, establishes his presence on

1. *Dictionary of American Biography* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1933), v. XI, p. 54.

2. See the last sentence in the first letter.

3. *Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Indiana* (Indianapolis, 1866), v. IV, pp. 55, 158, and 166.

4. The adjutant general's *Report*, so far as I have been able to discover, does not mention this period of service. If not, it would appear that the report was at fault.



the White county farm until 1867. The diary closes then, however, and two diaries of a niece and his brother Arthur, kept respectively in 1876-1877 and 1897-1899, do not mention him. He must have remained in Indiana, however, as when he applied in November, 1899, for admission to the soldiers' home he wrote that he had resided in the state for nearly fifty years.

He was admitted to the home on June 16, 1900, and except for an interval of slightly more than eight months, spent the rest of his life there. He died on January 14, 1905, at the age of 80 years.

Since the main events related in the letters are already familiar (such as the dispersal of the legislature at Topeka on July 4, 1856, and the various battles mentioned) and books on this phase of Kansas history are numerous,<sup>5</sup> it has not been deemed necessary to explain them in footnotes.

## II. THE LETTERS<sup>6</sup>

Wolf Mound Farm, White Co., Indiana  
Apl. 16th, 1857

Dear Art,

After an absence of ten months I now find myself again at home, and surrounded by old associations, among which prominently stands my long-neglected correspondence with you. It was my hope on my way home that when I reached it I would find you with Bob and Lizzy<sup>7</sup> and the little ones all living under the Lawrie roof-tree. But as I cannot talk to you face to face, I must talk to you through the mail, and tell you where I have been so long and what I have been about.

When I left home on the fifteenth of last June I had no intention of making a home in Kansas. I intended in case I could find any organization ready to take the field against the Missourians, to use my utmost endeavors to change the attitude of the Free-State settlers from a defensive to an offensive warfare. When I reached Leavenworth, I was unable to find any organization of Free-State men, and could only tell one when I met him by his hanging head and subdued tone of voice. While remaining in this place, the *Star*

5. J. N. Holloway, *History of Kansas* (Lafayette, Ind., 1868); Leverett W. Spring, *Kansas: The Prelude to the War for the Union* (Boston, 1885); and Sara T. L. Robinson, *Kansas: Its Interior and Exterior Life* (Boston, 1856), to name only a few that have come to the attention of the writer of this introduction in his curiosity to check the account of the events related in the diary with historical accounts of the same happenings. [Editor's Note: Lawrie was positive in statements concerning some things about which there is a great deal of controversy. His version, therefore, should not be fully evaluated until other contemporaneous accounts are read.]

6. A few corrections have been made in spelling, punctuation, and paragraphing, but, in general, the attempt has been made to leave the text as it stood in the diary.

7. Brother-in-law and sister, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Telfer.



*of the West* landed at the levee having on board the Chicago boys as prisoners, and fifty men could have released them and put them in possession of their arms, but there were a certain "five-thousand Missourians" who lived somewhere not far off that would be most grievously provoked should a rescue be attempted, and consequently none was attempted.

Hearing that people held up their heads and spoke what they thought in Lawrence, I started for that point and soon found myself at home as far as a hatred of tyranny and a thirst for vengeance for the insult of the 21st of May was concerned. The people had concluded to try whether there was truth in the Border Ruffian assertion *The Damned Yankees won't fight!* There was quite a stir among the young men in the way of target-firing and drilling in order to prepare themselves for any emergency that might arise requiring them *to contend with superior numbers*, the only thing that thus far had held them back. I found that arms were really scarce. I expected to find plenty of improved fire-arms, and it was with the greatest difficulty I succeeded in getting an old condemned musket. I was looked upon with distrust by a great many persons in Lawrence, having the appearance of a spy in their eyes. It was complimentary, for my appearance seemed above my position to them; but it was very disagreeable. The only military company in town (*the Stubbs*) expected to attend the convention at Topeka on the second and third of July and the opening of the legislature on the Fourth, when it was expected they would be needed to defend the legislature against the Ruffians and troops of the U. S. I applied for admission into the company and was put off with rather evasive answers. I went up to Topeka, however, resolved to prove myself a true man when the trying time came. I found the people discussing the propriety of defending the legislature against all who might attempt to disperse it. A few goddamned white-livered lawyers succeeded in getting through a resolution that it was the determination of the Free-State men *not to molest or hinder the U. S. troops*. On the fourth of July at an hour before noon the troops charged into town and dispersed the legislature and retired again unmolested.

I went back to the place where I worked near Lawrence, and did nothing but damn and curse lawyers and professional politicians until the sixth of August, when it was decided by some of the boys in town to go down to a block house erected by a company of Georgian robbers in the lower part of the territory and whip the robbers and burn the block house. I succeeded in obtaining permission to ac-





company the Stubbs on this expedition. We all slept in one place that night so that we might be awakened at an early hour and depart unobserved. We marched from one o'clock in the morning until breakfast time when we camped on Coal creek, where we remained two hours awaiting the arrival of two wagons and our captain. We were here joined by the Waukarusa company and the Coal creek company, making our force some seventy strong. From this camp on we had a chance to ride over smooth going, and we only stopped long enough to bait the horses until we reached Bull creek right in the heart of the enemy's country, where we camped for the night some three hours after dark, having lost our guide about the middle of the afternoon. When the guard was appointed for the night, I had the honor of being selected for the post on extreme left of the camp for the first mounting. I was tired, sleepy and hungry, but I felt the importance of the trust placed in me and managed to keep awake without making much noise by biting my lips and tongue. Our camp had a deep ravine in the rear and a small ravine on each flank, and was kept perfectly dark and quiet. At about one in the morning of the eighth of August (my birthday) I heard the tramp of horses' feet in the direction we came from, apparently right in our trail. I knew that our guide was out and perhaps it might be him, but then again it might not. I began to get very wide awake indeed. Presently I caught a glimpse of *two* horsemen, which satisfied me it was not the guide returning. I cocked my old musket and when they came within about a rod of me ordered them to halt, but instead of halting they clapped in their spurs and wheeled off to the right as fast as their horses would carry them. As quick as they wheeled I drew a bead on them and pulled, but the old musket didn't go, and before I could get ready again they had made some fifty yards when I let them have the buckshot and of course woke up the camp. Our captain inquired who had fired when I told him what had occurred, which I thought was discredited. In the morning I went out to see if I could find some proof in the shape of some of their arms which in their hurry they might have dropped, but only found a blood trail. When I was returning, I met four of our men who were putting out in the direction the two horsemen had taken in the night, and presently they returned with a saddled horse which had a couple of buckshot in him—one on the right side of his rump and the other on the inside of his off hind leg. My credit raised wonderfully when it was seen I really shot at something, and it rose still more when it was afterward discovered that the two men I had





shot at were Capt. Cook of the Bull creek Ruffians and one of his scouts.

