Tales of an Old Timer

Section 4, Pages 91 - 120

Tales of an Old Timer, containing early reminiscences, stories and sketches of Kansas City, Missouri and Kansas City, Kansas by John Calvin McCoy and compiled by W. W. Harris, Jr.

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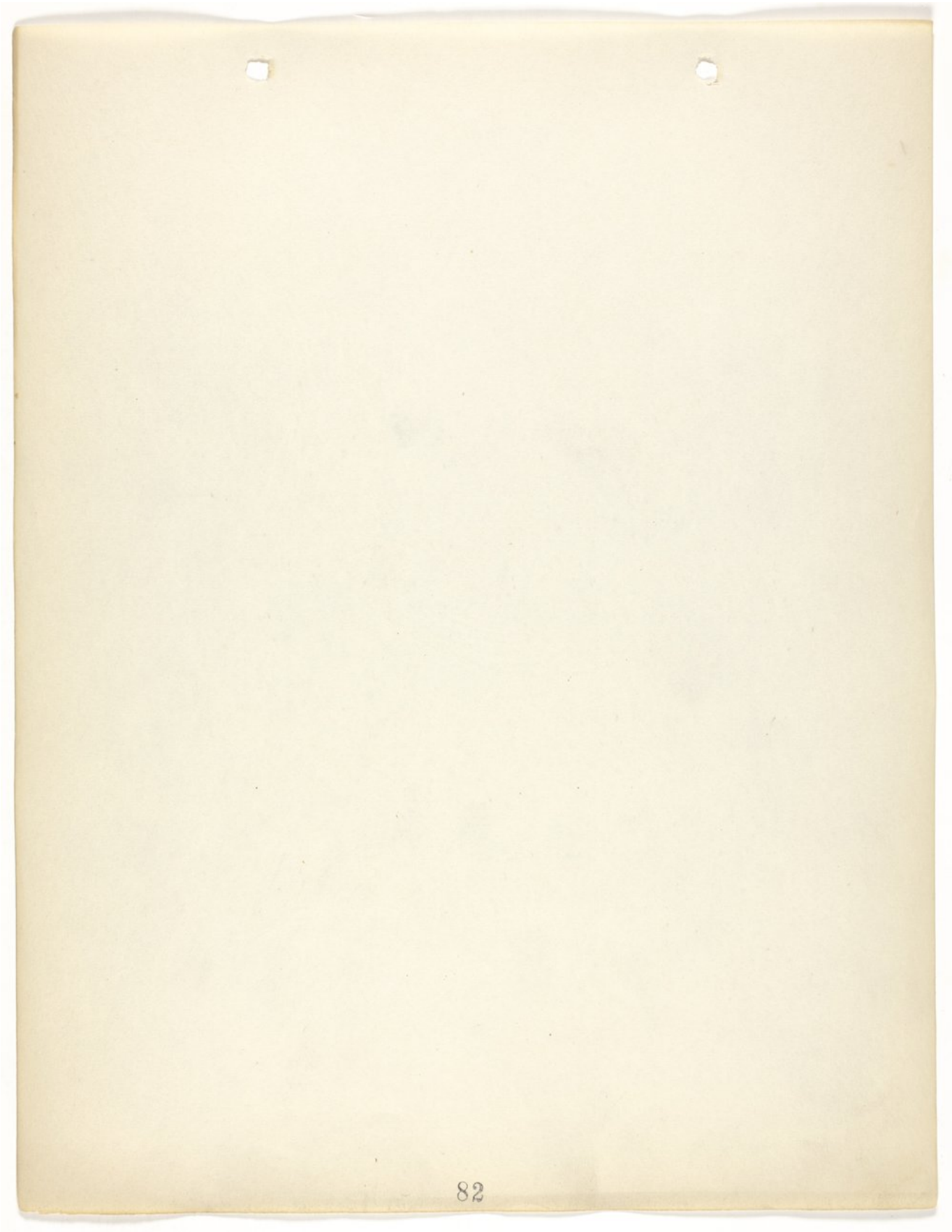

A N O L D T I M E R'S T A L E

Some Interesting Historical Facts Connected with Portions of Jackson County.

(Published in the Kansas City Journal)

"There are stranger things, Horatio, in heaven and earth than were ever dreamed in your philosophy".

Everyone who is familiar with the history of this portion of our country knows that the point where that history commences is at the small village of Sibley, on the south bank of the Missouri river, in the southeast corner of this(Jackson)county.

In Du Pratz's history of Louisiana, it is first mentioned as the chief town of the "Cansas" tribe of Indians, from which M.De.Bourgmont, commandant of Fort Orleans (the French post then situate on an island just below the mouth of Grand) took his departure in July, 1724, on his mission of peace to the Padoucas of the Western plains. It was first named Fort Clark by Captain Stodart, who established a military and trading post in 1808, but afterwards, until 1822 (when it was abandoned as a government post) it was known as Fort Osage. It was from that point the earliest pioneer Mexican traders and mountain trappers launched out in their journeyings toward the wild West.

At the date when white persons were first permitted to pass westward of that post for the purposes of settlement,(viz.,June 2, 1825.) there was an ancient, well beaten Indian trail leading from the post westward, following very nearly the line of the present traveled route through Independence to the state line near Westport, and continuing westward up the Kaw valley ad infinitum Another well defined beaten trail intersected this one near the intersection of Prospect and Springfield avenues, running southward, crossing Brush creek near Troost avenue, to the high prairie ridge beyond, about one mile, where on my first arrival in the county in 1830 were the remains of an old town of the Saukee tribe, and a log pen enclosing a dead chieftain in sitting posture, encased in a military coat with red facings and all his choicest arms and trinkets around him, the flesh, with painted face, was still in shape, and a tall pole with a white flag stood and fluttered to the breeze for a year or two afterwards.

Northward from the intersection of the two trails mentioned the latter passed northward very near, if not over, the exact spot where the great exposition building is being constructed, and then following down the long, deep ravine near Agnes avenue to the great crossing place of the tribes living north and south of the river, at Chouteau's trading post, opposite Randolph. As I must economize space, I will not now stop to mention any of the thousand memories that come back from that early period of my own and the country's history, and this brief outline must suffice for the present. We have the promise of soon enjoying a great carnival season of display and rejoicing, the first of the kind at this wonderful midcontinental center. It is a singular and somewhat remarkable fact that the great exposition stands upon historic ground-in fact,

we might truthfully say, on prehistoric ground, as I will now endeavor to show:

A visit to the vast structure which is being now so rapidly constructed for a great exposition in the eastern suburbs of the city, furnishes a sight and theme for thought of exceeding interest to any one having a knowledge of the historical facts connected with that immediate locality. To the few old time pioneers who are yet living, who are familiar with all the facts and events historical that cluster upon less than forty acres of ground surrounding that vast edifice, it has an especial and absorbing interest, for it was upon that identical spot of earth, and within 300 yards of it, the first bona fide white settler west of the Big Blue river halted and built his first rude shelter in that rich valley, amid the solitudes of the grand old primeval forest. That was sixty-two years ago.

The first rude, hastily built cabins were some years afterwards removed and replaced by better houses, and the dilapidated old cluster now standing represent the second edition, or better class of houses of the pioneer, being a great improvement upon the first rough and hastily built shelters. That old group of unsightly cabins, almost hidden in tall weeds and rubbish, is a notable landmark, as a connecting link between the prehistoric past ages of our glorious city and land, and the present results and developments, so wonderfully shown today all around this central point of our continent and the regions westward. But the facts already stated constitute only a small part of the great interest that clusters about that historic locality; there are others of far more ancient date that may be of interest to the historian and archaeologist that carry us far back into the past centuries. In the southeast portion of the exposition building there was , before the work of grading to level off the site commenced, an ancient artificial mound of earth which had been yearly plowed over since the land was cleared by that first settler, more than half a century ago. Pieces of pottery, flint arrow heads and spears and other stone implements of savage life were found from time to time in the vicinity.

This mound constituted the remains of an aboriginal earth house of very ancient date, as was shown by the immense size and age of the trees originally growing nearly over the site, and the decayed bones found while grading, which had the appearance of merely streaks of white lime in the excavated earth. This ancient aboriginal earth house was circular, about twenty feet in diameter and the bottom floor depressed about six feet below the original surface of the ground adjacent.

The writer claims to have some knowledge in this branch of archaeology, having in 1830 seen these earth houses with the aboriginal builders and occupants living therein, and having a distinct recollection of their appearance and manner of construction.

