Summer 1939

Book-Length Fiction By Kansas Writers, 1915-1938

Maynard Fox
Fort Hays Kansas State College

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholars.fhsu.edu/theses
Part of the English Language and Literature Commons

Recommended Citation
https://scholars.fhsu.edu/theses/292

This Thesis (L20) is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at FHSU Scholars Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of FHSU Scholars Repository.
BOOK-LENGTH FICTION BY KANSAS WRITERS
1915-1938

being

A thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the Fort Hays Kansas State College in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Science

by

Maynard Fox, A. B.
Fort Hays Kansas State College

Date July 25, 1939  Approved: Myrta E. McGinnis
Major Professor

Chairman Graduate Council
To

My Wife and Son

Whose Self-Denial and Help

Made This Work Possible.

--M. F.
# BOOK-LENGTH FICTION BY KANSAS WRITERS, 1915-1938

## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>A survey of subject matter, settings, and themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Settings of Kansas and adjoining states</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Early days on the plains</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Territorial days: the free-soil controversy</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Settlement from the sixties to the turn of the century</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Recent settings, problems, and developments</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Other settings</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Juvenile fiction</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Critical estimate of major contributions to the novel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Historical</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Immigrants in Kansas</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Character studies</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Reform</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Detective</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Critical estimate of minor contributions to the novel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Historical</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Character studies</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Propaganda, reform, and religious motives</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Adolescent girls</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Juvenile</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Larger values: place in American literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Conclusions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix I</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix II</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When the general subject of writings by Kansas authors first entered the writer's thoughts, it seemed that the whole field of prose writing would be a fruitful one in which to work. And so it proved to be, but one limitation required a further narrowing of the subject—time. So much is being written today that one person must perforce read steadily to know all that is published by writers of his own state. Essay, biography, the maze of journalistic materials, short story, novel—each is overdone in volume, perhaps underdone in real value. After a survey of materials and a reading of a fairly extensive sampling of writings, the writer limited the subject to Book-Length Fiction by Kansas Writers, 1916-1938. Book-Length throws out the short story. Fiction includes novels and other long stories—juvenile and adventure. Kansas Writers are those who were born in Kansas and live here, or those who, though born here, moved away but continued to write about places or people with whom they became acquainted while in Kansas, or those born elsewhere who have
since come to Kansas to live. The dates 1915–1938 bring us to the present but exclude work treated in a former University of Kansas thesis.

The purpose and method of the study have been to find and read the novels of the period in order that some judgment might be formed concerning the use of Kansas and other materials and the worth of the contributions discovered both in relation to each other and in relation to the literature of the nation as a whole.

Mae Reardon of the University of Kansas studied the materials for and wrote A Glance at the Kansas Novel, including all the novels produced before 1915. Naturally the present writer saw no need of using any of the fiction included in her thesis.

Several other related studies have been made. In a series of radio talks from station K. F. K. U. (c1936) Myra E. Hull used some interesting material about the more important Kansas Prose Writers. Iva Belle Harper of the University of Kansas wrote a thesis called A Survey of the Kansas Short Story in 1915. Kansas Women in Literature, 1915, by Nettie Garmer Barker, is a small book of interest to the general reader.

The present writer owes much to James P. Callahan's Kansas in the American Novel and Short Story.
a thesis completed at the University of Kansas in 1926. Mr. Callahan's subject includes some of the books in the present study, but the overlapping is not conspicuous. The present writer used Mr. Callahan's work mainly in the section comparing the fiction of the period 1915-1938 with the fiction of the earlier years.

Two other small books should be mentioned as related studies. A Survey of Kansas Poetry by Sister Mary Tharsilla Carl; and Kansas History as Seen in the Works of Margaret Hill McCarter, by Sister Mary Hildalite Carl, were both published in 1938.

Many of the books by Kansas writers are hard to obtain. There is no library containing all the fiction published since 1916, but the library of the State Historical Society is the most nearly complete. The writer's principal aid came from that library, the University of Kansas Library, the Topeka Public Library, the Hays Public Library, and the library of Fort Hays Kansas State College.

Because of the practical impossibility of obtaining all the fiction of the period, a sampling from some of the more prolific writers has been used as a basis for discussion. Any informed reader will see that no very significant titles have been omitted.

It must be added that newspaper and periodical material about some of the writers was very difficult
to find. It was necessary to know something of an author before including his work in the study. The clippings of the historical library were the best help in this need. Twelve publishers were kind enough to answer questionnaires concerning writers about which no other information was available. No evidence of the hours of searching for this kind of information has been recorded in this thesis.

The writer wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to all those who have given valuable suggestions in directing any part of the work of gathering the material for and the writing of this thesis. Because the writer can not name, in the space allotted here, all those who have helped, he must simply thank the librarians as a group for their directions and for the privileges which greatly speeded the work and enabled him to make a more complete and satisfactory survey of the materials at hand. But two names will be mentioned—Dr. Myrta McGinnis and Dr. Floyd Streeter. As professor in charge of the thesis, Dr. McGinnis has given unstinted labor in advising upon, in reading, and in criticizing this thesis at a time when her attention was heavily called upon elsewhere. The information Dr. Streeter had at hand led directly to the choice and limitation of the subject.

M. F.
A SURVEY OF SUBJECT MATTER, SETTINGS, AND THEMES

A. Settings of Kansas and Adjoining States

Introduction

Kansas history and geography play an important part in deciding what goes into Kansas fiction. This is to be expected. A brief suggestion of this background should aid the reader in his approach to the discussions which follow.

After Coronado's visit to Quivira (Kansas) in 1541, the country lay unwanted for many years. It was included in the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, and it saw many explorers cross its desolate expanse within the next forty years. For fifty years after it became a well-beaten track the old Santa Fe Trail held many dangers for the wagon trains that traveled along its four-hundred-mile stretch through Kansas.

The Kansas-Nebraska Bill of 1854 opened Kansas to a bitter strife preceding the Civil War. Ample record of this period has been recorded in story and factual narrative. In the seventies and eighties came the great rush of settlers. Since that time Kansas
has passed well away from the frontier type of community and is now settling to a permanent structure with its problems for the farmer, the laborer, and the businessman.

Geographically, Kansas is a plains country. It is not the floor-level country which some of those who have never visited it have supposed. It may roughly and inexacty be divided from east to west into the northern or more ruggedly hilly section, and the southern or flatter country. From north to south a line may be drawn midway to divide the state into the eastern or more populous and less arid section, and the western or less populous and more arid section. The state really consists of two different geographical sections. Heavy vegetation, rank crops, and a long growing season are characteristic of the east. The west is different.

Great bluffs along the rivers make sharp divisions between upland and lowland farm districts. All along the Arkansas are sand dunes which are now covered with rank grass but which quickly return to a former state if cropped too closely or if farmed too intensively.

Writers have used these general differences in their books. They have used the historical places,
the immigrants who have made up the population, the industries which have grown up. A large share of the writers have written in and about the eastern third of the state, the section that has been settled much longer than the rest.

1. Early Days on the Plains

Novels in which the stories begin in the days before Kansas and some of its neighbors became territories often cover several states. Great distances had to be covered to accomplish the business then carried on over the prairies. In those days few farms existed in this open country. Because of the magnitude of the country and the scarcity of towns, places are often indefinitely located in novels.

Hal Evarts' Fur Brigade (1928)\(^1\) is not strictly a Kansas story. The opening takes place on the banks of the Missouri River, probably near Kansas City. Later events happen in several parts of the great Northwest toward the headwaters of the Missouri, over the mountains of Utah and the Dakotas, in the salmon country of the Pacific coast as far as Canada. The

---

1. A date following a title refers to the date of publication, not to the time of the story.
central figure of the story is Hunter Breckenridge. Leroux, a Frenchman and a villain, is eventually overthrown, but not until he has captured the golden-haired Nepanamo (Hair-that-shines) McKenzie and carried her far into the Northwest, where Hunter kills all Leroux's band and takes the untouched Ann back to civilization.

The psychology of the traders in their dealings with the Indians is treated at length in this novel. Customs of the various tribes and differences in fur companies' policies in the treatment of the Indians are likewise of importance. Massacre and revenge, love and lust, have dramatic roles in this tale of the fur trade.

Margaret Hill McCarter has a tale of the old Santa Fe Trail from the time of the Mexican War until the late sixties in her novel *Vanguards of the Plains* (1917). The book shows various historical places of Kansas, such as Council Grove, Pawnee Rock, and old Fort Hays. It includes episodes of Mexican and Indian warfare in the territory which later became Oklahoma and New Mexico. The colorful old Trail is a background for the story, but one cannot get a picture accurate in distance-sense because widely separated places often appear to be close together. The impression is otherwise essentially correct.
Ginger (c1927), by Roe and Landers, is the story of a girl on a ranch in some indefinite part of the wild West in the days when St. Louis was the last point of civilization and when the Ozarks and the Indian country were large, unsurveyed territories. Duncan McNeel comes to survey for the government in the territory. Several interesting events culminate in the clearing up of mysterious circumstances which for many years have surrounded the life of Ginger's uncle. This is simply a story of the great open West when men were men and carried guns to prove it.

Of epic inclusiveness is any novel that covers several generations. Although the characters of the novel Trumpets West (c1934) do not reach Kansas until recent years, Elmer T. Peterson opens the story in the days when Kansas was young. He tells of a family of Swedish people who come to America and gradually push Westward until the third generation grows up on Kansas soil near New Salem." The Andreen family has been singled out for the enactment of what the writer for the book-cover termed a "saga of those who have ever moved Westward into the sunset as civilization encroached

2. Today New Salem is a village of about eighty inhabitants, located ten miles northeast of Winfield.
on them from the East." And there is the theme, for
the grandson of the first Andreen in America lives
through the closing pages of the book as he starts in
a non-stop aeroplane flight Westward across the Pacific.

