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## The Community of Mullinville, Kansas (1870-1900)

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The Community of Mullinville, Kansas  
(1870-1900)

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

Marilla A. Alford, A. B.  
Friends University

Date May 19, 1941

Approved by Myrtle E. McGinnis  
Major Professor

W. Albertson  
Chairman of Graduate Council

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To my family  
and

Dr. Myrta E. McGinnes

For without their encouragement

I should never have completed this thesis

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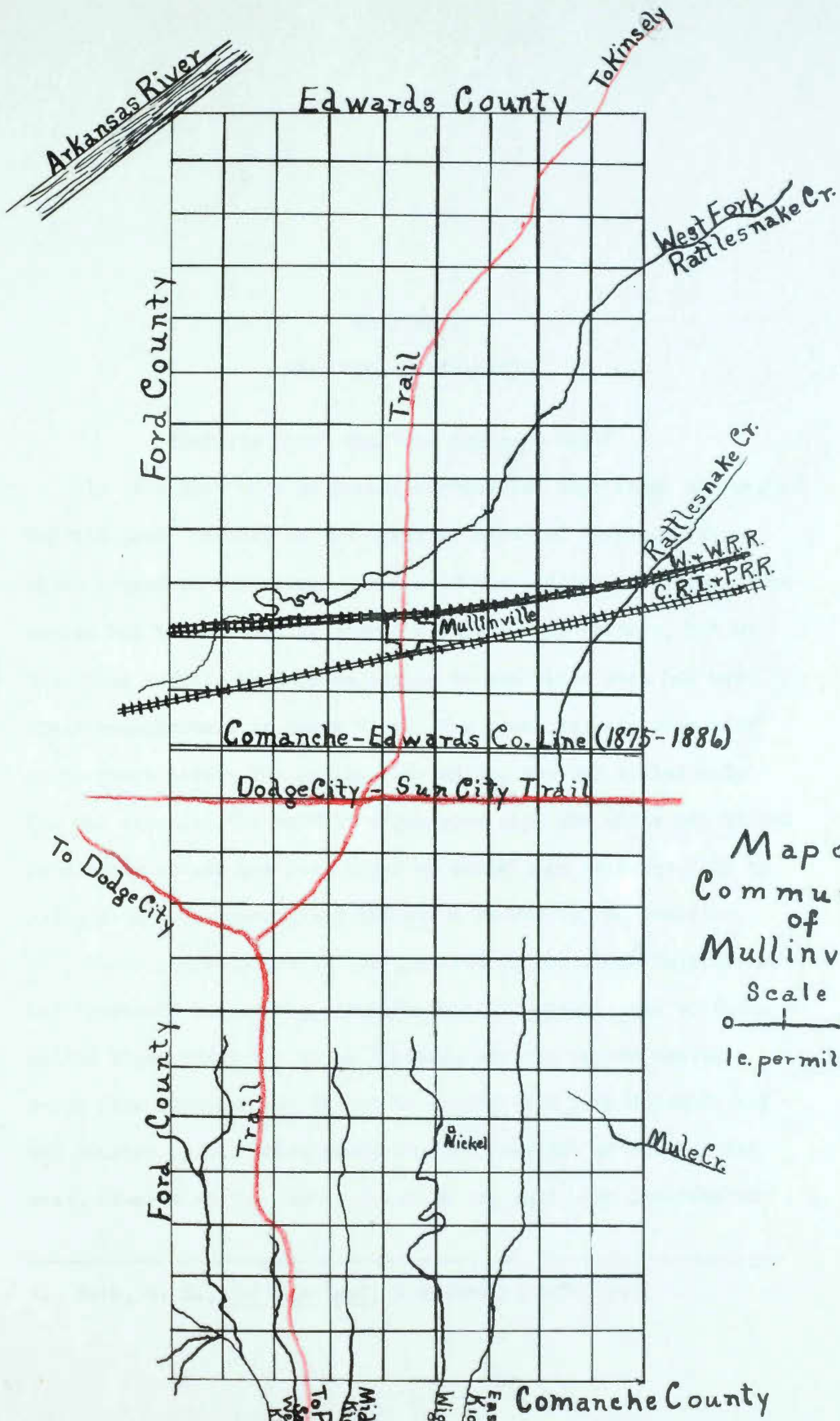
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## PREFACE

In this thesis I have attempted to preserve the heritage of the pioneers for the coming generations of the Mullinville Community. I have closed the main body of the thesis with the year 1900 because I feel that the last forty years are too close to the present to be discussed without prejudice and that the lives of my own family have been too closely connected with the history of the community for me to take an unbiased attitude. I trust that sometime later someone will pick up this history where I have left off and add more to the record of this heritage.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Myrta E. McGinnes and Dr. Floyd B. Streeter, who guided me in the writing of this thesis. I also wish to thank the Kansas State Historical Society and the Kiowa County Historical Society for source material, all those who granted me interviews and answered letters of inquiry, and everyone who aided me in any way in preparing this work.



Map of the  
Community  
of  
Mullinville  
Scale  
0 — 2  
1 c. per mile



## CHAPTER I

### PROLOGUE (1870-1884)

#### "Buffalo Land" and "The Comanche Pool"

In 1870 that part of Kansas surrounding Fort Dodge was called Buffalo Land<sup>1</sup> because of the numerous herds of American Bison which grazed on the abundant grass of the rolling prairies. This region had been a hunting ground of the plains Indians, but by this time buffalo hunters belonging to the white race had made their headquarters in Dodge City. Now great inroads were made on the vast herds; for unlike the Indian, who had killed only for the supplies the buffalo might give him, the white man killed ruthlessly to see how many hides he could take to Dodge City to sell, as a rule leaving the carcasses to rot on the prairie.

Three years before, in 1867, an act of the state legislature had "erected" twenty-six counties in this region. One of them, called Kiowa after the Kiowa Indians, was the second county north from Oklahoma and the sixth county east from Colorado and was bounded by the other newly created counties of Ford on the west, Edwards on the north, Pratt on the east, and Comanche on

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1. Webb, W. E., Buffalo Land, Cincinnati, 1873, p. 1.

the south.

The surface of Kiowa County is a rolling prairie, slightly higher in the center. The southern half lies in the valley of the Medicine Lodge River and the northern is a succession of gentle [sandy] foothills toward the valley of the Arkansas. Rattlesnake Creek, the principal stream [which is dry here except just after heavy spring and summer rains, is as treacherous as its name, for at those times one never knows whether it will be slightly muddy or half a mile wide and thirty feet deep. It] enters [Kiowa County] in the west and flows northeast into Edwards County. The Medicine Lodge River has its source in the south and flows southeast into Barber County.<sup>2</sup>

The west one-third of Kiowa County, which is now the Mullinville Community, a district nine miles wide and twenty-four miles long, was then only a place where buffalo, wild horses, and antelope roamed and where various snakes, bob cats, mountain lions, grey wolves, coyotes, and little foxes called swifts could be seen by those who passed through while hunting. There were no settlers even after the county had been created by the legislature.

The first real settlers came to Buffalo Land in the spring and summer of 1873 but only a few attempted farming.

A number of "cow men" took possession of the... and after it was ceded to the government by the Osage Indians and pushed the buffalo away from the creeks with thousands of head of cattle. Some of them organized themselves into a company which was known as the "Comanche Pool."<sup>3</sup>

The cattlemen decided the best way to handle the settlers was to do some homesteading themselves.<sup>4</sup>

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2. Cyclopedia of Kansas History, Vol. II, pp. 76-77.

3. Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 392-393.

4. The June 25, 1878, issue of the Ford County Globe advises stock raisers along creeks to homestead some land themselves to keep out settlers who planned to farm.

Since homesteaders could file on 160 acres of land, the cattlemen filed "strings of 40's" along both sides of the creeks. In this way they could get four times as much water frontage on each quarter section of filing and use the uplands for pasture.

It is claimed, although it may not be true,<sup>5</sup> that most of the Indian "scares" of the 70's were started by the cattlemen in this section. It was not difficult for a bunch of cowboys, racing in from the south, to start a stampede by spreading the word that the Indians were coming and warning settlers to flee for their lives. Hundreds of homesteaders fled from their claims, never to return,...letting the cattle barons have the range.<sup>6</sup>

Since six hundred inhabitants, excluding Indians not taxed, who are bona fide residents of the county and the United States are necessary before a county can be organized, Kiowa County was extinguished in 1875 and the territory divided between Edwards and Comanche Counties.<sup>7</sup>

Edwards County suffered greatly from grasshoppers in 1874 and the short crop of 1878 also retarded settlements.<sup>8</sup>

#### Buffalo Hunters

In October, 1875, Washington Kennedy in company with five other men left his home near Kansas City, Kansas. Equipped with two wagons carrying camping outfits and with two extra saddle

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5. Mr. Washington Kennedy made this assertion in an interview December 1, 1939. It was also suggested by several people at the Kiowa County Pioneer Picnic, November 15, 1939.

6. Hutchinson News-Herald, April 28, 1940.

7. Cyclopedia of Kansas, Vol. II, p. 76.

8. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 566.

horses, they reached the land of the buffalo as far westward as the head of Mule Creek (in Kiowa County). They did not venture farther south, for they had been warned not to go across the state line into the Indian Nation lest they be scalped. Although Indian Summer was the ideal season for buffalo hunting,<sup>9</sup> these amateurs had little success and had to content themselves with eating wild turkey.

Near Mule Creek they met the first herd of cattle ever brought into this section of Kansas. They belonged to John Chisum and were being driven to Sun City to be wintered.<sup>10</sup> The Chisum Trail and Other Routes by T. U. Taylor, pp. 43-44, points out that old cattlemen say that Chisum did drive one herd northwest across the two Canadians and that they did not reach Abilene. The supposition is that they reached Dodge City since it soon became a market for Texas cattle. The next few days the hunters were lost in the rough country along Mule Creek and the Medicine Lodge River, but after several days they found their way to New Kiowa in Harper County, a town of two houses, and from there started their homeward journey to Kansas City.

Two years later Mr. Kennedy and his partner, Sheldon A. Shepherd, took a similar hunting trip on a much larger scale,

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9. Carey, Henry L., "Indians Worshiped Them, White Men Destroyed Them," Hutchinson News-Herald, February 4, 1940, says, "In Indian Summer the fur was softest and thickest, the meat and tallow deliciously marbled, ambrosial sic steaks of alternate lean and fat on the prized buffalo hump. Broiled over an open camp-fire it was a dish 'fit for the gods.'"

10. Kennedy, Personal Interview, June 23, 1940.

first going to the Black Hills, then coming southward to Dodge City. They travelled along the Dodge City Trail following the Cimmaron River to Bluff Creek and on to Sun City, because it was early autumn and too hot to hunt buffalo. Later in the fall they went back to Dodge City for supplies and on down into the Panhandle after buffalo. This time they were successful enough to kill eight buffalo; Mr. Kennedy killed seven and Mr. Shepherd one. The hides were staked and stretched out in order that they might cure properly. The sirloins and hind quarters were wrapped in gunny sacks and smoked so that the meat would be edible when they arrived in Kansas City six months later.<sup>11</sup>

#### Squatters and Sheep Herders; Indian Raids

The exploits of Kennedy and Shepherd aroused the interest of their neighbors and on April 15, 1878, a company of six covered wagons, merely wagon boxes covered over with canvas tops stretched over rounded frames and drawn by mules, immigrated to that part of Kiowa County which had lately become the northern part of Comanche County. There along the creeks on land now known as the McBride and Lightner Ranches this little colony of ten men, five women, and their children squatted. "They chose this spot because they planned to raise sheep and because there was an abundance of water in the creeks and.... tracts of timber grew

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11. Kennedy. Compilation from manuscript based on interviews by Ellen Karns and my own personal interviews.

along the creeks."<sup>12</sup>

Later these colonists preempted their claims. At the time the nearest U. S. Land Office was in Larned.<sup>13</sup> Henry Booth became the receiver there January 1, 1878.<sup>14</sup> Preempting required the settler to live on his claim six months, make two hundred dollars' worth of improvements, and then pay \$1.25 per acre.

There were two carpenters in this colony and they had brought their tool chests.

As cold weather approached the question of shelter became acute, also supplies were running low; so Mr. Kennedy and a friend with a compass, started north to try to find a railroad and a town.<sup>15</sup>

They finally reached Kinsley some forty-five miles away and loaded up lumber to make roofs for their dugouts, plows, and other necessary tools and some groceries. All types of houses--sod, dugouts, log, and lumber-kept the colonists warm. Mr. Kennedy had a dugout but Mr. Shepherd built a house of boards which he brought from Kinsley.<sup>16</sup>

Although the hot winds were very devastating the first summer, the settlers spent the hot months breaking sod and hunting. The first crop, corn and sorghums, was good for a sod crop.

Mr. Kennedy was an Indian scout, but Indians were so scarce

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12. Kennedy, Interview, Manuscript by Garnet Fellers.
  13. Kennedy, Personal Interview, December 1, 1939. Later claims could be filed in Kinsley, and after 1884, Mr. A. A. Mullin took proofs at Mullinville. Mr. Kennedy proved up at Kinsley.
  14. Ford County Globe, January 1, 1878.
  15. Kennedy, Interview, Mullinville News, November 7, 1929.
  16. Kennedy, Personal Interview, December 1, 1939.

that he spent most of his time "walking down" wild horses. The Indians followed a path north from Ashland to Fellsburg whenever they broke away from the Indian Nation. In 1878 five of the men had a camp on the knoll where Chas. E. Sherer's barn now stands. Whenever they would spot a band of wild horses they would proceed in the same manner as one herds cattle with a horse; except for the first day the men did well to get within five miles of the band. The hunters would keep the herd of wild horses moving steadily, and in seven or eight days they would become so exhausted that they could be driven down a canyon into a corral which had been prepared for them. The corral was built in one of the deep canyons below what is now the Eagle Canyon Ranch. These canyons are deep vertical cuts. There are no rocks and the soil is red. They drop off suddenly from level ground; thus it was easy to make the corral a trap by building a barricade across a part of the open end of the canyon. In this one drive they captured twenty-three head. Most of these horses were broken and were sold for eight dollars<sup>17</sup> apiece or exchanged for many necessities in trade. One mare which had been broken before and had been running with the wild horses sold for \$25. One of the horses escaped from this corral by climbing up an eight-foot bank.<sup>18</sup>

When asked what the settlers lived on the first year or two, Mr. Kennedy replied, "Oh, we lived mostly on bones," then explained how they picked up buffalo bones off the prairie and

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17. Kennedy, Interview, Mullinville News, November 7, 1929.

18. Kennedy, Personal Interview, June 23, 1940.

hauled them to Kinsley.<sup>19</sup>

It took about three days and two nights to make the round trip by horses or oxen to Kinsley, their nearest trading post. The true friendliness of these people is shown in the way they cooperated in getting the mail. When anyone made a trip to Kinsley he brought back the mail for his neighbors. In this manner everyone was able to receive his mail about once a week.<sup>20</sup>

"They also hauled salt, in wagons drawn by two-horse teams from the Great Plains of Oklahoma to Kinsley. In exchange for bones and salt they received flour, cornmeal, beans, coffee,... bacon,"<sup>21</sup> and writing paper. "Antelope meat helped out a lot, but as Mr. Kennedy expressed it, 'There's a lot of room around an antelope for a bullet to go.'"<sup>22</sup> However, one time he killed three antelope with one shot from his big buffalo rifle; the back of one was broken, another was hit in the shoulder, and the hind legs were shot off the third.<sup>23</sup> "Often people would seat themselves at the table to a meal of opossum, badger, or skunk stew and cornbread cooked over a fire of cow chips then called 'Prairie Coal.'"<sup>24</sup> While picking bones Mr. Kennedy lived mostly on plover. The breast of the plover was very fat and the grease which remained after cooking the plover was used to grease the "picker's"

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19. Kennedy, Interview, Mullinville News, November 7, 1929.

20. Kennedy, Interview, Manuscript by Doris Brown.

21. Kennedy, Interview, Manuscript by Garnet Fellers.

22. Kennedy, Interview in Mullinville News, November 7, 1929.

23. Kennedy, Personal Interview, June 23, 1940.

24. Kennedy, Interview in Mullinville News, November 7, 1929.



boots.<sup>25</sup>

A little variation to add spice to the program occurred when a ... group of United States soldiers informed the settlers that "We've just taken a bunch of Northern Cheyennes from the Black Hills down to the Indian Nation and you'll have hell down there, for they're sure mad."<sup>26</sup>

Late in September, 1878, while Mr. Kennedy was scouting for Indians in the flat between the colonies and the sand dunes south of Kinsley, he "camped down" for the night near a water hole along the Rattlesnake. He lay down to sleep against the south side of a steep sand bank but was uneasy and couldn't sleep. He kept his "old 45" beside him and he thought it would be a good joke if he shot his foot off in his sleep. Finally he got up at dawn and prepared to move, but he saw two Indians coming. Because he kept motionless they didn't see him and rode on by on the top of the hill. One had a Spencer and the other a Winchester carbine. It was lucky for him that his horse did not neigh and give him away. These Indian Scouts were trying to find out how far the settlements went along the Arkansas River. The Cheyenne Chiefs were smart enough to try to keep their warriors away from settlements in order to avoid scalping.