He was one of a government surveying party that year and spent several days near the three towns of the Kaw or Kansas tribe of Indians, that of the fool chief (Wastaminga), in the level plain about four miles northwest of Topeka, of the bard chief(Wah-cha-ha), on the south side of the river about eight miles higher up the river,

and that of the American chief(Indian name not recollected) on the Blue Earth river near Manhattan. In each of these aboriginal towns there were several of these earth houses occupied by the natives. At a distance they appear like huge mounds or immense hay stacks, but less pointed on top, they were circular from twenty to thirty feet in diameter, and the extreme heighth from the dirt floor to the top, fourteen to eighteen feet. The walls were of sod cut in squares and brought from some distance, about two feet thick, built up for six or seven feet, nearly perpendicular, then arching rapidly toward the top center. The inside was supported by posts set in the ground, and framework securely tied with bark and lined with large sheets of white elm bark, peeled in spring time from large trees, which when spread out were from six to eight feet square, the smooth side being inward and the outside supporting the earth wall outside. There were only two openings, one about 2 x 4 feet, for entrance, with a covering of skin fastened on the outside top, and the other opening was at the top center - three or four feet wide, for light and ventilation and the passage of smoke from the fire immediately below. A platform about six feet wide extended entirely around the inside, except opposite the entrance, which was elevated about three feet above the ground floor. A notched post leaning on the inside was the stairway, to the top of which was a much used look-out and lounging place.

These earth houses were never constructed except in the permanent towns of a tribe or band, and only the head men and aristocracy could afford the luxury of such palatial mansions, and we may therefore, with reasonable certainty, record it as a historical fact, that the builder and proprietor of that ancient aboriginal earth house, the sacred remains of which were so ruthlessly scooped out to its foundations the other day and ignominiously dumped in the valley hard by was in his day and generation a personage of no small consequence and authority in those prehistoric times, probably many centuries ago. Thousands of these artificial earth mounds were found in all parts of the Mississippi valley, in many places indicating the sites of large and populous towns. When constructed on high ridges with good surface drainage, like that at the exposition, the floor was generally depressed a few feet below the surrounding surface ground, but seldom, if ever, on a level plain. Nearly always are to be found some ashes and charcoal in the center, bones(sometimes human) , flint spears and arrow heads, rude pottery and other evidences of savage life in and around them. The plow share has to a great extent obliterated much of these ancient landmarks of the prehistoric periods of our land. In the lapse of a decade or two these earth houses were abandoned, and tumbled down, forming small mounds of rich earth, often used by the savage as a depository of the remains of the original builder and his progeny, whose spirits had taken their flight to the happy hunting grounds. Since the earliest date of authentic history, the Osage and Karsah tribes were the only aboriginals who had occupied the vast country lying between the Missouri and Arkansas rivers. In 1734 the chief town of the latter was at the point where Fort Clark was subsequently built in 1808, now

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called Sibley.

Major Long, in his Western exploring expedition to the Rocky mountains in 1819-20, tells us of one Nom-pa-warra, or White Plume, a famous brave and influential chieftain of the Kar-sah, or Kansas, tribe, and who was then rapidly rising in fame and influence among his people. At the visit of the writer heretofore mentioned this famous chieftain was at the zenith of his mundane power, a large, portly personage of splendid physique and commanding presence. Major John Dougherty, United States Indian agent of these Western tribes, and my father having sent word of the time of our arrival, our party were received by the distinguished potentate with all the honors and formalities appropriate to an event of such importance. The government had built for him a stone house and fenced and plowed a large field for his highness, but we found him seated on mats and robes on the ground in front of a new bark and skin wigwam in a grove nearby, and upon inquiry learned that he had vacated his official quarters in consequence of the great number of fleas that had invaded the premises, compelling him to flee away to more open ground. On a tall pole nearby a United States flag of respectable size floated to the breeze to greet another small one, held aloft by one of our party. The reception was conducted with great dignity and formality, especially on the part of the great "Nom-pa-warra", who remained seated, and after the ceremony of hearty fraternal hand-shaking each with an expressive "How?"all round, graciously waved his guests to seats on mats and robes spread on the ground. I will not now stop to mention any further incidents of that novel reception, that made such indelible impression on the youth of 19 years, who remained seated on his small gray horse near by, looking after the straggling pack of animals, and casting occasional glances over the novel scene and toward the ladies of the royal household in their extremely decollete attire, peeping around corners at the gallant youngster.

This was "Nom-pa-warra", (probably the XVI of the dynasty) a lineal descendant of the great founder thereof, of the same name, whose ashes and earth house was the other day so ignominiously dumped out on the commons, to be trodden over by the common herd or kneaded into mortar for brick; alas! alas! sic transit gloria mundi.

A little more than half way from this prehistoric relic at the exposition, is the oldest settlers' houses aforementioned. Since time out of mind, a spring of pure water had flowed southward which poured its refreshing stream for the ancient savage, and his more modern successor, down until the inception of the great exposition project, when it was covered with earth made necessary in grading streets in its vicinity, and thus was obliterated the last memorial and landmark that could remind the coming generations of our great metropolis of the very earliest of all the evidences of human habitation within its precincts.

Ah! What a rare opportunity is now presented to some modern embryo "Homer" just developing premonitory symptoms of the divine afflattus to bestride his Pegasus and launch out in an epic that would awaken the great Aeneas from his slumber of ages. The sorry

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superanuated old plug of an withered old timer can merely shamble over a few of the outlines of the rich field and note here and there a few foundation facts - in the homeliest of prose, in the hope that these historical facts may be found useful by some embryo poet or orator who may be selected to deliver the opening address for our great coming exposition, and we trust that he will not forget to rescue from oblivion the name of the great sachem "Nom-pa-warra", (or White Plume),who flourished and held court in the southeast corner of this great modern edifice, or more properly perhaps,upon the site where the southeast corner was to be, many centuries after the final adjournment of his last term of court. It was here on this spot of earth, hallowed with memorials of the prehistoric ages past and of the genesis of this great mid-continental city, that is pushing her way with such wonderful speed toward the front rank of the great cities of the land, that the first glimpse of the light of a Christian civilization cast its beneficent rays into that dark,grand, old, far Western forest. Old? Aye, old as time, for since creation it had waxed and warred with the cycles of time and the seasons undisturbed, a domain and cover for the wild beast and a few scattered remnants of the lowest order of the human family - and the camp fires of that first settler on that October night of 1825, that cast their bright glare into the dark surroundings might well be likened unto beacon lights, heralding the advent of a new era in the world's history and the end of the old dominion of nature. Aye, even as the first rays of light from that bright star in the East that lighted the way of the shepherds and wise men nearly two score centuries ago to Bethlehem, and that in its steady onward and ever westward advance had then reached this far western solitude sixty-two years ago, and ever moving onward toward the Occident has now well nigh compassed the globe to its sacred starting point, for it was down there at the site of those old dilapidated buildings, falling to decay, almost hidden in rank weeds and rubbish, that the first Christian sermon was preached by the Rev.James Lovelady, 1825;aye on that now neglected spot the first announcement was made that a new era had commenced that in due time would make the wilderness and solitary places, the forests and plains of this "new world" blossom as the rose.
Here,then, on an area of less than forty acres, were memorials of the prehistoric ages, the advents and commencement of the new era of civilization and the ocular proof of its grandest achievements.

Since the earliest date of the history of our land the only aboriginal occupants of the vast country lying between the Missouri and Arkansas rivers west of the Mississippi river, except a remnant of the once numerous and powerful tribe of New-dar-cha,or Missouris, whose chief town was on the north side of the Missouri, below Grand river,and a few Delawares and Shawnees near St.Genevieve - were the Osages and Kar-sah tribes. By the treaty made at Fort Clark (afterwards called Fort Osage, now Sibley) the country lying west of a meridian line from that point to the Arkansas river was opened for the admission of citizen settlers in 1825.
In anticipation of that event about fifty families had assembled at the Six-mile government reservation around the post ready to move Onto the rich heritage lying beyond, which they did immediately the

treaty was signed, without waiting for its ratification.
Among the number was John Johnson, a native of North Carolina, a typical pioneer frontiersman, with six grown sons and one daughter. This party first stopped between Independence and the Blue to decide upon a desirable location. While doing so, some of their horses wandered away from the camp, and two of the sons went in search of the missing horses. There were at the time but two old Indian trails in the country, one from Fort Osage, leading westward by Independence toward the Kaw valley, and the other from the great crossing place of the Missouri at Randolph, bearing north and southward, intersecting the former trail near Prospect and Springfield avenues, of our city. These two sons followed the former trail westward to the intersection, and then the latter to the beautiful valley that stretches from the Blue westward to the state line at the point where now stand the old houses and the great exposition structure. Though failing to find the stray horses, they had found a veritable garden spot of nature's handiwork, and the whole party moved over into it in a few days thereafter.
In October, 1825, these first settlers numbering twelve persons, crossed the Blue, with five wagons, twenty horses, thirteen cows and fifty head of cattle, a flock of sheep and some domestic fowls. The names of the sons in the order of age were Samuel, Robert, Elliot, Charles, James and John, and of the daughter Sarah.
All of them were men of more than ordinary intelligence and sterling worth, honored and useful citizens in their day. The daughter, the only survivor of the original party, was married to Judge Walter Bales, lately deceased, in 1832, and has continued to live at and within sight of the old homestead, and with but little loss of her normal faculties, physical, and more especially mental.

My own advent in this Western wilderness dates only five years later than the first, and I have full knowledge of the facts whereof I write.