2. Territorial Days: The Free-Soil Controversy

In the 1850's Kansas witnessed a bloody little
Civil War over the question that divided the entire
nation in the next decade.

In *Land of Promise* (1927) and *Free Soil* (1920)
Margaret Lynn deals with historical materials of this
period in Kansas. The slavery fight centering around
Lawrence and the passing of several territorial gover-
nors, from Reeder to Geary, show the extent of time
covered by the two novels. The Wakarusa War, the
election won by Missouri votes, the free-state election,
the sacking of Lawrence, the first meeting of the free-
state legislature, and the raids of John Brown's forces
in Kansas are the principal historical events included.
Local color adds a solid background to the novels.

In *Free Soil* a minor purpose is to show the
development of a girl who enters the controversy un-
expectedly and comes out of it with the rugged assurance
of right that settlers of a new country often have.
In Land of Promise the leading character, John Truman, experiences some doubts about the ethics of the radical free-soilers.

Charles Henry Lerrigo's A Son of John Brown (1937) is a Kansas story opening in Ohio at the time that John Brown brings to Colonel Bentson's home a small child, a white child he has rescued from being sold into slavery for a Negro. The child is called John and grows up as Judson Bentson's cousin. He is told all that is known of his origin, but it is not until the last that he finds his relatives. The underground railway of Ohio is shown in operation.

The people of the story eventually come to Kansas and become involved in the same historical events Margaret Lynn treats in her novels. In his use of the materials Lerrigo has changed a few particulars of the famous Sheriff Jones episodes. Judson and John Bentson see the burning of the two free-soil papers and of the hotel. The raid on Harper's Ferry is told briefly. The story ends with a happy love fulfillment.

3. The State Historical Society has classified the book as biography. Whether or not the story of the adopted son of John Brown is true, the facts are clearly fictionalized.
3. Settlement From the Sixties Until the Turn of the Century

Many settlers came to Kansas in the late 1860's. Development of the eastern part of the state was rapid. Several novels have been written about this period of settlement, some dealing directly with the problems of all the pioneers, some with the problems of special groups.

Mack Cretcher has in *The Kansan* (1923) a novel of settlement at Bison City. The period of time included is from the first settlements until a menace from the Indians no longer exists in the south central and western parts of the state. Mr. Cretcher shows the change from pioneer hardships to the ease and the often unrighteous gains characteristic of the city.

The struggles of Jim Brandon from the time his father dies on the trail until he finds the girl of his dreams occupy the principal part of the book. Important elements are the Indian raid, the prairie fire, and the early boom and heavy speculation.

*In the Heart of a Fool* (1921) is a story which takes place during the growth period of Harvey, Greeley County, in southeastern Kansas. It opens with

4. Probably not the present Bison, Kansas. It could be Wichita, Newton, El Dorado, or a town nearby.

5. Fictitiously placed. Greeley County is actually on the western border of the state.
the coming of the first settlers and closes when the little boy of the beginning reaches middle age. In this story Mr. White has written of the growth of the mining industry. The needs of the foreign workers are the powers that put vitality into Grant Adams' work.

William Allen White put his theme into the title of the book. He shows how the fool, Tom Van Dorn, who says in his heart that there is no God, lets a cancerous growth of lust eat out his goodness (or its potentialities) so that in the end nothing is left but a slight remorse with evil all around the heart and with the ruins of a great career tumbling down around him because of his heedlessness. A secondary fool is Henry Penn. His cancer is drink, but he overcomes it before the end.

Dust in the lives of Martin Wade and his wife Rose furnishes the title and the subject matter for Mr. and Mrs. Haldeman-Julius' book Dust (1921). This story of the early shaping years of pioneer life in the 1860's and of the twenty-eight married years of Martin and Rose takes place in Fallon County, eastern Kansas. Wealth from the sale of coal rights has come

---

6. A fictitious county.
to Martin before his marriage, but his frugal habits and selfish bachelorhood days hold him so that he denies his wife any household conveniences. The money he saves he puts into equipment for his farm animals. Their two children are killed because of Martin's unfeeling attitude toward anything except work. The first is born dead after a cow has kicked Rose. The second runs away and is killed in the mines under Martin's farm. Finally Martin's own death results while he is doing the work which he should have hired someone else to do.

The western part of the state was early turned to a vast cattle range. It was gradually encroached upon by the farmers until much land that was good and much more that was not productive because of many dry years had been plowed up.

The Heritage of the Bluestem (c1930) by Anna Matilda Carlson is a story of Pilgrim Valley, west of Salina, beginning in the 1860's and continuing until the small Scandinavian babe, Arizona Berling, has reached maturity. She is captured by the Indians when five days old and is returned at seventeen years.

---

7. Probably east of Salina in actual setting. I know of no Scandinavian settlements in northwest Kansas in the early period. The topography could be west of Salina.
Later she becomes a great singer in New York but comes back to the soil. Eventually she marries Paul Michaelson, a young legislator, who accepts an appointment to a post that takes him to Egypt and Russia. The distinctive features of the book are the descriptions of Indian raids, grasshopper ravages, a buffalo stampede, dry years, the religious bigotry of the Lutherans and Separatists of Pilgrim Valley, and the workings of the early-day legislatures under a political boss.

A Kansas story of the phenomenon of soil erosion by the wind as confined to small areas is _The Reclaimers_ (1918), written by Mrs. McCarter. It is a narrative of the destruction of land and its reclamation in the community of New Eden, somewhere west of "S'liny," Kansas. The picture of the region is given sufficient space to render it colorful. With Mrs. McCarter the general aim of writing has been to tell the story of the development of the country, but in _The Reclaimers_ the growth of a girl from the time that she knows no responsibility until she has developed resourcefulness and honest daring occupies the central interest of the book.

May Griffée Robinson probably drew heavily from

her own recollections for the materials which went into Immortal Dream Dust (1931). The theme is in the title—the dreams of a strong mother for the education of her flock of little ones. The dreams become dust but not dust of a mortal nature. The story takes place near Sterling, Kansas, in the days of its settlement. Ma Porter dreams of sending her children back to Knox College in Galesburg. But Irma gets married after teaching a few years, others follow their father's occupation of farming, some go to Oklahoma to pioneer again—and Ma gives up one dream after another. Yet she does not feel that her life has been wasted, for the children are a fine lot.

Of George W. Ogden's novels, West of Dodge (1926) pictures as wild a country as any. It has elements common to the history of the western part of the state, such as the township fight, the building of the railroad, and the motley crews of workers. Dr. Andrew Hall enters the country west of Dodge without a gun and conquers Doc Ross and the Simrall gang without one. Wild shootings fill several pages. Mrs. Charles, as cook for the crew on the railroad, furnishes an interesting character study.

Fletcher M. Sisson wrote about the western part of
the state in *The Shepherd's Staff* (1930). It is the story of Granville's coming to Kansas as a cowboy preacher, and of his winning of Buck Boone, an outlaw, to civilized ways. Both love Bonnie, but the preacher restrains the expression of his love. A happy ending comes when Granville finds Sarah and marries her. A brief forward look into events of the twentieth century appears in the last chapter, so that a reader may easily suppose the story took place in the 1870's or 1880's.

The presence of Indians and the account of one of their raids is another evidence of the time shortly after the Civil War.

E. W. Howe's *Anthology of Another Town* (1920) is essentially what the title says. Its central figure is the town, undoubtedly Atchison, Kansas, but it reaches back to the days before the town is founded to show the people who came from the East to make it. It is contemporary in the sense that it brings the town down to the present, but no strict chronological order is discernible in the episodic narratives. No space is given to sketch in any color other than that needed for the individual stories.

9. In the preface the author leads the reader to believe the story is partly biographical.
Victor Murdock's *Folks* (1921) covers the period of settlement and growth of Wichita. It is another of those books of source materials for a novel, comparable to Masters', Howe's, or Canfield's. It is a group of sketches of people who made Wichita. The incidents from the lives of its citizens are incidental bits of color to show the character of the town. Characters include an artist, an actor, a lady, a doctor, a wizard, a rich man, and so on.

More recently than the settlers from the eastern part of the United States many immigrants have come from Germany and Russia to settle this country. Some settled in western Kansas, some in Colorado. Still others entered Arkansas, Oklahoma, and any other state furnishing good land at a cheap price. Ivan Smirnov, in Thelma Hruza's novel (1934)\(^{10}\) by that name, is a pure Russian among the Russian-Germans of Colorado. The story is one of hardships and ignorance, of the acquisitiveness and foresight of some in purchasing land with their "coin." Ivan himself grows up under a rigid work discipline, experiencing the life of an outcast among the other children. The theme is of love and motives misunderstood both by their bearer.

---

10. The novel has not been published. It was completed for the thesis requirement in 1934.
and by others until near the end. The first part of the novel is laid in the blistering beet country of the irrigated tracts of Colorado. In the latter part the scene shifts to western Kansas, probably near Hays. The customs of the Russian-Germans receive adequate treatment. The wedding feast is one of these.  

*Hedwig* (1935) is Vance Randolph's story of a Russian-German girl who is five at the time of the opening of the story, some time before the World War. The pictures given are of squalor among some of the more ignorant immigrants; of a life of free love and prostitution for one girl, in Oklahoma, Kansas, Arkansas, and Missouri; of the ways and means of the liquor bootlegging business. The loyalties of some Germans to the homeland during the World War are brought out. The theme seems to be a cry for social work and education.

4. Recent Settings, Problems, and Developments

Novels by writers who have chosen recent settings no longer touch upon pioneer difficulties. During the twentieth century Kansas has been faced by new problems. The World War brought some of them. Others are the result of natural growth and the unnatural organization of society.
Of Mateel Howe Farnham's books dealing with Kansas subjects, *Rebellion* (1927), winner of a $10,000 prize in 1927, was her first attempt at novel writing. It is placed in New Concord, Kansas,\(^{11}\) and concerns the rebellion of Jacqueline Burrell against the domineering rule of her father. Mr. Burrell has overcome the will of his wife but Jacqueline keeps her own head high. After she has been given a number of advantages in college training and in travel, Jacqueline still cannot get along with her father. Here the expression of women's rights, of feminism, is preached with assiduity. Eventually the daughter marries Kent and receives her inheritance so that she and Kent may go to Paris for his Beaux Arts training.