After the return of our guide we resumed our march in the direction of the Georgian block house, yet some twenty-five miles distant, and met with no incidents worthy of note until we reached the vicinity of the block house, where we were all rather anxious to see how the boys would behave under fire, many of them never having as yet heard singing lead. The night was rather dark, and the enemy showed no light and made no noise. Our captain (who by the way was an old man of wars man) reconnoitered the ground and concluded to lead us right on to the place and take it by assault as we had no artillery to storm the place with. The battalion was divided into two platoons, and the block house approached from toward its front and left so that in case we found it necessary to fire we could give them a destructive cross-fire. We went up as well as old veterans ever dared to go; and if there was any disorder at all whatever, it was occasioned by some of the boys rushing ahead too fast. The sound of our steady *tramp! tramp!* was too much for the garrison and they incontinently fled. We found about ten hundred pounds of bacon, some meal, several sacks of flour, a barrel of sugar, [and?] various articles recognized by many of our men as having been taken from Lawrence on the 21st of May, besides a number of letters written by Free-State men to their friends in the states which had been mailed in U. S. post offices, and probably had been abstracted in Missouri and forwarded to the Robbers of the Blue Lodge in order to give them whatever information they might possess of the prospects and conditions of their writers. After taking out all the provisions and military stores, we fired the block house and started home again by the light of it. On our return we had a most fatiguing time, but reached Lawrence without any incident occurring worthy of note. . . .

I found all our people well. I shall remain here until the middle of June when I intend returning to Kansas.

Your affectionate brother  
John Lawrie



Wolf Mound Farm, White Co., Indiana  
April 19th, 1857

Dear Art,

According to promise I now resume my history of my adventures in Kansas.

On our return to Lawrence there was some degree of hesitation manifested in regard to making an attack upon another fortified band of robbers who were occupying a stronghold near Washington creek, called Fort Sanders [Saunders—named for J. P. Saunders]. The *wisheads* succeeded in having a committee appointed and sent to wait on Major [John] Sedgwick of the U. S. army and represent to him the character and conduct of the Washington creek robbers and assassins. He told the committee they were mistaken in supposing the colony at that place robbers and assassins, and advised them to make further inquiries into their real character, and if they did not prove to be well-meaning citizens, he would permit the Free-State men to drive them out.

As if we were not already satisfied as to their character, the noble and heroic Major [D. S.] Hoyt was sent out to learn more of them, and they most basely murdered him and disfigured him by pounding the fleshy parts off his face and then putting some chemical substance upon [it] to remove whatever might still be left by which he might be recognized. (This was the last of the influence of the god-damned lawyers and professional politicians in Lawrence.) In order to carry the stronghold of these Ruffians artillery was necessary. We had none, but the enemy had one at Franklin, about four miles from Lawrence. It was taken at Sacramento by Col. [A. W.] Doniphan and is still known as *Old Sacramento*. One night about seventy-five of us took the road to Franklin and while on the road learned that Jim Lane was along and would plan the attack. Just before entering the town ten of our men were detailed under Lieut. Earle to make a demonstration in front of the buildings occupied by the garrison in which they had the cannon, while the main body of our men advanced upon their rear. The ruffians were summoned to surrender, but they wouldn't do it, so we replied to their fire in such an effective way that we drove them all into the center building, which was impervious to bullets, being constructed of logs. From this position they gave us a pretty hot fire, killing one man named Sackett and wounding two others, Gunther and Brooks. I had a position with my old musket close to a porthole in the rear of the log house, and by aiming at one flash and firing immediately at the next so dis-





concerted their aim that no more of our men were struck after my first charge of buckshot reached them. (While I was getting my aim, I got a tap on the side of my hat and made the discovery that a man cannot hear the lead sing that strikes him.) As our fire didn't seem to make much impression on them, a wagon was loaded with hay and run up to the building which was furthest to windward (which happened to be the post office) and set fire to; when our boys commenced singing out "*There she goes!*" "*There goes the roof!*" "*Stand off, boys, maybe there's powder in it!*" By and by it began to work on the garrison, and they screamed out "*Quarter! Quarter! Quarter!*" I spoke out pretty loud, "*They are calling for water.*" "*No,*" said they, "*Quarters! Quarters! for God's sake, give us Quarters!*" We told them to march out and stack their arms and we would do so, which they did in double quick time, and then we upset the load of burning hay, and not even the wagon was burned, saying nothing of the buildings! After gathering up their arms and getting *Old Sacramento* mounted, we started back to Lawrence and arrived there safely, but sorrowing for the loss of a brave Michigan boy named Sackett.

After taking this gun and before marching against Fort Sanders, it was necessary to run a lot of cannon balls for Sacramento. How do you suppose it was done where there was no means of melting cast-iron? I will tell you. A large chunk of wrought iron was suspended by a wire inside of the mould, and then the mould was filled up with type metal, *made from type which had been thrown into the Kaw river by the Ruffians on the 21st of May!*

When everything was ready, we started for the Free-State camp on Rock creek, where we found a large body of our men waiting for us under the command of Capt. [Samuel] Walker. Here we camped for the night, and the next day started for Washington creek to try our hands upon a famous stronghold defended by four hundred of the enemy. Jim Lane commanded in person. Capt. Walker had charge of our cavalry. Capt. Beckerton [Bickerton] had charge of the artillery, and Capt. Cutter commanded our company, which acted as light infantry. *Old Sacramento* was stationed about forty rods directly in front of the fort, and Capt. Walker's command was divided on the right and left of it, while we advanced directly upon it until we came within about one-hundred yards, when we halted and were ordered to lie down. Before a shot was fired, we received the order "*Up, Stubbs! Double quick, forward march!*" and the way we put in to it was a caution. We scaled their stockade, rushed



across their embanked breastwork and entered the fort in less time than I have been writing the account of the charge, and found that the enemy had acted on the old adage:—

Whosoever runs away  
Will live to fight another day.

We followed on in the wake of the retreating Ruffians, charged through two deep ravines, and made the discovery that the enemy knew the country better than we did, at least that they knew more of their own whereabouts. We took a large quantity of arms at the fort besides considerable other plunder besides military stores, etc. Who should I see here but Bill Porter, busy loading a four-mule wagon with bacon, muskets, flour, powder, tents, etc., who exclaimed when he saw me: "Why, John Larry! who the hell would have tho't of seeing you here?"

After taking out all we wanted, we set fire to the fort and fell back upon our camp of the previous night on Rock creek, where, as soon as we had supper, we received intelligence that [H. T.] Titus' gang had threatened to burn Judge Wakefield's house, and off we started across the country to pay our respects to the famous Col. Titus, who lived within one mile and a quarter of Lecompton. After a long and fatiguing march we encamped not far from Capt. Walker's place, but not until we had the pleasure of an accidental meeting with Col. Titus' gang of mounted robbers, who left us in a hurry minus two of their horses, we having killed the rider of one and taken the rider of the other prisoner. We were joined about daybreak by a reinforcement from Lawrence and started immediately for Titus' place, but the Chicago boys got the start of the Stubbs and had the fun all over before we came up. Titus had one man killed and one besides himself wounded. We took nineteen prisoners, Titus among the number, contrary to the wishes of a great many of the boys, but he begged so like a whipped puppy—so cringingly—that he was thought too goddamned mean, too despicable to notice sufficiently to kill him. One of his negroes, who was out at the stable during the fight, said, "Massa Titus wanted six abolitionists for breakfast! Yah! Yah! Gorra Massy! guess he get his belly full dis monin'!" With the exception of military stores Capt. Walker allowed nothing to be taken, but consigned the stronghold and its contents to the flames.