Only one other family of settlers crossed to the west of the Blue during that year(1825), being that of Colonel Robert Patterson, who located at the Vogel place on the state line near Westport.

The length of this imperfect outline of our city's earliest history, already forbids a more extended narrative than this brief mention of the beginning.

Not one of the many scores of thousands who will throng that historic hill and the miles of thoroughfares of our wonderful young metropolis during the next two months will look upon the scenes presented, and the marvelous change wrought all around them with interest and wonder more profound than the few surviving relics of the vanguard of the mighty hosts that have swept away the last vestige and feature from the wild primeval landscape of their youthful days. But now the memories of the long ago that come up so fast must needs wait for a hearing.

J.C.M.

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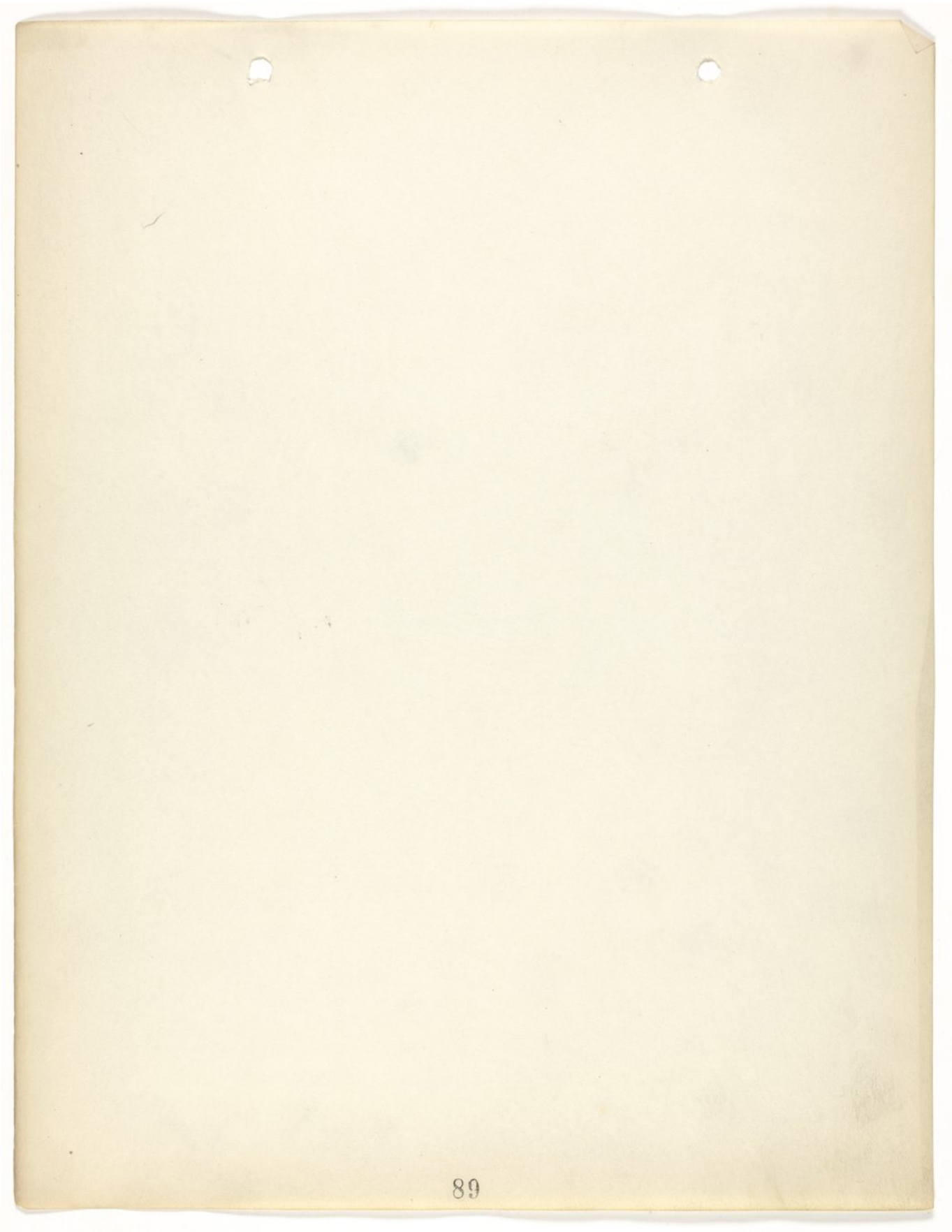

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TALES OF AN OLD TIMER.

THE BOUNDARY LINE QUESTION SETTLED BEYOND DISPUTE OR RESURRECTION.

Mr. McCoy tackles a Kansas Civil Engineer and floors him.

Going Back to the Time of Noah and Mt. Ararat.

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(Published in the Kansas City Journal, Feb. 9, 1879.)

A great many articles have been published in the newspapers of Kansas City and in the State of Kansas recently in regard to the line dividing the States of Missouri and Kansas- some of them affirming in positive terms that this line, as now established, is wrong, and that it should be, or had once been, several miles eastward of its present location. The writers of some of these articles I have seen are very positive in their declarations that a resurvey of this line would transfer Kansas City and a large amount of territory from Missouri to the State of Kansas. I may not be able to throw much

LIGHT UPON THE SUBJECT,

still it may not be out of place for me to communicate toward the settlement of this vexed question what little information I have acquired bearing upon it during a residence of nearly half a century in this vicinity.

The first article of the constitution of the State of Missouri, under which it was admitted into the Union in 1820, established the western boundary on a meridian line running through the middle of the mouth of the Kansas river. Some of the articles referred to affirmed that the mouth of the Kansas river was in 1820 down at the Randolph bluffs of Clay county. Others again say that the line, as originally run, was several miles eastward of its present location; and still another, that it was exactly "three and three-quarters miles east of the present line", "at the State Line house." This last article, which communicates this startling intelligence, was copied from the Olathe Mirror, and as we learn from the reading, is the decision of a

KANSAS CIVIL ENGINEER

who wrote the article. Having, it seems, a suspicion that Kansas had been cheated out of a portion of her birthright he says: "In 1859 and in 1860, we took particular pains to look this matter up and we found three old gentlemen living near Independence Landing, who were living in that vicinity at the date of the admission of Missouri into

the Union, who gave us the particular location of the mouth of the Kansas river at that time, and at our request made a statement in writing and were sworn to it by an officer of Kansas City, Mo. These affidavits were in our possession until the sacking of Olathe by Quantrell, and all our books and papers carried off." The loss of these valuable affidavits was truly unfortunate, and especially so from the fact that it seems that the writer has forgotten the names of these "three old gentlemen", otherwise he would no doubt have given them. If they told the truth they were indeed the first white men who settled the county of Jackson west of the Little Blue river, for it must be remembered that the date he names (1820) was six years before the land was bought from the Indians and the whites were permitted to settle upon it. Around Fort Osage, which is situated in the northeast corner of Jackson county, and which was established as a government military and trading post in 1808, there was a tract of six miles square in which whites were permitted to settle,

BUT NONE WEST OF IT,

except licensed traders. The treaty between the Osage and Kauzas Indians, negotiated at St.Louis in 1825, extinguished the Indian title to the country lying west of a meridian running from the Missouri river to the Arkansas, which line was about twenty-four east of the western line of the State. In order to make the statement I shall make as plain as possible, and to show how groundless are the suppositions that the State line was originally wrongly located, or that it has been changed from its original location, it will be necessary to make one other quotation from this luminous article of our "Kansas Civil Engineer", and especially as we learn that the archives of the interior department at Washington are now being searched for

PROOFS OF THESE ALLEGATIONS.

The "Kansas Civil Engineer" says:

"We have another flea to put into the ear of our Kansas City neighbors. About the year of 1832 or 1838 (we forget which date, as both dates are mixed up with it), some good hickory Quakers, with a surveyor from West Point, or some other kid-glove establishment, was sent out by the government to find out where the middle of the mouth of the Kansas river was located, and to accommodate a few early settlers who had crowded over the line into Kansas; and at that time the surveyor started from where the middle of the mouth of the Kansas river was located then, and ran the line a few miles, one report says, south to the Blue river. From his report we learned in 1860, at the time we read it, that the surveyor was of the opinion that it was one of the most singular meridian lines that he had ever had anything to do with in all his experience in locating lines; that it most certainly had some affinity for lines of latitude, but he finally located it where the McGees and Gillis and a few others said it ought to be located. This location was not intended to affect the State line, but to mark the

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boundary as near as possible without a survey of the line for the Shawnees and Delawares, then about to be located over the border in Kansas."

Now I think I can assist the writer on several points where he seems to be in doubt. Indeed the entire article seems to be

A STRING OF DOUBTS;

an effort to put in a lick that may strike something or somebody of doubtful existence. It was in 1838 that the survey of the State line was made by Capt. Hood, of the United States topographical engineers, and I was the surveyor of the party, and this is the first time in a long life I have been suspected of wearing kid gloves.

