

## Construction of sod houses

### Section 21, Pages 601 - 630

This collection consists of correspondence, plans, and specifications on the construction of sod houses. In 1932, the Kansas State Historical Society put out a call for information about and instructions on constructing a sod house, in order to create one in the museum when it was located at the Memorial Building in Topeka. The collection includes all correspondence received from this request, handwritten and typed reminiscences from around the country from men who built and lived in sod houses, as well as some of the standardized responses sent by the Society's secretary.

Date: 1932

Callnumber: Kansas State Historical Society, Sod Houses, Plans and Specifications on Construction, Boxes 1-2

KSHS Identifier: DaRT ID: 228755

Item Identifier: 228755

[www.kansasmemory.org/item/228755](http://www.kansasmemory.org/item/228755)

KANSAS  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

## Construction of sod houses

April 13, 1932

Mrs. Sara Shick,  
Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Dear Mrs. Shick-

In behalf of the Historical Society I want to thank you for your letter of April 11 in response to our request for information about the construction of sod houses.

Persons living in all parts of the country-- from New York to California and from Michigan to Texas-- have responded with detailed instructions. So widespread an interest has convinced us that a sod house in our museum will be a unique historical exhibit and will attract hundreds of visitors. The principal difficulty is to secure a sod that will withstand several handlings and the necessary trucking. There is no scarcity of men who know how to do the work; on Topeka alone there are eight or ten who have built and lived in sod houses. If we can obtain suitable sod we expect to have the house ready for inspection by Fall.

I want to thank you for your letter and to invite you to visit the museum whenever you are in this locality.

Sincerely yours,

P.S. Your letter was of special interest and value and I very much appreciate your assistance.

Secretary



## Construction of sod houses

Ans with April 11. 1932.

PS. + return photo

Minneapolis Minn

I, seen in the Minneapolis Tribune that Kirk Mechem Secretary Kansas State Historical Society wanted to know how to build a sod house. i am sixty years old never went to Eledge, but i know how to build a sod house. my father built one in Kansas more than fifty years ago. and we lived in it a good many happy years. the happiest days of my life was spent in that sod house and now if you will take advice from a woman here it is. and i hope it do you some good i always like to help any one when i can

- 1) Take buffalo grass sod that is the best and take a breaking plow with a colter so it cuts the sod even on the edge. select your place for your house take a sharp spade and cut the sod in strips about two or three feet long. my father first took the running gear of the wagon and put some boards on it and layed the sod on it and halled it to where he was making the house.

- 2) Start on the ground Lay the Sod grass side down be careful and get the walls even one layer on top of the other at the corners Lay one layer the long ways and the next time Lay the short ways. on top so the corners will be every other one on top



## Construction of sod houses

no 2 ( and the door and windows, about  
every to or three layers lay one  
strip of sod cross wise it holds it firm  
and solid, and start to leave a place for  
the windows a foot three feet from the  
floor. these windows are small four  
foot glass. the window sill and door  
sills are home made of course, and  
above the windows and doors lay  
two, two by six plank side by side so you  
can lay the sod on it to finish up the  
height of the house, when you get the  
side walls as high as you want them  
build the ends up to a peak just as you  
would any house. the Roof is put on in  
this style take a two by six lay one at  
the peak of the house the long ways, and  
one on each side a foot half way down  
and take wide boards lay them smooth  
side down. Lay tar paper on the boards  
and then a layer of sod, grass side down  
on top of the tar paper, put a piece of tin  
in the Roof for the stove pipe to go through  
you can make a house as big as you want  
to by putting a sod partition between  
the two rooms, but never more than one  
story high extend the Roof out over the  
side wall just like any house put the  
window in a foot middle ways of the  
wall with a wooden peg, when they  
wanted the window open they just