About the same time five scouts rode up the creek and looked over the colony. The people were frantic and sent a boy to hunt Kennedy and Steward, who were out scouting. Meanwhile they "forted up" in a Dutchman's big sod house until they were sure

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25. Kennedy, Personal Interview, June 23, 1940.

26. Kennedy, Interview in Mullinville News, November 7, 1929.

the Indians had gone out of the immediate district.

About two weeks later Chief Dull Knife and five hundred Cheyennes started north. They pitched camp near the ranches around Protection, began purloining herds of cattle, and taking supplies and horses. The squaws butchered and diced meat for a week in order to have food to make the journey north. Many settlers were so frightened that they rode to the stockade at Sun City. About forty soldiers and some cowboys<sup>27</sup> formed a circle around the camp but gave no resistance when the Indians departed. Although the settlers in the little colony saw the Indians passing, their homes were not attacked. Later they heard the booming of the guns at Fort Dodge when the soldiers spied the Indians going along the south bank of the Arkansas. This was just after Custer's last stand and the soldiers were afraid the Indians would attack them. However, the Indians went on west, crossed the river west of Dodge City, and headed on north.<sup>28</sup>

Some time later W. A. (Billy) Coburn and his new wife left the colony to obtain supplies to start housekeeping. On arriving at Kinsley, Coburn was met by one of the Edwards Brothers and was told that there were some Indians in the country. He did not tell his wife but asked her to hurry up and buy her groceries. They started home as soon as possible and got back as far as Bailey's.

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27. Kennedy, Personal Interview, June 23, 1940. Ed. Lidwell was one of the cowboys.

28. Kennedy, Personal Interview, November 15, 1939, December 1, 1939; June 23, 1940. I verified the name of the chief, the date, and the number of soldiers from the Ford County Globe, October 29, 1878.

One of the Bailey girls wanted to go home with the newlyweds and visit, hoping to meet some cowboys while there. Coburn was afraid to tell the girl she could not go with them for fear he would arouse his wife's curiosity. They reached the Rattlesnake crossing safely, but as they were coming up out of the creek bed Mrs. Coburn spied four horsemen riding swiftly toward them about three miles to the west. She tried to get Coburn to stop, but he told her he did not want to see the men and whipped his team into a run. They went as fast as possible for almost two miles. By that time the Indians had turned and gone on along the Rattlesnake.

He kept his horses going as fast as he dared until he reached the little colony. Mr. Kennedy came up to meet him and on seeing the horses so exhausted began to scold because Coburn had borrowed one of the horses from him. Coburn paid no attention to the scolding and Kennedy became angry; however, when Mrs. Coburn went into the house he told Kennedy what had happened. They got fresh horses and started north to hunt for the Indians, but failing to find any, they rode back home. On arriving home Coburn saw a light in his house; he hurried in and blew out the lamp. It was only then that his wife realized that the four horsemen had been Indians.<sup>29</sup>

This was the last Indian raid although there were rumors of Indians as late as 1886.

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29. Kennedy, Personal Interview, June 23, 1940.

## The First Wedding

In March 1879, three Dunkard families [from Illinois, the Van Landingshams, Roadcapes, and Emmons] with an immigrant car of farm and household equipment arrived at Kinsley by train.<sup>30</sup>

When they heard of the settlement along the creeks forty miles south, they decided to join the group. The Van Landingham family, a mother, two grown sons, and a daughter Sarah, attracted the attention of Mr. Kennedy. Soon he and Sarah found that they "were meant for each other and at noon on November 9, 1879, they were married at her dugout home."<sup>31</sup>

Had there been a newspaper near at that time the account of the wedding might read as follows: "Miss Sarah Van Landingham, age 19, and Wash Kennedy, age 29, were united in holy bonds of matrimony at the home of the bride's mother....November 9.

"There were seventeen friends and neighbors present at the ceremony, all families except one in the entire community being present.

"The bride was charming in a dress of blue alpaca, close fitting at the throat, [with] full leg o' mutton sleeves and the hem of the skirt sweeping the floor. The groom was dressed in a suit of conventional black cashmere.

"Following the ceremony, a bountiful dinner of mutton and duck were [sic] served the assembled guests.<sup>32</sup> In the afternoon the bride and groom accompanied by the guests and the minister went on their wedding trip to the home of a neighbor some three miles away where preaching services were held, the first preaching services in that part of the county since the settlement of the colony."<sup>33</sup>

Mr. Kennedy went to Larned ninety miles away for the license and some sheep. They were married by "Preacher" Gibson of Wendell, a little settlement about seven miles southwest of the present

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30. Kennedy, Interview, the Mullinville News, November 7, 1929.

31. Ibid.

32. The dinner was cooked in Mrs. Van Landingham's fireplace. Mullinville News, November 7, 1929.

33. Kennedy, Article, Mullinville News, November 14, 1929.

town of Lewis. Mr. Gibson served both as a preacher and a doctor. He was from Georgia, had several sons, a negro servant, and only one leg. Mr. Kennedy went after Mr. Gibson in a wagon by way of Kinsley. It took three days to make the trip. Mr. Gibson brought his own horse along so that he could have a way home.<sup>34</sup>

"Mr. Kennedy had traded a \$35 horse for his partner's claim in section 31-20-19, on which was a good log house, and he and his bride settled there. Theirs was the first wedding and their baby..."<sup>35</sup> daughter Eunice is thought to have been the first white child born in what is now Kiowa County.

#### The Drouth of 1878-80; Nigger Bill

The long drouth lasting from September, 1878, to July 21, 1880, almost wrecked the little colony, numbering 70 souls, and by the spring of 1880 almost all of them had gone.<sup>36</sup>

Everyone was discouraged. Many were homesick; others became weary from crop failures. When the drouth broke there remained only five or six families.<sup>37</sup> Food became extremely scarce, consisting chiefly of wild geese, and antelope. Cornbread, made of crude cornmeal, fat meat, and water gravy comprised the daily diet. Potatoes were highly prized, the price per bushel being two dollars. Flour was three dollars per hundred pounds.<sup>38</sup>

"The people had meetings and prayed for rain."<sup>39</sup> When it did rain they rushed out of their houses and began throwing their hats and caps, yelling to everyone else that it really was raining.

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34. Kennedy, Personal Interview, December 1, 1939.

35. Kennedy, Interview, Mullinville News, November 7, 1929.

36. Ibid.

37. Kennedy, Interview, Manuscript by Garnet Fellers.

38. Kennedy, Interview, Manuscript by Doris Brown.

39. Kennedy, Interview, Manuscript by Alma Bowers.

The hot winds, sands, and dirt were stayed by the rain on the twenty-first of July, 1880. He [Mr. Kennedy] gave his welcome by standing for an hour in the downpour. The rain seemed to be held in the air; while it was dry in one place, it would be raining six yards away.<sup>40</sup>

In the spring of 1880, Cap. Peppered and Nigger Bill, a big mulatto, tried to run the sheep men out. In answer to the sheep men's plea for protection Governor St. John wrote a letter saying, "We'll protect you, but I don't see why any of you want to stay down there if it doesn't rain pretty soon."<sup>41</sup> The creek never failed and the cured prairie grass kept the sheep fat, thus assuring an income from wool and mutton.

Nigger Bill's ranch was on upper Sand Creek. He raised cattle and consistently rode the range on the lookout for brands which he could easily make over into his own brand. In order to be prepared for such an emergency he always carried his branding iron with him so that he could rope the animal, build a fire, heat the irons, and make the "critter" his own.

As long as Nigger Bill liked a person everything went splendidly, but he was always suspecting someone of "laying for him" and soon that person was no more. He often fought with members of his own race at Kinsley or Dodge City. Finally a negro who had been working on the Greenleaf Ranch (a ranch about fifteen miles east of his) killed him at Dodge City. Mr. Kennedy was able to get along with Nigger Bill, for he often made trips back and

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40. Kennedy, Interview, Manuscript by Garnet Fellers.

41. Kennedy, Interview, Mullinville News, November 7, 1929.

forth to Kinsley with him.

During this period it was not uncommon for men to be shot and left lying on the prairies. Mr. Kennedy and his neighbors discovered bodies of unknown men several times, especially after so many men came hunting land to homestead. One time a dog dragged in a man's leg while one of his neighbors was cooking breakfast over a campfire.<sup>42</sup>

#### The Winter of 1880-81

"That fall Mrs. Kennedy and their baby daughter, Eunice, returned to Kansas City for the winter, which was the most severe Mr. Kennedy ever experienced, lasting from October to April."<sup>43</sup> Everyone left except Mr. Shepherd, Mr. Kennedy, and M. T. Bone, a cow cook, whose boss left him what is now the Horsehead Ranch. Bone tried to raise hogs that winter.

February 7, 1881, a terrible blizzard swept down upon this territory. The temperature dropped to thirty degrees below zero and the wind blew about sixty miles an hour. Mr. Kennedy kept warm by burning wood, but his live stock did not fare so well. His sheep were in a small pen with a shed in it and seventy-five winter lambs were completely covered with the snow and died. The drifts were ten and twelve feet high. He found his cows standing on a drift higher than the sheep shed.

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42. Kennedy, Personal Interview, June 15, 1940.

43. Kennedy, Interview in Mullinville News, November 7, 1929.

In March another storm which came lay a foot deep and did not drift. The wild horses and sheep pawed the snow and ice off the grass to find food, but many days after the storm cattle went thru the country bellowing for food.<sup>44</sup> "In the spring the beauty of the green grassy prairie was marred by the huge piles of bones in the valleys where the sheep and cattle had sought protection from the furious storm."<sup>45</sup>

#### Survey of Wichita and Western Railroad

May 18, 1883, the Wichita and Western Railroad Company was chartered to construct a line of railroad from a point near the city of Wichita, Sedgwick County, to a point at or near Dodge City, Ford County, Kansas. The survey was made in 1883 and 1884, and the line was constructed to Kingman, Kansas, and opened for operation from Wichita to Kingman October 1, 1884.<sup>46</sup>

#### Deep Wells and Permanent Ranches

In 1883 Mr. Kennedy sold out to Mr. J. J. McBride for two thousand dollars and moved north into the sandhills on section 34-27-20. He dug a well and built a two-room house with a shed kitchen. The house was built of 1 x 12 inch soft boards placed up and down and the cracks were covered with narrow "batting."

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44. Kennedy, Personal Interview, June 23, 1940.

45. Kennedy, Manuscript based on Interview by Doris Brown.

46. Fink, H. B., Personal Letter, February 20, 1940.



The sandy soil did not suit the Kennedys and soon they loaded up their belongings, house and all, and moved south to section 22-28-20 near the Rattlesnake crossing on the Kinsley Trail. It was about one-half mile south of Kennedy's new location that the surveyors for the new railroad passed and drove their stakes.<sup>47</sup>

Another rancher who came the same spring was C. H. Burgess of Ohio. He was soon joined by his friend, O. L. Stockwell, and the two of them bought out a man named Hathaway. Their ranch became known as the Horsehead because the cattle brand they used resembled a horse's head. "Mr. Burgess was one of the first to settle on the buffalo range away from a stream." The well was dug by hand and the dirt was hoisted out by buckets until the well was 120 feet deep; then a pump was swung over the hole and all water for stock and house pumped by hand. One of the jobs Mr. Burgess dreaded most was to go down into the well whenever the cylinder became choked--which it did pretty often. Some of the dug wells were over two hundred feet deep.<sup>48</sup>

In 1884 Mr. Burgess stocked his ranch with a thousand head of Mexican cattle, but because of the severe winter only twenty were left by spring. That winter, he with three other men, cooked in a dugout and slept in a board shack. It was so cold that they slept in their boots, hats, and overcoats under all the blankets they could pile on. For the ranchers the hide

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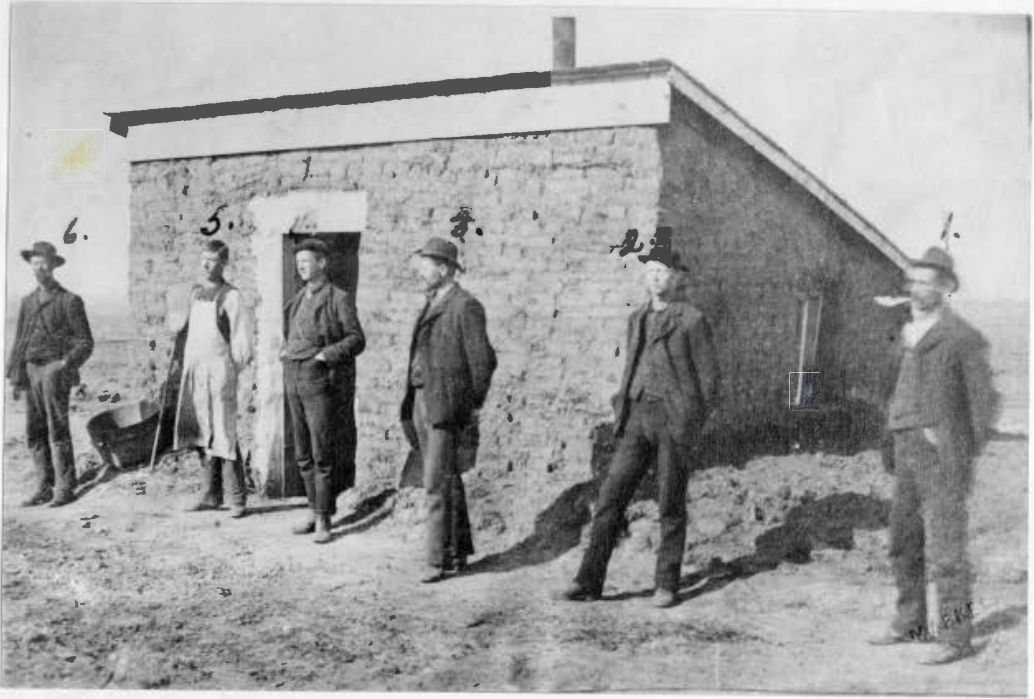
47. Compilation of Carrie Alphin's Kennedy story, Hutchinson News-Herald, May 26, 1940, and Kennedy, Interview, Mullinville News, November 7, 1929.

48. Burgess, C. H., Interview, Mullinville News, January 9, 1930.

business was the most flourishing. The hides brought \$1.25 apiece delivered at Kinsley thirty-five miles away.<sup>49</sup>

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49. Ibid.



1. C. F. Trick

4. ?

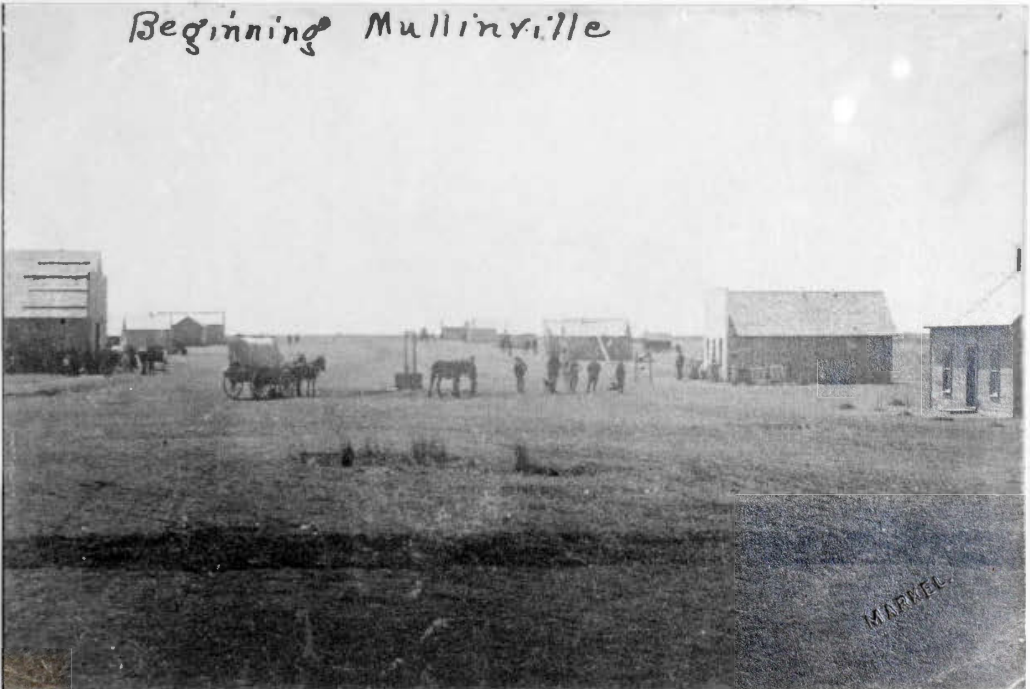
2. ?