I forgot to state that the old gun *Sacramento* first spoke at this place in favor of the Free-State cause, and also circulated several copies of the *Herald of Freedom* amongst Titus' crowd. Titus said

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he had no idea we could hit the house at all at the distance the gun was placed, to say nothing of knocking the door and windows in with round shot and then filling the house with cannister. Capt. [Henry J.] Shombre of the Indiana company received a mortal wound in a charge he made upon the Ruffians' camp, which was about two-hundred yards north of the house. One or two others of our men received slight wounds; Capt. Walker got a charge of buck-shot in his breast, but having on two or three woollen shirts they didn't penetrate the skin. During the fight it commenced raining, and fearing that our Sharps rifles would not be in fit trim for another fight until they were dried, Capt. Walker wouldn't allow us to march against Lecompton, as we desired him to do, and so we started back to Lawrence and arrived there safely without meeting with any adventure worthy of notice. . . .

Your affectionate brother  
John Lawrie

Wolf Mound Farm, May 11th, 1857

Dear Art & Bob:—

After an unaccountable delay I again resume my narrative. In my second letter I left off in recounting the affair at Titus' fort and the capture of that gentleman and eighteen of his associates. Nothing very remarkable came under my observation after this affair until Governor [Wilson] Shannon came to Lawrence accompanied by Major Sedgwick of the U. S. cavalry *to make a treaty with the rebels in our camp*. He agreed to deliver up to us what prisoners his party had and the twelve-pound howitzer which [Samuel] Pomeroy so cowardly delivered over to the Ruffians on the 21st of May, in exchange for the prisoners we held, and agreed to make no more war upon us. Major Sedgwick agreed to see the treaty carried out, and accordingly we escorted the prisoners back to Lecompton and made the exchange. The boys were delighted to see Betsy again, *i. e.*, the howitzer.

Soon after this Shannon resigned, and [Daniel] Woodson by virtue of his office became governor. He called out the Missourians, who came in great force. We were poorly off for powder, and our regiment was sent up to Topeka to escort the Plymouth company into Lawrence as they had a large supply and were not strong enough to force their way through. While we were on this duty, Ruffian [John W.] Reid with twelve-hundred men was playing such deviltry in the southern part of the territory that Jim Lane left





Lawrence with two hundred and fifty men in order to find Reid and give him battle. He came up to him at Bull creek and drove in his outpost before dark. The next day after a little skirmishing between the scouts Jim formed his line of battle and advanced upon the Ruffians, but they got so homesick they started off immediately for Missouri and never stopped until they reached home. When we returned from our duty, we found an order awaiting us to join Jim Lane immediately and bring along extra rations and ammunition, which we obeyed. We had not proceeded over five miles before we met a dispatch from Jim Lane stating that we should return as the enemy had fled at his approach, and as he was not prepared to pursue them he was on his return to Lawrence himself. After this we treed a party in Lecompton, but as they complied with our demand of an unconditional release of all the Free-State men held by them in Lecompton, we withdrew.

We had a great deal racing around the territory after the Ruffians, but somehow they were not to be caught, until on the 13th of September Jim Lane treed two companies, Capt. Robinson's and Capt. [H. A.] Lowe's, at Hickory Point. They took refuge in the log buildings, and Jim sent us word to bring him *Sacramento* by the way of Topeka, which was the route he had taken in finding the Ruffians. In order that you may have an idea of the blunder Col. [J. A.] Harvey made as a military man, I will make a diagram of the different localities.<sup>8</sup>

He had explicit orders to march by the way of Topeka, but instead of doing so he took us straight across the Delaware country to Hickory Point. When we got there, we were surprised in not finding Lane, but as we found the enemy we pitched in and made them surrender. The reason we missed Lane was that he had received [Gov. J. W.] Geary's proclamation and immediately withdrew his force and sent Harvey a countermand to his previous order by the route he had been ordered to come. After the battle we withdrew from Hickory Point about five miles and encamped at a place called Newell's Mills.<sup>9</sup>

This was the night of the 14th of September. On the night of the 12th we were up all night at Franklin on the lookout for the advance guard of Reid's new army; on the night of the 13th we were marching all night against Hickory Point, so that on the night of the 14th we were pretty well worn out.

8. A tracing of the map is also available. It is not reproduced here since the several places shown in the sketch were not all in their true positions in relation to each other.

9. Now Oskaloosa.—Andreas, A. T., *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago, 1883), p. 502.





About midnight we supposed the Kickapoo rangers were about to attack us, and just as old Tom Bickerton was about letting them have the contents of *Old Sacramento* we made the discovery that we were nearly surrounded by U. S. troops. Harvey made himself scarce, and we did the only thing we could under the circumstances—*surrendered*—because *Fremont was to be elected then*, and we were willing to go to hell with our boxes full of cartridges rather than do anything that would have a tendency to defeat his election. I laid down at Capt. Cutter's order my rifle, knife, and revolver, and never have seen them since. Capt. [T. J.] Wood of the U. S. cavalry said he would be personally responsible for the arms. We were taken to the U. S. camp near Lecompton and then had a realizing sense of the importance of the U. S. army.

Boys, I will defer for the present an account of our prison life. I do not feel in the humor to write when I think of it. I can tell it by little snatches, but I am afraid I cannot do it justice with the pen. . . .

Your affectionate brother  
John Lawrie

## First Newspapers in Kansas Counties

(Concluded)

1879-1886

G. RAYMOND GAEDDERT

MEADE COUNTY

The *Pearlette Call*, April 15, 1879.

FRANK S. Sullivan asserted, and evidence supports him, that the *Pearlette Call* was the first newspaper published in Meade county.<sup>1</sup> The first number was edited by A. Bennett, and published by Bennett and H. Lowry. After this issue it was A. Bennett, editor and sole proprietor. The paper was independent in politics.

The history of the name of the settlement, which also is linked with the paper, has a slightly sentimental touch. The colony that settled in Meade county in 1879 came from Muskingum county, Ohio. Shortly after they arrived one of their number, Pearl Atkinson, died, "the fairest and brightest of our jewels." J. T. Copeland suggested the name *Pearlette* for the settlement, and perhaps since Pearl was the first to be called away from the colony the paper was christened the *Pearlette Call*.<sup>2</sup>

Under the title "Exchanges" the editor made his bow to the Kansas press. He wrote:

Brethren of the Kansas Press, greeting! We come to you cutting rather a sorry figure, we know. To be candid, we admit that you could say nothing too mean of our sheet; we could say amen to anything you might say.

But gentlemen, remember that the *Call* is printed in a county which had scarcely a settler six months ago: that we are over 30 miles from a town, and but two houses on the way: that all of our material came 1,400 miles, and for two months was kicked around, hither and yon: that every word of our sheet was set up at the case without being written; that our office is not over 4 x 6: and—But why go on? we did the best we could; and perhaps some of you would have done no better.

In another place he wrote:

When we left Zanesville we thought we could get out the first issue of the *Call* in two weeks after our arrival in Meade County; but we found out different after our arrival here. We found it took more time to build our house than we had any idea of; for before we left Ohio we knew of mite meetings building four sod houses in one evening, but some-how they can't be built so fast out here; because here we build by work, and there we built by wind.

1. Sullivan, Frank S., *A History of Meade County* (Crane & Company, Topeka, 1916), p. 68.

2. The *Pearlette Call*, April 15, 1879.





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And after we got in our little house we found ourselves so cramped that things went very slow. Just think of a family of five living in a house 11 x 14!

Then, in addition, put in a printing office, stamp factory, stencil shop etc., and you will wonder how we work at all—as we often do.