## Construction of sod houses

3! pushed out on the bottom of it and the top tipped in. these doors had no knobs. just a Latch. they can be plastered but they must stand for some time first for they will settle and crack the plaster. and the floor can be put in of just common pine flooring some of them was just left with out floors or plastering but if they are put up good when you are in side of them you wouldnt know you was in a sod house. the sod should be a foot and a half wide. so the wall would be a foot and a half thick. the plaster must be a good mortar. and press it firm against the dirt wall first take a sharp spade and trim up the walls so there will be no rough places. they will stand for years and are warm. you must build all four walls at the same time. and not one wall and then another. or you want get the corners built as they should be Every other Layer of sod should Lay on top of the other one that holds the corners so they will never come a part. i wished i could be down there to help you build one i sore am a good boss. if we lived in Phillips Co Kansas for years and i grewd up with the hot winds and the sunflowers



## Construction of sod houses

4. I was born in a Log house in Iowa  
my father went out west when i was  
six month old lived in neb. two years  
and then went to Kansas he traveled  
in covered wagon and drove some stock  
ove the prairie where there was no Road  
if there is any thing a boot this that you  
dont under stand just write and ask  
i will be glad to tell you. i have a  
picture of a sod house i will be glad to  
send it to you. but i would like to have  
it back. i only wish i wasnt so far  
a way so i could help you build a sod  
house. i also have lived in a dog out  
they are and then the sod house i  
never lived in a frame house till i  
was sixteen years old the people in  
Kansas was always full of fun and  
was difernt than they are now. well  
i will stop for i know you will get  
tiard of this i could talk for a week and  
tell of the prairie fires and the Grasshoppers  
and a good many things but that was  
a good many years ago. will close hope  
i may here from you any way.

Sara Shick  
1706 - Elliot Ave. So  
Minneapolis Minn.





PHONE 3199

*ans*

1818 FRANKLIN STREET

### R. C. SISSON

#### CONTRACTOR

TEAMS  
and  
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Grading, Excavating and Paving

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ROAD GRAVEL CRUSHED AND SCREENED

Answered May 27, 32, BELLINGHAM, WASH... May 23, 1932.

Mr. Kirk Mechem,  
Sect. Kansas State Historical Society -

Dear Sir:— In a short newspaper write up— you are quoted as seeking some one familiar with sod houses and the building of same, no doubt, since that time many have offered information & technique and I wish to offer same, and can cite you to at least two gentlemen who can correctly and easily give you all information and also build me; I lived in a part sod house as a little girl in South Central Nebraska (Red Cloud) and one of these gentlemen, I speak of, built & lived in one of the largest, newest, nicest, sod houses that I remember as a little girl; it was white washed inside and was really beautiful & clean. If this should interest you, write me for further particulars.  
Yours Truly.

Mrs. R. C. Sisson  
1818 Franklin Street  
Bellingham, Wash.

## Construction of sod houses

April 16, 1932

Mr. Fred Sailors,  
Dodge City Journal,  
Dodge City, Kansas.

Dear Mr. Sailors-

I want to thank you for the article about sod houses written by L. O. Sutton.

I hope to build one in the museum this spring or fall. The Capital carried a story some time ago which was picked up by the Associated Press and the United Press. The United Press story made it appear that here in Kansas we don't know anything about sod houses. As a result I have received more than seventy letters from all parts of the country--from Michigan to Texas and from California to New York--telling us how to go about the job. These are most interesting and many of them go into detail. As a matter of fact, there are eight or ten men right here in Topeka who have built and lived in sod houses and who are qualified to do the work. The principal difficulty is to secure a sod that will withstand several handlings and the necessary trucking.

If you publish any more articles on sod houses I will be glad to receive copies .

Sincerely yours,

Secretary



## Construction of sod houses

May 5, 1932

Mrs. Sarah Smith,  
Gilson, Illinois.

Dear Mrs. Smith-

In behalf of the Historical Society I want to thank you for your letter of recent date in response to our request for information about the construction of sod houses.