5. ?

3. A. A. Mullin

6. ?

*Beginning Mullinville*



Pictures taken in Mullinville in 1884

## CHAPTER II

### THE BOOM YEARS (1884-1893)

#### A. A. Mullin Starts a Town

In the spring of 1884, the bright green of the buffalo grass stretched as far as the eye could see with here and there a darker field of blue stem. The golden sunshine flooded the prairie and the clear pools in grass-lined buffalo wallows mirrored the little white clouds, the blue sky, and the plentiful flowers of many kinds and colors. Out of the tall grass, the antelope would cautiously slip to drink and then bound away. Coyotes, quails and prairie chickens, and water fowl were everywhere.<sup>1</sup>

Such was the country through which Alfred A. Mullin, a twenty-five year old Chicagoan, rode in his search for a townsite. Before noon on June 18<sup>2</sup> he saw a windmill loom up in the west as he followed the stakes of the Wichita and Western Railroad survey.

As he came to the windmill for water he was met by Mr. Kennedy, who had noticed the black speck in the east and had watched beside

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1. Anderson, Lina S., "Memories," Greensburg News, September 23, 1937.

2. Kennedy, Personal Interview, December 1, 1939.

his well for the rider. Mullin asked Kennedy whether he knew of a place where a town could be started. Kennedy told him that he knew nothing about starting towns but he would like to borrow Mullin's little black pony to round up his own horses, which had escaped during the night. When Kennedy first saw the speck in the east he had been trying to decide whether to walk to Hixon's (thirteen miles northeast<sup>3</sup>) or the McBride Ranch about fifteen miles south and east to borrow a horse. While Kennedy was driving in his horses, a big rain came up. Mullin ate dinner with the Kennedys and then rode back to where the railroad and the trail to Kinsley crossed; here he drove a stake. This was approximately where Boone Pedigo's house now stands. He rode on to Kinsley that night. The next day Mr. Kennedy started to Kinsley with a load of wool and met Mr. Hixon bringing a load of lumber and some sixty dollars worth of groceries with which Mullin started a store.<sup>4</sup> Mullin built most of the store by himself.

The Hixon Ranch was the only place on the trail between Kennedy's and Kinsley and the Hixons served meals to travelers. Their son Harry married the widow Smeltzer, a sister to the Lovettes.

Mr. Mullin said he thought that after he left Haviland he had come to the wild and woolly west, but at Jaynesville Max Williamson asked the blessing and when he ate dinner at the

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3. Kennedy, Interview, December 15, 1938. From Kiowa County Historical Society Files.

4. Kennedy, Personal Interview, December 1, 1939.

Kennedys' Mrs. Van Landingham returned thanks. The Hixons were also religious people, and so he decided that the country was not so wild after all.

The second day after Mullin drove his stake he was selling groceries to the freighters who came along the trail.<sup>5</sup> The night Mr. Burgess, who was on his way to Kinsley with a load of cattle hides, camped with Mullin.<sup>6</sup>

Later a freighter station along the trail was established at "Billy" Reed's home. He came in September of 1884 and took a claim ten miles south and west of Kennedy's.<sup>7</sup> Mr. Reed's capital consisted of five dollars in money, a sow and five pigs, a team, and a cow.

The news of the town of Mullinville spread up and down the trails, and the Sunday after Mullin drove his stake, people from Coldwater flocked to the new town. Settlers began to come from everywhere, especially from Ohio and Arkansas. The best land was south of town and these people took land there.

To mark the points of a claim, a stone or a piece of charred wood was used. The government sent men out to survey and mark these claims. If a stone or rock could not be found nearby, the men would light a match and after it had burned, place it in the ground as a marker made of charred wood. Of course this was not a good way of marking land and there arose many disputes from time to time.<sup>8</sup>

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5. Kennedy, Interview in Kiowa County Historical Society Files.

6. Burgess, Interview, Mullinville News, January 9, 1930.

7. Graven, Rosie Reed, Personal Interview, November 15, 1939.

8. McClaren, H. H., Interview, Mullinville News, December 2, 1929.

At first everyone hauled water from Mr. Kennedy's well. Often times there would be a waiting line and the settlers would spend all night getting water. If the wind did not blow they would have to pump the water.

#### The First Places of Business

Mullin built his store at the corner on the east side of Main Street and south side of Wall Street. His store also served as post office and the meeting place for the Sunday School. Mr. Mullin was a good Baptist and he often preached to the settlers.<sup>9</sup>

John Abbot and George McKay built a saloon and grocery store just across the street west from Mullin's. They brought a barrel of whiskey from Kansas City and made six barrels from it. They had a mill and made mash. Many of the emigrants passing through got quite drunk and often quarrelled when they came to Kennedy's for water.

Jim Koontz dug the first well in Mullinville at the intersection of Kansas and Cherry Streets (just south of Boone Pedigo's house). The well was dug by hand, and after much difficulty he reached a depth of ninety feet.<sup>10</sup>

Mullin, his partner C. F. Trick, Barry Wall of Wichita, and

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9. Sherer, Marilla H., Personal Interview, April 13, 1940.

10. Kennedy, Personal Interview, December 1, 1939.

two other men formed the town company.<sup>11</sup>

The winter of 1884-85 was so cold that Mr. Burgess and three others who slept in a board shack had to sleep in their overcoats, boots, hats, and under all the blankets they could pile on.<sup>12</sup>

Mr. B. A. Sidener and a cousin "spliced a team" (each furnished a horse, which was the common custom) and came west in 1884.

Mr. Sidener homesteaded the quarter of land, designated as section 9-28-20, three miles northwest of the present site of Mullinville. He lived there two years in a dugout home 7 x 9 feet, which, while not pretentious, afforded very comfortable quarters.

The Mullinville of 1885 consisted of two stores and a post office. Tom Collins was owner of a general merchandise store, H. W. Hodges ran a grocery store while A. A. Mullin was in charge of the post office...Mail at that time was brought to Mullinville overland from Kinsley, no railroad having yet been built to Mullinville.<sup>13</sup>

Joe Havens soon put up a livery barn and hotel. It was here that Mr. Burgess brought his wife and two little boys when they arrived from Ohio. She very aptly described it by saying,

I shall never forget my first night in Mullinville, for I was about scared to death. The little shack they called a hotel was full, so they gave me a cot in the dining room. Cowboys with big hats and six-shooters tramped back and forth through the room all night, and I was sure we would be murdered or my children kidnapped before morning. Mr. Burgess got a bed in a dugout near by but a big rain put six inches of water in the dugout so he had to move out.

Mr. Burgess had built the largest dugout in the country, eighteen by twenty feet with a board floor in it. The cowboys

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11. Compilation of stories about the founding of Mullinville. (Kennedy, Interview, Kiowa County Historical Society File and Kennedy, Personal Interviews, December 1, 1939, June 15, 1940 and June 23, 1940.)
  12. Burgess, Interview, Mullinville News, January 9, 1930.
  13. Sidener, Interview, Mullinville News, November 21, 1929.



often borrowed the use of the dugout and forty or fifty would dance there.<sup>14</sup>

Mr. Epley, who worked for the Havens Hotel, said that at first it was only two rooms and the men slept on the floor or in the barn.

Mr. Sherer always enjoyed telling this story of pioneer hotels: The old hotels were crude affairs with a stairway which led to a place called a corral room. This was a large room, on the floor of which were several ticks filled with prairie grass, placed close together. When one paid for his bed he did not pay for privacy, for all the men slept in this room. One never knew when he went to sleep at night who or how many would be lying in this bed by morning.

A year or two later the Havens Hotel advertised a sample room for travelling men.

#### A Typical Settler

March 16, [1885, J. A.] Sherer engaged a driver and started to hunt an unstaked claim and that evening was left afoot on a quarter he had staked nine miles southwest of Mullinville [just across the line into Ford County]. As he had no shelter he walked to a little 8 x 10 board shack two miles away and by night seven other men from four different states had gathered there. A blizzard began and by morning they were forced to hunt better shelter with some settlers in dugouts farther on. Four of the men representing Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Pennsylvania staked adjoining claims and, with the aid of.... [a] settler's ox team, they broke sod and erected four sod houses, getting lumber for the roofs by ox team from Kinsley. Then came the question of furniture. Mr. Dockerty and Mr. Sherer walked to Kinsley and each.... [brought] a little sheet iron stove which they got a man to haul to Mullinville, then they walked back, bought a few groceries which they put into the stoves, roped them onto

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14. Burgess, Interview, Mullinville News, January 2, 1930.

their backs and packed them to their claims nine miles away. For fuel they used blue-stem grass twisted into hard ropes until they were able to borrow an ox team and haul some wood from the creek.

In early April Mr. Sherer and his partner were sound asleep when a big storm came up and took the roof off their sod house. As their bed was suspended from the roof by ropes they were dumped onto the floor in their underwear and had to back into a corner and wait in the rain and cold until morning. When daylight came they gathered up their clothes and had a 'drying time,' then put the roof back on the house....

Water for all purposes, washing, cooking and drinking, in the early day came from buffalo wallows which were numerous over the unbroken sod of the prairies. Only occasionally did these wallows go dry, but when they did go dry, it was necessary to carry water for quite a distance. Mr. Sherer recalls that while living on his claim, he carried water from the Alkire Lake, some three miles away, in a keg perched on his shoulder...Alkire Lake of that time lay just north of where Kiowa School house now stands.<sup>15</sup>

Mr. Sherer started a blacksmith shop in Fonda and did not move to Mullinville until October 13, 1886. The fall and winter of 1885-86 he spent surveying with General John D. Fonda, who was laying out townsites and sections from Ford west to the state line.

The three B's were the principle [sic] menu on the surveying trips, sow belly, beans, and biscuits. 'We would cook up a pot of beans after supper,' says Mr. Sherer, 'then for breakfast cold beans, for dinner warmed over beans and for supper warmed over again.' Such foods were strengthening and satisfying and sic more easily carried than bulkier foods.<sup>16</sup>

He often told of going to the lake one morning before breakfast and finding a dead steer out in the lake. The weather had become dry and hot and the lake was becoming stagnant. He said he could realize then why the biscuits of the woman with whom he boarded had had a green tinge the last few days. He quickly found

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15. Sherer, J. A., Interview, Mullinville News, November 14, 1929.

16. Ibid.

a new boarding place.

Most of the people who came here were poor and had very little. Most [of them] came seeking work. For all of their labors they were rewarded in 1885 by a good corn and millet crop. For that year rain was plentiful.<sup>17</sup>

July 3, 1885, a number of cowboys came riding in from the south, spreading an alarm that the Indians were coming. Many of the newcomers were frightened and some prepared to leave, but it was soon discovered to be a hoax of the ranchers who wanted the settlers to leave.<sup>18</sup>

#### Prairie Fires

The prairie fire was one of the gravest dangers the pioneers had to face. The fires were often started by lightning, the sun shining through bits of glass, or a stray spark from a campfire or homesteader's chimney.

During the hot weather these were practically uncontrollable, because of the vastness of the dry grass. About the only means of possible protection were fire guards, which were made by plowing two furrows around one's property. One evening at dusk everyone was amazed to see a bright reflection in the sky. They later learned that it was a prairie fire. Mr. Kennedy and several men fought the oncoming prairie fire until dawn.

The fire reached Coldwater before it was finally put out.<sup>19</sup>

Frank Brown of Haviland, Kansas, describes a prairie fire of 1885 that swept down out of the sandhills through the blue-stem grass, which was as high as a horse's back and waved in the breeze

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17. Sherer, Interview, Manuscript by Georgia Clifford.

18. Kennedy, Personal Interview, December 1, 1939.  
Graven, Personal Interview, November 15, 1939.  
Cf. p. 3 above.

19. Kennedy, Interview, Manuscript by Doris Brown.

like wheat,<sup>20</sup> as being the most beautiful sight he ever saw. The wall of fire seemed to be ten feet high as it rolled toward his home.

Whenever there was a sign of prairie fire the ranchers in the south third of Mullinville Community collected together in order to be able to fight the fire more effectively. The Briggses kept two horses saddled ready to go and a cowhide soaking. After the fire had passed, two men would mount the horses, fasten the wet cowhide between the two horses so that it would drag the ground, and drag the edges of the burnt strip. One horse walked on the burnt ground and one on the unburnt portion. This was a means of making sure that the fire was out. Miss Elizabeth Briggs rode after the fire fighters with water bags of drinking water for them.<sup>21</sup>

#### The Blizzard of 1886

The fall of 1885 had been mild; but with the coming of the new year the weather grew cold and finally on January 6, 1886, one of the most terrible blizzards in the history of the community came upon the settlers. The stories vary, but the most authentic say the blinding storm raged from twenty-four to thirty hours. The snow was two feet deep on the level and the drifts were ten and twelve feet deep.<sup>22</sup> Mr. Kennedy says the temperature dropped to

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20. Sherer, Marilla H., Personal Interview, March 3, 1940.

21. Briggs, Elizabeth, Personal Interview, November 15, 1939.

22. Compilation of stories in Sidener and Kennedy Interviews, Mullinville News, November 7 and 21, 1929.

30 degrees below zero and Mr. Epley's diary reads: "Jan. 7 - terrible storm; Jan. 8 - cold 23 degrees below zero; Jan. 9 - 16 degrees below zero."

During the storm Mr. Kennedy and his hired man, Dave Fenters, (a big partially paralyzed fellow who wore burnsidies)<sup>23</sup> went to try to put the sheep in the corral, but the corral was full of snow. In order to keep the sheep from freezing they would "stir up" the flock occasionally. Since it was impossible for the men to see any distance they yelled at each other to keep from becoming lost. Out of a flock of over a thousand sheep Kennedy lost half.<sup>24</sup>

As soon as possible after the storm abated Mr. Kennedy started to Kinsley for coal. Apparently many others had exhausted their supply of coal, for he found that the trail was broken from Mullinville north and a train of wagons two miles long was on the way to Kinsley to get coal.<sup>25</sup>

Mrs. Kennedy had to help take care of the sheep while he was gone and her mother, Mrs. Van Landingham, stayed in the house with the three children, Eunice, Guy, and Bruce. Every time Mrs. Kennedy and Fenters came in to warm they would bring in cornstalks to burn. The children were made to stay in bed all day to keep from freezing their feet. Mrs. Van Landingham cut up so many cornstalks for fuel that there were blisters all over her hands and she finally

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23. Kennedy, Personal Interview, June 23, 1940.

24. Compilation of story from accounts in manuscripts of Interviews written by Doris Brown and Beth Brown.

25. Kennedy, Personal Interview, June 23, 1940.

had to wrap up her hands.<sup>26</sup>

#### Fuel

Fuel was often a problem to the settlers, for they had little money to purchase coal which had to be hauled from Kinsley. Since there was no wood available almost everyone burned cow chips which were better known among the settlers as "Heifer City Coal." Epley says the prairie close to Mullinville was kept pretty well cleaned up. In the fall he often took his family and drove to Kiowa Creek sixteen to eighteen miles south, and gathered the chips along the canyons. These were hauled home and used for the winter supply of fuel.<sup>27</sup>

Other settlers who had an abundance of corn and could get only ten cents a bushel for it, burned the corn on the cob for fuel.<sup>28</sup>

#### Kiowa County Restored

February 10, 1886, Kiowa County was restored by an act of the state legislature<sup>29</sup> and boundaries defined as follows:

Commencing at the intersection of the west line of Range 20 west with the north line of 27; thence south along range line to its intersection with the north line of township 31; thence east along township line to where it intersects with the west line of

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26. Harp, Eunice Kennedy, Personal Interview, June 23, 1940.
  27. Epley, Interview, Hutchinson News-Herald, December 24, 1939.
  28. Barnes, Harold, Interview, Manuscript by Glenna Crommer.
  29. "Kiowa County," manuscript, compiled from old newspapers by Dean Burtsfield.

range 15 west; thence north along range line to where it intersects with the north line of township 27, thence west to the place of beginning.<sup>30</sup>

The Governor, John A. Martin, appointed H. H. Patten, Jacob Dawson, and C. F. Fullington, County Commissioners and M. A. Nelson, County Clerk and at the first meeting of the commissioners on March 29, 1886, they declared Greensburg the temporary county seat and formed six townships, namely: Wellsford, Glick, Reeder, Center, Martin and Kiowa.<sup>31</sup>

Each commissioner's district contained two townships. Martin and Kiowa townships made up the Mullinville Community.