The village pictured could be one of many like it in the Middle West. Whenever the characters go East or to Europe, the point of view remains that of a person in Kansas telling of far away events. The time is after the World War. The story could well have taken place during the time the author was growing to womanhood. Indeed, a controversy has grown up over the possibility that the book caused her father to disinherit her because it reflected upon his own treatment

\(^{11}\) A fictitious place.
of her and her mother.

Great Riches (1934) is likewise placed in New Concord. The title is taken from this verse in Poor Richard’s Almanac:

A little house well fill’d,
A little field well till’d,
And a little wife well will’d,
Are great riches.

The central characters, James Stimson, the third, and his wife, Jane, are both spoiled children, but Jane is the more intolerable person because of her childhood. The young couple are never happy during their fifteen years together. After James returns from the War, they are divorced and James goes to Leslie, his childhood sweetheart. The book is a decided commentary upon the gossips and the meddlers of the small town. Both of James Stimson’s marriages come about through the steering of a single person, a Miss Julia.

In Lost Laughter (1933), Mrs. Farnham is undoubtedly drawing upon material gleaned from the years of her life in Kansas, although she has placed the story in Missouri. The story centers around the illegitimate son of Bella Price, the father of whom is a nationally known Southern gentleman. It is told in the first person by Hughie’s cousin, a girl ten years his senior. The same kind of knowledge by an old darky is used as appeared in Rebellion. In both stories the
old man's knowledge proves to be a way of concluding the plot and bringing out the character of another person.

Two novels of the recent period touch upon university life, probably at Lawrence. One of these, Tommy of the Voices (1918), by Reynolds Knight, opens at the turn of the century and includes the years of a boy's life from six to twenty-five or thirty. It is a story of a small town boy and his awakening from the trustfulness of six to a growing knowledge of actual experience, from his first bee-sting until his loss of the girl he loves because he thinks something else more important than she. The urgent quest of a young man, university trained, for what is best, is the theme. He of the novel at first thinks study and the editing of a university paper important, as all of us think varied activity worthwhile until a loss occurs through the misplacement of values. Of course Tommy wanders about rather aimlessly over several states and in several jobs until he finds Fanny again.

The Bent Twig (c1915) is one of Dorothy Canfield's novels dealing with a subject placed partly in this section of the country before the days of the automobile. The town of La Chance is the seat of the
university of a Middle West state. Sylvia's father, a professor in the university, brings up his family in a section of town apart from the aristocracy. The girl Sylvia grows up in a sheltered atmosphere, becomes initiated to the ways of the world, and rejects several unsuitable lovers. Eventually she sees that her love for Austin is for himself instead of for his money, now gone, and accepts him.

The theme is evident in the title. The characters show a tendency to develop according to the influences of youth. Sylvia's mother, her father, the life separated from the faster set, are deciding factors in her choices, even in her approval of Austin.

Economic, political, social, and religious novels have not been neglected in recent years. L. Addison Bone wrote in *Behold a Man* (c1921), a story placed in the larger cities of the state. Fights, fistic and verbal and capitalistic, take place within its pages. Local color has been reduced to a minimum, probably because the development of the characters and the theme require very little beyond the brief scenes showing laboring men at work and at the discussions of their problems.

12. La Chance is probably Lawrence, where Miss Canfield grew to womanhood.
The book insists upon economic reorganization. The theme protrudes so vigorously that only a slight story binds together the propaganda. It is against the whole capitalistic system, for profit sharing between employer and employee. Of the 233 pages, 75 are filled with the propositions and platforms of the new organization.

The story is told in the first person. Principal characters are those standing staunchly for the new order—read, the professor, and Mason.

George Alfred Brown wrote Harold the Klansman (1923) to represent the Ku Klux Klan and its work in Kansas. It, like none's book, is highly propagandistic. It is really a source book in the principles of the Klan. B'nai B'rith of the Jews and Knights of Columbus of the Catholics are cited as similar organizations. The story mingled with the Klan doctrine is interesting in itself but not enough background is given to place it definitely in any section of the state. Harold King is the Klansman. Stover proves to be the foul crook. Of course Wolter is introduced as a rival suitor to add spice to the story. All ends well with King and Ruth Babcock happily engaged.

13. The author wrote from Neodesha in Wilson County, southeastern Kansas.
Charles M. Sheldon wrote *Howard Chase, Red Hill, Kansas* (1918) with the expressed purpose of picturing the most gossipy town in the state, the town called Red Hill. Through many adverse situations he triumphs in his ministry, gets his pastorate back a second year, and wins Agnes, the leading deacon's daughter. The principal uses of color in the story deal with the gossipy town as seen by a rather liberal minister. It could have taken place any time in the past fifty years.

William L. White has a story of contemporary interest in *What People Said* (1938). The Finney bond scandal, which culminated within the last decade, forms the central story around which a picture of people of today is drawn. The newspaper and corruption in politics have their places in the story. The scene of action, although located by the author in the imaginary state of Oklarado, is in eastern Kansas, probably Emporia. White tells of two families in similar positions of public honor and brings both through the story, the son of the Morssex family going in disgrace to prison for bond forgery and the son of the Carrough family publishing

the paper that has closest contact with the story's chief events.

The utilities of Kansas have had a rapid development in the period since the World War. Hugh Maddox goes up as an executive in this business, but he cannot win Alison Winters as part of his booty. Hilda Mauck's *Wings of Hope* (c1932) shows Hugh's tenacious holding onto a hope for their future happiness, even after Alison marries Jimmy Todd, ambitious young clerk. It takes several jolts to shake the boyish Jimmy loose and make him grow up, but he finally comes to himself and refuses an easy job at high pay because he doesn't want Hugh's help in caring for Alison. The unselfishness of Alison in staying by an unfortunate friend also opens Jimmy's eyes. The time of the story is 1928-30; the places, Kansas City and central or southern Kansas.

Both *Widening Waters* (1924) and *Homeland* (c1922) by Mrs. McCarter may be called books of contemporary developments. The scenes of greatest action in both are Colorado and New Mexico. *Homeland* is a story dealing with the mining development and the trickery growing out of the stipulations of a will. The spirit of the West permeates the scenes in that section but slavish copying of nature does not appear to be the author's purpose. *Widening Waters* treats the development of
irrigation and the continuation of the sheep-raising industry in New Mexico. Race characteristics which show when Indian, Mexican, Scotchman, Englishman, and American are thrown into close juxtaposition are given a large place in the development of the story.

Kirke Mechem’s *A Frame for Murder* (1936) is set in and near Wichita. It is a commentary upon the lives of a certain group or kind of people, one element of the oil development population. Its set purpose is, of course, to unravel a murder mystery. The country homes of modern oil barons, the seething life all about the gushing oil well, the picture of a gusher, and the drinking habits of people in a "dry" state, come in for careful study.

Tacy Stokes Paxton’s *Tellings* (1928) is a naive story told in the first person by a very small child. The country life of the family of Molly, Freddie, Me, and the parents could take place anywhere in the great Middle West. The fortunes of the family take them through moderate means to barest poverty. Sickness in the family is often present. Eventually the culprits named Slade and Flint are caught and punished for their wrongdoings. The setting is not placed at or near any known town.

*Aunt Liza's "Praisin' Gate"* (1916), by Effie Graham,
is a brief chronicle of happenings in the lives of Aunt Liza Hollerson and her husband, Jone. They live in the eastern part of Kansas at the time women receive the vote. By twisting the parson's text, Aunt Liza becomes obsessed with yearning for a "praisin' gate." Family misunderstanding then comes about because Jone will not listen to her religious raving. All ends well at Christmas time. The minor story brings out the theme of human sympathy for disrupted families and how it can be shown by reporters in their treatment of the juicy news of domestic strife. The Negroes' lives and their spiritual beliefs and misconceptions occupy the center of interest in the story.

_Missy_ (1920) is the story of the development of a modern girl from her earliest teens until the latest. Dana Gatlin pictures an unsophisticated town, Cherryvale, in the story. It can be placed any time in the present century. As a picture of a town's youth it best serves the author's purpose. It is not a story of rural scenes. Missy experiences a flame of religious fervor early in the book. She helps an older friend so that he is happily married. Then Missy

---

15. Cherryvale is a town of over four thousand souls, located in the northeastern part of Montgomery County, southeastern Kansas.
grows into beaux and parties, learns to blush, to ride a horse, and finally to write society items for the Cherryvale Beacon. Thus the growing girl develops.

Mrs. Louisa Cooke Don-Carlos wrote Virginia's Inheritance (c1915). It is the story of a child born to an unfortunate mother, but after several years in the poorhouse and in other care, Virginia's mysterious origin is cleared up to the satisfaction of those concerned so that she inherits her rightful estate. The theme includes the misguided desires of Peter White, poorfarm overseer, for money. Virginia is the central childish figure in a picture containing old people such as her adopted Aunt Louisa and her Grandmother Putnam. The heavy growth of trees and plants common to the eastern part of the state is pictured in several outdoor scenes.

In Unhappy Wind (1930) Nelson Antrim Crawford treats the theme of cross currents in the life of a growing boy. From a very small child, Winifrid grows to manhood and finds himself always a little different from other boys. He goes the long road with a girl, Marjorie, without any pangs of conscience, but he does feel relieved when she tells him that she has to marry a Lieutenant Wilson to save herself. But young
Winifrid, who has decided to give himself fully to the Roman Catholic Church, finds that the knees of a girl opposite him in a rail car can interest him. Thus blow the unhappy winds of his desire.