Persons living in all parts of the country-- from New York to California and from Canada to Texas-- have responded with detailed instruction. So widespread an interest has convinced us that a sod house in our museum will be a unique historical exhibit and will attract hundreds of visitors. The principal difficulty is to secure a sod that will withstand several handlings and the necessary trucking. There is no scarcity of men who know how to do the work; in Topeka alone there are eight or ten who have built and lived in sod houses. If we can obtain suitable sod we expect to have the house ready for inspection by Fall.

I wish to thank you for your interest and to invite you to visit the museum whenever you are in this locality.

Sincerely yours,

Secretary

## Construction of sod houses

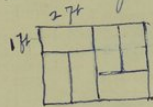
Mr. Kirk Mechem, *Ans*  
Topeka, Kansas.

Dear Sir,-

By the Chicago Tribune, I understand you are wanting information regarding the building of sod houses formerly used in Kansas.

I lived in sod houses there in the early eighties, and will offer what information I can, in case it is still needed.

The houses were usually built in the spring of the year, the sod, wild prairie grass, being cut about the time grass started to grow well. Sod plows were used, which cut the sod about four (4) inches deep, and blocks were made 1 ft. x 2 ft. x 4 in. in size. There were placed thus -



making the wall three feet thick. The second layer was placed with the lengthwise blocks on the opposite side, adding strength to the wall. For roof, the first builders cut saplings and shaped the roof, placing one layer of sod



## Construction of sod houses

on top, later, twelve inch boards were used with sod on top. Windows, one sash in size, and wooden casings, were built in the walls with a ledge two feet deep on the inside of the room, and ready made doors were hung.

The inside walls were plastered and usually whitewashed, also the board ceilings (where boards were used in roofs), a few afforded paper for the walls, and those who could afford it had board floors. Others had to be content with dirt floors.

The walls were about seven feet high at the eaves, and nine ft. at the eave. The rooms were about 16 x 24 ft. and very comfortable, being warm in winter and cool in summer, and quite clean. Ordinarily two rooms were built, or even one room with curtain partitions, occasionally larger families had three rooms.

The deep window sills provided space for potted plants, and the rooms were

## Construction of sod houses

made attractive. The chimneys were built of sod and plastered. These houses seldom leaked, in fact there was very little rainfall then.

Wishing you success with your "soddie", I am,

Very truly yours,

Sarah Smith.

Gilson, Illinois.

Knop Co.

(Mrs. E.)



## Construction of sod houses

April 9, 1932

Mr. J. W. Smith,  
Bellingham, Washington.

Dear Mr. Smith-

We received so many responses to our request for information about the construction of sod houses that it was impossible to answer all of them immediately. In behalf of the Historical Society I want to thank you for your letter and for the information it contained.

Persons from all parts of the country--from New York to California and from Michigan to Texas--have responded with detailed instructions. So widespread an interest has convinced us that a sod house in our museum will be a unique historical exhibit and will attract hundreds of visitors. The principal difficulty is to secure a sod that will withstand several handlings and the necessary trucking. There is no scarcity of men who know how to do the work; in Topeka alone there are eight or ten who have built and lived in sod houses. If we can obtain suitable sod we expect to have the house ready for inspection by Fall.

I want to thank you again for your interest, and to invite you to visit the museum whenever you are in this locality.

Sincerely yours,

Secretary

P.S. Your letter was of special interest and value and I very much appreciate your assistance.

## Construction of sod houses

### STATE OF WASHINGTON

MILITARY DEPARTMENT

IN REPLY REFER TO

Bellingham work  
3/30 32

Kirk Mechem.

Topeka, Kas.

Dear Sir in the  
Bellingham Herald of 3/29/32  
I saw an item stating you  
could not find any one who  
knew how a sod house was  
made.

Where are all of the  
old timers?

As I am one of  
those who went there the mill  
in north west Nebraska. I will  
tell you how we did it.