#### Scanning the first Mallets

The first newspaper in Mullinville was the Mullinville Mallet, the first issue of which is dated April 9, 1886. The following is a compilation from the initial issue as printed in the Mullinville News, March (9), 1939:

Mullinville is located ten miles west and one-half mile south of Greensburg, in Kiowa county; and four miles from the east of Ford County. It commands, as its tributary, a scope of country at least 20 miles long by 10 miles wide. All this area is capable of a high degree of fertility. A better piece of country than that which surrounds Mullinville cannot be found anywhere else. The people who have located in this section are all hard-headed sons of American labor, experienced agriculturists, and consequently understand how to utilize land to the best advantage. They have verified their intentions of making their residence permanent, which is attested by the vast acreage of land broken and sown to seed, and by their neat and comfortable dwellings which dot the prairies. And yet there is room for more of the same wide-awake, enterprising farmers.

#### MULLINVILLE

Mullinville is destined to become the second best town in Kiowa county. Pleasantly situated, and commanding 200 square miles of as

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30. Cyclopedia of Kansas History, Vol. II, pp. 76-77.

31. "Kiowa County," Manuscript compiled from old newspapers by Dean Burtsfield.

fine territory as the sun ever shone upon as its tributary, it cannot fail in becoming a thriving and populous city.

There is not a town in Kiowa county outside of Greensburg better represented in the most needed branches of business than Mullinville. The men who have entered into business here have done so with the utmost faith in the future prospects of this town. Most of these located here, in their respective avocations, when this place existed in name only. By strict adherence to business, and ever working for the interest of the town and country, they have established a lucrative trade. Below we present the few men of the town who are engaged in business at this writing.

J. McNown, located on the west side of North Main Street. He has a large store building, filled to its utmost capacity with choice and staple articles, such as flour, grain, teas, coffees, spices, cigars, tobaccos, boots, shoes, queenswares, shelf hardware, notions, agricultural implements, etc. Mr. McNown is a shrewd business man, and ever alert to further the interest of the town.

H. W. Hodges, located on the west side of North Main street, is also engaged in the general grocery business. He occupies quite a large building which is at all times well stocked with choice goods. Mr. Hodges is another of our town's solid men, and ever anxious to further the interest of the community.

Thomas Collins large establishment is located on the east side of South Main Street. He carries a fine stock of groceries and provisions, general hardware, boots, shoes, clothing, gent's furnishing goods, and agricultural implements. He is a genial gentleman, an expert business man and ever alive to the interests of his patrons, and the community at large.

W. T. Bunn, blacksmith, is located on the east side of North Main street. He is a genius at his business, and enjoys a good reputation.

Red Front Livery Barn, Joseph Havens, proprietor, is situated on the east side of North Main. This is a large structure, with ample room and feeding accomodations.

City Hotel, Joseph Havens, proprietor, this hotel is on the east side of North Main street. As a hotel it is hard to beat in many towns of thrice the population of this town.

Reed & Mullin, lumber dealers, located on the west side of South Main, have a fine yard, and carry a full line of lumber, lath, shingles, windows, doors, etc. This town was named in honor of Mr. A. A. Mullin of the above firm.

Dr. T. L. Hawkins, represents the medical fraternity here. His office is in J. McNown's store. The doctor enjoys a good reputation.



Thus we have given a brief resume of the business houses of Mullinville, and as the amount of business done by them is any criterion by which to judge of the welfare and prosperity of the surrounding territory, we are led to the inevitable conclusion that we have a rich and rapidly developing country from which to draw; and yet it does not appear to what height of prosperity we shall attain. Even as we write there comes to mind a few more positive business ventures which will appear here soon, and among which is a bank, a drug store. On the lot east of the MALLET office there is in progress of erection an exclusive hardware and agricultural implement house, the owner thereof being Mr. Charles Watson. The air rings with the music of the saw and hammer.

Our educational facilities have not been neglected. We have almost completed a commodious and very handsome school house, which will be well furnished, and in which will be held our summer term of school. Our people can rest assured that none but the most efficient instructors will be employed.

We invite all parties desirous of locating in a prosperous community with the brightest prospects for its future, to come to Mullinville. We urge all to investigate the merits of our claims, and we feel confident that we will be concurred with in our views.

The boom was well underway by April, 1886, and buildings were springing up like mushrooms. Soon the editor of the Mallet began to call Mullinville the "Gem City." An item from the Mallet of May 21, 1886 reads:

Six weeks ago, Mullinville, contained twenty-two houses. Today there are in the town, completed, and in course of erection one hundred and thirteen buildings.

The week of April 16 to April 30 thirty buildings were started.<sup>32</sup>

During this time not only claims but town lots were subject to being "jumped." The Mallet advises all those "who have taken lots to get lumber on them as soon as possible to avoid any trouble whatsoever."<sup>33</sup>

People were coming from everywhere and papers were carrying

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32. Mullinville Mallet, April 30, 1886.

33. Mullinville Mallet, April 30, 1886.

articles like the following to entice more settlers:

If you are a young man toiling as your father toiled, in worn out and barren deserts of the east; if you would like to live where the soil rewards the tiller, where the grain waves and sparkles in the morning dew and fills the cribs in the fall; where the banner of prosperity waves, and the gaunt specter of starvation crosses into another land come to Kansas. There never was such a country for the best kind of husbands, they run loose on the street and you meet them everywhere. If you are a young woman full of golden vision and would like to pick up a husband on every section line come to Kansas. If you want one put on your best garments. Oh, daughters of the east, come to Kansas. The country is filling up fast; they come by the rumbling trains, they come affot and horseback. Before many years every quarter section will have a house on it, and the hills that now know only the spangled cow and the untamed broncho, will echo to the heavy tread of the book agents as cultivation sweeps onward. Our cities are growing, the railroads change timetables every week to accommodate new cities that were not on the last one issued. Farmers pump water for their cattle with mills, and do their own plowing sitting upon a spring seat with a box of cigars on one side. In the east they carry their water from the nearest creek, and walk behind a plow until they have no distinct idea whether they are shoving the machine or the horses pulling it. We men who can't thrive, prosper and grow in Kansas, would starve in a bakery.

--Once a Week Correspondence 34

As in all other communities only the good things were lauded, but hailstones which stripped the crops,<sup>35</sup> tornadoes that whirled the buildings to bits,<sup>36</sup> and rattlesnakes that crawled about the doors<sup>37</sup> were also a part of that booming summer of 1880.

The Mallet suggests that a victim of a rattlesnake bite be given whiskey to make him dead drunk. If there is no whiskey to give the patient, apply onion poultices to the affected parts.<sup>38</sup>

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34. Mullinville Mallet, August 27, 1886.

35. Sherer, J. A., Manuscript by Georgia Clifford.

36. Kennedy, Manuscript by Alma Bowers.

37. Mullinville Mallet, April 23, 1886.

38. Mullinville Mallet, April 23, 1886.

The following time table is another indication of the boom.

#### Stage Time Table

##### Cannon Ball Route (Greensburg)

| Daily Stages South      | Arrive     | Leave      |
|-------------------------|------------|------------|
| Kinsley Express No. 1   | 12:00      | 12:55 p.m. |
| Daily Stage North       |            |            |
| Coldwater Express No. 2 | 11:50 a.m. | 1:00 p.m.  |

##### Dodge City and Greensburg Route (Mullinville)

Arrives from West on Tuesday and Friday

Arrives from East on Wednesday and Saturday

Leaves for West Wednesday and Saturday

Leaves for East Tuesday and Friday.<sup>39</sup>

#### Further Development of Business

Several new business places were added in the summer of 1886. One of these was Wallie Burnette's Ice Cream Parlor on Main Street, where one could obtain ice cream and lemonade.<sup>40</sup> It became popular among the young people of the community.

J. A. Abbott, a tonsorial artist, opened a new barber shop on East Wall Street.

If you desire any hirsutical operation perpetrated on your cranium, or your physiognomy rendered more attractive by the painless extraction of that 'downy' beard from the region of your facial anatomy, call on friend Abbott.<sup>41</sup>

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39. Mullinville Mallet, April 9, 1886.

40. Mullinville Mallet, July 9, 1886.

41. Mullinville Mallet, May 14, 1886.

Mr. [J.] Lovette was busily engaged in superintending the making of as fine bricks as could be found in the state of Kansas at his brickyard in the west part of town. The brick machine of his own invention has the capacity to turn out five thousand first class bricks per day.

He now has about enough to fill a kiln, and expects to burn them the coming week. When we get our railroads next spring, or even one road so that cheaper coal can be had Mr. L. says he will put in steam power machinery enough to supply the whole southwest with as good and cheap brick as can be had this side of Missouri.<sup>42</sup>

A list of advertisers in the Weekly Telegram for October 21, 1886 included:

The Telegram Real Estate Agency, H. L. Van Zandt, agent.

The Commercial House, E. Burnett, Prop'r. The largest and best hotel in the city, located on Central Main.

T. L. Hawkins, Physician and Surgeon, calls answered promptly night and day. Can be found at residence or H. M. Bacon's Drug Store.

W. G. Johnson, dealer in Drugs, Medicines, Oils, Paints, Toilet Articles, etc. Central Main Street, Mullinville, Kansas.

Anton Shafer, dealer in Harness, Saddles, Whips, Fly Nets, Lap Robes, and everything kept in a harness shop. West Wall St., Mullinville, Kansas.

Winslow and McQueen, Contractors & Builders, Estimates of cost of buildings made on application. None but good workmen employed. Mullinville, Kansas.

N. E. Stine, Painter, Grainer & Sign Writer. All work executed with neatness and dispatch. Mullinville, Kansas.

Millinery Store, West Wall Street, Mrs. Viola Page, Propriet'ess. Millinery Goods of all kinds, Quick Sales and Small Profits.

Wm. A. Cooke's City Meat Market. All kinds of fresh meat on hand. Central Main Street, Mullinville, Kansas.

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42. Mullinville Mallet, July 23, 1886.

C. A. Watson. Farming Implements, Hardware. I will sell at Kinsley Prices. Mullinville, Kansas.

Hollis & Dampf--Dealers In--[G]roceries, Flour, Feed, Provisions, Canned [G]oods, Fancy Tobaccos and Cigars, Salt Meats, Boots, Shoes, Hats, Caps, Gloves, Confectionery [sic], &c. Mullinville, Kansas.

The Mullinville Bank -- Is pleased with the patronage extended towards it, and wishes to be of still greater service to the community in the way of its regular business, in Collections, Exchanges, Loans, Deposits [sic] etc. Open from 8 a.m., to 4 p.m. G. W. Snyder, Cash.

Traveller's Bulletin--  
Dodge City & Greensburg Mail and Stage Line Arrives every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, from Dodge City; and every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, from Greensburg.

Kinsley & Protection Stage Line Arrives from Kinsley on every Tuesday and Friday; and from Protection every Wednesday and Saturday.

These lines make close connections with passenger trains on the Santa Fe road at Dodge City and Kinsley.<sup>43</sup>

The first bank in Mullinville was organized in 1886, with George Snyder the principal stockholder and president. This bank building stood on the corner west of the present Church of Christ.<sup>44</sup>

E. K. Neveling went into the bank as Cashier February 24, 1887.<sup>45</sup>

Other business places not advertised in the Mallet or Telegram were: Grimes Brothers Hardware Store and Lumber Yard, Boot and Apple General Store, Peter Leonhart's Grocery Store, John Herd's Furniture Store, George Bidwell's Grocery Store, Dr. Gossett's Drug Store, Lon Jakeway's restaurant, Johnny Moil's Land Office and J. A. Sherer's blacksmith shop.<sup>46</sup>

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43. Compilation of items from the Weekly Telegram, October 21, 1886. This paper was sent to A. A. Mullin and bears his name in pencil across the top. Mr. Mullin presented the paper to Edgar B. Corse and he in turn lent it to the Kiowa County Historical Society.
  44. Sidener, Interview, Mullinville News, November 21, 1929.
  45. Mullinville Mallet, February 24, 1887.
  46. "Start of Mullinville" Manuscript from Kiowa County Historical Society File.

A rather unusual business for a town of this size was H. E. Hurd's spring bed factory on West Wall Street, which was established in the spring of 1887. A bed known as the "Star" was advertised as possessing several good qualities. With increased demands for the bed many persons would be employed and thus the enterprise would be beneficial to the city.<sup>47</sup>

#### Description of Mullinville, September 30, 1886

This city is also an excellent criterion from which to judge the actual prosperity of this part of the county. Six months ago there were but twenty buildings, all told. Three stores, one hotel, one livery stable, one lumber yard and one blacksmith shop, represented the various business interests of the town. In the intervening time between then and now, 350 new buildings have been completed besides a large number yet unfinished. We now have nine general stores, one hardware store, one furniture store, two bakeries, two large hotels, two meat markets, one bank, three restaurants, two drug houses, two livery stables, one barber shop, two blacksmith shops, one mammoth lumber yard, two dressmaking establishments, three doctors, one dentist, two good newspapers, one Union hall for school and church purposes, one brick yard, three real estate agencies, one harness shop, one jeweller, one millinery store, besides painters and carpenters' shops.

The town is well supplied with water, having six public wells, of which three are fitted with windmills and pumps.<sup>48</sup>

Mullinville was incorporated as a third-class city by the board of county commissioners on April 13, 1887.<sup>49</sup> The population at that time was over one thousand inhabitants.

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47. Mullinville Mallet, April 15, 1887.

48. Weekly Telegram, September 30, 1886.

49. Mullinville Mallet, April 15, 1887.

## The Railroads Come

The Wichita and Western Railroad Company had been surveyed in 1883, but had been built only as far as Kingman, Kansas. September 11, 1885, the Kingman, Pratt and Western Railroad Company was chartered to construct a railroad beginning at Kingman and extending to the Western boundary line of Ford County, Kansas. The survey was made in 1885, and construction began at Kingman in 1886.<sup>50</sup>

By May, 1886, both the Rock Island and Kingman, Pratt, and Western (also known as Wichita and Western and Sante Fe) had propositions before the people of Kiowa County. The Rock Island asked for \$120,000 in bonds and the Kingman, Pratt, and Western asked for \$115,000. Either road was to be completed to Greensburg by December, 1887.<sup>51</sup> In June the bonds for both railroads carried.<sup>52</sup>

The surveying corps of the Rock Island Railroad arrived in this city Tuesday. The line surveyed by them runs about 1300 feet south of the town limits.<sup>53</sup>

E. P. McNeal, E. Penny and A. P. Penny have purchased the James Grissom farm of 160 acres, adjoining the townsite on the south. The price paid was \$1,800. Last week the Rock Island company located a depot on this farm, and the chances are that many times the amount of the purchase money will be realized from the sale of town lots.<sup>54</sup>

All through the summer months there was much speculation about the railroads, but by fall there was more assurance that both railroads were building toward Mullinville.

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50. Fink, Personal Letter, February 20, 1940.

51. Mullinville Mallet, May 14, 1886.

52. Mullinville Mallet, June 25, 1886.

53. Mullinville Mallet, June 4, 1886.

54. Mullinville Mallet, June 11, 1886.

Besides the vastness of our agricultural capabilities we are located on the survey of two railroads which have received an aggregation of \$240,000 in bonds from this county. The roads are the Sante Fe and the Rock Island, and they will be completed to Mullinville by the fall of 1887. This city is the objective point of these roads. Here they diverge, the Santa Fe continuing to a connection with its main line at Dodge City, and the Rock Island going southwest through the Pan Handle of Texas to El Paso. These are not branch roads, but through trunk lines. They will open up markets for our grains in the north and south, the east and the west, besides creating local markets. They will cheapen the transportation on all our imports and place us in direct contact with the coal fields of eastern Kansas and Colorado, which we need so much to be. The foundations of our success as a permanent and prosperous town are fully established,<sup>55</sup> and we are moving right along to higher planes of advancement.

The mail was being carried by stage and the following mail schedule was published in the Weekly Telegram for January 13, 1887;

Post Office Bulletin

Hours of Business

The postoffice in this city will open every day except Sun., at 7 a.m. and close at 7 p.m.

Delivery

Mails close 15 minutes before arrival of hacks from any direction.

Mails from Kinsley and Protection arrive at 12 m.

Mails arrive from Dodge City at 3 p.m., from Greensburg at 10 a.m.

J. W. Moyle, Postmaster  
W. A. Cooke, Assist. Postmaster

After much agitation daily mail service from Dodge City went into effect March 3, 1887.<sup>56</sup>

The early "squatter" colony of this vast community had established a post office called Nickel Post Office in the home of Jacob Hamm,

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55. Weekly Telegram, September 30, 1886.