The *Call* also reflected the life and mirth of the colony. In the first number the editor tells about the scarcity of coal and wood, which induced the resourceful settlers to resort to the use of buffalo chips for fuel. The editor in an interesting manner describes how the women became adapted to them:

It was comical to see how gingerly our wives handled these chips at first. They commenced by picking them up between two sticks, or with a poker. Soon they used a rag, and then a corner of their apron. Finally, growing hardened, a wash after handling them was sufficient. And now? Now it is out of the bread, into the chips and back again—and not even a dust of the hands!

The *Call* started as a two-column, twelve-page folio, to be published semimonthly. The second number, however, did not appear until May 15. The next seven issues appeared semimonthly, then there was a gap between September 1, 1879, and January 10, 1880, following this the *Call* appeared weekly until it apparently was discontinued May 8, 1880.<sup>3</sup> The Society has the first twenty numbers of this paper.

NESS COUNTY

*The Ness County Pioneer*, Clarinda, May 3-10, 1879.

As the name suggests, the *Pioneer* was undoubtedly the first newspaper published in Ness county. F. Shelden was the editor and publisher. The *Wa-Keeney Weekly World* of 1879, published Ness county news items which told of the establishment of this paper. On March 29, 1879, the traveling correspondent of the *World*, wrote of Clarinda:

We also met Mr. Shelden. He expects to start a paper at this point sometime in the near future, if he receives enough subscribers to venture out on the sea of journalism.

On April 12 the same paper carried the following statement: "The printing office is under way. They are laying the basement walls. The building is to be 14 x 36 feet." On May 3 a statement in the same paper read: "We expect to have a newspaper here this week." The following week, May 10, the *World* stated: "The printing outfit has arrived, and our editor, with his new head, is busy spreading the ink." While the above statement issued from the press of the *Wa-Keeney Weekly World*, *The Ness County Pioneer* flung its banner

3. *Ford County Globe*, Dodge City, July 13, 1880.



to the breeze. The front page carried the date of May 3 but the inside had May 10. The first issue really served as numbers 1 and 2, for the next issue, dated May 17, was listed number 3.

In the *Topeka Daily Capital* of June 30, 1935, under title: "Things Historical Are Preserved in Ness County," appeared the following item:

Among the hundreds of things preserved of a historical nature is the complete bound volumes of the first newspaper, the *Clarinda Walnut Valley Times*, first published in 1879, down to the latest issues of the *Ness County News*, still in the hands of the family of the late J. K. Barnd, pioneer publisher. . . .

Andreas stated that the *Clarinda Walnut Valley Times*, published by N. C. Merrill, appeared October 1, 1879, and was removed to Ness City in January, 1880,<sup>4</sup> where it became the *Ness City Times*. This statement agrees with contemporaneous newspaper reports. On October 6, 1879, *The Ness County Pioneer* announced the first number of the *Times*:

The *Walnut Valley Times*, Vol. I, No. 1 is out. Mr. Merrill the editor says he was forced into his position.—Just so!! He wants to know "why he can't run a paper, even if he owns a townsite." We expect he can.

In the same issue the editor of the *Pioneer* wrote: "We move this week to Sidney. . . ."

The *Pioneer* was Republican in politics. Under the title, "To Our Reader," Shelden wrote: "We hope to make the *Pioneer* worthy of a place in the sod house, stone mansion, camp, or tent of every settler, a welcome visitor to all."

Clarinda, at the time of the first issue, boasted a fine general store, a plow factory, operating to full capacity and the Clarinda Hotel. A drug store, printing office and a general store were still under construction. "The Clarinda plow," it was said, "is taking the lead with all who have used it."<sup>5</sup>

The Society has a good file of *The Ness County Pioneer*, including Vol. I, No. 1.

## GRAHAM COUNTY

*The Western Star*, Hill City, May 15, 1879.

*The Western Star* no doubt was the first newspaper published in this county. The first number may have appeared May 15, 1879. The Society has Vol. 1, No. 2, dated May 22. It listed Thomas Beaumont and T. J. Garnett as editors and publishers. The *Hill City Times*, August 22, 1940, gave the date of the first issue of the

4. Andreas, A. T., *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago, 1883), p. 1524.

5. *The Ness County Pioneer*, May 3-10, 1879.



*Star* as May 15, 1879, but said the paper was published by Beaumont, Garnett and McGill. Andreas gave the date as May 15 and listed Beaumont and McGill as editors.<sup>6</sup> However, the *Norton County Advance*, of Norton, May 22, 1879, announced the first issue as follows:

*The Western Star*, Graham county's new paper, Vol. 1, No. 1, and published at Hill City by [Thomas] Beaumont and [T. J.] Garnett, has reached our desk. It is a five-column folio, and contains a considerable amount of local news. Its advertising patronage is light, but we think that it will increase and that the paper will, therefore, live.

*The Western Star* of May 22, 1879, reflected the spirit and happenings of the county. In the "Local" column appeared the following:

The *Star* twinkles for all Graham county. . . .

A Buffalo was seen north west of town Monday last. . . .

There are large numbers of antelope in this county yet. . . .

There is not a saloon in Graham county, which speaks well does it not? . . .

Graham county has a great number of bachelors, and you can hear them sing:

Bachelor's hall, I think it is best,

Be drunk or be sober you can lie down and rest;

No wife to control you, no children to squawl,

O, happy is the man that keeps bachelor's hall. . . .

It is believed that there are 2,500 people in Graham county. . . .

The emigration of the colored people from the Southern states still continues, and will continue just as long as their rights are tampered with. We welcome them to our State and our county, and firmly believe that the emigrants will be a source of untold wealth to our state.

The Society has an incomplete file of the *Star* including issues of May 22 and December 25, 1879, to June 10, 1880.

## KEARNY COUNTY

Lakin *Eagle*, May 20, 1879.

The Society has eighteen issues of the *Eagle*, including Vol. 1, No. 1. S. W. Taylor and R. H. Mitchell were the editors and proprietors. In the salutatory they wrote:

Our purpose in starting a newspaper at Lakin, is to furnish southwestern Kansas with a medium with which to advertise its vast undeveloped resources, and to direct the homeseeking immigrant to the most available points to engage in stock raising or agriculture.

Under the caption, "Does It Blow in Kansas?" the editors produced a lengthy jest from which the following is quoted:

As a truth and no fabrication, Kansas is not a windy country. We have

<sup>6</sup> Andreas, *op. cit.*, p. 1061.



here during twelve months of the year an imperceptible circulation of air from the south, west, north and east, (varied to suit one's taste and inconvenience) that in other states as in Colorado, Illinois and Nebraska, might be called high wind, but here it is considered nothing but a gentle zephyr. In some states they have high winds but NEVER in Kansas.

A two gallon funnel turned flaring end windward and gimblet end downward will collect enough of Kansas zephyrs in seven hours to drill a hole in solid sand rock one hundred and eight feet deep. We never dig wells in Kansas. Condensed air does the work most successfully.

It is terrible windy just across the line in Colorado but it never or we might say seldom ever blows in Kansas.

The men here are all pigeon-toed and bow-legged. This is caused from an unceasing effort to stick the toes into the earth and trying to keep a strong foothold on terra firma. The gentlemen carry a pound of shot in each breaches leg to keep them (the gentlemen) right side up.