The flea upon which he has placed his finger preparatory to placing it in the ear of his "Kansas City neighbors", may not be as well secured as he imagines, for "the wicked flee when no man pursueth;" but the flea that this man pursueth will I think not be found just thar when needed.

In 1838 the Indian bureau was an appendage of the war department, and Congress made an appropriation of ten thousand dollars for surveys in the Indian Territory. The secretary of war sent out Capt. Hood, of the topographical engineers, to carry out the object of the appropriation. He honored me with the appointment of surveyor for the party, confining himself to the topographical and other duties of the expedition. The first work he entered upon was to establish accurately the eastern boundary of the Indian territory from the Missouri river to the southwest corner of the State, and to fix permanently, the corners of the lands assigned to the various Indian tribes on the west of it.

The western boundary of Missouri was surveyed and established by Joseph Brown of St. Louis county, soon after the admission of the State, and Capt. Hood

MADE NO ALTERATION

of the line which at that time was plainly marked in the timber with blazes and witness trees, and in the prairie with large mounds of earth, each with a deposit of charcoal, and some times with monuments of stone. One of the latter kind stood on the west bank of Turkey creek, three miles south of the mouth of Kansas river, the site of which is now in the centre and at the intersection of the two roads in front of Dr. Bell's store and Joseph McDowell's residence. This latter monument, now destroyed, was erected by Major Langham in 1826 as the northeast corner of lands assigned to the Shawnees. We commenced our work, not at the mouth of the Kansas river, but on Brown's line on the south bank of the Missouri river, which was at that time, I think, about 300 yards below the lower point of the Kansas river. Capt. Hood's topographical notes will show the exact distance and course. It would be a very easy matter to fix the exact locality

which Brown assumed as "the middle of the mouth of Kanzas river" when he made the survey. The

SURVEY OF CAPT. HOOD

was carefully and accurately made- the measurements with a four-pole chain and three chain carriers, one in the centre named Bayliss, who was brought out by Capt. Hood from Washington City- who looked to the levelling and acted as a sort of guard upon the other two.

This survey was made very slowly to a point some thirty or forty miles south, when Capt. Hood became disabled from a sore leg, making it necessary for him to be carried along in an ambulance. The disease grew upon him rapidly until the leg had swelled to an enormous size, and the expedition returned to Westport to enable him to procure medical treatment. The survey was never resumed, for in about a month, and whilst still an invalid, Capt. Hood returned to Washington.

Now this is a brief history of that kid glove survey, which so greatly agitates the mind of "Kansas Engineer"; and I do assure him, in all sincerity, that

NO VARIATIONS WERE MADE

from the line plainly marked out by old Joe Brown to accommodate the McGees or Gilliss, or anybody else, for there existed no necessity for it. I would very much regret to have any controversy with him or any one else. I doubt not that he is sincere in the belief he entertains, and as he has stated, and I desire to say nothing that would impugn his motives or sincerity. But as the question of the correct location of the mouth of the Kansas river in 1820 is one just now of great interest to a large number of people, both of Missouri and Kansas, he will, I hope, pardon me for suggesting some very grave difficulties that confront us from his standpoint. Assuming that his statements, affidavits and theories are correct, it would be very clear that our young State of Kansas, while yet in the womb of time, and more than thirty years before her birth, had been outrageously swindled out of a valuable portion of her birth right, but then we can imagine no motive that Surveyor Brown could have had to violate his oath, seeing that the land on both sides of his line belonged to the Indians at that time, and they were too poor to offer him any inducements.

In the next place the land lying east and adjoining this

LINE WHERE IT NOW IS,

was surveyed into townships and sections in 1826 and the lines thereof all closed upon that State line of Brown's, as is shown by the plats and field notes in the county clerk's office, at Independence, which were furnished for the use of Jackson county and certified to by the surveyor general of Missouri.

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This alone settles the question as far back as 1826- that the mouth of the Kaw river was, at that date, about mid-way of the river on the great sand bar and about three-fourths of a mile north-east of the present mouth. My own knowledge of the locality extends back only to 1831, probably about eight years after Brown's survey. At that time (1831) there was a wide sand bar on the south side of the river extending from a point about opposite the oil mill and Advance elevator to the lower end nearly of the State line, with a small island and a narrow slough channel between it and the south shore, just below which stood the

HOUSE OF LOUIS BERTHOLET,

or Grand Louis. About 1832 or '33 the steamer "Booneville", loaded with corn for Fort Leavenworth, was snagged and lost in the main channel of the river about three miles above Wyandott. A few years afterwards I surveyed the meanders of the Missouri river, on the west side, from the mouth of the Kansas to the Little Nemaha, and I am satisfied that the point where the Booneville sank is now fully one mile from the nearest water in the river at the present time.

But still other difficulties confront us in accepting the statements of our civil engineer. As late as 1843, when I lived for a short time where Harlem now stands, there was then an unbroken forest, many of the trees thickly scattered through the whole extent of large growth, several hundred years old, and with no appearance of a river channel across the bottom. The time required to level up the channel from sediment of overflow? and afterwards to grow those large trees would probably carry us back to about the time

NOAH CAME DOWN FROM ARARAT,

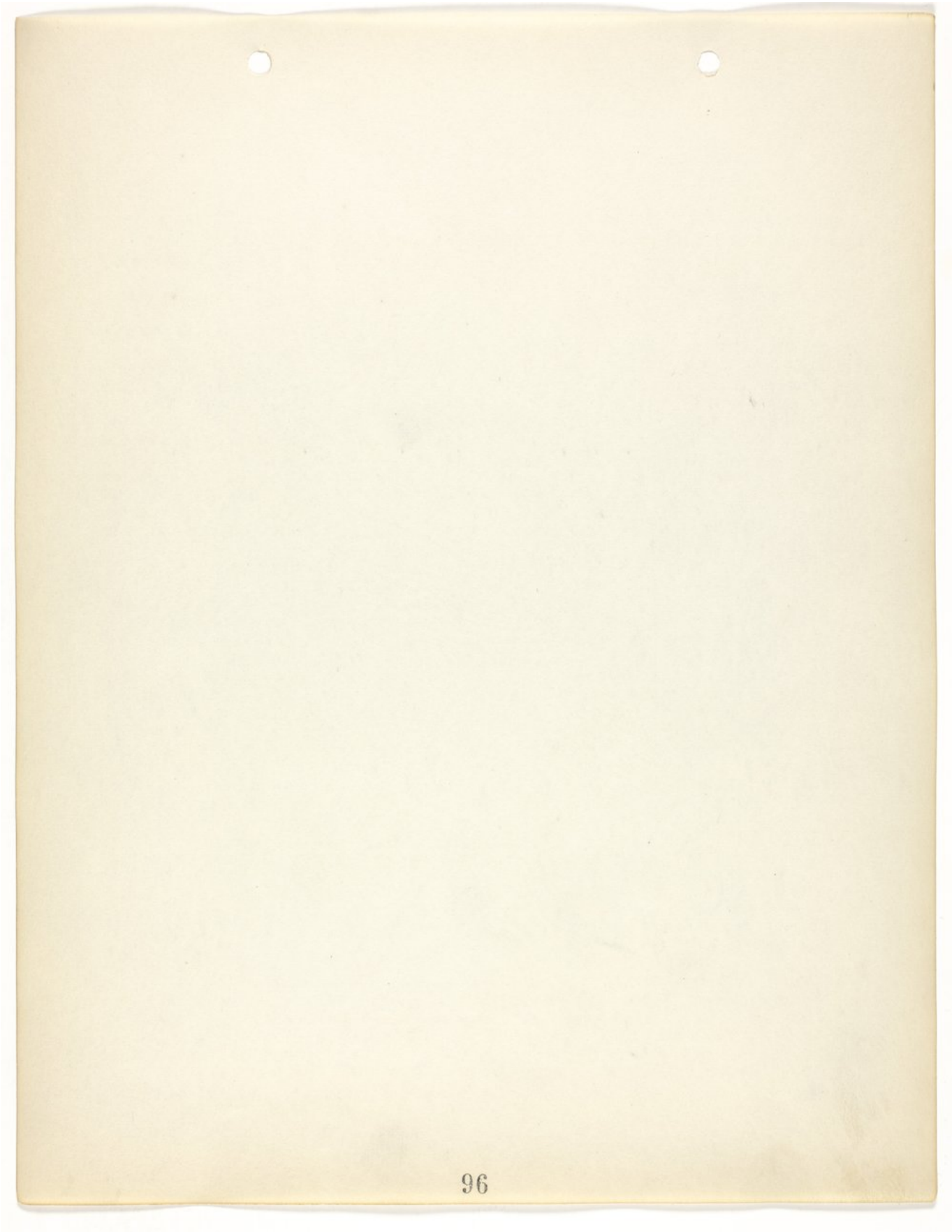
too far entirely to settle any question in this controversy. What I would like to know is what route did the Kansas river take to empty itself into the Missouri down at Randolph bluffs, or on a meridian "three and three-quarter miles due east from the State Line house? And still farther, Col. Francis Chouteau established a trading post on the north bank of the Missouri river, opposite the Randolph bluffs, three miles below the city, in 1821, and which continued to be his residence until his buildings were washed away by the great flood of the Missouri river in 1826. Three members of his family now living in Kansas City, will, I presume, sustain the correctness of

BROWN'S LOCATION

of the State line. But I have already said far more than is necessary about this tempest in a tea-pot. I believe that the vague, indefinite statements which have been published occasionally for years past in

the newspapers about some great wrong that had been done in the location of the western line of Missouri will do infinitely more harm than good toward the accomplishment of the scheme of the annexation of Kansas City to the State of Kansas. Better far to take the bull square by the horns. If that scheme can be accomplished it will mark a bright day in the history of Kansas City. Being now a citizen of Johnson county, Kansas, my sympathies are of course altogether on the side of annexation.