The walls were usually made  
28 inches thick (two widths of a  
14" plow some made them 42")

That would require the sods  
to be cut 28" long. so they could  
be laid up same as brick  
thus binding the walls together.

We used a sod of what  
was called "igger root" a very  
fine tough grass with a very  
matted black root which would  
not rot for several years





STATE OF WASHINGTON

MILITARY DEPARTMENT

IN REPLY REFER TO

2

prefer cutting sod in the spring. They were plastered inside with "gumbo" a tan colored mud which would dry very hard. The roof was made with ridge logs with small poles laid close together up and down. We would then place on top the sods cut same size as the walls grass side down taking great care in fitting tight. over this spread about 3" inches of the "gumbo" wet and tamped this would bake in the sun and if made right would not leak. The doors and casings were made of split home made boards. The hinges and latches were also home made. And until we could get money to buy glass we used greased paper for windows. The floors were made of puncheon or plastered with a thick coat of gumbo. When finished we were as pleased and satisfied as tho it had cost a million

Yours truly  
J. W. Smith  
State Army



April 9, 1932

Mr. E. F. Strack,  
Bolivar, Missouri.

Dear Mr. Strack-

We received so many responses to our request for information about the construction of sod houses that it was impossible to answer them all immediately. In behalf of the Historical Society I want to thank you for your letter and for the information it contained.

Persons living in all parts of the country-- from New York to California and from Michigan to Texas-- have responded with detailed instructions. So widespread an interest has convinced us that a sod house in our museum will be a unique historical exhibit and will attract hundreds of visitors. The principal difficulty is to secure a sod that will withstand several handlings and the necessary trucking. There is no scarcity of men who know how to do the work; in Topeka alone there are eight or ten who have built and lived in sod houses. If we can obtain suitable sod we expect to have the house ready for inspection by Fall.

I want to thank you again for your interest and to invite you to visit the museum whenever you are in this locality.

Sincerely yours,

Secretary





Bolivar Mo 7/2 - 32  
Mr Kirk Mochew  
Topeka Kas

Dear sir,

I see by my paper  
that you want to build an  
old time sod house  
If such are the facts I will  
build you one <sup>of 60 years ago</sup> if you  
make it worth my while  
and furnish right kind of  
material

Yours Truly  
E. F. Strack  
R. E.

## Construction of sod houses

### KANSAN ASKS DATA ON OLD SOD HOUSES

Wants to Build Typical One  
for State Museum; Puzzled  
Over Correct Construction

TOPEKA, Kas., Wednes., May 18.  
—Kirk Mechem, secretary of the  
Kansas State Historical Society, is in  
a dilemma. He wants to build a sod  
house and doesn't know how.

The history books say that the  
Kansas prairies were dotted with sod  
houses and that thousands of early  
day Kansans lived in them.

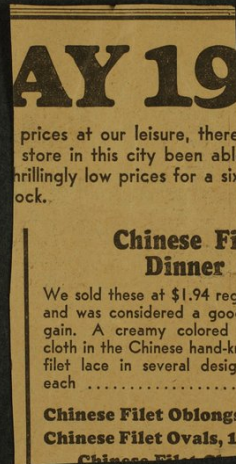
Mechem, whose job calls for much  
familiarity with the history books,  
decided to build a sod house in the  
state museum. But now he can't  
find any one who knows what the  
buildings were like.

Other states have log houses, stone  
houses, and other types of pioneer  
structures in their state museums,  
but Kansas wants one of the typical  
"soddies." But how to build one is  
the question.