56. Weekly Telegram, March 3, 1887.



who received a commission as postmaster in the fall of 1887. The mail was delivered to this post office from Mullinville twice a week by a carrier.<sup>57</sup>

By Christmas, 1886, the Santa Fe had part of the grade constructed<sup>58</sup> and the Rock Island was looking at land for a right of way.

Col. Doty, the right-of-way man of the Rock Island, was in the city and along the line of the vicinity several days this week, buying right-of-way where a satisfactory consideration could be agreed upon. A. N. Reed, a notary public accompanied the colonel and acknowledged the deeds whenever a sale was made. Those who refused to accept what the company thought to be a fair consideration and non-residents, will have to abide by the decisions of the commissioners appointed by the district judge (unless they wish to stand a law suit) who will appraise the damage, after the right-of-way has been condemned, and the amount will be deposited with the county treasurer in payment for the right-of-way through their lands.

The following gentlemen, residing or owning land, have settled with the Rock Island, through Col. Doty, for right of way through their lands: F. W. Price, \$190; O. P. Reed, \$100; Wm. Byerly, (320 acres) \$270; Godfrey Byerly, \$75; Jas. Mitchell, \$150; Tom Braden, \$160; Jas. Payne \$40.<sup>59</sup>

The February 18, 1887, issue of the Mallet states that the Rock Island contractors were viewing the line with the idea of bidding in work. By March first the Rock Island had established a camp at the south edge of Mullinville and grading was expected to begin the next week.<sup>60</sup> A month later this railroad had located a depot in the first block east of Main Street in Clement's addition.<sup>61</sup>

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57. Mullinville Mallet, October 7, 1887.

58. Kennedy, Personal Interview, December 1, 1939.

59. Mullinville Mallet, February 4, 1887.

60. Mullinville Mallet, March 4, 1887.

61. Mullinville Mallet, April 8, 1887.

An item in the June 3, 1887, issue of the Mallet reads: No less than a dozen railroads for Kiowa County and Mullinville. This city is destined to become one of the greatest railroad centers of the southwest.

One of these, the Denver, Memphis and Atlantic, better known as the D. M. A. or "Darling Mary Ann," was a possibility for many months but never materialized.

The Santa Fe (Wichita and Western, as it was called then) had reached Greensburg by July 1, 1887, and the Cannon Ball stage hauled the mail from Greensburg to Dodge City. The route to Kinsley was discontinued and a new route established from Greensburg to Ashland.<sup>62</sup>

In July it was discovered that the total bond issue for the two railroads had exceeded the maximum limit allowed by law. The elections having taken place the same day, the question was raised as to who should receive the bonds.<sup>63</sup>

The August 19, 1887, issue of the Mallet carried this item: The Santa Fe grade between this city and Greensburg is about completed; the pile driver has finished work at the rattlesnake crossing [sic] and track laying will begin next week.

Carpenters were at work on the Rock Island depot in September and it was described as one of the neatest and most commodious in the state.<sup>64</sup> The Santa Fe depot was also being built. It measured twenty-four by forty-two feet and was handsomely finished. By

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62. Mullinville Mallet, July 1, 1887.

63. Mullinville Mallet, July 15, 1887.

64. Mullinville Mallet, September 2, 9, 16, 1887.

September 30, 1887, the Rock Island track was laid across the line into Ford County almost to Bucklin.

The Santa Fe was building a Y at Mullinville<sup>65</sup> because the railroad would be built no farther that year. The Santa Fe had also stretched their telegraph wire to Mullinville.<sup>66</sup> The D. M. A. Railroad was expected to reach Mullinville by December 10, 1887.<sup>67</sup>

The Mallet of October 7, 1887, carries the following exchange from the Wichita Eagle about the completion of the railroads: "Last week was one of great moment at Mullinville. The Mallet of that town announces the completion of both the Santa Fe and Rock Island road to that place, with the Southern Kansas headed that way. --Eagle."

There seems to be no mention in either the Telegram or Mallet of a celebration, but Mr. Kennedy says the townspeople turned out and threw apples at the train crews as they raced to cross the Main Street.<sup>68</sup> Another version of the story is that the two roads tied in the race by crossing Main Street at the same time September 1, 1887.<sup>69</sup>

The first passenger train pulled in over the Santa Fe came into Mullinville<sup>70</sup> October 6, 1887. A large number of citizen met it at the depot.

There seems to have been competition between the two routes,

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65. The Y was about four miles west of Mullinville near the Ford County line.
  66. Mullinville Mallet, September 30, 1887.
  67. Mullinville Mallet, September 9, 1887.
  68. Kennedy, Personal Interview, December 1, 1939.
  69. Sherer, Interview in Mullinville News, November 4, 1929.
  70. Mullinville Mallet, October 7, 1887.

especially so at points between Pratt and Mullinville. Most of this distance of about fifty miles the two rights-of-way are never more than two miles apart. The February 24, 1888, issue of the Mallet carries the following advertisement: "C. K. & N. Railway on Fri. and Sat. Feb. 24 and 25 will sell round trip tickets for price of one-way fare. Good to return until Feb. 27. Will sell to competitive points with A. T. & S. C. only.

J. P. Jarrett, Agt."

Below are the time cards of the two railroads.

C. K. & N. Time Card (Rock Island Route)

Going East

No. 22 4:02 a.m. Daily  
 No. 24 4:31 p.m. Daily  
 No. 70 12:45 p.m. (no Sunday) [Freight]

West Bound

No. 21 11:33 p.m. Daily  
 No. 24 10:50 a.m. Daily  
 No. 69 11:17 a.m. [Freight] (no Sunday)

W. & W. Railroad (Santa Fe Route)

| Time Card                | Going West              |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| No. 1 leaves Wichita     | 7:30 a.m.               |
| arrives Mullinville      | 1:35 p.m.               |
| East bound               |                         |
| No. 4 leaves Mullinville | 3:00 p.m.               |
| arrives Wichita          | 8:15 p.m. <sup>71</sup> |

The Rock Island engines often threw out sparks which set the prairie afire. One night during a heavy wind a fire of this kind swept over all "the western portion of the county. Many farmers lost all their feed and losses is [sic] estimated at not less than \$10,000."<sup>72</sup>

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71. Mullinville Mallet, March 2, 1888.

72. Kiowa County Signal, February 8, 1889.

## Politics

The elections were among the early day excitements and the Horse-head ranch was one of the voting precincts...In one of the elections the Granger Party defeated both the Republicans and the Democrats. All candidates for office drove from house to house to solicit votes and one night the Burgesses had the floor of their large dugout occupied by fifteen men,<sup>73</sup> several being candidates for the same office on opposite tickets.

The following ticket for Martin township was elected [in May, 1886]: J. D. Werzt, (Demo.) trustee; Chas. A. Watson, (Rep.) clerk; G. W. Snyder, (Rep.) treasurer; George Dawson, (Demo.) and A. N. Reed, (Rep.) for justices of the Peace; Frederick Palmer, (Demo.) and Ira Cossell (Rep.) for constables.<sup>74</sup>

September 30, 1886, H. L. Van Zandt published the first issue of the weekly Telegram, a six-column quarto devoted to the interests of Mullinville, Kiowa County, and the Republican Party.

The fourth issue, dated October 21, 1886, was devoted primarily to newsstories about the Republican County Convention which was held at Greensburg October 16, 1886. A. N. Reed of the Mullinville community was chosen temporary secretary. W. W. Payne was nominated for superintendent of public instruction, O. L. Stockwell, county surveyor. A. A. Mullin, probate judge.<sup>75</sup>

A. N. Reed's speech which resulted in the nomination of A. A. Mullin for probate judge was considered by far the best oratorical effort of the day. It was said to be pointed, well-rounded, and convincing.

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73. Burgess, Interview, Mullinville News, January 9, 1930.

74. Mullinville Mallet, May 4, 1886.

75. Weekly Telegram, October 21, 1886.

### Lawlessness

Mullinville was not without incorrigibles although there seemed to be less lawlessness than in most booming towns. The following are stories the old-timers tell.

Horse thieves raided the town one evening in June, 1886, and made away with two fine animals. The horses had been picketed out and were not missed until the following morning. No definite clew was discovered, "but movers passing through the town...reported that a couple of horse men were seen" that night riding at breakneck speed through Greensburg and later Wellsford.<sup>76</sup>

Another incident which required the attention of a peace officer was that of Frederick Miller, who had been considered mentally deranged for some time. Judge Hankins and a jury declared him insane and kept him in confinement in Mullinville until word was received from the insane asylum where he was to be taken.

On Sunday last he resolved to starve himself to death, and for nearly three days refused all food and drink, but later repented, and now manages to dispose of all the provisions within his reach.<sup>77</sup>

Charles Epley's version of the Chapman robbery and murder with the missing links supplied from the boyhood memories of Don Cope and B. A. Sidener Interview is as follows:<sup>78</sup>

Two brothers named Bob and "Reverend" Chapman lived southeast of Mullinville near what is now the Eagle Canyon Ranch. "Reverend"

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76. Mullinville Mallet, June 25, 1886.

77. Mullinville Mallet, May 28, 1886.

78. Sidener, Interview, Mullinville News, November 21, 1929.

preached for the community and everyone thought he was "it." Bill Braden,<sup>79</sup> another young man, had a place northeast of town which cornered Charlie Tanner's place. The Chapmans got acquainted with Braden. They became good friends and got to playing cards. Braden made it up with the Chapmans to take his oxen, go to Kinsley, and steal the safe at one of the lumber yards there. Their plans failed and so they decided to rob Hodge's Store, Mullin's Store, Collins' Store, the post office, and the lumber yard in Mullinville. Bill decided that he would tell the merchants they had planned to rob but he told them that the Chapmans were going to do the robbing.

Havens, Collins, McNowan, and several others gathered in Collins' Store; the storeroom had a side door and there were three barrels by the door in the backroom. The six men hid behind the barrels and put a lantern under a half bushel measure. Soon the Chapmans came in and one of them went for the money drawer. As he was opening the money drawer he yelled at Bill, "Billy, come get some boots." Someone made a noise and "Reverend" Chapman ran. Someone shot him in the shoulder and he fell over the molasses barrel. Then everyone became excited and shot at him but no one hit him. The next morning they discovered the ceiling was shot through with holes. In the meantime Braden and Bob Chapman escaped.<sup>80</sup> The wounded man was taken to Catlin's eating house. The next day when Charles Epley came to town he heard about the whole affair and went to see Chapman because

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79. Cope, Don, Personal Interview, December 29, 1939.

80. Sidener, Interview, Mullinville News, November 21, 1929. Bob Chapman surrendered and was taken to Kinsley where he was held for a time and then released.

they had been good friends. This made those whom Chapman had tried to rob angry with Epley. Epley did all he could to help Chapman but he could not live. Epley buried Chapman on the Chapman claim and six months later helped take up the body when the family came to claim it. The corpse looked natural except that it was black and that it smelled.<sup>81</sup>

Last Monday morning at about 8 o'clock, Walter Howland shot and mortally wounded a man by the name of Telfer, and shot Grant Bowlby, seriously wounding him. The following are the facts, as near as we could learn them: It seems that Walter Howland had been paying his attentions to Miss Bowlby for some time, and, not caring to have him continue to call on her, she informed him to that effect, which stirred within him a desire for revenge, which he endeavored to obtain by reporting in the neighborhood that she and her brother-in-law, Mr. Telfer, were altogether too intimate. At first no attention was paid to these reports, but after his continuing to circulate them, Grant Bowlby, Mr. Telfer, and a man by the name of Ed. Ball concluded to call on young Howland, and a neighborly way, if possible have the report stopped. Hence, last Monday morning they rode over to Howland's, and brought the matter up, when a quarrel ensued young Howland drew his revolver to shoot Mr. Telfer. Grant Bowlby, at once taking in the situation, rode his horse between them to prevent the shooting, but to no effect. Howland fired at him, the ball hitting him in the chest, striking the collarbone and ranging downward, lodged in the region of the shoulder blade, making an extremely ugly and serious wound but not necessarily fatal. The report of the pistol frightened Mr. Telfer's horse, which turned and started to run. Howland then fired at him, the ball striking him in the back just below the seventh rib, and two inches to the left of the spine, inflicting a wound from which he will die. Bowlby and Telfer were removed to Mr. Bowlby's father's, and medical aid at once summoned. Dr. Hawkins, of Mullinville, was first called after which Dr. Milligan, of this place, was sent for, and all that could be was done for the sufferers. When Howland saw what he had done, he saddled his pony and left for parts unknown.

Telfer was a graduate of Ann Arbor, and he and Bowlby stood high in society, there being no foundation for the report whatever. Howland also bore a good reputation, but it seems that his dismissal by Miss Bowlby so angered him, that out of a maddened jealousy he sought to appease his mind by circulating these stories, which brought about this terrible result.

There was some talk of lynching, but it is hoped that cooler action will prevail, and the law given its course. The two families



live in about one mile of each other, and about fifteen miles southwest of Mullinville.---Greensburg Republican

We are unable to fully ascertain the true situation of the affair, but have been informed by different parties that young Howland was justified in shooting as he did so in defense of his life.<sup>82</sup>

In spite of his "mortal" wound it appears from the following item that Mr. Telfer recovered:

Messrs. Grant Bowlby and Tom Telfer, who were dangerously wounded by Walter Howland May 9, are recovering from their wounds. Howland has not returned or been captured as yet.<sup>83</sup>

Charles Epley had been friendly with a settler known as Kid, who lived south of Henry Fromme and east of Billy Reed. One day Wm. George, who was a "squire" in Mullinville, came out where Epley was plowing and swore Epley in as a constable. It was then that Epley learned that Kid owed Bidwell, Collins, and Hodges and had taken his belongings and was "skipping the country." Kid had a two-day start but Epley took Joe Havens big black team and caught up with the Kid just before he reached the town of Kiowa. Epley with the help of a lawyer took over the seven cows and sway-back pony. The trip back to Mullinville was one of hide and seek for Epley because Kid tried time after time to take the cattle from him. At last Epley came so near Mullinville that Kid quit following him.<sup>84</sup>

#### Agricultural Development 1884-1892

The years 1884, 1885, and 1886 were good years for crops. The

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82. Mullinville Mallet, May 13, 1887.

83. Mullinville Mallet, May 20, 1887.

84. Epley, Personal Interview, December 2, 1939.

settlers raised corn, oats, and millet hay.<sup>85</sup> Mr. Epley put out twelve acres of peach trees and they grew without irrigation in spite of drought and hot winds. One year he had so many peaches he didn't know what to do with all of them. He always raised peanuts to eat.

In 1886 Mr. Burgess tried raising crops by breaking out sod and planting some wheat and five acres of corn. The corn was planted by his jabbing a sharpened baseball bat into the sod, dropping a few grains of corn into the hole and closing it with his heel. The corn grew 16 [sixteen] feet high and was a bumper crop. His 15 [fifteen] acres of cane reached the same height and the stalks resembled stove wood.<sup>86</sup>

A stalk of blue-stem grass, measuring ten feet and ten inches was exhibited in Mullinville late in April, 1886.<sup>87</sup>

Hailstorms were another enemy of the settler, and about the middle of June, 1886, a hailstorm came. Growing corn waist high was stripped, leaving the stalks standing as if they were poles.<sup>88</sup>

The following notice appeared in the Mullinville Mallet of April 30, 1886: "This is the last day that stock will be allowed to run at large in this county. The herd law will go into effect to-morrow."

Mr. Burgess claims the distinction of taking the first claim for agricultural purposes and being the first to plow for a crop, also of raising the first wheat. He was also among the first to dehorn cattle, which was then counted very terrible but has since proved a benefit to all ranches.<sup>89</sup>

In the late eighties many cattle and sheep were raised in this section. Salt for the stock was hauled from the salt plains on the

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85. Kennedy, Personal Interview, December 1, 1939.

86. Burgess, Interview, Mullinville News, January 9, 1930.

87. Mallet, April 23, 1886.

88. Sherer, Interview, Manuscript by Georgia Clifford.

89. Burgess, Interview, Mullinville News, January 9, 1930.

Cimmaron River south of Protection. Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Sidener often made trips together to haul salt.

Neighbors of Sidener and Kennedy in 1886 were A. Cope, F. W. Price, A. J. Olson, Jet Hutsell, and T. S. Rankin.<sup>90</sup>

Sidener herded sheep for Kennedy in 1887 for fifty cents a day.<sup>91</sup> An item from the Kiowa County Times, July 20, 1888, states that "W. Kennedy shipped 30,000 pounds of wool to St. Louis, last Saturday. The shipment was made through the agency of Grimes Brothers." Mr. Kennedy kept his sheep until 1891; then traded the sheep for cattle.<sup>92</sup>

Potatoes and onions were also easily grown as is shown by newspaper accounts. The Weekly Telegram for October 21, 1886, calls attention to J. M. Sinclair's twenty-five bushels of Murphies raised from a one-eighth acre patch. The Kiowa County Times for July 20, 1888, comments on the numerous onion fields. There is a suggestion that Kiowa County should hold annual agricultural fairs and that a display for 1888 would dazzle the eyes of all beholders and advertise the county far and wide.