Wilder, Johnson Co., Kansas. J. C. M.



MR. JOHN C. McCOY, of Kansas City, next read the following historical sketch of Kansas City:

Old Settlers of Jackson County:

By the arrangements made for this meeting of the old settlers of Jackson county, the duty was assigned to me to write out a historical sketch of Kansas City, to be read to the few remaining old veterans of a former age who are still left on this side of the river, across which, very soon, we will all make the passage, and who on this anniversary of our independence are assembled here today to interchange friendly greetings, to renew old friendships, to recall old memories, and reproduce old scenes, and last, but not least to make affectionate and honorable mention of comrades and companions who long since have crossed the river into a better and a brighter land. Very many, yes nearly all of that pioneer army of honored and loved ones, who, nearly half a century ago, with us entered this goodly land, and who with us side by side encountered the privations and hardships incident to the settlement of a new country, have received their furloughs, crossed the river and are now we trust forever at rest. Only a few of us, scarcely a corporal's guard are now remaining on this side, with heads whitened by the frosts of three score years and ten and all bearing the scars received in life's conflict.

Anything that I can say or do that would add to the interests or pleasure of this reunion of old neighbors and friends, I regard as not only a duty but a high privilege; but I confess that I am not pleased with the theme upon which I am to make my effort- the history of Kansas City. That city is too young and too modern to have much history as yet. A vigorous, healthy, overgrown infant it is true, but remembered by us as if it were but yesterday, when it emerged from Nature's swaddling clothes, and when those rugged hills and gorges where now sits the young city in its pride and glory, was covered with the dense forest, disturbed only by the aboriginal red man and the beasts of the forest.

But, old friends, we are now too old to feel much interest in the upbuilding or fame of cities, or to be dazzled by the glare and glitter of these latter days of progress, so called, We are looking with anxious hope and fond desire toward that city that hath foundations- a peaceful home in that better land where the weary, way-worn pilgrim will be forever at rest. Our anxieties and our sympathies are now centered and drawn out in behalf of our children, our children's children and our coming country.

Old Watchmen, what of the night? How do you like the outlook? Is it as encouraging and as bright now on this anniversary as it was on the first one we celebrated in this county? I leave each one of you to decide that question. To me it is not. The boasted progress of this latter day is much of it, I fear, progression in the wrong direction- in ways that are dark and tricks that are vain- by no means indicative of the near approach of the millennium.

But let us return to our objective point, Kansas City and its history. It has, as I stated, very little history to be written, and as a short horse is soon curried, I promise to make short work of the subject.

Not so, however, with our county and Western Missouri: That region has a history which, in the hands of some one competent for the task, would make a volume of great value and thrilling interest.

I said that I would make short work of Kansas City, but nevertheless it will survive. Her citizens and enthusiastic admirers who are now here need have no fear that her claims to admiration will be forgotten or neglected so long as a Kansas City editor, or gas blower, can wield a pen or blow a horn. The growth of that city has been unprecedently rapid, and without a parallel, perhaps, in the history of cities on this continent. The first sale of lots was had in April, 1846, but its progress was very slow for many years- various causes and untoward events contributed to keep it back. The cholera era in 1849 decimated the population- fifteen deaths occurring on the first day of the appearance of that dread scourge in the village. The early settlers in in were generally poor. Independence, which had been the centre of trade for the county since its first settlement, and the point whence the Santa Fe ********** influence and interprize, and was by no means pleased at the attempt to make a town at the mouth of the Kaw river. About the year 1840 the Santa Fe trade was gradually transferred from Independence to the village of Westport, and it grew up very rapidly into a very important commercial point. For many years the chief importance of Kansas City consisted in its convenient and safe steamboat landing for Westport; but gradually, though slowly and steadily, the important and unrivalled geographical position of Kansas City began to be felt and appreciated, and it had become a prosperous and thriving town before the war commenced, containing a population of probably six or eight thousand. During the war it again passed through the furnace of affliction. Free-boöters from over the line, and our Leavenworth neighbors, were indefatigable in their efforts to pull down and destroy their hated rival, until at the close of the war, our famous city looked about as forlorn and forsaken as an old gander plucked of its feathers- and it was a year or two after the war even before it began to show signs of vitality.

How suddenly and rapidly the old bird, Phoenix like, rose out of the ashes and donned her new gay plumage, and flaunted her tail in the face of disconsolate and discomfited Leavenworth. I need not here tell- Kansas City editors and writers have saved me that trouble, and I will therefore leave that task in good and faithful hands. Of the original projectors and proprietors of the town only three of fourteen are now living- Robert Campbell, of St. Louis, Jacob Ragan and myself of this county.

In 1833, thirteen years before the sale of lots, the first lot of merchandise was landed from the steamer John Hancock, consigned to a fine young man named McCoy, who had established a store in a log-house by the side of the road, upon the spot where the Harris House in

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Westport now stands.

The picture as I first saw it in 1832, of her rough precipitous hills, deep impassable gorges, and of the dense forest, and almost impenetrable vines, brushwood and fallen timber, and of the old field of a few acres on the high ridge overlooking the river, surrounded by an old dilapidated rail fence, with a few old monarchs of the forest with bare limbs that had withstood the rude blasts and buffetings of the storms of a hundred years, and of the log-house standing on the rocky brink of the river, with its occupant, one-eyed Ellis, and his brood of young bare-footed and bare-legged children, and of the narrow winding pathway up and down the river bank, and even the solitary crow perched high on a limb of one of the old trees, all, all, are still vividly impressed upon my memory, much more vividly doubtless, from the contrast the magical change that is now pictured upon that same ground.

But my dear old friends, is it good policy or good manners for us to waste valuable time here today in discussing Kansas City? The Good Book tells us that our days (compared in the light of eternity), are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and the hours of this day of all others, one of the most precious in our long pilgrimage, are too precious to be recklessly wasted and squandered on Kansas City. I could dribble out an interminable stream of incidents and facts connected with this young metropolis, until the last one of my old friends here would fall asleep. But it won't pay you to listen to, or me to recite them, and therefore with your permission we will for the present dismiss Kansas City with that most emphatic new letter of our American alphabet, the letter "Rip".

And now, let us take a rapid survey of some other scenes, places and persons that deserve to be recalled and remembered- of scenes and persons cherished and embalmed with sweet incense in the memory and heart of each and every one of us. We feel a mournful pleasure in recalling scenes and beloved faces long since passed away- and albeit a cloud or a shade of sadness ever and anon will float across the clear sky, we would not forego the pleasure that it affords us to look back- no, to look forward and upward.

Some one has expressively said that "death loves a shining mark." The arrow of death with unerring aim has brought down many bright jewels- many noble and honored names from our original company. The jewels are now set in brighter caskets and their memories sacredly cherished in loving hearts, and neither are the noble and honored names forgotten. Be it our sacred and pleasing duty to-day, to strew flowers over their sleeping dust. Brooking, Fristoe; Lucas, Simpson, Franklin, Owens, Lee, Weston, Davy, Robert Johnson, Shepherd Wallace, the Flournoys, Irwin, Staples, Boggs, Parker, Harrelson, the Chiles brothers, Cowherd, Stanley, Rice, Bartleson, Stayton, Hambright, Adams, the Russells, the Cogswells, Thorp, Bittle, Drake, Creason, the Potses, and a host of other worthies are vividly recalled in our memories by the familiar old faces now here assembled. It would require a volume to record separately the peculiar traits of character of these personages. Many of them were men of no ordinary ability and worth, were public benefactors, and high-

toned, honorable gentlemen. In life they were loved and trusted; in death they are remembered and honored for their good and generous deeds which live after them, but time will not allow me to make further reference to these men now, neither will it allow me to touch even briefly on the many interesting scenes and incidents connected with the early days of our country. Railroads and the telegraph were then unknown * * * * * * * * * * * * * to and fro over the State and into distant States was performed in wagons and on horseback. Merchants, who generally went to the Eastern cities to lay in their stocks once a year, and usually in the winter, traveled on horseback as far as Zanesville, Ohio. In 1831, in company with Gen. Sam'l C. Owens and two other merchants, who were all bound East for goods, I traveled on the same horse from Independence, Mo., to Toledo, Dayton, Cincinnati, and back, in mid-winter. The primitive horse-mill, with its pull-round or tread-wheel, was the only means to obtain meal or flour for bread. And yet, with all these disadvantages and drawbacks and lack of modern improvements, conveniences and luxuries, I am sure that my old friends here will bear me out in the assertion that the people of that period were more contented and virtuous, and really more independent, than the people are who occupy this land to-day, and with more of the milk of human kindness, unostentatious piety, and genuine hospitality than can now be found. We had no tall church spires pointing heavenward, with loud sounding organ and fine array, but the prayers and praises from devout and thankful hearts, which ascended from the humble log meeting house, were heard far above the loud pealing organ. But, my old friends, I doubt not you are tired of this rambling, imperfect sketch, and I will tax your patience and politeness no farther. The probabilities are that this will be my last effort to address the old settlers of Jackson, methinks I hear some patient old martyr among you exclaim with more unction than poetry, "Amen", to this, and Amen say I. And now, friends of the olden time, allow me to close with a few words of parting cheer.