Color in this novel is largely a matter of minute details. To the small child color appears in everything—in music, sounds, expressions on the face, tones of voice, feelings inside people. Local color crops out in the picture of luxuriant vegetation, gentle people, and small-town atmosphere.

B. Other Settings, Characters, and Subject Matter by Kansas Writers of Fiction

A few Kansas writers have backgrounds that cause them to write of places remote from the section of the country. The settings of these novels and stories are so widely scattered that no unified picture of them can be presented. Consequently, those have been reserved for this part of the discussion.

Mrs. L. M. Alexander knows South Carolina. Her novel, Candy (1934) is based upon that state. Although the materials are historical in background in that the Negro is making the adjustment from slavery to freedom, it is difficult to place the novel within a certain period of time. Mrs. Alexander probably had in mind
the carpet-bagger period of reconstruction for the South. The local color of the plantation fairly bristles out from the novel—from description and dialogue alike. Mrs. Alexander has shown the great pull of the old plantation upon the central figure, Candy. The loose ways of Candy are somewhat condoned, for the thought that heavy drudgery and the fading of youth cause the death of love in the heart of many a married person holds the attention of the thoughtful person through most of the story. In the end Candy's system does not work.

Charles H. Lerrigo's novel, The Castle of Cheer (c1916), is set in Chicago and is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Edward L. Trudeau. The castle of cheer, a sanitarium for tuberculous patients, grows from a struggling institution with a limited number of free patients to one well endowed through the change in heart of Vance Doane and the changing fortunes of Milton Stroud, Johnny Langston, and "Old Doc" Williams. The love theme appears in the story, and the theme of fourfold restitution for wrong done any man.

Because of her years in missionary work, Josephine H. Westervelt felt called to write The Pool of Sacrifice (c1931), an adventure which takes place in Guatemala
and Yucatan. The adventure centers around the missionary work of Simpson Weldon and his subsequent marriage to Elsie.

C. Juvenile Fiction

The material included in this section is far from complete. In addition to the books discussed, it should be remembered that much of the fiction of Kansas interests children and adolescents. Some writers probably would have included such books as Missy, Telling, and unhappy Wind in the juvenile section, but the present writer feels that there is too much the youth will miss and that the adult will understand and enjoy in these books to consider them juvenile.

Edna Becker has written after the manner of the medieval tale in Hugh and Denis (1934). A dozen stories with connective links tell of fourteen years in the lives of two brothers of the Middle Ages in northern France. The material is definitely historical in scope and use, but the interest of the stories has not been subordinated to the scholarly materials. Details of medieval ceremonies such as betrothal, marriage, customs of hunting, and methods of sanitation add
touched of interest to the story. Names of implements are given to acquaint adolescents with the Middle Ages. As Hugh grows up he becomes first a squire at fourteen and then a knight at twenty-one. Denis is slower in growing but finally reaches the place that makes it possible for him to become a squire.

Dorothy Canfield wrote *Understood Betsy* (1916) for girls of ten to fifteen. The story begins in a state which could be Kansas and ends in Vermont on a farm. Betsy learns what it means to live and find out things for herself after having spent much time existing with her oldster aunts.

Charles B. Driscoll's *Treasure Aboard* (1931) is interestingly illustrated at the beginning to show where it takes place. It is the story of five boys living in and just south of Wichita. They camp on an island in the Arkansas River nearby and discover a buried ship in the middle of a sandhill. Then begins a fantastic tale of five million dollars worth of treasure aboard, of drifting down to the mouth of the Mississippi during a spring flood, and of fighting Harry Slade, an old man crazy for gold. The naming of the Spaniards who buried the gold and the discovery by the boys of a journal in Spanish add authentic touches.
Of course the ship has to be abandoned in the Gulf of Mexico and only pockets full of gold can be salvaged.

Of Thomas C. Hinkle's numerous animal stories, *Black Storm* (c1929) has been chosen as representative. *Black Storm* is a horse that cannot be ridden until Joe Bain mounts him without spurs and conquers his frightened spirit. In the introduction Dr. Hinkle makes us believe that *Black Storm* is a real horse that has roamed all the Northwest for several years. The horse's adventures in the story take him over Kansas from Wichita to Junction City and out into the open spaces for unknown distances.

Edna Osborne Whitcomb wrote *We Five* (c1922) about children from the ages of four to nine and probably for children of the same ages. The five small children live on a Kansas farm and grow up with the live things.
CHAPTER II
A CRITICAL ESTIMATE OF MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NOVEL

Introduction

In any criticism of a book read for pleasure, the process of judgment is probably in the inverse order from that which the critic would have us believe. What actually happens is that the reader feels deeply impressed or impressed not at all, and, because of his particular reaction, he begins to search for the things of the book which caused him to feel thus. Eventually he happens upon a plausible answer, and he blandly states to a gullible public that this book is sentimental, that it is improbable in the sequence of its happenings, and, consequently, is not convincing to the reader; and he is all the while unaware of his up-side-down reasoning process.

The writer must admit that he sometimes felt unconvinced by the novels here represented without knowing just why he felt it. For the general or pleasure reader, that reaction is enough to doom the book to an obscure place. Phrasing and diction play such a large part in the effects a writer is able to make that it is not always possible to judge objectively.
A critical attitude toward the novels represented here brings out some interesting things.

The novels of the period fall logically into several divisions. The most obvious use of Kansas materials can be seen in the historical novels. Fewer in number but quite as important for the use of the materials that have gone into the making of the state are the novels which tell of the settlers who came to Kansas from foreign countries. Several novels dealing with present-day problems or those of the first part of the century are probably more correctly classified as character studies than as any other type. One novel of reform and one detective novel are considered important for the period.

A. Historical Novels

Miss Lynn is Kansas' foremost writer of historical fiction during the period. Her two books treat a controversial subject in a manner inviting to criticism. Her reader may find himself wondering why the anti-slavery forces were made up of such angelic characters until he is reminded that the opposing side was necessarily of evil origin. The Southern man who hoped for a slave state out of the Kansas Territory could not leave his plantation, but he could send disreputable
men in his place. Thus came about the battle ground between real settlers from New England and Ohio and the squatters from South Carolina and Missouri. Miss Lynn finally achieves fairness by depicting a few characters such as the Southern gentleman, Evans, a man as fine as any of her free-state men.

Miss Lynn's means are ordinary. She achieves nothing above the average in characters, but she does not descend to the plane of sentimentalism in her characterizations. The young hearts of Hardie and Phoebe (Free Soil) beat joyously in their love song, a kiss is exchanged upon occasion, and confusion enters Phoebe's thoughts when she fears detection by the children of the cabin, but the note of love rings true.

A conflict in ethics takes place in the mind and actions of John Truman. Selected by his Lawrence townsmen as a natural leader, he refuses any official position but influences the group to a policy of non-resistance. A great change comes when he is convinced that Brown's work has been misunderstood and that good can come from it. Thus he actually takes part in one battle on the side of Brown. His mental crisis proves to be a severe one, but he comes out of the hardship of it all with a feeling of justification
in a human sense.

The differences in point of view between the two books by Miss Lynn are interesting. *Free Soil* has that of a woman who knows much about the movements and means of the free-state men. In *Land of Promise* a sympathetic understanding of a girl of the early teens makes itself felt until one sometimes feels that the author is that young girl. Without being inconsistent, Miss Lynn allows the adult point of view to be in evidence in several places where the relatively limited knowledge of the girl will not make clear the progress of events.

The novels of Margaret Lynn are readable life stories of the history of the state and should be recognized for their careful scholarship and relatively unbiased presentation.

Hal G. Evarts achieved, in *Fur Brigade*, something of the heroic tone of Cooper, a little of the romantic strain of Scott. He saw the great fur country of America as it was controlled by three nations in 1815, and he chronicled the vast agencies at work in depopulating the area of Indians and fur-bearers. Any reader can catch the spirit of his vision and see the magnificent brigade go down the long road of history. But another reader will see further, will appreciate the Southern drawl of Hunter Breckenridge, the Scotch
characteristics of Big Mack, and the oil-smooth ways of French Leroux as being a little too near stereotypes to be considered more than characteristic figures in the enactment of a great historical drama. Perhaps that is what we should have in such a chronicle, but it is doubtful. History makes ample record of types, of average men and their deeds. A novel should be more than that.

Comparable to Evarts’ Fur Brigade as a record of some historical part of the West is Mrs. McCarter’s Vanguards of the Plains. The conception is as great. The rich use of events, places, and persons historical is still greater. But again the characters do not measure up to the greatness of the chronicle. Esmond Clarenden is a wiser, a kindlier man than any the writer has ever known. Gail Clarenden, the first-person narrator of the story, may be compared with the Jim Hawkins of Treasure Island. All he does is right, good, fortunate. Any reader desiring to gain a picture that will stay in his mind, or it may be his heart, should read the book. It gives life, too idealistic and fanciful, to be sure, to the period from the 1840's to the late 1860's.

As a novel, Vanguards of the Plains shows improvement over some of Mrs. McCarter’s earlier works in which
her self-conscious analytical study of character was not as convincing as the technique of dramatic presentation used in this novel. However, Mrs. McCarter continues to be at her best when she deals with colorful scenes instead of characters and plots. Her earlier technique is evident again in *The Reclaimers*, published a year after *Vanguards of the Plains*. Her story is convincing enough, but her way of telling all and leaving nothing for the reader to think out for himself does much to lessen its value.

Two of Mrs. McCarter's novels, *Widening Waters* and *Homeland*, are filled with exciting action. The youth of Kansas like to read them.

### B. Immigrants in Kansas

Forty years ago Kansas was in the midst of a period of rapid immigration from Russia and Germany. Sometimes whole communities were set up and the foreigners remained apart from their neighbors. Americanization eventually will take place, but not before many worthy and unworthy members of the new communities have met unhappy experiences because of their differences from their neighbors.