The corn burnt up in 1887 and it was not much better in 1888.<sup>93</sup> Many of the settlers were becoming dissatisfied and they began to hunt for new lands or go back home. However, many people were making a living and others could not leave because everything they had was involved in their holdings.

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90. Sidener, Interview, Mullinville News, November 21, 1929.

91. Sidener, Interview, Mullinville News, November 21, 1929.

92. Kennedy, Personal Interviews, December 1, 1939.

93. Ibid.

In the spring of 1889 as a sideline to his blacksmith shop, Mr. Sherer decided to do some farming. He planted his first corn crop of seven acres and raised some fine corn. "Many who owed him blacksmith bills paid in corn and he bought more at 10¢ per bushel until he had 2000 bushels of it. As all the bad people had gone he stored it in the 'calaboose.' He bought all the shoats from people leaving the country and turned his corn into money when he sold his hogs for 2¢ per pound. By this time he had bought the 40 in the North Addition, a part of the half section where he now lives, and [an additional] 80 acres. He decided to try a wheat crop, so in 1890, he sowed eight acres by hand, covered it with a walking cultivator and harrowed it and was rewarded by a 25 bushel per acre crop which he and Jim Harp bound and shocked.

"In 1891 he broke out 50 (fifty) acres which made good and added another quarter of land to his holdings. He had no assurance that the land would ever be more valuable but they had a happy home and were content."<sup>94</sup>

Mr. Kennedy began to raise wheat in 1888 but because of lack of rainfall did not have a crop until 1900. He bought a second-hand binder from Sherer to harvest his crop. This was one of the first binders in the community. Sherer had purchased it from a Mr. Mitchell, repaired it, and resold it to Kennedy.<sup>95</sup>

In January, 1890, Kiowa County "fell in with" the Farmers' Alliance

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94. Sherer, Interview, Mullinville News, November 14, 1929.

95. Kennedy, Personal Interview, December 1, 1939.

movement. The Alliance meant not only protection for the farmer but advocated improved methods of farming.<sup>96</sup>

About this time mortgage companies and real estate offices were advertising long lists of land for rent. The following article suggests that the farmers were beginning to be wary of rented land.

Several in this neighborhood are beginning to break sod. They say it only takes one time to break it and then they can farm their own land instead of running around so much to get what they need. The farmers have come to the conclusion not to farm any more of the loan companies' land than they have to, and let their land lay and set back to grass, for just as soon as the crops begin to amount to anything here comes the land shark or some other smart Aleck that pretends to be their agent and demands all the rent he thinks there is any hope of getting, never thinking once that if it had not been for those poor farmers keeping the land stirred it would all have been set back to grass before this and they would have to pay \$1.50 per acre to get it broken, and as the crops they have raised have not paid them for their trouble just let their land lay and they will soon get tired of keeping it. Besides some have collected rent that had no right to as has been learned since.<sup>97</sup>

In March, 1891, Epley bought some sand land just north of Mullinville for \$1.25 per acre. There seemed to be no wheat on it; but the rains came, the wheat which had been planted sprouted, grew, and averaged twenty-three bushels to the acre.<sup>98</sup>

That spring many farmers hoping for a better yield sowed oats and barley in preference to corn.<sup>99</sup>

The crops were greatly benefited by a big rain in May despite the fact that it was accompanied by hail which reports claim lay on

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96. Kiowa County Signal, January 24, 1890.

97. Kiowa County Signal, February 20, 1891.

98. Epley, Personal Interview, December 2, 1939.

99. Kiowa County Signal, February 20, 1891.

the ground at a depth of eighteen inches in places.<sup>100</sup>

Wheat harvest began about the twenty-fifth of June and O. L. Grimes, the implement dealer, was busy unloading threshing machines.<sup>101</sup>

By August the farmers were cutting the prairie grass (which was abundant that year) with mowing machines.

They were also plowing wheat ground with gang plows preparatory to sowing a large acreage, for at last they had begun to realize that the best results were not obtained from drilling in stubble.<sup>102</sup> Sowing time was much later than it is today. It was not unusual for some farmer to sow wheat after January 1, but almost everyone tried to finish sowing before Christmas.<sup>103</sup> Threshing of the grain was also carried into the winter. By Christmas, 1891, L. D. Ward, a farmer, who owned a threshing machine, had threshed 35,000 bushel of wheat during the season.<sup>104</sup>

In the spring of 1892 people were moving from place to place and land was being bought and sold. One quarter just west of the town sold for one thousand dollars and an adjoining quarter sold for seven hundred dollars. This was considered very cheap.<sup>105</sup>

In May, 1892, loan companies and settlers were breaking out sod preparatory to sowing wheat in the fall. It was estimated that

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100. Kiowa County Signal, May 22, 1891.

101. Kiowa County Signal, June 26, 1891.

102. Kiowa County Signal, August 7, 1891.

103. Epley, Personal Interview, December 2, 1939.

104. Kiowa County Signal, December 25, 1891.

105. Kiowa County Signal, April 1, 1892.

one thousand acres in sight of Mullinville were broken out that spring.<sup>106</sup>

Farmers spent the latter part of June getting their harvesters and headers ready to begin harvest by July 4 and many of them "imported hand" to help in order to save the grain.<sup>107</sup> A forty-acre field belonging to C. A. Watson averaged forty-two bushels per acre<sup>108</sup> and Charles Epley's wheat averaged the same.<sup>109</sup> The market price for this wheat was fifty-two cents per bushel.<sup>110</sup>

The month of June, 1892, was one of hail storms. The Kiowa County Signal of June 10 carries this account: "about 7 o'clock Tuesday evening we were visited by a terrific hail storm, several stones weighing over one pound." According to Epley the hailstones on June 18, 1892, were as big as baseballs. Mrs. Louise Harp and the Sherers tell similar stories.

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106. Kiowa County Signal, May 13, 1892.

107. Kiowa County Signal, June 24, 1892.

108. Kiowa County Signal, August 5, 1892.

109. Epley, Personal Interview, December 2, 1939.

110. Kiowa County Signal, August 12, 1892.

### CHAPTER III

## THE HARD YEARS (1893-1900)

### Agriculture

Following the excellent wheat crop in 1893 the farmers put out wheat and sowing was not finished until February!<sup>1</sup> However, their hopes were not fulfilled, for the rains failed to fall and the wheat yielded from five to seven bushels per acre.<sup>2</sup> Had there been a full crop land prices would have jumped thirty to fifty per cent.<sup>3</sup> Good level hard land was advertised in February for \$800 a quarter section.<sup>4</sup> Crop rotation was advocated by some and warnings were issued against too much wheat farming<sup>5</sup> but they seemed to have little effect, for farmers plowed and sowed a large acreage although it was dry.<sup>6</sup>

The crop failure, no rain for eighteen months, and the opening

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1. Republican Banner, February 10, 1893.
  2. Greensburg Times, June 23, 1893.
  3. Greensburg Times, June 9, 1893.
  4. Republican Banner, February 10, 1893.
  5. Greensburg Times, June 9, 1893.
  6. Republican Banner, September 8 and October 20, 1893.



of the Cherokee Strip, September 16, 1893, caused a large number of the people to leave the community.<sup>7</sup> An item in the Republican Banner of September 22, 1893, states that over thirty persons had left Mullinville to go to the Strip. However, not all of them stayed, for there are later accounts of persons returning from Oklahoma.

The year 1894 was another bad year, for very little if any wheat came up.<sup>8</sup> In addition to the wheat failure, a big freeze came on May 18 and froze everything. Epley had potatoes in bloom and peaches as big as marbles.<sup>9</sup>

April, 1895, was the time of sand storms, but the following quotations show the attitude of the settlers:

How is your crop? Stand up for Kansas; don't bellyache just because the wind has blown out your crops the second time. Put in again; three times &c; &c; you know and out.

Another terrible sand storm Monday. When will our peck of earthly sand be full?<sup>10</sup>

When one of these storms came up the Kennedys were in town; they started home and were unable to see the horses any of the way.<sup>11</sup> The fields blew terribly in the sandy sections just north of Mullinville. Wherever the land had been plowed deeply for oats every bit of the top soil blew away and the mark of the plow could be seen on the subsoil.<sup>12</sup>

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7. Sherer, Interview in Mullinville News, November 14, 1929.

8. Kennedy, Personal Interview, December 1, 1939.

9. Epley, Personal Interview, December 2, 1939.

10. The Kiowa County Times, April 19, 1895.

11. Kennedy, Personal Interview, December 1, 1939.

12. Ibid. Epley tells the same story.

Even as late as May 31 the sand storms raged, for an item in the Kiowa County Times states that mixed trains could not run from Greensburg on west to Mullinville because of the huge sand drifts in the deep cuts.

Despite the sand storms the wheat and corn looked good on July 5.<sup>13</sup> Sidener and Kennedy raised a fine crop of corn on two showers.<sup>14</sup> Epley had good corn and small grain.<sup>15</sup> In the fall Ralstin shipped six tons of broom corn to Wichita and sold the entire shipment for thirty-five dollars.<sup>16</sup> Andy Olson had corn which made thirty-seven bushels to the acre.<sup>17</sup>

Again the farmers sowed wheat but it seems not to have amounted to anything because no mention is made of harvest in the current papers of 1896 and some of the men had gone to Harvey County in July to work.<sup>18</sup> However, grass was thirty days ahead of the preceding year<sup>19</sup> and corn was being planted. The corn matured and the farmers were busy gathering it at Christmas time.<sup>20</sup>

The outstanding events of 1897 were a fair wheat crop,<sup>21</sup> and the tornado of August 29. A five-inch rain followed the tornado,<sup>22</sup>

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13. Kiowa County Times, July 5, 1895.
  14. Kennedy, Personal Interview, December 1, 1939.
  15. Epley, Personal Interview, December 2, 1939.
  16. Kiowa County Signal, November 15, 1895.
  17. Kiowa County Signal, January 24, 1896.
  18. Kiowa County Signal, July 17, 1896.
  19. Kiowa County Signal, May 1, 1896.
  20. Kiowa County Signal, December 24, 1897.
  21. Epley, Interview, Hutchinson News-Herald, December 24, 1939.
  22. Kiowa County Signal, December 11, 1896.

or cyclone as the pioneers called the twisters. Sidener reports raising two thousand bushels of wheat.<sup>23</sup>

It was in 1898 that John Marriage established his five thousand acres of land south of Mullinville into the Eagle Canyon Ranch and stocked it with Marriage-Muley dual-purpose red cattle.<sup>24</sup>

1898 was a good peach year, for J. B. Koontz exhibited five peaches in Greensburg in the fall.<sup>25</sup> Many of the settlers who had come from the east had planted orchards, but not all of the orchards grew and produced fruit. Mr. Koontz and Mr. Epley were more successful in their efforts and several years had fine fruit. In April, 1899, the dust storms came.

These 'black blizzards' of recent years in western Kansas are nothing new at all, insists Epley. They had them 40 years ago in Kiowa County.

Epley's diary for April 30, 1899, has this notation: 'Terrible dust storm'...It blew all day, all night and part of the next day so thick that we couldn't see the windmill only 100 feet from the house. The dust filled the water pail until it was covered with mud, We couldn't get out to get other water.

When that dust storm was over farm implements in the yard were buried under the dust drifts.<sup>26</sup>

Despite the dust, those who had stayed on put out crops and the year 1900 came with a more prosperous note. The wheat was better and

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23. Kiowa County Signal, December 24, 1897.

24. Item from Historical Society Files.

25. Kiowa County Signal, September 30, 1898.

26. Epley, Interview in Hutchinson News-Herald, December 24, 1939.

as the year ended the Rock Island railroad shipped out fifteen big carloads of grain during the first two weeks of December.<sup>27</sup> An item from the Kiowa County Signal states that "The way Mullinville has been doing business the last two weeks would astonish the natives."<sup>28</sup>

At last those who had braved the hard times of the new community were beginning to be repaid for their labor.<sup>29</sup>

#### The Santa Fe is Discontinued

"The Santa Fe R.R. in Receivers Hands" is the obscure statement hidden away among the numerous one-sentence news items of the December 29, 1893, issue of the Republican Banner. However, the Santa Fe continued to operate for two more years; then the following item appeared in the Kiowa County Signal for December 13, 1895: "The W. & W. R.R. [Santa Fe] this week discontinues her service in this county and still she wants Kiowa County to pay her bonds." Six months later the following article was printed in the Signal:

Supt. D. H. Rhodes passed through town Tuesday, going west over the W. & W. R.R. We understand he asked about getting water for an engine here, and it was thought that a portion of the track beyond Mullinville was to be taken up. Our county officials should see to it that they leave the track just as it is, or use it as they contracted to do. The road should be in operation today, and would be, only for what we think was a gross misrepresentation of the condition of the road. If Kiowa County had justice the road would be running today. We do not think any court should aid a railroad in taking from the people what they by contract agreed to give them. Let the county authorities see to it that they at least leave the track where

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27. Kiowa County Signal, December 4, 1900.

28. Ibid.

29. Kiowa County Signal, December 28, 1900.

it is. The road since it was started has pursued a dog in the manger policy. The road should be connected with a road going west or built on to the mts., but the Santa Fe got its finger on it and stopped it out here on the prairies because they knew it would damage their traffic for the people to have this road extended and today it is in the hands of the courts and Kiowa County should look to her interest in the road and see that the road bed be left at least until the road is sold, with the hope that it will be purchased by some road that will extend the line and make it one of the best paying lines in the state. Don't wait but act is our advice to the fathers of our county.<sup>30</sup>

County Commissioner's Journal "B", at p. 7, dated July 7, 1896, reads:

The County Att'y is hereby ordered to prepare, and present to the State Rail Road Commissioners a petition or complaint against the Wichita & Western P. R. Co. for ordering them to resume operation of said Road through said Kiowa County.<sup>31</sup>

The Kiowa County Signal of July 17, 1896, states that the W. & W. tracks were being torn up west of Mullinville. Epley's diary shows that in July he was busy hauling railroad ties, railroad irons and cars. Epley received old railroad ties for fuel in exchange for his work.<sup>32</sup> Other farmers of the community took advantage of this offer.<sup>33</sup>

George Bidwell furnished food and Harry Massoni did the cooking for the railroad gang of forty men. Massoni used the section house for his kitchen and Con Harp hauled the meals in his delivery wagon wherever the men were working. Big lard cans were used for cooking utensils and enough biscuits were baked to fill a double egg case.

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30. Kiowa County Signal, June 26, 1896.

31. McElroy, V. M., Sworn Statement, February 11, 1941.

32. Epley, Interview, Hutchinson News-Herald, December 24, 1939.

33. Kiowa County Signal, January 1, 1897.

The men were so greedy that the food had to be portioned out to them.<sup>34</sup> After the track was taken up past Mullinville Chas. Tanner and Nelson Justice became chief cooks.<sup>35</sup>

"There is no record of what the county attorney did in the records of the Commissioners' proceedings nor in the Kiowa County Court,"<sup>36</sup> but the Kiowa County Signal of August 21, 1896, carries the following item:

W. C. Perry, Topeka U.S. District Att'y, for Kansas has been appointed Special Master in Chancery to take evidence in the matter of the Wichita and Western Rail Road. Will hear the evidence at the Santa Fe depot in this city [Greensburg] Tuesday, August 25th at 8 o'clock a.m.

"There is one entry of an expense acc't paid to E. A. Fisher, Co. Att'y, in October 1896, for his expenses in the Wichita and Western R. R. Co. matter."<sup>37</sup> The Kiowa County Signal of November 30, 1896, states that Fisher had just returned from Topeka, where he had gone before Judge Foster in the interest of Kiowa County concerning the matter of the tearing up of the Wichita and Western Railroad tracks. The Signal commends Fisher for doing so well in coping with the railroad attorneys, but the consensus of opinion among the old timers around Mullinville is that he "sold out" to the railroad. Whatever the case, Kiowa County lost a direct route to Wichita when the Santa Fe was allowed to take up its tracks and the county had to pay for the bonds although there was nothing to show for them except

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34. Massoni, Harry, Personal Interview, August 15, 1940.

35. Kiowa County Signal, December 25, 1896.

36. McElroy, Personal Letter, February 11, 1941.

37. McElroy, Personal Letter, February 11, 1941.

a narrow trail of cinders and an occasional grade with a cut from which a bridge had been removed.