Mrs. Carrie E. Davies produced an article entitled, "Lakin in 1878," in which she wrote:

. . . Of course, every wide awake town must have a paper, so a Mr. Deal and a Mr. Taylor came as editors and started our first paper and named it the *Lakin Eagle*. I do not think that it was much more than twenty inches long, but we enjoyed it just the same . . .<sup>7</sup>

Mrs. Davies was mistaken in one of the editors. The *Eagle* was a four-column folio, independent in politics. It changed hands several times during its short period of existence. The last issue the Society has is dated October 10, 1879.

#### DECATUR COUNTY

*Oberlin Herald*, June 12-19, 1879.

The Historical Society has Vol. 1, No. 1, of the *Herald*. It bears two dates. On the front page is June 12, 1879, and on the third page June 19. J. C. Humphrey and James N. Counter were the editors and publishers. In the salutatory they said their aim was to furnish the citizens with a live, local paper, conducted in their interests. Politically they would adhere "strictly to the true principles of Republicanism," but reserved the right to "expose any rottenness or shysterism should such ever be discovered within its ranks." They were willing to "support the educational, agricultural, religious and temperance interests of the county."

In the first issue the editors explained that they had first shipped their printing material to another point in the county but when they heard of the rapid growth of Oberlin they concluded it was "no use

<sup>7</sup>. The article was published in a book on Kearny county entitled, *Prairie Breeze*, 1931, p. 96 ff.



to 'kick against the pricks' " and located at Oberlin. Describing the growth of this town they wrote:

On a visit to this place in September last the town comprised two general stores (one frame and one sod), one log hotel, one log black-smith shop, one sod residence and one frame in course of erection. But to-day, after a lapse of only eight months, we can hardly realize that the change is real. . . .

The editors then quoted the *Atchison Daily Champion* of April 22, 1879, as follows:

Oberlin, the young city of the Kansas frontier, is a wonder. A few months ago—what was it? It was a beautiful strip of rich prairie, skirting the north bank of the Sappa, near the geographical centre of Decatur county—a county that was principally known from being the scene of one of the most bloody and devilish outrages recorded in the annals of frontier life. But three or four log and sod tenements then marked its present site, without churches, societies, mercantile pursuits, manufacturing industries, or many of the influences of civilization; but with a few intelligent and determined settlers, who came to cultivate the soil, found homes, build churches and school houses, and convert the country into a land of progress, promise and prosperity. In less than one year this has all been done. Churches, schools, stores, hotels, shops and dwellings line the streets. The buildings are of good size (many of them large and imposing) substantially constructed and handsomely finished. Enterprise, liberality and industry, stimulated by the rapid settlement of the country, have wrought, as it were, in a few days, the wonderful transformation of a prairie settlement into a town full of vigor, life and business, with a future of unusual promise and commercial prospects before it. . . .

John A. Rodehaver, in 1873, pre-empted the section on which the town site of Oberlin was later located.

The file of the first year of the *Herald* is incomplete and some copies are badly mutilated; other than that the Society has a good collection. The *Oberlin Herald* is still published. E. R. Woodward is the present editor and E. W. Coldren and Woodward are the publishers.

#### RAWLINS COUNTY

*Attwood Pioneer*, October 23, 1879.

The first paper in this county, according to Andreas and other sources, was the *Attwood Pioneer*.<sup>8</sup> A. S. Thorne was the editor and Edwin and A. L. Thorne the publishers. "In politics, morals, temperance and religion," the paper stated, "we expect to stand where the best interests of the people and the Bible stand."

In the salutatory the editor gave an interesting account of his life before he came to Atwood. It reads:

To all readers of the *Pioneer* we extend a cordial "How d'ye do"? Four

8. Andreas, *op. cit.*, p. 1607.



months ago we directed the *Review*, then being published in Millerstown, Butler county, Penn'a, to be closed, with a view to the removal of the office, presses and type to the new and flourishing State of Kansas. We had seen Kansas before, lived among her Indians, seen the scarcity of her timber and water, and experienced her drouth. We were among Kansas' first settlers, having landed at Atchison in November, 1857, and lived in Brown county until the fall of 1860; but, although absent so long, we had always had an abiding faith in Kansas. And since we came to the State again, we have not been disappointed. From Brown county which in 1857 was occupied by Indians and a few scattering settlers, we traveled westward (the course we had heard Empire takes its way) on and on and on, past railroads, highly cultivated farms, luxuriant orchards, acres on acres of cultivated forest trees, populous towns and cities, till, bewildered with distance, we had almost spanned the entire State. Our search for a home on public and unoccupied land brought us to Rawlins county, in the northern tier of counties, as the best unorganized county in the State, and Attwood, at the forks of the Beaver, as the most desirable and promising location in the county.

So here we are, family, presses, type and all. We have located our land, built our sod house, set up our presses, distributed our type, dusted our fonts, cleaned off our galleys, adjusted our forms, set our sticks and our "devils" have gone to work with combed hair and sleeves rolled up. . . .

Contemporary newspapers had words of praise for the *Pioneer*. On October 31, 1879, the *Kansas Smith County Pioneer*, Smith Centre, carried the following statement:

The first number of the Attwood *Pioneer* is on our table, published at Attwood, Rawlins County, away out on the very outskirts of civilization in Northwestern Kansas, by Messrs. Thorne & Sons. It is truly the *Pioneer* paper of Kansas, and we take pleasure in bearing testimony to the fact that it does honor to the name. The *Pioneer* is a neat, newsy, well printed, all at home, six column paper, and is chuck full of western items, spicy locals and well written, solid Republican editorials. The *Pioneer* has the PIONEER's best wishes for its continued success and prosperity.

The editor spelled Atwood with two "t's" until May 12, 1880, when he changed to the present spelling of the word. The Society has a good file of the *Pioneer*, including Vol. I, No. 1.

#### GOVE COUNTY

Grainfield *Republican*, January 28, 1880.

The *Republican* appears to have been the first newspaper published in Gove county. The Society has Vol. 1, No. 1, of this paper. A. J. R. Smith was the editor and publisher. In the salutatory he wrote:

The *Republican* will always be found as the earnest advocate of all those things that tend to develop the highest and best interests of the people, and the uncompromising foe of whatever tends to degradation and dishonor. No poor man struggling to gain an honest livelihood but will find a personal



friend in the *Republican* and no man in any station in life striving for the moral, social and financial improvement of the country but will find an ally to the full extent of its powers.

In his own way Smith described the founding of Grainfield by J. B. Beal of Abilene:

Last July after making his will, having his photograph taken and kissing his wife goodbye, he landed in the wilderness. The first thing he did was to kill an antelope and the next thing was to eat it. (Mr. B. by the way is a terrible eater.) Then he dug a hole in the ground and persuaded Mr. Dryer to help him pile rock around it and sticks on top of that, and the first thing they knew they had the finest Hotel between Salina and Denver at a cost of \$10,000. So he tore up his will, burnt his photographs and sent for his wife and gave her back her kisses. And that is how Grainfield started.

The real estate agents, Beal and Dryer, built the Occidental Hotel in the summer and fall of 1879. It had twenty-five rooms for guests, besides parlors and waiting rooms. Throughout its history the *Republican* carried a half-sheet front-page advertisement featuring the advantages of the hotel and advertising "for sale upwards of one million acres of the choicest lands belonging to the K. P. R. R. . . . in Gove, Sheridan, Wallace and Thomas counties."