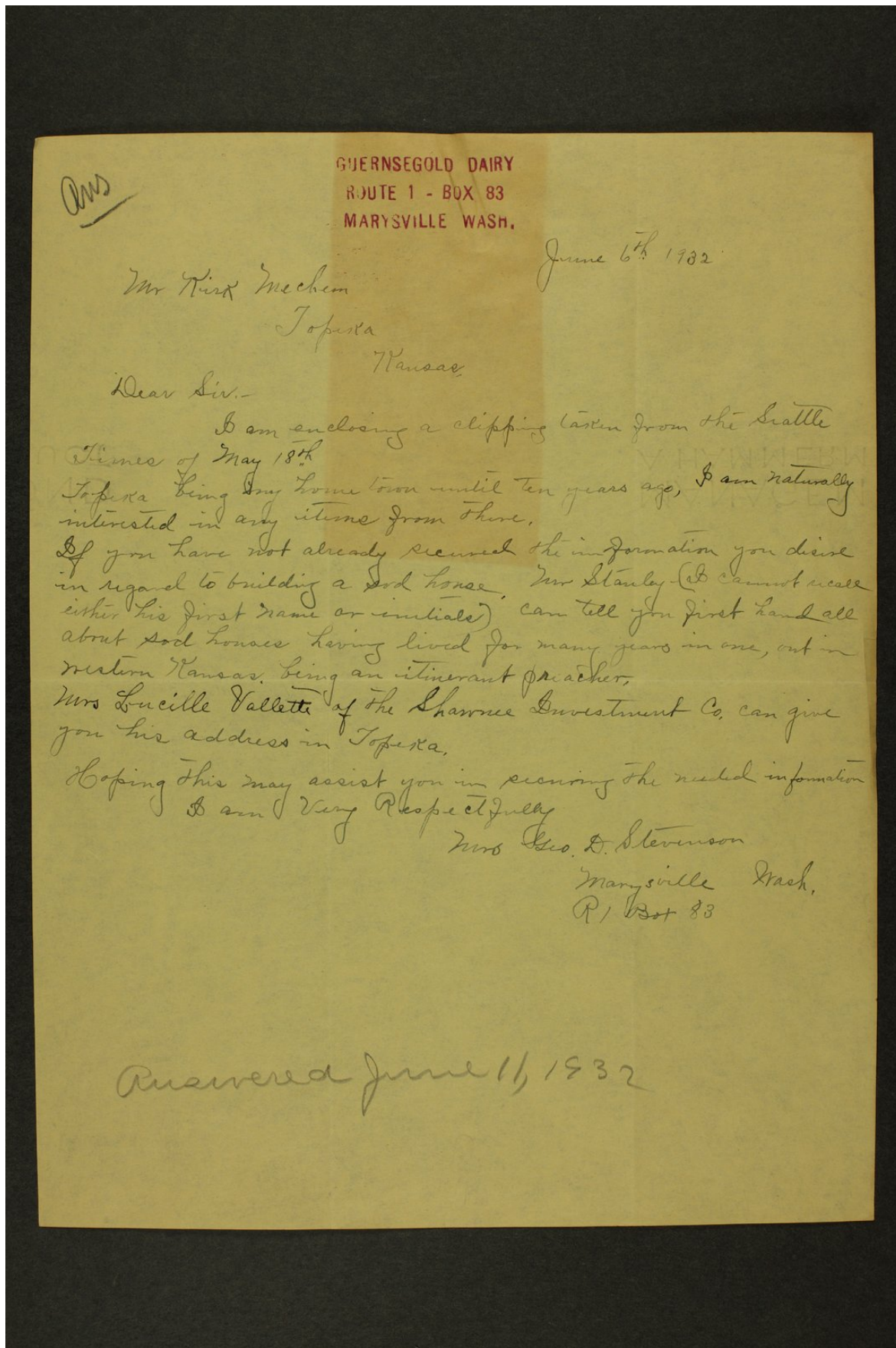
How thick were the walls and of  
what were the roofs made? What  
kinds of windows and doors did the  
soddies have, and were the rooms  
plastered inside? What kind of grass  
makes the best sod and what time of  
year should the sod be cut?