Allow me to ask the question, shall we all, without the absence of a single one now here, meet again on this side of the dark valley? Almost with certainty it can be said we will not. One by one each rapidly following another- I might almost say in companies- we will cross the river. We are now in the "sere and yellow leaf".

"Leaves have their time to fall
And flowers to wither at the north wind's blasts,
And stars to set, but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O, death."

But like the lovely and long-sought view spread out before the old prophet from Pizga's top, do you not see the distant lights shining in our Father's house, beyond the dark valley?

With His rod and His staff to guide and support us, and with our lamps trimmed and brightly burning, we can fearlessly, nay, joyfully enter that dark valley.

Then, old veterans of life's campaign, shall we not appoint one other meeting- a trysting-place, where we all, without the absence of a single one, shall once more strike hands? Yes, do you say? Then let that place be in our Father's house, and let all who agree to this say, Amen.

That light, that glorious light which we behold so brilliant away yonder in our Father's house, is the light from the Star of Bethlehem.

"Hark! hark! to God the chorus breaks
From every host, from every gem;
But one alone the Savior speaks-
It is the Star of Bethlehem."

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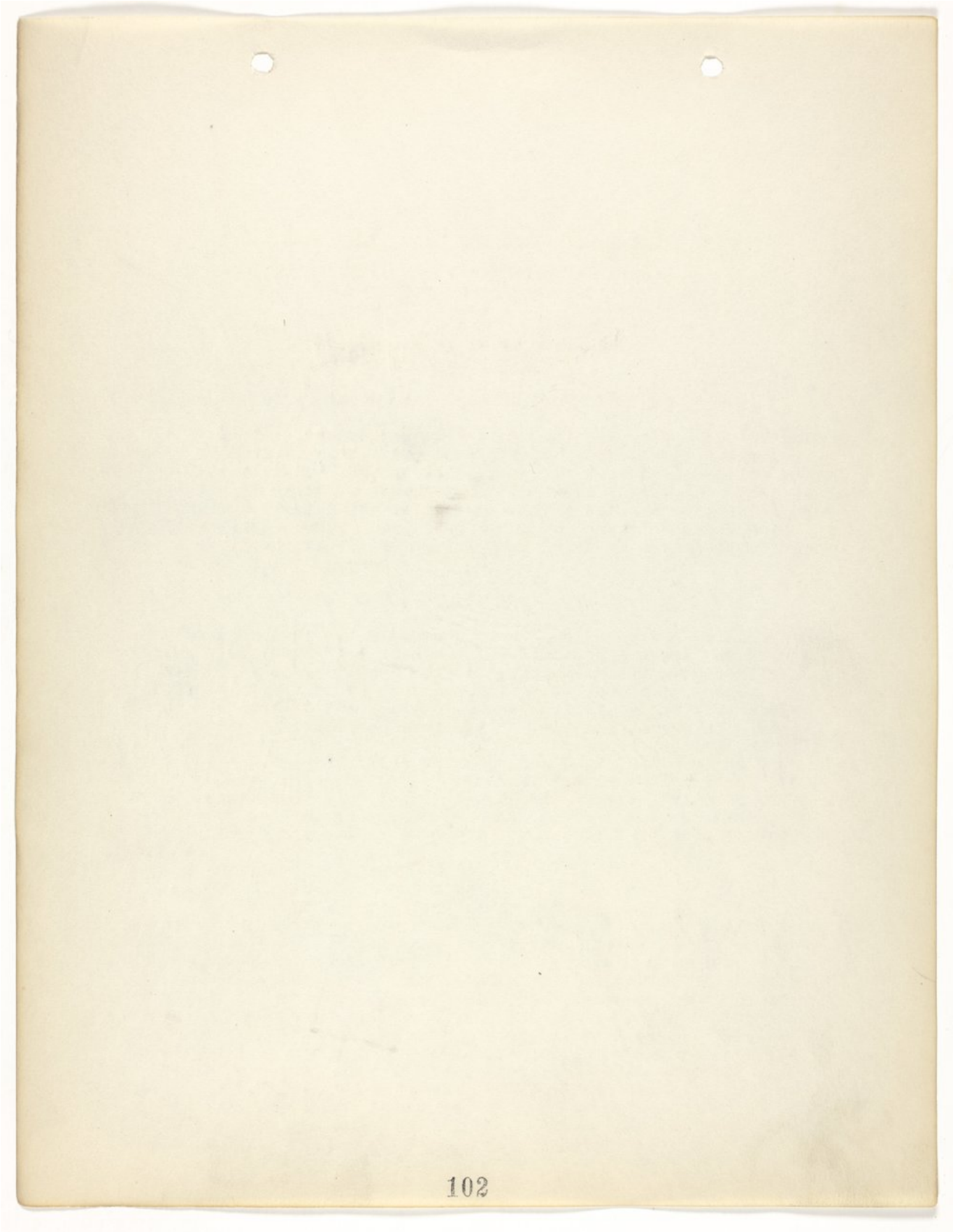

TALES OF AN OLD TIMER.

Interesting Scraps of the History of Kansas
Heretofore Unwritten.

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Persons and Things of Forty Years Ago
Noted by One of Them.

(Published in the Kansas City Journal- Feb. 2, 1879.)

In the last number of sketches of the early days of this country I stopped very abruptly my writing of the events connected with the Mormon war of 1833 in Jackson county just at the point where the greatest historical interest and importance attaches to that memorable struggle between those latter day saints and the original inhabitants of Jackson county. Not wishing to rely upon my unassisted memory of those events, I will ask to be allowed to resume this theme after I shall have fortified

MY OWN RECOLLECTION

by consulting records and persons that will greatly aid me in making a truthful record of those events. The historical facts and events about which I have heretofore written are nearly all merely my own recollections, assisted by documents and data within my reach. As I am unknown to most of the readers of the Journal, who may take the trouble to read my imperfect sketches, it may not be out of place, and I hope will not make me liable to the charge of egotism, to make it known that my opportunities of acquiring a knowledge of matters I write about have been unusually favorable, from the fact that I have been a permanent resident of this immediate vicinity for more than forty-eight years, and an active participant in nearly all the stirring events and changes that have taken place in this goodly land.

SURVEYING.

In the month of August 1830, I accompanied a United States surveying party in charge of my father, which was outfitted in Howard county, Mo., and passed up through Jackson county to Cantonment Leavenworth, a frontier military post that was established in 1827. This party, after establishing the boundaries of the military reservation of about eleven sections, proceeded westward with the survey of the northern line of the land assigned to the Delaware Indians, who emigrated to the same during the next year. This survey of the northern boundary of the Delaware outlet extended about 366 miles west of the west line of the State of Missouri, and returning the party reached Chouteau's trading house, about ten miles above Topeka, in the last days of November of same year. We there met the Rev. Thos. Johnson and a Mr. McAllister, who had gone up to the Kansas Indians to council with them in relation to establishing a missionary

station and schools among that people. A more unpromising

FIELD FOR THE PHILANTHROPIST

to sow the seeds of civilization and christianity could not have been selected probably at any time since Cain struck out into the wilderness of Nod. They were as a people, without doubt, the most industrious set of thieves under the sun, and were easily able to beg one with tender sensibilities, such as I possessed, out of his birthright, I never met one who was not, according to their unmistakable signs, on the verge of starvation, which they let you know by very significant motions, with one hand toward their mouth, while at the same time they pressed the extended palm of the other on their bread-basket, in an effort to flatten it back to the thickness of an inch board.