A novel of this group is Thelma Hruza's *Ivan Smirnov*. In it the characters stand out as individuals. There
is a common denominator in the ways of all immigrants of one nationality, but, as Mrs. Hruza recognizes, not as many fall into a deeper groove of likeness as might be supposed. Many Russians believe in hard work for all members of the family. Others are unappreciative and unimaginative, just as are people of other nationalities.

Ivan's father, a Russian, is certainly not characteristic of all the Russians. He resembles some in his desire for more "coin" with which to buy land and in his resultant craze for work. Because of his hard early years of poverty, this characteristic is consistent with his energetic nature. Ivan follows the laws of heredity in his physical and mental make-up. He has the acquisitiveness and uncanny judgment of his father. He is in much else the son of his mother. His unfortunate way of wooing Elaine Northrup must have been intended to show the daring and misfitness of the odd child now grown to manhood. As a study in Americanization and as a record of customs it is a worthy addition to Kansas and Colorado literature.

Vance Randolph produced a compelling story when he wrote Hedwig. There is something so fresh about his realistic way of writing that the reader is projected

1. The novel has been revised and bettered since the thesis, from which the information was taken, was written.
with little effort on his part into the mood the author feels. He believes that he understands the ignorance and simplicity of the unfortunate girl who tells the story. He sees poverty and ignorance doing strange things much against the dictates of modern sanitation. He sees the desire of the girl for fine clothes when she must spend her last dollar to get them. He knows what keeps people where they are, why they must stay up or down in a "class-free" country.

A serious lack in the story is the indefiniteness of the plot, but if one considers the aimlessness of the conditions pictured he sees that no culminating incidents are needed. The girl's life will continue as it has been going until she meets violent death or is cast upon the generosity of society. As a cross-section of life the story presents a clear picture. Although this story treats a foreign element in Kansas, its purpose cannot be construed by any to be the painting of a picture of the Russian-Germans. Hedwig is not representative of her people. The difficulties of the Germans in understanding the ways and the beliefs of their adopted countrymen add an authentic touch for the attention of the sociologist. Characteristic of the girl's thoughts and of the author's style is this:

It always seemed like I was to be somebody big
in the world, and I never thought it would all turn out like I am now.  

Elmer T. Peterson's story, *Trumpets West*, shows the Swedish people who moved to Kansas. It cannot be termed a novel with the primary purpose of showing the new habits and the Americanization of a people. Peterson shows instead a people unchangeable in the desire to be always heading toward undeveloped land or resources. This idea of a resourceful people fits the pioneering kind, but oftener stories of pioneers end by showing the original settlers in a niche of the community which no one else can fill instead of picturing them ever forging Westward. The novel is noteworthy in the amount of time and the expanse of country it covers without losing the balance of important events and the unity of effect even a novel should possess. If one were to list the incidents of the story in chronological order, one would find that each adds a bit toward the fulfillment of the super-theme. For this reason it may be said that the author uses discrimination in selection of detail.

An interesting variation is Peterson's use of a short overture to begin each section of the book.

2. P. 20.
Each has a mythical or literary allusion pointing toward the developments which take place in the pages following. Style and technique in the narration are not noticeable. There is no particular good or bad in the manner of writing. Only wonder at the world of things and vital seriousness appear.

C. Character Studies

Novels may be short on plot and long on character. An outstanding novel of this type by a native Nebraskan is My Antonia. In Kansas a few writers have developed stories showing more character development than plot. Of these, Unhappy Wind is the most pronounced type.

Nelson Antrim Crawford selected an unusual idea to exemplify in Unhappy Wind. It is not that the idea is so uncommon in the minds of people but that it does not often find expression as the principal theme in novels of today. His idea goes something like this: the world is made up of human beings. Some are soldiers, some farmers; a few are financiers, a few churchmen, many laborers. Some are better than others, some worse. The human element exists in all. In a hundred young men, there will be some better than others, some worse.

3. Willa Cather is the author.
The human element exists in all. In a hundred young men, there will be some better than others, some worse. Of the better ones, a few will take up this calling, a few that. Of the worse, some will be soldiers, some farmers, some financiers, some churchmen, some laborers. It is not to be expected that all the better people will fall into one occupation, nor all the worse into one.

He could have no other idea uppermost in picturing the life of Winifrid. This boy chooses to be a churchman. He is not very bad, not very good. He feels no particular hypocrisy in his attitudes and actions, which are far from puritanical. Yet the author chooses to call his book *Unhappy Wind* because trouble must be in store for the lad in the days ahead of him. The particular import of the idea comes in the author's refusal to become excited about the unhappy development of the boy Winifrid. In his acceptance of the situation he approves the idea that some churchmen must be worse than they should be.

The story Miss Canfield has to tell in *The Bent Twig* is one that has often been told. The lusts after drink, money, prestige, the flesh, are the powers that are being fought by Miss Canfield. She shows how the lust for money ruins the life of Aunt Victoria Marshall-Smith.
She pictures the sophistications of various sets of people in the university. She shows the life of Arnold ruined by drink.

If Miss Canfield would place herself more definitely on the side of the apologists for the village, she could more ably tell her story of the power of the lusts. The evil she finds in La Chance is an encroachment from the East, or from the vices of large cities. Her sympathies are with the misunderstood atmosphere of Sylvia's home.

It must be said that Miss Canfield understands the adolescent girl with the appreciative perspective of her years; she keeps herself far enough removed from her pictures of torrid love scenes to make her true purpose evident in them; she does not lose herself in the sentimental. She creates delightfully sure pictures. If an episode is mellow, if nauseating, if uncomfortable, conflicting, or pitiful, she makes the reader sure of it.

The character of Sylvia is a problem only to the girl herself. Any reader can see the inevitable forces of her life leading on to her final decision. Sylvia's explanation to Arnold of her doubt about her own

motives before Austin gave up his riches shows her unwillingness to believe in herself. This alone does not seem quite true of her prototype.

The book is interesting reading for anyone who has not heard too much preaching on the subject. Miss Canfield does not preach, but an unsympathetic reader might accuse her of it.

The bullying character of Mr. Burrell shown in _Rebellion_ is a consistent creation and certainly not an overused type in character studies, but Mrs. Farnham would not deserve mention here had she written no more novels. The weakness of _Rebellion_ lies in the development of the love theme. In it is seen inexperience and a consequent unimpressive and sentimental effect. Even the scenes of anger between Jacqueline and her father are long, difficult harangues sounding unnatural and forced.

Her two later novels dealing with folk of the Middle west show much improvement in effects, gained through a better understanding of cause and effect and probably a better perspective with the passing of the years in her own life. In _Great Riches_ she does not condemn the small town as an institution of this country. She strikes at the root of the trouble--some of the people making up the population of the small town. She
sees the town with the perspective of an Easterner. Her characters are unhappy young people because of their own faults and because of meddlers. Domestic tensions in a marriage that was not believed in by the author before it took place grow until life for the parties of the contract is one distraction after another. Sociologically, the central story is a careful study.

Lost Laughter develops the theory of the inheritance of certain qualities by a child, even when the child does not come under the direct influence of either of the parents. Physical formation and mental characteristics are both emphasized in Hughie's resemblance to his mother and father. The whole story hinges around the lad whose parents are both unknown in the community in which he is reared because of the stigma attached to his birth. In the use of this theme the novel is successful. In treatment of a broader purpose, a more useful one, it is lacking. Great Riches is more significant.

Hilda Mauck's choice of approach to the love theme in Wings of Hope cannot be said to be entirely fortunate. She does avoid the overworked way of picturing a long series of love scenes and an equal or greater number of disappointments before dropping the hero and heroine
upon us with an approaching marriage as a climax. She avoids this by the choice of theme. Wings of hope bear joys or sorrows contrarily: to Hugh Maddox they promise much joy but give little; to Jimmy Todd, fulfillment of ambition, which is about to be gained as the story closes; to Alison Winters, a better Jimmy. The author emphasizes the story of Alison and her hope.

Sociologically, the implications of the story are important. The trend during the present century for husband and wife both to work finds expression in the story of Alison's and Jimmy's marriage and their subsequent hopes for something better. The treatment of an unfortunate girl by the more fortunate Alison and her attempted explanation of how she herself could have fallen in the same way touches an important factor in the fall of many a girl.

Any particular value the story has must lie in the whole, not in any part of it or any means of development. The character development is not unusual. Neither is the style, or the use of incident, or any other part. The whole is a careful, an effective, a touching story made of ordinary materials. The characters are human. If anywhere, there lies the strong appeal of the book.

In Tommy of the Voices Reynolds Knight defines the urge of an intelligent young man to find a suitable
companion in life as an indefinite one, an urge to something fine, idealistic, unplaceable. He does not make the mistake of supposing that love of woman is an entirely separable quality. He recognizes that the mind of a young man of talents turns to pursuits other than love, and that such a young man believes that the voices calling him are the right ones. In Tommy's experience the satisfaction of longing comes only after several years of rather average success in other pursuits. Knight approaches nearest the much-worked idea that love and careers in the highest sense do not mix, somewhere near the middle of the novel. The realization and depiction of the fine balance of the qualities and wishes of a young man's mind are the important elements of the story. The author avoids too much use of sentimentalism.

As a character sketch, the novel brings out the development of a balanced kind of lad who knows himself different from other boys from his first disillusionment until the fullest reach of his mental powers has been developed.

5. A dead bee stung him while he was burying it.
William Allen White's *In the Heart of a Fool* is a noteworthy contribution to the novel of reform or economic reorganization. The plot he develops is far from complex in any modern sense. The usual main plot interest—concerning Tom Van Dorn, if we take the title as our criterion for judgment—is supplemented by an interwoven plot of almost equal importance—the development and work of Grant Adams.