## Construction of sod houses



## Construction of sod houses



*Ans*

GUERNSEYDAIRY  
ROUTE 1 - BOX 83  
MARYSVILLE WASH.

June 6<sup>th</sup> 1932

Mr Kirk Mechem  
Topeka  
Kansas

Dear Sir:-

I am enclosing a clipping taken from the Seattle Times of May 18<sup>th</sup> Topeka being my home town until ten years ago, I am naturally interested in any items from there. If you have not already secured the information you desire in regard to building a sod house, Mr Stanley (I cannot recall either his first name or initials) can tell you first hand all about sod houses having lived for many years in one, out in western Kansas. Being an itinerant preacher, Mrs Lucille Vallette of the Shawnee Investment Co. can give you his address in Topeka.

Hoping this may assist you in securing the needed information  
I am Very Respectfully

Mrs Geo. D. Stevenson

Marysville Wash.  
R/ Box 83

Received June 11, 1932





Ans

Ans. May 23, '32

Seattle Wash

May 20-1912

Kirk Meehem.

Secretary Kansas State  
Historical Society

Dear Sir

I read an article in the Seattle  
Times you was looking for  
some one to get information  
on building a sod house.

What was it you wanted to  
know? It so happens that  
I was raised on the plains of  
western Neb & Kan, and in my  
early days help build a  
number of sod houses and  
half dug out and the rest sod.  
If you will let me know  
what you want maybe I can help  
you out.

Respectfully Yours

Roy C Taylor

3801 Rainier ave  
Seattle Wash

## Construction of sod houses

April 9, 1932

Mr. Romanzo Thompson,  
Agenda, Kansas.

Dear Mr. Thompson-

We received so many responses to our request for information about the construction of sod houses that it was impossible to answer them all immediately. In behalf of the Historical Society I want to thank you for your letter and for the information it contained.

Persons living in all parts of the country-- from New York to California and from Michigan to Texas-- have responded with detailed instructions. So widespread an interest has convinced us that a sod house in our museum will be a unique historical exhibit and will attract hundreds of visitors. The principal difficulty is to secure a sod that will withstand several handlings and the necessary trucking. There is no scarcity of men who know how to do the work; in Topeka alone there are eight or ten who have built and lived in sod houses. If we can obtain suitable sod we expect to have the house ready for inspection by Fall.

I want to thank you again for your interest and to invite you to visit the museum whenever you are in this locality.

Sincerely yours,

P.S. Under separate cover I am sending you a copy of our 27th. biennial report.

Secretary



## Construction of sod houses

*Send biennial report  
over*

Agenda Kansas.

March 20th 1932.

Secretary State Historical Society.  
Topeka Kansas.

Dear Sir:

Some time ago, I saw an item in the Topeka Capital, saying that you were wanting directions for building Sod Houses. As I helped to build a lot of them in the early days in western Kansas, I thought that I would give the main requirements as we used them at that time.

The best Sod for building there was Buffalo Grass sod, it was tougher, and stood the weather better than Blue Stem. The house was usually built with walls 24 to 28 inches in width, the sod being plowed 14 to 16 inches wide, and about three to four inches in thickness.

The ground was first levelled off where the wall was to be built, and the sod laid two sods wide, with the joints mismatched, as in bricklaying, then the surface of that layer was cut down level, and the cracks between the sods filled with the loose dirt, then we started the next layer, laying the sods cross-ways of the wall, and levelled them up as was done with the first layer, and so on untill the wall was as high as was wanted.

the window, and door openings were left open as the wall was built, and when the right height was reached, there was usually split poles laid across the top, sometimes we had plank, but not often.

In finishing the windows and doors, the openings were cut to fit the frames, and the frames were nailed in to pins driven into the wall at the right points for fastening,?

The roof was usually made by getting a log for a ridge log and poles for the rafters spaced to the right distance apart for whatever was used for a covering.