Whilst the chief men of the tribe were in the house counselling about schools, a large crowd, of all ages and sexes, were assembled on the outside, and an old man bestriped with paint of various hues was stalking back and forth uttering in a loud, grandiloquent tone a great speech, the burden of which, as interpreted, was, "Beware, my children, of the Mohe tonga (big knife)! The great spirit didn't make us to talk to the papers, but to hunt game, kill buffalo and Pawnees, to paint our faces and steal horses," etc. But my purpose now is not to talk about Indians, but of my various wanderings through this portion of the far west. From the time of the return of that surveying party to Missouri until 1855 I was at intervals employed in surveying and establishing the exterior and dividing lines of the lands assigned by the treaty stipulations with the various emigrant and indigenous tribes within the Indian Territory, the first seven years thereof almost continually. This employment made it necessary for me to traverse the Indian Territory in all directions and at all seasons of the year, from the Canadian river at the south to the Nemaha at the north. and extending westward from Missouri to Longitude 100°, west. It is unnecessary for me to specify the various lines run by me during that time. Suffice it to say that they comprised nearly every line run within the limits named, except a few which had been previously established by Maj. Laugham, in 1826 and '27. This, of course, enabled me to acquire an accurate

KNOWLEDGE OF THE COUNTRY,

of its few inhabitants and its general characteristics, and I would be dull indeed not to have garnered at least some substantial fruit from the historic field over which I was passing. Having said this much by way of explanation, and as a kind of authentication of the statements heretofore, and that may be hereafter made by me, I dismiss this subject.

To those of us who remember the site of Kansas City as an almost untouched natural forest, the rapid building up upon it of this large, flourishing commercial metropolis, is very impressive- far more so, of course, than to those who only read about it$

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ASTONISHING PROGRESS.

But as astonishing and impressive as have been her rapid strides towards metropolitan proportions, to me the transformation wrought throughout the State of Kansas in a still shorter period of time is far more amazing. I can in truth hardly realize the fact that there is a State lying right west of us, embracing nearly all of that country, a large proportion of which, for a long series of years, was supposed to be uninhabitable, that now stands first as a wheat-growing and food-producing State of the Union, numbering well nigh a million of civilized inhabitants.

The wonder is not so much that the State of Kansas has been occupied so very rapidly by an industrious, enterprising population, but in the fact that the larger portion of the State toward the west is fitted for a civilized agricultural population at all. It is no fiction, but a positive fact, that the habitable portion of the country lying west of Missouri and Arkansas was until a few years ago, supposed to extend no further west than about one hundred and fifty miles, decreasing in value for agricultural purposes as it extended west to that point. Beyond that distance no one, thirty or forty years ago, supposed that the country would ever be settled by white men to any considerable extent. I confess that I shared in the common belief, notwithstanding I had, during nearly half a century, traversed it at all seasons of the year. I have recently conversed with several old residents of this region on this subject, and they all confess to have held the same opinion; and our conclusions were that we had always been either wofully mistaken in regard to the value of the country, or else a great change has taken place in the country itself, caused by a great increase in the rainfall.

THE DESERT.

A line running northward from about Wichita by Salina to Fort Kearney was forty years ago about the eastern limit of the short buffalo grass and the western limit of the common prairie grass or blue stem. For several years past I understand that the latter has been fast superseding the former for a long distance westward. Be that as it may, the belief was, I think, universal that the portion of those vast plains referred to would never be of any earthly use except to rear buffalo, and perhaps support a few cattle ranches. None doubted the fertility of the soil, but all doubted the sufficiency of the rainfall. The bed of the Arkansas river was often known to be dry for a hundred miles in extent between the great bend and Pueblo.

In proof of the truth of the statements I make, I transcribe from the diary of my father the following entry: "Thursday, May 6, 1831- Last evening's mail brought my commission and instructions from the secretary of war, by which I am instructed to explore the Indian country west of Arkansas and the State of Missouri at least as far west as the lines we have marked on our maps, which we have supposed constituted the western limit of habitable country; to examine

it minutely and to report its character in all respects particularly; to adjust the boundaries of some tribes and to survey and mark certain boundaries. The work is intrusted to me with two assistants, who will follow the compass, etc." After his further exploration of the country his reports of its value, and especially of its peculiar adaptability for the colonization of the various Indian tribes of the States, were extremely favorable, so much so, indeed, that I sometimes feared that his zeal in behalf of his pet scheme of colonizing the Indians had led him to color too highly the character of the country.

A FARM.

Robert Polk and Moses H. Scott, traders among the Pottawatomies about the year 1834, broke and put in cultivation a large field in the valley of Pottawatomie creek, near Osawatomie, which they cultivated for several years, and never succeeding in raising half of an ordinary crop of corn, they finally abandoned the effort. McCoy & Waldo, Santa Fe mail contractors and merchants, tried the experiment at Council Grove with about the same results. At the Methodist and Baptist missions above Topeka the experiments were more successful, one year especially the yield of corn was very heavy. It was always believed, however, that the rainfall was greater along the valley of the Kansas river than farther inland. There was one year in which a disastrous drought prevailed throughout Kansas- I think it was about 1836- and scarcely a bushel of corn was raised in that year. By the last of July the corn, about the time it began to show tassels, became as dry as cured fodder. The Shawnee Indians gathered en masse at a great pow-wow to go through some of their conjurations to bring rain. I forget with what success, but I think that about after one week unceasing nonsense they abandoned the effort in disgust. These conjurations to obtain rain were formerly common to all tribes of Indians. There were in each tribe a small number known as

MEDICINE MEN.

They were shrewd and belonged to a kind of secret organization and always officiated on extraordinary occasions like this, and, by the way, let me, just here, say that I have a full and graphic description of one of their great medicine dances and religious festivals, jotted down at the time during the various stages of the performance, and when I have nothing better to write about I will, if deemed worthy, insert it in some future writing. During my various wanderings in the West, it was my fortune to frequently come in collision with the wild unruly members of the prairie tribes. Some of our encounters were somewhat serious and many ludicrous, but I am neither in the vein, nor have I the time, now to enter upon their description.

J. C. McCoy.

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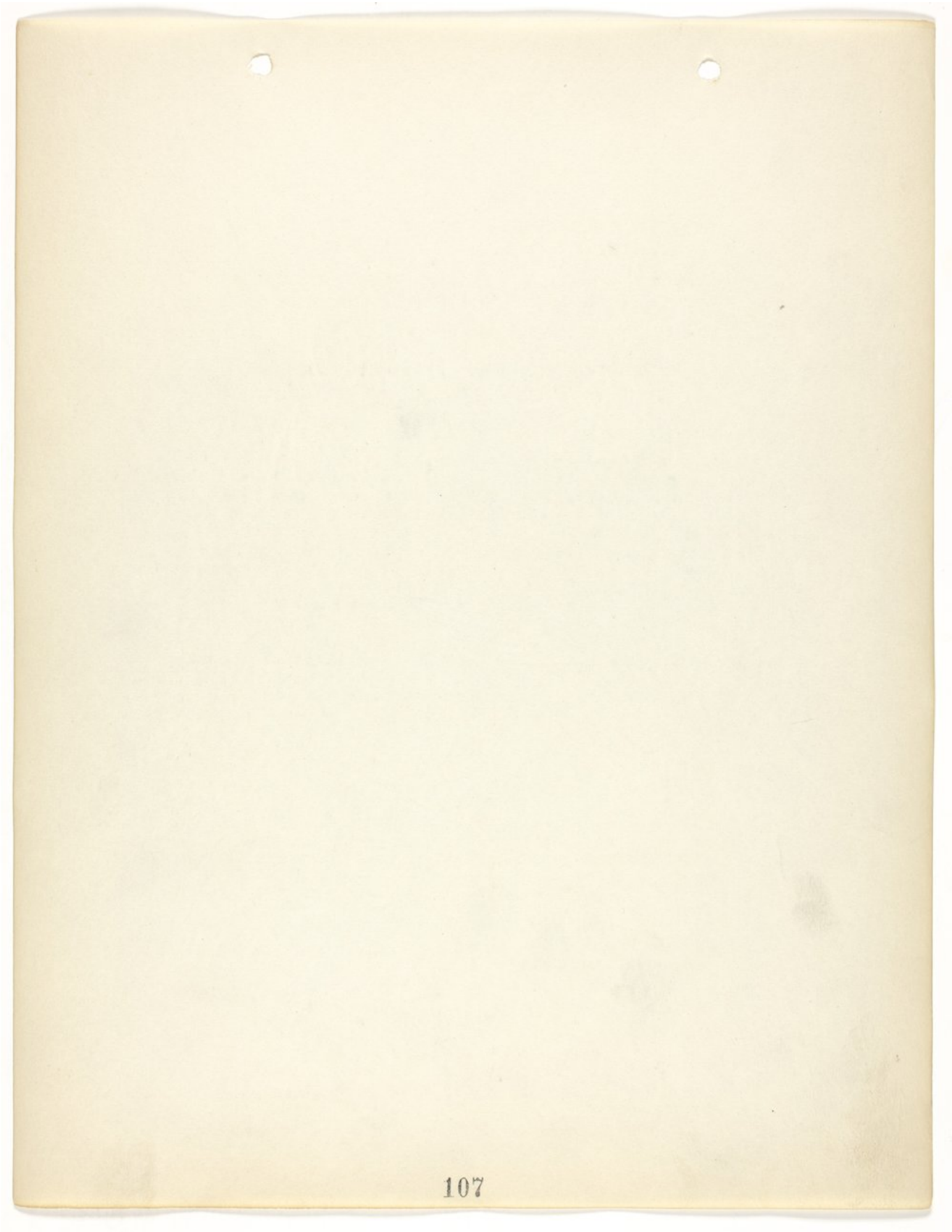

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TALES OF AN OLD TIMER.