One of the necessities of Grainfield, wrote the editor, was the erection of a flouring mill: "At present all our flour is brought from Salina or farther east. We have in the immediate vicinity of Grainfield not less than three thousand acres of wheat and a mill here would receive the patronage of the people for forty miles north, east and south."

The type with which the *Republican* was printed was made at the Kansas City Type Foundry. The Society has a good file of this paper up to December 10, 1880, when it ceased coming. It was published occasionally until April, 1881, when it discontinued.<sup>9</sup>

#### LANE COUNTY

*Lane County Gazette*, California, January 29, 1880.

W. H. Lee was the editor and proprietor of the *Gazette*. It started as a small two-column, six-by-nine-inch, four-page paper, but soon changed to a large, six-column folio. Although in the first issue the editor did not commit himself politically, he showed Republican leanings in later issues.

The original number carried but two advertisements, one by J. H. Pelham, "dealer in Groceries, Provisions and all the necessities kept in a first class store," and that of the *Gazette*. The office was built by Frank Tingley.

<sup>9</sup>. *Buffalo Park Express*, January 22 and April 9, 1881.



The paper showed frontier characteristics. It spoke of a new school house that was being built—"a box house . . . 14 x 20 in size. When completed it will be used for Sabbath School, church services and all public meetings. This is a commendable enterprise and it is to be hoped that the people all over Lane county will follow the example as soon as possible." On the front page the editor told of the murder of John Bowers in Wichita county. The man accused of the act had been apprehended and taken into custody by the people of California, who had delivered him into the hands of the law in Trego county. The accused, however, had been allowed to depart in peace because "the governor, attorney general and other prominent officials" had decided "there was no law, either government, State or county, in this part of Kansas to punish murderers." The editor regretted the offense, but much more the fact that such criminals were permitted "to run at large without hindrance." While not in favor of mob rule, he asked whether it would not be well for the citizens to "adopt some plan of bringing criminals to sure and speedy justice?"

Lee published the last issue of the *Gazette* on March 23, 1882. He wrote:

The *Gazette* has been published regularly for a little over two years. Although the receipts have not at any time been more than sufficient to pay expenses (not counting labor), it has been kept up on the hope that there was a better time coming. As that time does not seem nearer now than when we first begun we have decided to suspend publication. This issue will therefore be the last.

The Society has a good file of the *Gazette*.

#### SHERIDAN COUNTY

*Sheridan County Tribune*, Kenneth, June, 1880.

Secondary authorities agree that the *Tribune* was the first newspaper published in Sheridan county. They also agree, and in this they seem to be mistaken, that the first number appeared in 1879, rather than 1880. Andreas wrote: "The *Sheridan County Tribune*, at Kenneth, was established the 1st of July, 1879, George N. Palmer, editor and proprietor."<sup>10</sup> Mrs. C. E. Toothaker of Hoxie wrote: "The first newspaper printed in the county was established there [Kenneth] in 1879. It was called the *Sheridan County Tribune*."<sup>11</sup> Contemporaneous newspaper accounts challenge the statements on the date. On June 3, 1880, the *Buffalo Park Express* carried the

10. Andreas, *op. cit.*, p. 1520.

11. Manuscript on Sheridan county by Mrs. C. E. Toothaker, p. 5.—Library, Kansas State Historical Society.



statement: "Our attention has been called to the first number of the *Sheridan Co. Tribune* a six column folio paper just started at Kenneth." On June 5, 1880, the *Wa-Keeney Weekly World*, under Sheridan county, announced: "This county has a newspaper, the *Tribune* published at Kenneth." Five days later *The Norton County Advance*, of Norton, published the following item:

The *Sheridan County Tribune*, published at Kenneth, by Geo. N. Palmer, is the latest received addition to the frontier press. It is a pretty, newsy, all home print, six column paper and apparently is deserving success.

The first issue of the *Tribune* in the Society's file is dated July 14, 1881, listed as Vol. II, No. 6. If regularly issued it would place the first number on June 9, 1880. The Society has a file of this paper from July 14, 1881, to August 3, 1882.

#### CHEYENNE COUNTY

*The Cheyenne News*, Wano, October 2, 1880, and May, 1881.

This no doubt was the first newspaper published in Cheyenne county. It was first printed as a part of the *Republican Citizen*, Atwood. The first number appeared in this paper October 8, 1880. It was headed: "THE CHEYENNE NEWS. Vol. I.—No. 1. Wano, Kansas, October 2, 1880. By A. M. Brenaman." It was a two-column sheet, made up of local news and one advertisement, for "the only store in Cheyenne county, kept by A. M. Brenaman & Co." The editor of the *Citizen* said of it:

We give place in our paper this week to *The Cheyenne News*, which will be found interesting and newsy. We hope that the *News* may grow until it can be bodily removed to Cheyenne to grow up with that splendid county.

Five issues of the *News* appeared in the *Citizen*, dated as follows:

Vol. I, No. 1, dated October 2, 1880, appeared in *Citizen*, October 8, 1880.

Vol. I, No. 2, dated November 4, 1880, appeared in *Citizen*, November 5, 1880.

Vol. I, No. 3, dated November 11, 1880, appeared in *Citizen*, November 19, 1880.

Vol. I, No. 4, dated November 25, 1880, appeared in *Citizen*, November 26, 1880.

Vol. I, No. 5, dated January 14, 1881, appeared in *Citizen*, January 14, 1881.

In the fifth number appeared the following statement:

The *Cheyenne News* will not only be edited but published in Wano by May next. A printing press and printer are already engaged.

On May 6, 1881, the *Citizen* quoted from the *Cheyenne County News*, and on May 21 the *Wa-Keeney Weekly World* stated: "This county [Cheyenne] now has a newspaper, the *Cheyenne News*,



which is issued every two weeks." On July 10, 1885, the *Cheyenne County Rustler*, Wano, carried the following statement:

The first paper published in Cheyenne (but published in Atwood) was the *Wano News*, by A. M. Brenaman, who edited five issues. The next was one issue of the *Echo*. We now have the *Bird City News* and the *Rustler*.

On March 19, 1915, the *Topeka Daily Capital* carried an article on Cheyenne county in which it stated: "The first newspaper published in the county was the *Wano News*. It was printed at Atwood and passed away in its infancy."

The Society has only the five numbers published in the *Atwood Republican Citizen*.

#### COMANCHE COUNTY

*The Western Star*, Coldwater, August 23, 1884.

According to available information the *Star* was the first newspaper in Comanche county. John G. Cash was the editor and John and William Cash the proprietors. The paper has been listed as independent in politics, but its sympathies were Democratic. In the *Comanche Chieftain* of Nescutunga, it had a close rival. The first issue of the *Star* appeared the last week or two in August, 1884. The first number of the *Chieftain* came out the second or third week in September. The earliest number of the *Star* in the Society's file is dated September 20, 1884, listed as Vol. I, No. 5. If published regularly the first issue should have appeared August 23, 1884.

The paper elicited favorable newspaper comment. On August 29, 1884, the *Barber County Index* of Medicine Lodge, announced: "*The Western Star* is the name of a newspaper now published at Coldwater, Comanche county. It is a creditable sheet; full of local news and will no doubt look after the interests of that county." The *Hazelton Express*, September 4, described it as ". . . a six column folio, very neatly gotten up and ably edited by Cash Bros." The same day *Lea's Columbus Advocate* stated:

At last the "long-felt want" has been supplied at Coldwater, Comanche county, Kas., in the way of a new paper, *The Western Star*, with Cash Bros. at the helm. It is a neat 5-column folio, and well filled with news and advertising. Politically it is independent. Long may she live and shine to illuminate the entire country, so as to enable home-seekers in the far west to find their way through the dark and desolate country.