Mr. White has used the method of basing much that he says upon biblical quotation without becoming dogmatic and sentimental. The healthy glow of the comprehensive outlook colors the entire book. The boy Grant may rave in his spiritual awakening after the fire in the mines, but the maudlin does not enter the story. Grant is kept from becoming an idealized figure by the simple means of letting him fall into clandestine disgrace early in life and of picturing him with rough features.

A forceful picture of a man is that of Tom Van Dorn. A temporary release from youth's failings allows him to marry a fine woman and to secure the support of a powerful politician. It is a release, because he

---

6. For a contrasted idea, see Blankenship, *American Literature*, p. 652.
feels within himself an urge to do the right thing for a time, but the overpowering influence of a rotten and rotting core is too much for a man with a fleeting desire to be good. The use of analogy in presenting the sad case of Henry Renn has a striking effect. Van Dorn's eager course in the "primrose hunt" receives the same recompensatory setbacks as Renn's way with the bright liquids that flow softly down to the starved entrails.

The challenge of the book is stirring. Greed and power try to keep down the ignorant masses. The informed "have-nots" take up the fight against corruption in politics and injustice in business. Foreigners with hearts and loves as strong as those of the aristocracy are given a virile sympathy.

The rise of labor unions and the means employed in the book to obtain the demands of the masses may bring us too near the practices labelled as Communism. Essentially the pull is toward justice. If Mr. White is advocating justice and uses an unselfish man as his mouthpiece, then should not that man be allowed to participate in a bit of idealistic communal enterprise to gain his ends?

The book appeared after most novelists had turned to new fields with the changing public mind after the
World War. However, it may be considered a final shot of the time, perhaps a delayed-fuse bomb in a cause that is not yet settled, whether writers continue talking of the issue or not.

E. Detective Novel

A detective novel must be a study of motives and planning in the mind of a human being. Kirke Mechem has contributed a detective novel (A Frame For Murder) rather isolated because of none other of Kansas origin with which to compare it. It certainly excels the poorly constructed flood of dime novel stories. It is excellent in its intricate balance of evidence against all the characters. Mechem makes the reader feel foolish for not recognizing the guilt of the murderer, but the end is slightly too conventional in its complete surprise. A reversal comes in the closing scene. Ripley is taken as the culprit immediately after it has seemed that his friend Garnet is being enclosed in the mesh of circumstances. It may be said that this novel presents challenging studies in hidden motives.

CHAPTER III
CRITICAL ESTIMATE OF MINOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NOVEL

Introduction

The would-be critics of any age have weaknesses that do not allow them to see the literature of their own day from the most intelligent point of view. Certain types of writing have been set up for them. Anything that varies from the type in organization, content, or technique is looked at askance and depreciated accordingly. Consequently, writers with much good in them are often not "found" until many years after they have done their best work. With a full realization that this very thing may happen to one or two writers in the minor group reserved for this chapter, the present writer presents the evidence which follows. The books represented here have as yet created no great stir in the literary world. Some are outstanding for particular parts or techniques, as will be pointed out.

Books of fiction written primarily for children,

1. To some it can not happen for the books represented here.
although not considered novels, are included in the last section of the chapter.

A. Historical for Kansas and the West

Mae Griffiee Robinson has in *Immortal Dream Dust* a book of appealing interest. The simplicity of the manner (it could be called Pa and Ma phrasing) destroys all the feeling of sophistication. The book is short and the events few. It could hardly be called a novel if it were not for the achievement of the theme. The author, lest her purpose be misconstrued, has repeatedly brought out the thoughts and hopes of the little "Ma" who struggles for her children.

Lerrigo's *A Son of John Brown* is the last word in an idealized picture of the free-state men, including the fanatical John Brown. The first part, treating the subject of the underground railroad and the free-state feeling in Ohio, is a slightly different treatment from the usual interpretation of this illegal practice. The latter part dealing with the Kansas struggle has been written about so much and so often that Lerrigo fails to present anything essentially new. His changes in the details of some of the affairs of the famous sheriff Jones and the fight around Lawrence add nothing especially good.
Anna M. Carlson's story of Pilgrim Valley (The Heritage of the Bluestem) contains historical materials that show the development of the state in a true light. Evidences within the novel point to such hasty writing that it seems little more than a book of raw materials. Much of the story consists of narratives in the first person, related by old settlers of the valley. Such speeches destroy the unity of the novel because of their length and their digressive pull. For over a third of the book, sandwiched between the ends, the story of the growing political machine is told. From the point of technique this would be of no damage if the story of the girl Arizona were carried through this part at all consistently. The author keeps us wondering if she has forgotten her original narrative. The novel is entertaining in spite of these lapses.

G. W. Ogden's manner is hurried. In West of Dodge he takes the short and unconvincing route to make characterizations. He describes the appearance and the nature of his characters, leaving nothing for the reader to do except to notice that he has often said too much about his characters and left too little to the actions of the characters.

Roe and Landers have some good materials in their book Ginger. The opening scene, in which the meeting
of the hero and the heroine is brought about, is too conventional for effectiveness and tells much of the outcome against the will of the reader. Thorough revision of the story to bring out impressions more emphatically and to sketch in necessary background would make it more effective than it is. In mechanical details the novel is crude. Vague rhetorical references and an unconventional use of commas cause any experienced reader to wonder why some good proof reader was not employed to make the reading smoother.

Mack Cretcher’s use of plot structure in The Kansan is interesting. The outcome of his story is predictable in the sense that the majority of novels end happily, but the means he uses is unexpected. The story does lack probability because of several lapses from character to aid the plot. One of these comes when he has the Jim we have known throughout the story for a careful and coolheaded person suddenly display an unseeing anger, shout threats, and thus motivate a suspicion in the minds of the onlookers that Jim was responsible for Steve Osborn’s death.

The details of description are too uneven. Mr. Cretcher often tells in a page what should take ten to tell with conviction and in the proportion assigned to
other passages of equal importance. The story is an exciting one worthy of consideration because of its use of historical material.

Howe's and Murdock's collections of sketches (The Anthology of Another Town and Folks, respectively) are interesting chiefly because of their abruptness and brevity. The usual plot-structure is not carried over from one sketch to another. The character of the town is the important interest to be developed. The same characters are mentioned in different sketches, but this use is incidental. The two writers have put a great deal of their philosophies into their anthology type of story. They have presented the raw materials from which fiction is written. In the sketches themselves just what is fact and what fiction is difficult to say.

B. Character Studies

Mrs. L. M. Alexander produced a puzzling novel in Candy. The book may be interpreted in two principal ways. Either the book is a representation of the loose ways of the plantation Negroes written for the accumulation of sales or it is a realistic representation written for the sake of preserving the changing status of the moral and social evolution of the plantation Negro.
The book is especially light reading. This evidence supports the former suggestion. But the characters of Candy and her friends are so consistently drawn that the easy reading may suggest hard work by the author in bringing a sense of realness to the narrative. The changed status of the Negro and his difficulty in believing in any system of social life other than that to which his ancestors were accustomed as slaves are shown in the character of Candy. Candy's system admits but one lover at a time, and she loves him wholeheartedly. Her system has the merit of keeping alive a love that she fears will die if she were chained to the man and forced to lose her personality in drudgery. The implication is clearly that the author can understand the merits of the system, but the difficulties encountered overbalance the advantages. The book neither condones nor condemns.

Mr. and Mrs. Haldeman-Julius' book Dust must be classed as a character study. It shows how a particular man among the early settlers of the country developed into a brute. Hard work and deprivation in pioneer days may have made many harsh and unfeeling, but few could be to the extent that Martin Wade of this story is. The tragedy of losing the spirit of play is sad indeed.
Martin becomes acquisitive and unfeeling, probably because his original nature is fitted to the kind of life he leads.

A too-sparse background at the beginning gives the reader a feeling of incompleteness. The technique of the book could be better, but the bitterness and the inevitableness of it could not. It grips the heart. Once the marriage of Martin and Rose takes place, the impending disaster is as inevitable as the crash of an automobile hurtling through harmless space.

Tacy Stokes Paxton's novel Tellings cannot be considered important in its general elements—plot, incident, setting. The method of developing character is the interesting thing. The point of view of a child who is only one or two years old is well "supposed." Naively the child relates events which are clear to an adult reader. The reader is made to feel that the child is well represented. Words which a child does not hear correctly, such as bran, hired man, and Jew's harp, are given as brand, hard man, and juice harp. Ideas are similarly cloudy yet they reveal a child's attitudes and interests.

A person well acquainted with Emporia and with possible real life characters in the book has said that W. L. White did good reporting in his What People Said.
but that he probably failed to fictionalize some of his material sufficiently. Certainly the characters are well drawn. The young Lee Norssex is a dupe of his father's methods, and he is a too-persistent and enterprising young man to maintain his entire sanity. His mad desire for recognition and achievement lead him to perpetrate crimes for which the public usually lowers the culprit to the position of scoundrel. White has tried to show the psychological importance of Lee's trouble, and he has been ordinarily successful. The novel is realistically written. It attempts to use the stream of consciousness technique without depending too much upon incomplete or fragmentary sentences. The relatively low intellectual level of the characters and the ordinary conversations give a good picture of a great group of young people.

Effie Graham studies the mind of the old Negro woman and its turning upon religious and social questions in Aunt Liza's "Praisin' Gate." The happiness of the Negroes she evidently knows depends upon simple explanations of complex affairs. Miss Graham's treatment of the difficulties of the young white people cannot be said to be consistent with her treatment of the

2. Dr. Myrta McGinnis, Assistant Professor of English, Fort Hays Kansas State College.
Negroes. The reader feels the careful distance of Miss Graham while she narrates the majority of the events in the book, but when she turns to the white folks she suddenly becomes sentimental. Evidently Miss Graham understands the Negro but she feels too close and too dear to her own people to treat them with the objectivity she uses with the Negroes.

C. Propaganda, Reform, and Religious Motives

Among the motives for writing fiction may be listed the desire to bring about changes, either in social customs, in government, or in religion. Several writers in this period have written with purposes of this kind in mind. In national literatures writing for such a purpose has, in ages past, proved to be remunerative and successful when well done, but the product usually does not last because of the ephemeral nature of the cause.