If the claim was close to a stream, they usually used small straight Willows for the covering of the rafters, a layer of about three inches, then sod was laid on the willows as close joined as possible, and then over the sod there was thrown a couple of inches of dirt, or if it was obtainable, native lime was used in place of the dirt.

The walls were kept trimmed smooth and straight as they were built, and when the roof was on, the walls were plastered with native lime mortar, some called it magnesia, some lime blossom, but it was all the same material, and made a fine finished wall, just as good as real lime if you kept the rain off.

The size of the house varied from a ten by twelve ft dugout to houses of several rooms, but the sod was laid the same in all.

the roof varied too, from the one described to a shingled roof, just depended on how much money the settler had to put in a house, and you would be surprised at the small amount some of the people had when they first settled the west.

OVER.

## Construction of sod houses

We settled in Graham Co in 1879,  
and that is the way we built our houses there at that time,  
I suppose the same general description would cover the whole  
west at that time.

Hoping what I have written will help you out,

I am Yours Respectfully,

Agenda Kansas, Route #1.

*Romango Thompson*

✓ Is the last report of the State Historical Society  
available for distribution now?

If so I would be pleased if you would send me a Copy.



## Construction of sod houses

April 13, 1932

Mr. C. W. Taber,  
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Mr. Taber-

In behalf of the Historical Society I want to thank you for your letter of April 11 in response to our request for information about the construction of sod houses.

Persons living in all parts of the country--from New York to California and from Michigan to Texas--have responded with detailed instructions. So widespread an interest has convinced us that a sod house in our museum will be a unique historical exhibit and will attract hundreds of visitors. The principal difficulty is to secure a sod that will withstand several handlings and the necessary trucking. There is no scarcity of men who know how to do the work; in Topeka alone there are eight or ten who have built and lived in sod houses. If we can obtain suitable sod we expect to have the house ready for inspection by Fall.

I want to thank you again for your interest and to invite you to visit the museum whenever you are in this locality.

Sincerely yours,

P.S. Your letter was of special interest and value and I very much appreciate your assistance.

Secretary



PHILADELPHIA

ESTABLISHED 1879

### F. A. DAVIS COMPANY

PUBLISHERS

EDUCATIONAL  
DEPARTMENT

232 EAST ERIE STREET  
ROOM 200

CHICAGO

Aor. II, 1932

Mr. Kirk Mechem,  
Topeka, Kans.

Dear Sir:

My daughter sent me the enclosed clipping from North Carolina. Doubtless you have had many to tell you how to build a sod-house, which seems very simple to the writer, who has helped to build them in Dakota Territory. You might, by the way, be interested in my book "Breaking Sod on the Prairies," published by the World Book Co., of Yonkers, N.Y.

As I remember it, we broke sod anytime in the summer, perhaps late summer might be better. We plowed deeply, so that the sod was at least four to six inches thick. Then we cut the sod in lengths of three to four foot strips. Sod with wire-grass in it was best, as the grass roots helped to hold the dirt together. The sod should not be too dry as it crumbles. If cut in strips too long it breaks in handling. As cut, the sod was laid on a wagon bed, or better on boards laid upon the truck without the wagon-box. It was piled criss-cross so as to carry well.

The prairie was leveled off evenly. Two layers of sod with about three inches of space between each layer, was laid on the ground, lengthwise, in the direction in which the wall was to follow. The space between the sod was filled with dirt. The depth of the wall could be whatever was desired. If wider, another layer could be laid. Some walls were three-feet thick. The next layer of sod was cut so as to lay in the opposite direction, so that the two layers crossed each other, something like this #####. Then the next layer was laid straight. Space between the layers was filled with dirt. Wooden frames were made for windows, and doors, and set in as needed, and surrounded with sod.