The *Pleasanton Herald* on September 5 said: "The paper gives Coldwater a boom, and is chuck full of reading matter." The *Advocate* probably was mistaken in the size of the *Star* for other papers spoke of six columns.



In the issue of September 20, 1884, the *Star* had an interesting statement on Coldwater and its water supply:

Coldwater still booms, and has over fifty houses finished, all painted or the work contracted. One hundred and seven more houses are under way. The city now enjoys a public well and pump, the water being raised by windmill. This is the best well in Southern Kansas, and supplies water for over 500 people and over 1,000 head of cattle every day. The water is pure and good, and suitable to wash with. . . .

The *Western Star* is still published. Mrs. H. V., Ward H., and Merle T. Butcher are the present editors and publishers. The Society has a good file of this paper commencing with the issue of September 20, 1884.

#### CLARK COUNTY

*Clark County Clipper*, Clark City, September 25, 1884.

This paper started with Vol. I, No. 2. The editors explained the irregularity in these words:

On account of the delay of our paper we could not get out an issue last week, although we had everything else ready. We leave one side just as it was, which will account for any mistakes in regard to time, etc. We will change the date of our first issue, subscriptions, advertising and all, to Sept. 25. . . .

The *Clipper* was Republican in politics, Robert C. Marquis and James E. Church were the editors and proprietors. Under the caption "Our Bow," they wrote:

Believing that, in a new county, especially, harmony is of more importance than the success of any political party, we shall, in local affairs, always aim to support the best man; but in State and National politics, we are Republicans. The columns of the *Clipper*, however, will be open for the discussion of current topics, by any person, regardless of political proclivities.

In the first number the editors wrote that they were "greatly indebted to Mr. Bennett of the Garden City *Irrigator* for valuable service rendered," but failed to explain what it included.

The name and place of publication changed with time. In the issue of October 2, 1884, appeared the statement: "Yesterday the name of our postoffice ceased to be Klaine, and quietly assumed the future name—Clark. . . . Hereafter the name of this postoffice will be Clark." By November 6, 1884 (Vol. I, No. 8), the paper had moved to Ashland. In explanation of this change the editors wrote:

It will be observed that the place of publication of the *Clipper* has been changed from Clark City to Ashland. All in this vicinity are conversant with the circumstances connected with this move, but the facts are as yet, unknown to the outsiders. A few settlers feeling the need of a town in this county,





organized themselves into a town company and founded Clark City. The town was prosperous enough until a rival sprang up which had capital to back it. This rival was laid out at the crossing of the two great trails of southern Kansas, and nearer the center of population of the county. With these facts before us, we have cast our lot with the town of Ashland, believing it will make the leading town of this county. In this move we are not alone. When all the buildings are here that are now under contract to move, more than half of Clark City will be in Ashland. . . .

Ashland has since then remained the place of publication.

The *Clipper* was favorably received. On October 7, 1884, the *Harper Graphic* stated:

The *Clark County Clipper* is the latest. The "head" looks as if it was just coming up out of the prairie grass. Marquis & Church are the pilots and their first issue is a good one. They say the new town of Clark is booming, and we trust it will continue to prosper. Everyone here knows Robert and all his friends wish him success.

The paper changed hands several times. Starting as the *Clark County Clipper* it changed, March 2, 1911, to the *Ashland Clipper*. On December 27, 1917, it announced consolidation with the *Ashland Record*, but the new paper continued as the *Ashland Clipper*. On June 30, 1927, the *Englewood Times* was consolidated with the *Clipper* and both publications were issued as *The Clark County Clipper*. The paper is still published under this name. Walter C. Ray and Son are the present editors and publishers.

The Society has a good file of the *Clipper*, including Vol. I, No. 2.

## KIOWA COUNTY

Greensburg *Rustler*, January 15, 1885.

The *Rustler*, according to available information, was the first newspaper published in this county. It was Democratic in politics. The *Kinsley Graphic* of Edwards county, just north of Kiowa county, announced the first number January 23, 1885:

We have received Vol. I, No. 1, of the *Greensburg Rustler*, edited by J. N., Crawford. The paper is very neat typographically, brimful of "ads" and except that it swears a little in the poetical effusions, does credit to the bustling little town it represents.

On January 23, 1936, an article in the *Greensburg News* discussed some of the county's early newspapers and reported: "The *Rustler* is a Democratic paper edited by S. B. Sproule and claims to be the oldest paper in the county and established January 15, 1885." The first issue in the Society's file is dated April 15, 1886, listed as Vol. II, No. 14. If regularly issued it would place the first number on January 15, 1885.

On May 11, 1885, the Kansas City (Mo.) *Journal* published an article on Kiowa county, written by De Vera. It gave the following description of the *Rustler*, four months after its inception (already it had changed hands):

The Greensburg *Rustler* is a hebdomadal six column folio, with a considerable amount of excellently selected news matter on the outside, and a vast amount of brain work on the inside. It is published by Messrs. Bolton & Canfield, and is a very creditable publication. Mr. Bolton, being the county superintendent of public instruction, and also a member of one of the best law firms in the county, is consequently unable to give the *Rustler* the benefit of his eruditic mind to any great extent; consequently Canfield is left to look after about all the work, mental and physical. . . .

Two other papers, the Wellsford *Register* and the *Democrat and Watchman*, Dowell, were started in Kiowa county during this year. The Society has Vol. I, No. 3, of the *Register*, dated June 13, 1885, and Vol. I, No. 1, of the *Democrat and Watchman*, dated November 28, 1885.

#### THOMAS COUNTY

*Thomas County Cat*, Colby, March 12, 1885, first paper published in the county.

*The Enterprise*, Colby, March 19, 1885, first paper printed in the county.

The *Thomas County Cat*, of Colby, was the first paper published in Thomas county, but the first paper printed there was *The Enterprise*, of Colby. E. P. Worcester and D. M. Dunn were the editors and proprietors of the *Cat*; Brown and Son published *The Enterprise*. One account of Thomas county, published in 1887, says:

The first newspaper office was brought to the county by Brown & Son, in February, 1885. The office was located in J. R. Colby's house near the center of the county. They printed one issue of a paper called the *Enterprise*, on March 19. The second edition was never printed. Prospects looked too gloomy and the senior Brown being old and a little childish, gave as his reason for leaving the county that he was "afraid of the coyotes." The *Enterprise* was the first paper printed in the county, although the first number of the *Thomas County Cat* bears date of March 12, 1885.<sup>12</sup>

On March 8, 1885, E. P. Worcester and family left Minneapolis for Thomas county. He had been foreman of the Minneapolis *Messenger* for more than a year. Prior to that he was publisher of two newspapers. D. M. and C. M. Dunn published the *Messenger*. The

<sup>12</sup>. A Brief Sketch of Thomas County, Kansas, and the City of Colby, the Past, Present and Future of the Prettiest County in Kansas (*Thomas County Cat*, Job Rooms, 1887), p. 49.