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Interesting Reminiscences of the Early Settlers of Independence and this City.

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Valuable Historical Sketch of Mormonism in Jackson County - Its Hard Lines.

(Published in The Kansas City Journal, Feb 16, 1879)

In August, 1830, when I first passed through the county, there was only one settler whose place joined up to the State line, that of Col. Patterson, now known as the Vogel place, near Westport. Adjoining him to the northeast, including the present site of Westport, was the tract of Robert Johnson, an uncle of William Mulkey. He was a man of more than ordinary intelligence, possessing talents of no common order, was during one or two sessions a member of the legislature, but withal rather taciturn and accentric. I saw him once while he was canvassing the county on foot and barefooted. Hon. Edward Bates, Attorney-General of the United States, with whom I once fell in company on my way to St. Louis in the stage, told me that Johnson delivered one of the best speeches of the session, replete with logical argument, good sense and vigor.

The next two settlers whose places joined the State line on the east were Dr. Lykins and William Gilliss, both of whom located in 1831. Of the latter I have spoken heretofore, and of the former it would require more space than the limits of these brief sketches will allow to do justice to his memory as one of the first, most useful and worthy pioneers of this country. In 1831 he entered and settled upon a tract of land on the State line, two miles southwest of Westport. At this old homestead during many subsequent years he gathered around him his home treasures, and in its quiet forest burial place half of them and many of mine repose in their last long sleep.

THE FIRST POST-OFFICE

west of Independence was established there about the same year, under his charge. More than half a century of his useful, active life was devoted to the promotion and advancement of the best interests of his fellow men, with his pen, his counsel and in labors abundant. He was often the originator of and always with the foremost in every scheme looking to advancement and prosperity of the city and surrounding country. He was the second mayor of the new city, and for a long series of years faithfully and efficiently discharged the many important official trusts committed to him. Several years before Kansas City had an existance he bought from Louis Bertholet about sixteen acres of land bounded by the Missouri river, Broadway and Fifth streets, known as Lykin's addition.

Upon this tract he built, at an early day, a large brick warehouse, which was torn down to make way for the P. R. R. track. The Rev. Thos. Johnson is another name that should be held in grateful remembrance as a benefactor and promoter of the best interests of this country, and whose

RECORD OF GOOD DEEDS

dates back to I830, when he first commenced the organization of missionary schools in the Indian Territory. No history of Kansas or of this portion of the old Far West would be complete without prominent mention of his long and efficient labors in its development. He was open-handed and liberal toward every benevolent enterprize looking to the moral, educational and material advancement and growth of the country.

I have heretofore made mention of very few of the old settlers of Jackson county except such as were identified in some way with the up building of Kansas City. A correct history of the county would enroll the names of many others whose prominence deserves especial record. I doubt whether any portion of the State except St.Louis and St.Charles presents such a prolific field for historic research, having so many stirring episodes and fierce struggles as

THE OLD CITY OF INDEPENDENCE.

Being the outside post on frontier of civilization it was for twenty years the starting and outfitting point for all expeditions across the western plains. Traders to New Mexico, the Rocky mountain trappers, government exploring parties, missionaries, contractors and traders among the Indian tribes to the west all made it their chief point of departure and supply.

For more than twenty years after the town was started, in I826, it kept almost undisputed possession of all these advantages,before they were gradually drawn away to Westport and Kansas City.

The near proximity of open prairie for grazing the stock of caravans, etc., to the southwest of Kansas City was really the chief reason why these advantages were transferred from Independence to it. The opening of the Indian territory for settlement and the extension of lines of railroads westward soon, however, put an end to all of these sources of prosperity to either place. It would be an interesting task to collect facts and write up many chapters of the early history of Independence and Jackson county, and of the

MEN WHO BUILT UP

and controlled her destinies - of Owens, Lucas, Agnew, Aull, McLelland, old Uncle Wood Noland, Courtney, Joe Walker, Weston,Franklin, Boggs, Staples, Hamilton, Hudspeth, Simpson, Waldo, of the Bents, St. Vrain, the Sublettes, Hicks, and many more whose names do not occur to me - and we could even mention old Uncle Billy Yates, who

forgot the august dignity of his official position of justice of the peace, and danced around the outskirts of the ring formed around Lewis Jones and Bazil Robinson while they were putting in their best licks on each other in the most approved western style. Jones was testifying in a case before him, and a voice remarked, "That's a lie." "Who said that?" asked Jones. "I did," answered Robinson. Quick as lightning Jones' retort landed on Robinson's nose, coloring his photograph a bright crimson, and then the exercises formally and quickly opened. The bystanders formed a ring to see fair play. 'Squire Yates, as in duty bound, rose to his feet, holding the statutes in one hand, crying,"I command the peace; I command the peace." Discovering, however, that no one heard or cared for his order, and that he was losing his share of the fun, he commenced

HOPPING AROUND THE CROWD,

uttering with a quick, sententious jerk, "give him h-ll, my little Jones." One-half of the tail of his old frock coat having been accidentally burnt off, we can imagine the undignified appearance of the old man as he danced around the crowd, and why old Russell Hicks, attorney in the case, gave vent to his intense enjoyment in that deep, hearty growl of a laugh that shook his old sides.

This, however, was only one of the thousand comedies enacted on our primitive boards, before the introduction of the glaring adjuncts of gas, tinsel, catgut and wind.

Tragedies, too, were enacted sometimes. In the earlier stages of the country's history very rarely; but in the later periods her blood spots are thickly dotted about her precincts.

During nearly three years from 1831 inclusive to Nov.3, 1833, when the mormons were forcibly expelled from the county and their new-found Zion, the materials of the historian are profusely strewn along his pathway. I left off in my narrative of that period, hoping to find an old manuscript of my father's, which gave all the details of the struggle between the two parties. Not having found it, however, I will very briefly give from my memory a few of the leading events that occurred.

THE MORMONS.

There is no use at this remote day in denying the fact that the Mormons received at the hands of their Gentile neighbors very harsh treatment. In many instances, indeed, this term is entirely too mild; it was cruel. That some of their leaders deserved summary measures was true, but in nearly every instance the overt acts of aggression were perpetrated by the party opposing them. The respectable, law-abiding portion of the old settlers had become convinced that the time was rapidly approaching when they would either be compelled to give way to that fanatical horde of new comers, sell out their possessions at such price as they might choose to offer and leave the field, or they would be overwhelmed and absorbed into the brotherhood. Neither of these contingencies could be

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contemplated without stirring up a feeling of animosity. Still very few of that class were willing to take any part in acts of unlawful violence. There existed, however, a class who were not restrained by any scruples of conscience. The larger number of the Mormons lived between Big Blue and the State line, in three settlements - one in the valley of Brush creek, near the State line, another south of the same creek two miles lower down, and another in the neighborhood of Linwood school-house, two or three miles southeast of the city. The balance lived in the vicinity of and in Independence, and a few were scattered about the county elsewhere.

With a very few exceptions the land was entered or bought in the name of their bishop (Partridge), and was parcelled out in very small tracts, and their settlements resembled continuous villages.

THE NEWSPAPER.

To the old settlers the most annoying and aggravating element in the controversy was the weekly newspaper, which did not hesitate to announce to the unbelieving Gentiles the unwelcome intelligence that the Lord's Zion would soon be purged of their presence, or they would be compelled to bend their stiff necks to the gentle yoke of Mormonism; that this country had been set apart by Divine authority as the heritage of the Latter Day Saints, which they were bound to possess by purchase, by gift or by blood, and when the terrible fate of the wicked Canaanites threatened them we can very well believe those backwoods chaps didn't feel very amiable.

In the last days of October, 1833, a public meeting was held at Independence at which it was resolved that something had to be done, and they immediately proceeded to do it. They laid

VIOLENT HANDS ON THE MORMON

bishop (Partridge) and one other of the saints, tarred and feathered them on the public square, pounded several of the smaller luminaries, razed the small brick printing office to the ground, scattered the type and other fixtures to the four winds and threw the press into the Missouri river. A pretty lively day's work for a new county.

These summary proceedings so far from pouring oil on the troubled waters only intensified the bitterness of the dispute - and from that time the ball went on with fresh vigor.

Gen. Moses G. Wilson, a big Tennessean, and very prominent man in the county, lived at that time on the public road one mile above Big blue, where he had a store. Here various persons to the number of twenty to fifty were accustomed to meet almost daily, from whence they sailed out, sometimes at night, to the Mormon settlements, where they tore down their houses, caught some of the men and unmercifully whipped them, and committed other acts of vandalism. As they were returning from one of these raids, the Mormons suddenly emerged from the woods on both sides of the party and fired into them killing two and wounding a good many others. The two killed