Boards were laid across the top, at a sloping angle, for the roof. If the structure was large enough, scantling was rested upon the walls, and covered with the boards. The roof was then covered with tar-paper, and often covered with sod. Sometimes the roof was not covered with sod. When scantling was used for the support of the roof, the spaces between the scantling was filled with sod. The floor of most sod houses was hard-pan from which the surface soil had been removed. Rarely, a settler whitewashed the inner walls with some lime mixture. Often a frame shack built for summer use, was later completely enclosed with sod, which gave a much better interior. In some cases a wooden floor was laid.

This is as I remember it, when as a boy I built such a house, and lived in it all alone during a very long winter. Stakes were driven into the ~~iii~~ walls and supported for a bed. I had a kitchen stove, with a stove pipe running up through the roof. My fuel was Buffalo Chips, or the dried manure of the buffalo. Wire grass or ~~brush~~ grass was the best sod.

CWT-SE

*Bunch*

Sincerely Yours,

*C. H. Faber*  
Educational Manager



## Construction of sod houses

April 8, 1932

Mrs. Bessie Turnbaugh,  
Havensville, Kansas.

Dear Mrs. Turnbaugh-

We received so many responses to our request for information about the construction of sod houses that it was impossible to answer them all immediately. In behalf of the Historical Society I want to thank you for your letter and for the information it contained.

Persons living in all parts of the country-- from New York to California and from Michigan to Texas-- have responded with detailed instructions. So widespread an interest has convinced us that a sod house in our museum will be a unique historical exhibit and will attract hundreds of visitors. The principal difficulty is to secure a sod that will withstand several handlings and the necessary trucking. There is no scarcity of men who know how to do the work; in Topeka alone there are eight or ten who have built and lived in sod houses. If we secure suitable sod we expect to have the house ready for inspection by Fall.

I want to thank you for your interest and to invite you to visit the museum whenever you are in this locality.

Sincerely yours,

P.S. Your letter was of special interest Secretary  
and value and I very much appreciate  
your assistance.

good des of furnishings ✓

Waverlyville, Kansas.

March 17, 1932.

Miss Muehlen, Secretary of  
The Kansas Historical Society,

I wonder if I can be of any  
assistance in building that  
sod house, I am not sure  
I can write well enough to  
make myself understood, how-  
-ever I will try to do the best  
I can. I came to Kansas year  
1879 in early autumn, I  
was a small child but well  
remembers the sod houses in  
<sup>the</sup> south-west corner of Decatur Co.,  
we landed just one half mile  
north of where the Hanteye  
Post-office was a little later





Established, 1880 or 81. I think  
it was. Father Richardson home-  
steaded just one mile east of  
where we had landed at his  
sons homestead. It was twenty-  
one and one half miles south-west  
of Oberlin. Our home was soon  
established on the east side  
of a large draw that ran  
along our west line about one  
hundred yards from the draw  
I think it was. A cave was  
dug twelve by fourteen ft. and  
four ft. deep. Above this was laid  
at sides and ends a wall of  
sod about two ft high, the  
ends sloped to the center to  
about five ft. This wall was

In  
eighteen inches thick, the west  
end at the center was left an  
opening just large enough  
for a half window, over this  
opening was placed small logs  
split in half to connect the  
wall. In the south east corner  
was left an opening for <sup>the</sup> doors  
covered over in the same way, a  
sort of trench with four steps  
led down to the doors. The case-  
ings of 2 x 6's were hauled by  
wagon from Kirwin as was also  
the matched flooring for the door <sup>and window</sup> in.  
The roof was a large cotton-  
wood log laid across from  
the east to west end of the  
wall under which at center was



## Construction of sod houses

Placed <sup>a</sup> Center pole, one end placed about two feet in the floor, the forked end tight up against the log, from each side wall to the Center log were placed small poles about eighteen inches apart, over which was placed small green leaved willows. Logs poles and willows were obtained on the Creek to the North west. Over the willows were placed two layers of sod, the first layer layed length ways of roof and the last one up and down; over the sod a layer of clay and sand. The outside door like the inside door was made