<sup>13</sup>. Minneapolis *Messenger*, March 12, 1885. The paper stated that the past week the *Messenger*, the *Thomas County Cat*, and the *Solomon Valley Mirror* had all been printed in the office of the Minneapolis *Messenger*.



first issue of the *Cat*, therefore, was printed in this office.<sup>13</sup> When Worcester arrived in Thomas county he set up shop in H. W. Miller's sod house, near "Old Colby." His office consisted of:

. . . a Washington hand press, fifty pounds of brevier, forty pounds of small pica and several fonts of type that could not be used to advantage in any other office except on the extreme frontier. . . . At that time there was no store near the center of the county, and the town of Colby "was a rumor and the improvements a stake."<sup>14</sup>

Miller's sod house also served as a hotel and at night all available space was used for beds. Worcester therefore had to set up type during the day, and to prevent the wandering night prowler from pieing the type, he had to lock it in form every evening. The room was only 12 x 14 feet. Whenever the *Cat* was put to press, the only rack Worcester possessed had to be moved outside.

The first month the *Cat* subscription books at the Colby post office showed only fourteen subscribers, but by 1887, the list had increased to 1,300.<sup>15</sup> Jessie Kennedy wrote of the year 1885: "Those were hard times. Native fuel was used almost entirely, with a few railroad ties that floated up the Solomon thrown in for seasoning."<sup>16</sup> On March 19, 1885, the editor of the *Cat* wrote: "We take almost everything on subscription, but one thing we cannot take—native fuel."

In the salutation the *Cat* said merely, "Here's yer Cat." The editor wrote:

The *Cat* will purr for Thomas county, and what we deem the best interests of all her people. The *Cat* will be located at the new town site on the Dog. The *Cat* has velvet paws, but will not allow the fur to be stroked the wrong way. To all concerned it would be well to remember that a *Cat* has nine lives, and farther that a *Cat* is greatly attached to a place where located.

The paper elicited interesting comments. The *Mankato Review* stated:

. . . The *Cat* is yet rather small, six column folio, but if it catches plenty of rabbits may grow to large size. . . . In politics it is Republican, and we think it plainly indicates that the party intends to maintain its supremacy in the state when it sends out young Thomas Cat missionaries to Republicanize the coyotes. . . .<sup>17</sup>

The Logan *Freeman* said:

We imagine they are having a cat and dog time out in Thomas county, and the newspaper name is well chosen. But we should like to know on what part

14. *A Brief Sketch of Thomas County* . . . , pp. 49, 50.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 50, 51.

16. *Colby Free Press-Tribune*, October 4, 1939.

17. *Thomas County Cat*, Colby, April 9, 1885.

of the dog the cat is located. A Thomas cat usually selects the part of a dog farthest from the bark to make a location, and we should judge from the solidity of the reading matter that this cat has not been lacking in judgment. We suppose if the fountain head is a cat, the issue must be kittens, and we hope it may increase until the fur flies all over that part of Kansas.<sup>18</sup>

The Society has a good file of the *Cat* from March 12, 1885, to February 5, 1891.

## SCOTT COUNTY

*The Western Times*, Scott Center, May 27, 1885.

*The Western Times*, a weekly publication, undoubtedly was the first newspaper published in Scott county. Mrs. M. E. De Geer & S. W. Case were the editors and proprietors, Charles L. Waite was the publisher. The *Times* was a continuation of *The Crusader*, a monthly temperance publication, established in Chicago in 1874, and published by Mrs. De Geer and her daughter.<sup>19</sup> In January, 1885, Mrs. De Geer came to Kansas and temporarily established *The Western Times* at Garden City, "Devoted to Western Immigration, Temperance and Justice." Under title, "Wedded," in the issue of January 30, 1885, listed as Vol. XI, No. 2, the *Times* stated:

In the month of January, 1885, *The Crusader* and *The Western Times* joined hands and became one, henceforth to go forward together in the blending and extending of knowledge and principles calculated to educate and make the *dependent* masses happy, by becoming *independent*; for without self-reliant independence there can be no happiness.

*The Crusader*, after years of reformatory and educational work, on the part of its editors, was devoted to temperance, literature, justice and the best interests of humanity, and took its stand, not in the ranks alone of the grand crusade of 1874 against intemperance, but as a leader among the advance guards of God's own army. We were at that time denounced as fanatic, trying to do too much, and were besought by many overcautious friends of the cause, not to mix politics (advocate prohibition) and temperance and let woman suffrage alone altogether. But knowing we were right that temperance, justice and equality were cardinal virtues, and that the God of battles was with us in that right, we moved steadily onward, and at the expiration of ten years, rejoice in the advancing millions that are now in 'the same onward march. . . .

Mrs. De Geer, however, had interest in the Scott county ranch lands and soon directed her attention to the county northward. On May 13, 1885, the *Times* carried the notice: "Office of *Western Times* will be moved this week to De Geer ranch. We look for our post-office outfit every day." The following week, although still

18. *Ibid.*

19. *American Newspaper Directory* . . . (Geo. P. Rowell & Co., New York, 1877), p. 50.





dated Garden City, the *Times* already boosted Scott county. A "postal" in this issue remarked in a teasing manner: "Let us know when you have lots for sale in De Geer." The next number, May 27, 1885, was dated Scott Center.<sup>20</sup> This issue explained that Scott Center was "so called because of it being located in the exact geographical center of Scott county." The article went on to describe the town as "two months old and consists of one store building 30 x 40, one good sized hotel, one printing office and three dwellings. The town is situated on the highest point in the county yet excellent water is obtained at a depth of 45 feet." At the end of the article it said that *The Western Times* was printed by "Mrs. De Geer at the Center and is devoted to booming the county and publishing land office notices." Scott Center soon became Scott City. The change first appeared in the date line September 16, 1885.

*The Western Times* continued to be published at Scott City till September 16, 1886, when it was moved to Sharon Springs, Wallace county. The first issue published there was dated October 16, 1886. Mrs. De Geer severed her connection as editor and proprietor of the paper in October, 1885, when Kate B. Russell, daughter of Mrs. De Geer, and S. W. Case assumed control. The change appeared first in the masthead October 28, 1885. Mrs. De Geer remained for some time as corresponding editor. *The Western Times* is still published at Sharon Springs. Harry F. Lutz is the present editor and publisher. The Society has an incomplete file of this paper, commencing with the issue of January 30, 1885.

## HAMILTON COUNTY

The *Syracuse Journal*, June 12 (?), 1885.

The *Syracuse Journal* was the first newspaper published in Hamilton county. *The Kearny County Advocate*, Lakin, made this statement when it announced the first number of the *Journal*, June 13, 1885:

Vol. I, No. 1, of the *Syracuse Journal*, published by Lester & Armour, has been received. It is a very nice and news[y] sheet and is a credit to its publishers. It is the first paper ever published in Hamilton county, and the names hoisted at its head guarantees success. May their labours be crowned with their highest ambitions.

In the earliest issue of the Society's file, dated July 17, 1885, listed

20. Oliver S. Lawson, in "History of Scott County, Kansas" (August, 1936), p. 70 (MS. in library of Kansas State Historical Society), mistakenly dated the first issue of *The Western Times*, published at Scott City, as March, 1886. The *Scott City News Chronicle*, June 24, 1937, was more accurate in listing it as "the spring of 1885." *History of Kansas Newspapers . . . 1854 to 1916* (Topeka, 1916), p. 311, was also in error.