### Politics

In the early nineties the Populist Party gained a following in the community. H. J. Brown, who lived in the northeast corner of the community, was a delegate to the congressional convention at Wichita and helped nominate "Sockless Jerry" Simpson to Congress. He also helped to nominate Governor Lorenzo F. Lewelling.<sup>38</sup>

Mr. Epley made the following notations in his diary concerning the Populists: "June 18 (1891) - To Greensburg Meeting. Mrs. Lease spoke. [The Mary Ellen Lease of Populist days who advised Kansas to raise less corn and more hell.]

October 29 (1891) to Greensburg to hear Jerry"<sup>39</sup>

Some of the residents of Mullinville, however, did not care for Mrs. Lease's speech.<sup>40</sup>

The Populists had a regular jubilee in Mullinville November 4, 1893,<sup>41</sup> but the party lost out in the county election which followed.<sup>42</sup> However, J. H. Brown was elected County Commissioner in 1896.<sup>43</sup>

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38. Brown, Interview in Mullinville News, December 12, 1929.

39. Epley, Interview in Hutchinson News-Herald, December 24, 1939.

40. Kiowa County Signal, June 24, 1892.

41. Kiowa County Times, November 3, 1893.

42. Republican Banner, November 10, 1893.

43. Brown, Interview in Mullinville News, December 12, 1929.

## Crime

The people who remained in the vicinity of Mullinville seem to have been very law-abiding, for only four newspaper accounts of unlawfulness were recorded from 1890 to 1900. J. A. Sherer always claimed the bad people left when the "hard times" came.

The first account, dated October 13, 1893, arrest of Tom and Moses Caldwell, who were charged with stealing wheat from W. H. Smith. They were released on bail until a preliminary trial could be held.<sup>44</sup>

In March, 1874, C. H. Volkman was tried for attempting to kill Harvey I. Burr and the verdict was assault.<sup>45</sup>

The following account appeared in the Kiowa County Times in January, 1895:

Another shooting affair near Nickel post office the Saturday before Christmas, this time it was George Briggs, shot Charley Burr, the shot took effect in the calf of the leg and he is not dangerously hurt.<sup>46</sup>

In the following year this incident occurred:

The peace of our little city was somewhat disturbed on last Friday night. Someone supposed to be a mover, stole some horse collars from Mr. Watson and took some things from the school house. This is the first thievery in our town for a long time.<sup>47</sup>

## The Town Lives

Despite the fact that hard times struck the community, Mullinville did not die out as many boom towns did. The following items show that some people stayed with the town:

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44. Republican Banner, October 13, 1893.

45. Kiowa County Signal, March 16, 1894.

46. Kiowa County Times, January 4, 1895.

47. Kiowa County Signal, May 8, 1896.



Nothing entering the Signal from Mullinville and vicinity is no sign that the people are all dead at this place.

A. J. Muns will do your butchering or cobbling your shoes.

Mrs. Leonhardt has a wide reputation as a manufacturer of gloves.

If you want to be threshed, Capt. Lewis has the machine.

J. A. Sherer and brother, besides doing smith work, grinding, etc., run the farm and have started a cattle ranch.

As to our merchants, Mr. Bidwell takes the lead with Leonhardt and Hodges closely bringing up the rear.

Joseph Miller is a cobbler.

Mrs. Burnett feeds the hungry.

Edward Jackson is mail carrier and Mr. Veach holds sway as Post Master.

Con Harp is chief drayman.

If any of us get sick or die, we have the Co. Coroner, Dr. T. J. Gossett, who is a good hand to give pills or sit on dead bodies.<sup>48</sup>

When settlers left, those who remained could buy a good house or store building for twenty or thirty dollars. They also purchased cattle or anything else that could be sold. Land could often be bought for one dollar an acre. Many people who left "t go back home to their wife's relation" had everything so heavily mortgaged that they would turn whatever they had over to the mortgage company.<sup>49</sup>

It was at this time that Charles Epley bought and moved so many houses and store buildings to his farm that it became known as Epleyapolis.<sup>50</sup>

Although the Wichita and Western Railroad was discontinued in

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48. Items from the Kiowa County Signal, March 13, 1896.

49. Kennedy, Personal Interview, December 1, 1939.

50. Kiowa County Signal, December 18 and December 25, 1896.

Kiowa County, the Rock Island Railroad continued to extend its line toward the west and soon became the artery through which the trade of Mullinville flowed. Among other things that were shipped over the railroad in 1900 was a ton of dressed turkeys, billed for the Colorado Christmas market.<sup>51</sup>

The year 1900 ended with a prosperous note. People spent much money for Christmas presents and the stores had bought over a ton of candy for Christmas consumption.<sup>52</sup> Those settlers who had stayed on had begun to purchase more land and stock it with better livestock.<sup>53</sup> At last Mullinville was to live and not become a ghost town as many of her sister settlements did.

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51. Kiowa County Signal, December 14, 1900.

52. Kiowa County Signal, December 28, 1900.

53. Sherer, Interview, Mullinville News, November 14, 1929.

## CHAPTER IV

### COMMUNITY LIFE 1884-1900

#### Social Life

It would be hard to describe the difference in those first settlers. Some came for the serious business of making homes, hoping to find plenty of room in this new Kansas soil to establish roots and expand into a good and stable community life where their children might find advantages to fit their needs. Others came to recoup their fortunes in a business venture and were usually doomed to disappointment. The old soldier, restless and dissatisfied with the old life, came to start life over again. Many came for the romance and adventure of the new and untried. All were hoping to gain a boon from the new land.

Surely it was a strange, curious mixture of personalities which assembled on the Sabbath, a Fourth of July Celebration, or any public gathering. Beautifully dressed women from the city wore clothes of the very latest styles, tight basques, bustles, hoops and tiny flower covered hats. Perhaps her neighbor was a woman from the hill country with tow<sup>1</sup>headed children, very odd clothes and peculiar manner of speech.

Again it might have been the wife of a settler who had been in the west for several years and whose clothes were beginning to be shabby.

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1. Anderson, Lina S., "Memories" Greensburg News, September 27, 1937.

## Neighborliness

Neighborliness was characteristic of Mullinville. In sickness, in death, at childbirth, at weddings, or in time of trouble the settlers were willing to aid one another. Those who needed help were helped regardless of station or occupation.

Mr. Harry Massoni tells of two families who lived in the east part of the community in the Garfield Township, who became so destitute they had no food. The children of one of these families begged food from the other children at school. The other family almost starved because the mother was too proud to accept county aid. Finally the husband became desperate and appealed to one of his neighbors who possessed a little more of this world's goods. The neighbor gave him ten dollars, some food, and told him to give his wife a good talking to about being so proud.<sup>2</sup>

Another example of neighborliness was shown when Taylor Caldwell, a negro farmer, lost all his farming equipment and stored grain by fire. A petition was circulated enabling everyone who wished to, to contribute something toward Mr. Caldwell's relief. The Greensburg Times admonished everyone to "Remember that the Lord loveth a cheerful giver, and we know not when misfortune may overtake one of us and we may need help from our fellow man."<sup>3</sup>

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2. Massoni, Personal Interview, August 15, 1940.

3. Greensburg Times, January 27, 1893.

## Amusements

Mrs. Tanner says: One of the principal entertainments of Mullinville belonged to the 'Square Dance' type, with the old-fashioned fiddler furnishing the music...with occasionally guitar or banjo accompaniments. In our community east of town there was just one organ but not where dances were had. (I could not attend dances but in my middle teens began going to occasional 'play-parties' where the one or two-roomed houses were cleared of nearly all furniture, which was soant aplenty, to make room for Miller Boy, Skip-to-my-Lou, Old Sister Phoebe, Marching Round the Levee, Rocky Road to Dublin, Charades, and last but not least that bold, daring Post Office. Midnight was terribly late to stay! especially when we dared to eat anything as heavy as pie, which was often served.

We generally walked two miles to literary till we had a 'beau,' then we would go by fours, sixes or the wagon load. Of course if the 'beau' was fortunate enough to drive maybe we could go in real style, alone in a buggy or a two-wheeled cart that took us riggedy-jig with every step of the horse.

Perhaps once or twice in an entire summer there would be an ice cream supper which was the highest excitement possible in my young life. Always there was one during the clos[ing week] of the Normal School.<sup>4</sup>

New buildings were dedicated with dances, which were generally followed by suppers. The proceeds from the dance held in C. A. Watson's new building on April 9, 1886 were used to complete the new school house.<sup>5</sup> The supper which followed a dance given at the Burnett House in May, 1886, was well attended and the supper at the French House which followed "was all that the most fastidious epicurean could request. The table was tastefully arranged and burdened with tempting delicacies."<sup>6</sup>

Not all the dances were of a high type and occasionally one

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4. Tanner, Ovie Pedigo, Personal Letter, July 23, 1940.

5. Mullinville Mallet, April 9, 1886.

6. Mullinville Mallet, May 14, 1886.

broke up in a row because a few of those present had a "super-fluity of tanglefoot." Such affairs were criticized severely by the editor of the Weekly Telegram.<sup>7</sup>

In June, 1886, an ice cream social was given to raise money to buy furniture for the school house.<sup>8</sup>

"The Dramatic Society consisting of Misses Ramey, Clements and Harp and Messers. Wertz, Tinker, Stine, Mullin, Guthrie and Arnott"<sup>9</sup> decided to produce the play "The Social Class" at a meeting in September. A literary society was organized in Mullinville November 8, 1886. This was followed a few weeks later with a literary society at the Prairie Home Schoolhouse and soon every school district had a "literary." Travelling stage shows played Mullinville too, for "Professor Tribble's Monster aggregation of trained goose and minstrel show" appeared in June, 1886,<sup>10</sup> and the Grand Concert and Literary Entertainment was advertised in 1888.<sup>11</sup> Magic lantern shows,<sup>12</sup> elocutions,<sup>13</sup> and gramophone<sup>14</sup> entertainments

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7. Weekly Telegram, February 10, 1887.

8. Mullinville Mallet, June 18, 1886.

9. Mullinville Mallet, September 24, 1886.

10. Mullinville Mallet, June 6, 1886.

11. Mullinville Mallet, February 3, 1888.

12. Kiowa County Signal, December 4, 1891.

13. Kiowa County Signal, March 27, 1896.

14. Kiowa County Signal, February 5, 1897.

took their turns in helping the people of the community to forget their troubles.

The Mullinville Brass Band was organized in April, 1887, with the following members: G. A. Cash, leader; A. J. Olson, instructor; E. Guthrie, J. A. Sanders, J. F. Mercer, Elby Dixon, W. A. White, Jas. W. Hunter, and N. E. Stine.<sup>15</sup> As long as A. J. Olson lived in the Mullinville community there was some kind of band. In 1892 and 1893 the Mullinville Band provided music for the Kiowa County Fairs.<sup>16</sup> In 1895 Mullinville and Greensburg had a combined band.<sup>17</sup>

A. J. Olson also led the singing in the community. In 1892, he conducted a singing school of twenty scholars.<sup>18</sup> In 1896, singing was conducted every Wednesday evening and every other Sunday evening by Mr. Bidwell or Mr. Olson.<sup>19</sup>

#### Baseball

Baseball was popular among the men and a ball diamond was laid out west of Main Street and north of the Wichita and Western Railroad tracks. Epley was one of the first catchers and Stockwell pitched.<sup>20</sup> The Mullinville Baseball Club was organized in the spring of 1887 with G. H. Parker as captain and W. B. George,

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15. Mullinville Mallet, April 15, 1887.
  16. Kiowa County Signal, September 16, 1892.  
Republican Banner, September 8, 1893.
  17. Kiowa County Times, May 10, 1895.
  18. Kiowa County Signal, January 29, 1892.
  19. Kiowa County Signal, March 13, 1896.
  20. Epley, Personal Interview, December 2, 1939.

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Umpire,<sup>21</sup> The next year baseball fever raged as an epidemic. Everyone was playing ball and the Main Street of Mullinville became the dividing line. The East side of town played the West side.<sup>22</sup>

The Mullinville Baseball Club was still in evidence in the spring of 1893 and was challenging the other teams of the county.<sup>23</sup> The newspapers of the following years make no mention of baseball at Mullinville, and there is a legend that baseball (particularly Sunday baseball) went into a period of disfavor after the great revival of 1893.

Dancing suffered a similar fate and entertainment turned more and more to church ice cream socials,<sup>24</sup> oyster suppers, and parties where games were played.<sup>25</sup>

#### The M. W. A.

The Modern Woodmen Lodge was organized in Mullinville in March, 1896, with eighteen charter members.<sup>26</sup> The M. W. A. provided social life for their large membership in the form of regular

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21. Mullinville Mallet, April 29, 1887.
22. Mullinville Mallet, July 26, 1888.
23. Republican Banner, May 26, 1893.
24. Kiowa County Signal, August 31, 1894.  
Kiowa County Times, May 17, 1895.
25. Kiowa County Signal, December 11, 1896.
26. Kiowa County Historical Files.  
Kiowa County Signal, March 27, 1896.



meetings, ice cream socials, oyster suppers, and basket dinners. At the first annual Woodmen Supper of the four Kiowa County camps three hundred and fifty plates were laid. Greensburg had not had such a social gathering in years. Members of the reception committee from the Mullinville camp were A. Olson, J. A. Sherer, and E. K. Cherrington.<sup>27</sup>

Approximately one hundred and fifty people attended the oyster supper and public initiation given by the Mullinville M.W.A. in January, 1899.<sup>28</sup>

#### Holidays

Holidays were highlights in the lives of the settlers. For the first ten years of the community the New Year started with a ball and others of the winter holidays were celebrated in like manner.

The following is a typical Memorial Day celebration:

Memorial services passed off pleasantly and successfully in the city, last Sunday. The school house in which they were held was packed to its utmost capacity, and large crowds gathered at the door and windows to listen to the exercises. The exercises opened with a song selection from Gospel Hymns [sic]. 'The Earth is the Lord's' was then effectually rendered. Rev. W. N. Hawkins followed with a suitable address, which received the entire attention of the audience. A beautiful song selection, 'Freedom's Banner,' was then presented in charming style. H. L. VanZandt then delivered an address, eulogizing our government in general, and garlanded with sweet and fragrant flowers of thought, the memory of all our heroic dead, and paid a beautiful tribute to the survivors of our late civil struggle. A. N. Reed followed

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27. Kiowa County Signal, March 26, 1897.

28. Kiowa County Signal, January 27, 1899.

with a select reading, 'Our Nation's Dead.' Miss Belle Wells then presented a select reading, 'The True Decoration' in her brilliant and charming style. Rev. Gilson then made a few fitting and applicable remarks after which an anthem, 'Prepare to Meet Thy God' was sung, and the services were closed. The memory of this 30th of May spent with the heroes and defenders of our liberties, will ever be rembered [sic] through all the future years of those who attended and participated in strewing flowers [sic] of memory upon the nations chivalrous lost.<sup>29</sup>

The Fourth of July of 1886 was celebrated with a basket dinner and a platform dance in the evening.<sup>30</sup> Some years the "Fourth" was not celebrated at Mullinville.<sup>31</sup> Halloween was celebrated by the usual changing of outhouses.<sup>32</sup>

Thanksgivings were celebrated with basket dinners<sup>33</sup> or evening entertainments at the various school houses in surrounding districts and occasionally there was a ball at Mullinville.<sup>34</sup>

To give a Christmas program and have a tree, presents, and treats was the aim of every school and Sunday School in the community. The phrase "Are you going to the Christmas Tree?" can be heard yet today and is synonymous with Christmas program. Santa was always present to distribute the numerous gifts which were hung on the tree, for many people took even their family presents to the "Tree."

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29. Mullinville Mallet, June 4, 1886.

30. Mullinville Mallet, June 25, 1886.

31. Kiowa County Signal, July 5, 1889.

32. Kiowa County Signal, December 6, 1889.

33. Kiowa County Signal, November 1, 1895.

34. Kiowa County Signal, December 11, 1891.

Often girls received presents from their first beaux at the Community "Christmas Tree."

#### Unusual Weddings

Almost all of the weddings in and around Mullinville were home weddings, but occasionally some couple was married in a more spectacular manner such as the following accounts:

George Simmons of Mullinville and Jennie Nash of Greensburg were married on the most public thoroughfare in Mullinville July 19, 1887. The Rev. J. B. Hunt tied the knot while the young couple sat in their buggy.<sup>35</sup>

Mrs. J. W. Totty of Pratt, Kansas, and J. H. Pedigo were married on board the Rock Island train during its few minutes stop at Greensburg on March 22, 1891. The ceremony was performed by Probate Judge Douglas and the Happy pair rode on to the crossing four miles east of Mullinville to the groom's home. They celebrated the affair by serving an elegant spread to neighbors and invited guests.<sup>36</sup>

Another interesting wedding was performed on the Kiowa County-Ford County line. The groom had purchased the marriage license in Ford County and as the minister was preparing to marry the people at the home of the bride's parents northwest of Mullinville, he discovered that the prospective couple must be married in Ford County to make the marriage legal. Not to be daunted, the wedding party drove three miles to the county line and the minister continued with the ceremony.<sup>37</sup>

Charivaris were quite popular and various instruments for

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35. Mullinville Mallet, July 22, 1887.