George Alfred Brown could have reached a wider audience and accomplished more for the Klan if he had subordinated his use of propaganda in Harold the Klansman. There is no subtlety in his method. The characters are types, strongly accentuated in goodness or badness. It must be admitted that the arguments presented are
convincing to the average person. The style makes it readable.

L. Addison Bone (Behold a Man) is even more bald in his presentation. The arguments and platforms are tacked on without excuse so that the story is not readable for one seeking the usual fiction interest. The reader may feel hurt at times that he has been tricked into picking up the book. As a mouthpiece for the proponents of the reorganization of society the book is probably more effective than a non-fictionalized document would be.

Charles Sheldon has never proposed (it may be inferred from the themes of his books) to become a writer of any kind of novel except the one with a strong didactic purpose. He wrote _Howard Chase_ with many years of experience behind him and in the evident hope that he might reach his and other congregations with the idea that is difficult to put into words from any pulpit—the idea that gossip is an evil force, either from the ethical or from the social point of view. He has failed to make his examples of gossip acid enough to be quite effective.

Fletcher M. Sisson flavors his writing with a strong moralizing tone which often destroys the virility
he probably intends to put into his ideas. The action in *The Shepherd's Staff* is rapid, too rapid for adequate development. Background is sparsely used.

Josephine H. Westervelt let her use of the sentimental mood drown any greatness in *The Pool of Sacrifice*. Characters are hastily drawn in the most pronounced types known. Inexperience may explain the lack of balance in space allotted to important events. Her hope of evangelizing heathen nations probably finds more effective expression from the pulpit.

Although Charles H. Lerrigo's novel, *The Castle of Cheer*, is sentimental in some places, the feeling comes to the reader that the author is viewing much of what he has to say from the distance proper to a quiet and humorous attitude toward the foibles of human nature. The achievement of purpose in this book must be admitted. It shows how four-fold retribution for evil cannot make right harm done to a gullible public.

D. Adolescent Girls

Two novels of the group are of special interest for girls in their teens. There are, however, suggestions in the books which only adults can appreciate.

Dana Gatlin (Missy) evidently understands the
exact nature of the longing in a girl's heart for something great and beautiful. She keeps her psychological distance enough so that the reader does not feel that the author is losing herself in the ecstasies of the girl. The story is pathetic and appealing. It puts humor into distressing predicaments.

Mrs. Don-Carlos' story, *Virginia's Inheritance*, would interest the girl who loves adventure. The series of circumstances through which Mrs. Don-Carlos takes Virginia may be rightly called a romantic thread of adventure. Many a girl has wondered whether she herself were actually the child of her parents and whether she could, perhaps, have had a romantic origin similar to Virginia's.

**E. Juvenile**

Children can be easily slighted by those who propose to write stories for their reading. Probably no one understands the child mind perfectly. Every adult has gone through the period of childhood, but the things he remembers are so largely tinctured by what he has learned since that only an approximation of actual child interest can be made.

Any writer sitting down to tell a story for a
child has, in addition to what adult critics may say of it, three ways of judging whether his story is good: (1) his own likings in childhood, (2) the response of interest in the child who hears the story, and (3) the actual effects upon the child's attitudes and behavior. The second and third criteria are the ones useful for this study. It is natural that no book would be placed in this section if the writer did not feel that it was written for children and according to their interests. The writer knows that two of the books included here are read by school children when the books are placed upon library shelves and not required to be read. The other three present similar interests for children.

The third item—the actual effects upon the child's attitudes and behavior—does not assume a strong didactic purpose in the books. Just what will a child's reasonable reaction to a book be? Assuming interest, it will be some kind of action.

Most children are interested in the stories of the Middle Ages when the stories are dressed in the romantic robes proper to them. The romantic halo which surrounds the period brings many children to love Robin Hood, King Arthur, and any other hero of a well-told tale.
Edna Becker's *Hugh and Denis* is made up of simplified stories of boys reputed to have lived and grown up in a castle of France. A careful map-picture of their part of the country, placed in the front of the book, should lead any lively boy to a better understanding of those days. The lid of history will be pried off and the boy will devour the materials of what may formerly have been dry history for him. Enough authentic details of customs are given to make a good starting point for sprouting research. The book is valuable.

Of recent date in the placing of events are the books by Charles Driscoll and Thomas Hinkle. The interest is mainly for boys. *Treasure Aboard* takes the reader back to the remnants of the explorations by the gold-thirsty Spaniards and brings to light much of historical interest. It should stimulate boys to the study and understanding of history as much as *Hugh and Denis*. It has the added value of being placed near at home for all Kansas boys.

Thomas Hinkle's animal stories are scattered liberally throughout the state in the public school and city libraries. In western Kansas hardly a boy lives who has not read from one to a dozen of Hinkle's books. The stories have something akin to the wild-West sagas cluttering up many a bookstand, but their wholesomeness
and the spirit of them engendering love of animals are unmatched by any other. Hinkle's animals—dogs, horses, wild fur-bearers—respond to kind treatment. To a boy a horse or a dog is human. If dogs understand as Hinkle's do, they are fundamentally all right. There lies the secret of their hold on boys.

Homes are not always what they should be. Either a real or a foster home may be a grown-up world in which children are expected to thrive. A child placed in such an atmosphere will miss the best part of his life. Or, if his guardians attempt to solve all his problems for him, a certain initiative and creative part of his development will be dwarfed. *Understood Betsy* by Dorothy Canfield pictures a little girl, Elizabeth, in a combination of the grown-up world and the protected sphere. The sympathetic treatment will bring relief to any child, especially a girl who has experienced a wee bit of the isolation Elizabeth feels. The stimulation of Elizabeth's interest in the rural home to which she is taken should bring to the child an interest in growing things. Growth is a mystery to adults. To a child the mystery is tenfold.

*Edna Whitcomb's We Five* appeals to the same interests as the latter part of *Understood Betsy*. The country scene is stimulating.
CHAPTER IV

LARGER VALUES: PLACE IN AMERICAN LITERATURE

Introduction

Unless the literary people of a state can interest a reading public larger than that made up of the people of their own state, they cannot expect to have much influence upon what happens in national literature. This is obvious. Fiction comes especially under this limitation. Publishers cannot be expected to become enthusiastic about a book that has no interest for the general public of the United States. Publishing such books is not profitable. Interest alone will not insure an influence upon the national literature, but interest there must be.

The reason that Dr. Hertzler's recent book, *Horse and Buggy Doctor* (1938), has gained such wide recognition is, in addition to its fascinating style, that it records the doctors' part in the great frontier which was not located in Kansas alone but in every state. The universality of appeal in a book may be something else, but it must be.

Kansans may well question why the state is not
better recognized for its literary men. The purpose of this discussion is not to condone any lack of literary talent in Kansas. A suggestion may help the worried critics of the state to understand why things are as they are. In his section on "The Frontier," Blankenship says that

one of the characteristics of the frontier [is] that it influences the customs and thought of a community two or three generations after the rolling line of settlement has passed on.

Kansas (and many other states as well) is just emerging from the period of direct influence from pioneering days. Parallel to the differences in customs and thought are differences in work habits. Pioneers have little time or education for writing. Much that is written is incidental to living and is not carefully done. Kansas has been shaking its sprouting literary wings—witness the books considered in Chapter 1.

Among the people of the state who think upon the subject exists a feeling that a great Kansas novel will one day be written. Perhaps a dozen people have

1. For an interesting discussion and lamentation of the deplorable lack of writing, not writers, in the state, see Thackrey's "Nominations for a Literary Heritage," Kansas Magazine, 1936, p. 1-3.

2. Blankenship, American Literature, p. 60.
expressed this idea to the writer himself within the last two years. Probably some of these had read Thackrey's appeal and prophesy:

Some one, some day, is going to use Kansas as the locale of a series of books that will make the author justly famous. Whether it will be a Kansan or not is to be seen. It should be a Kansan. It will depend in part on whether Kansas writers have and take the time, get the encouragement, and the initiative to do the job. I hope it will not be left to a New Yorker or a Californian or a Southerner to make use of Kansas' past and its present.

Let this then be a warning, a voice out of the darkness, a finger pointing to the true and straight road. Let politics and publishing, pedagogy and pettifogging go hang until the book is finished. Let Kansas writers write!

It may or may not be foolish of Kansans to consider doing anything brilliant in literature. Certainly the class of people who have the time and desire for writing is on the increase.

It is true that Kansas writers do not receive much space in discussions of the whole period of American literature. They are better represented if only the period since the 1890's, when Kansas first began to come into her own, is considered. Even then, only a few of the novelists are granted any space.

3. Thackrey, op. cit., p. 3.

4. Study is needed upon this problem. Whether the economic depression affects the number of writers or changes the quality of writing is debatable.
Howe, William Allen White, and Dorothy Canfield are about the only novelists mentioned in representative one-volume treatises on American literature. But Ed Howe has gone on. He produced one hybrid novel in the last twenty years. William Allen White may feel young yet, but he too has but one novel during the period. Dorothy Canfield can no longer be claimed by Kansas. She has shifted her materials to New England and only occasionally dips back into the scenes of her youth.

It is impossible to say who will be the next novelist of Kansas to "make" the national literature. R. L. Thackrey and W. G. Clugston have made enough guesses. Too many factors intervene to allow useful speculation.

Just what has been done in Kansas worthy of national recognition? It has already been shown that the most important fiction by Kansans deals with Kansas subjects. James P. Callahan in 1926 did not believe much of this group belonged in the class having enduring value.7

7. Callahan, Kansas in the American Novel and Short Story, p. 46.
It is doubtful that much has been written since to change his opinion on this score.

When Kansas fiction writers do make their way into a national discussion, the place accorded them is none too good. They enter the discussion in the controversy of the village. Evidently the institution known as the village has largely influenced the thought of the people of the state. This is to be expected when most of the people in the state live in or near villages.8

Blankenship divides the writers into apologists for the village and attackers of the village. White, of course, falls into the group of apologists. Canfield holds herself aloof, but Blankenship sees in her writing a defensive attitude. She refuses to find anything in the village which is "innately hostile to culture."2

Evidently not much hope is held by Blankenship for the salvation of the literary souls of the "idyllic" personages who emerge from the village saturated with its lore. He paints this illuminating sketch of the village as seen in Mr. White's novels:

---

8. A town of not more than 20,000 souls (mostly damned) is evidently a village in the national mind.

The middle-western village, as visualized by White....is a place of idyllic felicities. According to its friends its material happiness is matched only by its depth of spiritual satisfaction. It knows neither avaricious millionaire nor the lean and dispossessed proletariat. All its worthy citizens live in comfort; none in want, none in luxurious idleness. Labor is accounted a happiness; thrift is a pleasurable duty. By some magical feat unsatisfied desire has been exorcised from the hearts of these people, and all live together, happy in the performance of the daily round of homely tasks. In the village religion is a matter of simple faith, unspoiled by doubt and exemplified by good works, and in their social and political life the villages respect the tenets and practices of primitive American democracy. Such is the picture that the apologists have constructed of our small towns.10

White, it is generally agreed, believes staunchly in the village sentiment he shows. Even to the "intelligent" eye of those critics not imbued with the village ideals, the courage and energy of Mr. White are apparent.

Ed Howe neither defended nor attacked the village. He did not over-rate its scandal and pathological conditions. He was interested in things as they actually were.11

Beyond the import of these brief discussions, little will be found about Kansas writers in one-volume

10. Ibid., p. 650-1.
discussions of the whole of American literature. Criticisms have been written in periodicals about most of the Kansas books, but they have too little perspective for anyone to judge well by what is said in them. A discussion of a single book is one thing. A discussion of its relation to many others is another.

Several fertile fields lie yet almost untouched by recognized hands. The oil development in Kansas should furnish an appeal to a public widely scattered and not very far removed from some first-hand knowledge of its effects. The shifting of the population during and following long periods of drought brings about changes that some novelist should record. The rapid changes from horse power to motor power farming on most of the farms of the state have brought some good and some bad results, all worthy of the notice of novelists. The passing of the "harvest hand" from the fields of small grain has been an event of epic proportions.

The possibilities are legion. The hope is that writers will find the universality of appeal too often lacking in novels so far written. A hint of what nationally known critics expect may be seen in this statement:

Whether our literature is "great" or not is of comparatively slight importance. It is profoundly expressive of the changing American mind....

Almost all the books of fiction written by Kansas writers within the last twenty-four years have been set in Kansas or adjoining states. A few of the novels of the early history of the territory now included in the state present materials covering several of the Middle Western states. A few treat the subject of the border warfare before the Civil War. A number deal with the days of settlement in all parts of the state except the extreme western portion. In the novels of settlement the emphasis is sometimes upon the common difficulties of the settlers, sometimes upon special problems of foreign groups or of maladjusted individuals.

In novels of recent years new problems have received increasing attention. Pioneering has passed with its problems. During the period in which the novels considered here have been written, no great trend of changes in settings or subject matter has been evident. The time settings of the novels, not the dates at which
they were written, have largely decided the content.

The use of themes has varied little during the period. However, books treating events of recent date tend to be more largely novels of social, economic, or psychological problems than those of earlier days.

The period before 1900 produced a large number of historical novels by Kansans. During the first twenty years of the present century, there was a lapse of interest in historical materials. However, a revival came in the 1920's so that the second twenty years of the century have produced a larger number of creditable historical novels than the first twenty.

The actual literary value of most of the novels by Kansans is doubtful. Quantity there is in plenty, but real and lasting value is lacking. Some historical subjects have been used so much that hardly any new interpretations have been made. In novels dealing with modern or psychological problems the difficulty of finding new approaches has been similar. The old easily become worn and trite.

Kansans with literary talent are often attracted to the large cities and in a few years cease to write

1. The body and the bibliography of Mr. Callahan's thesis was used to reach this conclusion.
about their home state.

Interest in the writings of Kansans is not lacking. Several of the books of the period have been best sellers or prize winners. A few writers have been able to live on the income from their published novels.

Children and adolescents find as much enjoyment in the fiction of the period as does any age group. Indeed a number of books of fiction have been written for younger minds. Most older people either find more enjoyment in a heavier type of reading or belong to the group of people who do not read much fiction besides magazine short stories.

Kansas authors and their writings are receiving some recognition outside the state. There is a feeling among commentators that the great Kansas novel will soon be written by a Kansan.
APPENDIX I

In this study the writer has found that it was not practicable to read every story which may be classified as book-length fiction. Some are so short that they may be called short stories. Others are obviously hybrids in organization and treatment. Still others have come from the pens of writers who have had so many tales published that only a sampling could be made if the whole field was to be adequately considered.

Anyone who wishes to find a complete list of books written by the more important (and more prolific) authors should use Who's Who in America. No value would have come from the inclusion of all the titles from Who's Who in the chronological list which follows. All those included have been inspected by the writer. Those starred (*) have been read.
1915


1916


1917


1918


1919


1920


1921


1922


1923


1924


1925


1926


1927


1928


1929


1930


1931


1932


1933


1934


1935


1936


1937


1938

APPENDIX II

Before much of the exploratory work had been done for this study, it seemed that biography should be included with fiction. After examining the holdings of the library of the State Historical Society, the writer discovered that the materials were too great for the time available. In order that the work done might not be thrown away, the list of biographical materials has been preserved. It will be presented below in chronological order.

Because a number of the old pioneers are seeing their last days, the biographies turn often to pioneering, Indian fighting, cattle grazing, and other aspects of the life that awaited those who had come to early Kansas. Materials on John Brown have not been worked as much as in the years previous to 1915. Much of what has been written about him since that time has been by writers other than Kansans.

Co., [c1934]. 204p.), Mrs. Orpen (Memories of the Old Emigrant Days in Kansas, 1862-1865. Edinburgh and London, William Blackwood and Sons, 1926. 324p.), Frederick Palmer (This Man Landon. New York, Dodd Mead and Co., 1936. 245p.), and Paul Starrett (Changing the Skyline. New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, [c1938]. 319p.), to mention but a few, have not been included in the list. The writers of this group either were born in Kansas but lived here only a short time or are persons who have always lived elsewhere but have used Kansas subjects.

William Allen White has probably contributed more of real worth to biography than any other Kansan of the period. Kate Stephens has preserved much of interest in the life of her betrothed, Byron Caldwell Smith, in her books here included. Dr. Hertzler and John Ise are much quoted at the time of this writing.

The list which follows makes no pretension at completeness. The entries starred (*) have been read by the writer.

1916


1918

1919


1920


1921


1922


1923


1924

1925


1927


1928


1929

Griffith, George W. E. My 96 Years in the Great West. Los Angeles, California, By George W. E. Griffith, c1929. 289p.


1930


Townley, Charles V. Other Days, Olathe, Kansas, The Johnson County Democrat, c1930. 152p.

1931


Daniels, Dawn. Lorenzo D. Lewelling--A Leader of the Kansas Populists. Dissertation, Northwestern University, 1931. 73p.


1932


1933

1934


1935


1936


1937

1938

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A short novel of Negro life.

Good short biographical sketches but many important persons are omitted.

A collection of sketches for the extensive reader.

A story of two brothers in medieval France.
Material on Howe, White, and Canfield.

An argument for economic reconstruction.

Propaganda for the Ku Klux Klan.

Useful in preparation of preliminary list of titles.

The university life in it is probably taken from recollections of days in Lawrence, Kansas.

A little girl finds happiness in the country.


An interesting survey of historical and natural background in Mrs. McCarter's novels.


Useful as a comparative study in Kansas literature.


A story of a Swedish community.


A discussion of the more important Kansas prose writers.

A boy grows up in the cross currents of life.


Frontier days on the prairie.


A little girl comes into her fortune after years of poverty.


A treasure ship is raised from an island in the Arkansas River.


The fur business of the great Northwest.


Domestic strife comes to two spoiled darlings.
An illegitimate son comes into his own.

The daughter will not be ruled over as her mother was.

A girl grows to womanhood in a small town.

The Negroes are reconciled and teach the white folks a lesson.

Dust in their lives destroys their marital happiness.

Good for comparison as a study of Kansas literature.
A wild horse loves the right man.

Inside views of a little town.

A study in the Americanization of Russians.

Hull, Myra E. Kansas Prose Writers. Lawrence, Kansas, University Extension Division, [c1936]. Various paging. (In a series of radio talks from Station K. F. K. U.)
Covers a limited number of writers.

He heard the voices but was not happy until the right one called.

Placed near Chicago in a sanitarium.
They fought to make Kansas free soil.

It is a large country but two old buddies find each other after the war.

Blowing sands are difficult to control in windy Kansas.

They blazed a dangerous trail across the wide prairie to Santa Fe.
He built the dam in spite of great opposition.

Hope is fulfilled when hands and hearts work together.

He tried to get his friends indicted, but the detective caught him.

It took them all to make the city (Wichita).

It is a wild country and a dry one.

The small child views great family troubles.

Their blood calls them ever Westward to a pioneering life.


She always expects a better life, but it does not come.


Its terminal is the starting point for this thesis.


She dreams dreams for her children in the new country.


She is the center of a number of strange circumstances.


He wins a fight in the gossip-filled town.

The outlaw turns to righteous ways.


A prophesy of greatness for Kansas writers in the future.


Useful sketches of two or three Kansas writers.


A story of Central America, by a missionary.


Little brothers and sisters on a Kansas farm.

His course of the primrose hunt brings him to corruption.


Their business finally catches them in the toils of the law.