36. Kiowa County Signal, March 27, 1891.

37. Sherer, Marilla H., Personal Interview, November 15, 1939.

noise making were used. At Wallie Burnett's charivari the boys used a bass drum, a shot gun, an E-flat tenor and a cornet; and the groom silenced them with cigars.<sup>38</sup> The people of Nickel serenaded Mr. Inman and Mrs. Drew on their wedding night with "guns, cowbells, plowshears, mould-boards and rolling cutters. After which they were served cigars, some splendid wine, candy and later a splendid supper."<sup>39</sup>

### Religion

Although there were no churches within reach of these pioneer settlers, Sunday was carefully observed. An interesting story is told of a settler who could not remember which day of the week it was. In order that he might be sure not to forget which day was Sunday, he drove seven nails in the wall under his clock. He then placed a key on one of them and each night when he wound the clock he would put the key on the next nail, thereby he always knew when Sunday came and he could have his day of rest.<sup>40</sup>

Whenever a church service was held the entire community "turned out," for it made no difference whether the minister was Methodist, Baptist, or a member of any other denomination; everyone was glad to have the opportunity to attend the service.<sup>41</sup>

The first religious services in Mullinville were held in Mullin's Store but they were moved to the Union Hall after it was constructed.<sup>42</sup> After the schoolhouse was built in 1887, divine

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38. Kiowa County Signal, December 25, 1891.

39. Kiowa County Signal, April 17, 1896.

40. Barnes, Interview in Mullinville News, December 19, 1929.

41. McClaren, Interview in Mullinville News, December 2, 1939.

42. Weekly Telegram, February 24, 1887.

services were held there.<sup>43</sup> Protracted meetings were held by various denominations and by January, 1887, the Weekly Telegram was carrying the following church directory:

Baptist  
Preaching every 1st and 3rd Sabbath at 11 a.m.

Methodist Episcopal  
Preaching every 1st and 3rd Sabbath at 7 p.m.  
Class meeting same day at 6 p.m.

Christian  
Preaching every 2nd and 4th Sabbath at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.  
Union Sabbath School at 10 a.m., and prayer meeting every Thursday evening at 7 p.m.<sup>44</sup>

The Reverend J. C. Gibson was the first local Methodist Episcopal Minister to reside in Mullinville. He stayed from 1887 to 1889.<sup>45</sup>

God must have been taken for granted after that, for there was no church of any denomination nor any regular services held<sup>46</sup> until 1892. J. A. "Sherer was one of the five who organized the Mullinville Sunday School in March, 1892, and this Sunday School has been evergreen since. He was elected as assistant superintendent the first year and as superintendent the following year and he was either superintendent or assistant superintendent for twenty-six years."<sup>47</sup>

United Brethren ministers from Greensburg had held protracted

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43. Sherer, Interview, Mullinville News, November 14, 1929.
  44. Weekly Telegram, January 13, 1887.
  45. Mullinville Mallet, May 20, 1887.  
Fiftieth Anniversary Program Bethel M.E. Church
  46. Republican Banner, April 28, 1893.
  47. Sherer, Interview, Mullinville News, November 14, 1929.

meetings in Mullinville<sup>48</sup> as early as 1886, but it took L. J. Parker to gain a definite hold on the settlers. The March 25, 1892, issue of the Kiowa County Signal carries this item from Mullinville: "Our people are hungry for preaching and honor Mr. Parker with good congregations as well as attention." The next issue states that Mr. Parker was liberal in his views and a good speaker, and six weeks later the packed schoolhouse which heard Mr. Parker's sermon was "all indication of moral interest on the part of the denizens of our quiet city."<sup>49</sup> The seed planted that spring seems to have matured by the first of the next year, for Mullinville was in the greatest revival it has ever known.<sup>50</sup> Seventy-five persons were reported to have been reclaimed and converted,<sup>51</sup> and in the latter part of April twelve were immersed and seven sprinkled at a baptismal service held near the Drew Ranch on Kiowa Creek. The Mullinville United Brethren Church, which was organized in February 1893, was the outcome of this revival. Its charter members were: J. A. Sherer, Marilla H. Sherer, A. N. Reed, Edith Reed, B. A. Sidener, Belle Sidener, A. J. Olson, Mary Olson, A. Olson, Mrs. A. Olson, and C. F. Trick.<sup>52</sup>

United Brethren Ministers who served the Mullinville Church

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48. Weekly Telegram, November 18, 1886.

49. Kiowa County Signal, April 1 and June 10, 1892.

50. Republican Banner, January 20, 1893.

51. Kiowa County Times, February 3, 1893.

52. Sherer, J. A., Private Papers.

from its organization until 1900 were L. J. Parker, Mr. Myers,<sup>53</sup>  
Mr. Garman,<sup>54</sup> D. M. Gray<sup>55</sup> (the cowboy preacher), Mr. Foulk, and  
Jno. Morrison.<sup>56</sup>

The Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor soon followed  
the organization of the church and it has been active from that time  
since.<sup>57</sup> The Sunday School was considered as a Union Sunday School  
rather than a United Brethren Sunday School and was attended by people  
of all denominations.<sup>58</sup> Sunday school conventions were very active  
during this period. The following is a typical Sunday school con-  
vention program:

Martin Towp. S.S. Convention to be held at Mullinville, July  
26, 1896  
Song Service - school  
Prayer - Rev. Myers  
The S.S. Lesson  
Hindrances to S.S. Work - J.A. Sherer  
Who Ought to Attend S.S.? - F. W. Price  
How Can Young Men be Interested? - Rev. Myers  
Dinner  
Methods in Primary Teaching - Mrs. Cox  
Recitation - Elva Morford  
Normal Drill - Mrs. E. Parker  
The Teacher's Motive - N. T. Cox  
The S.S. and the Home - A. N. Reed  
How Can Outsiders be Interested? - R. Keasling

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53. Kiowa County Signal, May 8, 1896.  
54. Kiowa County Signal, December 18, 1896.  
55. Kiowa County Signal, January 20, 1899.  
56. Kiowa County Signal, December 14, 1900.  
57. Kiowa County Times, October 20, 1893.  
Kiowa County Signal, January 13, 1899.  
58. Kiowa County Signal, April 16, 1897.



Teacher Preparation - Mrs. Ketterman  
How Can Sociability be Promoted? - Morford  
The Scholar's Motive - Matesy Harp  
Collection, etc.

J. A. Sherer, Twp. Pres.<sup>59</sup>

The Reverend Mr. Officier held a protracted meeting at Mullinville in April 1893 which lasted over a week. He organized a Christian Church of about twenty members.<sup>60</sup> The Signal of December 14, 1900, carries an item about a postponed meeting to be held by a Christian minister. Both the Christian Church organization and the United Brethren used the schoolhouse for services.

The first Sunday school in Westland township was organized April 11, 1886 at the home of Aquilla Cope, a staunch Quaker, with a number of people present. Sunday school was planned for 11 o'clock every Sabbath and preaching services were to be every alternate Sabbath at 10 o'clock a.m.<sup>61</sup> The Reverend Mr. Calkins was the first preacher.<sup>62</sup>

After the Westland School house was built services were held there. Since the Copes were Quakers, many of the ministers for Westland came over from Haviland. After the railroads came the Quaker preachers would ride the Rock Island train to the crossing three miles north of the Westland schoolhouse and the train would stop to let the preacher off; again in the evening the train would stop to "pick up" the preacher. Two of these early Quaker preachers

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59. Kiowa County Signal, July 24, 1896.

60. Kiowa County Signal, April 21, 1893.

61. Mullinville Mallet, April 16, 1886.

62. Mullinville Mallet, April 25, 1886.



were Margaret Binford and Stacey Bevins.<sup>63</sup>

A Union Sunday School was organized in the home of Mrs. Lucy Parhurst in the Crescent Community, and began meeting in the various homes. Later the Sunday school met in the schoolhouse. In the autumn of 1887 Jerry D. Botkin, presiding elder of the Wichita District of the Methodist Episcopal Church, learned of this Union Sunday School. He came into the community and organized a Methodist Class, which was given the name Bethel. This church organization has been very active since that time and has helped to make a community life in the northeast part of that large section which has since been incorporated into the Mullinville Community.<sup>64</sup>

Another Church organization active in Mullinville was the Free Methodist Church. The Free Methodists held a ten-day camp meeting in Mullinville in October, 1899. Otto Zimmerman was the pastor in charge<sup>65</sup> and later he held a charge at Mullinville. This same fall he held a revival at the Bethel Schoolhouse, out of which grew the Bethany Free Methodist Church.<sup>66</sup>

Sunday School and church services have been held at one time or another in all of the rural schoolhouses in this entire community.

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63. Morford, Cary, Personal Interview, August 14, 1940.

64. Fiftieth Anniversary Program, Bethel M. E. Church.

65. Kiowa County Signal, October 6, 1899.

Alford, Edith Sherer, Personal Interview, February 23, 1941.

66. Kilgore, Opal Cope, Personal Letter, February 20, 1941.

## Schools

At first school opportunities were very limited. School sessions lasted as long as there was money and it did not take long to exhaust the money. Often times a session lasted only a month or two.<sup>67</sup>

The first school in Mullinville was a subscription school conducted by a Mr. Carpenter in 1884 or 1885.<sup>68</sup> Miss Belle Wells opened a subscription school May 3, 1886, in the Union Hall with a large attendance. The school closed July 24, 1886.<sup>69</sup> This hall was also called the City Hall and Community Hall by the "old timers." It stood just west of the bank on Wall Street.

The first meeting of School District No. 36 was held September 23, 1886. John McNowan, A. N. Reed, and G. Mercer were elected as members of the Schoolboard. A motion was passed to have a seven months school.<sup>70</sup> School commenced November 1, 1886, with J. B. Hunt from Kentucky in charge.<sup>71</sup>

Our school is to be divided into two apartments. The first grade will be held in the second story, and the second grade in the first story of the present school building. J. B. Hunt will be principle [sic] and Miss Belle Wells, assistant. The present roll of scholarship is about 50 and this will be increased by at least 50 more shortly, which renders the employment of an assistant teacher necessary.<sup>72</sup>

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67. McClaren, Interview in Mullinville News, December 5, 1929.
68. School Record, Manuscript from Kiowa County Historical Society Files.
69. Mullinville Mallet, April 30, May 7, July 24, 1886.
70. Mullinville Mallet, September 24, 1886.
71. Weekly Telegram, November 4, 1886.
72. Weekly Telegram, November 11, 1886.

The following is a list of names of pupils of the Grammar Department of the Mullinville Public Schools entitled to a place on the Honor Roll. An average of 7 on a scale of 10 to include attendance and deportment being necessary to entitle any pupil to this distinction: Josie Reamy, Minnie Burnette, Minnie Douglass, Gertrude Snyder, Allie Douglass, Jennie French, Mary Wells, Lizzie Jordan, Darthula Jordan, Alta Dawson, Charlie Wells, Dora Snyder, Blanchard Snyder, Bonna Collins, Bessie Carson, Carrie Carson, Nettie Dawson, Ella Leonhardt, Lettie Holman, James Hawkins, Ida Johnson, Ida Douglass, Member Hodges, Ida Slusher, J. T. Dillingham, George Moore, Edward Wood, Nelson Eyer, Lizzie Wells. J. B. Hunt, teacher.<sup>73</sup>

By June 3, 1887, a petition praying for a bond election for the purpose of voting \$2,500 for the erection of a schoolhouse had been circulated, signed by the majority of citizens, and was being presented to the school board of district #36.<sup>74</sup>

The building had been completed by fall, and \$300 worth of furniture had been purchased for it.<sup>75</sup> School began in October, 1887, with W. S. Pratt as principal and Mrs. Maude McLaughlin, primary teacher.<sup>76</sup>

The following is the list of teachers of District #36 from 1887 to 1900, as compiled from the first treasurer's book: E. E. Barker and Nellie Ullroy, 1888-1889; R. J. Davis, 1889-1891; Allie Duncan, 1891-1892; L[ovina] M. Smith, 1892-1893, and Louise Herzer, spring term, 1893. N. T. Cox, 1893-1894, and Cora Wells, spring term, 1894, also fall, 1894, and to February 1895; H. Kenaga, spring term, 1895; Nat Bennett and Iown Deel, 1895-1896; C. E. Cook and Iown Deel, 1896-

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73. Weekly Telegram, January 27, 1887.

74. Mullinville Mallet, June 3, 1887.

75. Mullinville Mallet, August 19, 1887.

76. School Record, Manuscript from Kiowa County Historical Society Files.

1897; G. E. Battin, 1897-1898, also fall term, 1898; A. W. Harshberger, spring term, 1899; and Mary Dillon, 1899-1900.<sup>77</sup>

The number of teachers seems to have depended upon the enrollment, for there were forty-six<sup>78</sup> pupils enrolled in June, 1888, and only eighteen<sup>79</sup> in September, 1891. However, by October, 1891, there were twenty-seven pupils enrolled in the Mullinville School.<sup>80</sup> Many boys and older students attended school during the spring term only and this often necessitated another teacher. In January, 1897, the primary room reported an enrollment of sixteen pupils.<sup>81</sup> The teachers' salaries ranged from thirty dollars to fifty-five dollars per month. When two teachers were employed the principal received five dollars more salary per month.<sup>82</sup>

J. A. Sherer<sup>83</sup> served on the school board of district #36 from 1892 until 1916 and B. A. Sidener<sup>84</sup> served as treasurer of this board from 1893-1902.

#### Rural Schools

In the Crescent (or Bethel) Neighborhood the children were first

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77. Treasurer's Book School District #36, Kiowa County, Kansas.
  78. Mullinville Mallet, June 16, 1888.
  79. Kiowa County Signal, October 2, 1891.
  80. Kiowa County Signal, October 9, 1891.
  81. Kiowa County Signal, February 5, 1897.
  82. Treasurer's Book, School District #36, Kiowa County, Kansas.
  83. Sherer, Interview, Mullinville News, November 14, 1929.
  84. Treasurer's Book, School District #36, Kiowa County, Kansas.

taught at home. Soon several families would meet at one home and have school for a few hours at night.<sup>85</sup> Later District 24 was organized and bonds voted for the purpose of building a school house. The first teacher was M. M. Parker.<sup>86</sup> The school building was twenty by twenty-two feet. Forty-five children attended the school, and in order to make enough room each one of the double seats held three or four children.<sup>87</sup>

By 1886 schools were being organized all around Mullinville. G. W. Cox and his wife taught a short term at the Harmony School House three and one-half miles south of Mullinville, in April and May, 1886. Westland, Prairie Home, the Ward School, Forrest Grove, Nickel, and Kiowa followed, and soon there was a school on every school section--fifteen in all in the Mullinville Community.

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85. Barnes, Burgess, Interview in Mullinville News, December 19, 1929.
86. Brown, Interview in Mullinville News, December 12, 1929.
87. Guthrie, J. E., "Old Timer's Reminiscence," Greensburg News, August 20, 1936.

CEMETERY

North



W.S. Winslow



B.A. Sidener

Mullinville (1906)  
Township 28S. Range 20W.

Scale 400 ft. to one inch

(0 Wells added from)  
Harp Plat

Standard Atlas  
of  
Kiowa County Kansas

Chicago, Rock Island



Ave.

Ave.

Ave.

St.

Ave.

Ave.

St.

St.

St.

St.

St.

St.

Walnut

Pine

Olive

Spruce

Chestnut

Oak

A. A. Mullin



C. W Raymond

35-

Herbert Marriage Est.

Shelton

S. G.

Pacific R. R.



## CHAPTER V

### EPILOGUE

1900-1940

After 1900 settlers began to flock to the sand land north of Mullinville that had been taken over by mortgage companies during the hard years.

In 1903 and 1904 those farmers who had braved the hardships of the new country were beginning to see the fruits of their labor, and many of them began to improve their farms with fine houses, barns, and other buildings.<sup>1</sup>

In 1905 the population of Mullinville was approximately sixty people. The residences and business places were scattered out over a wide area. Hayne's Store, the Rock Island depot, and two elevators were clustered along the Rock Island right-of-way and the hotel was midway between there and the other section of the town which stretched out from the intersection of Wall and Main Streets.

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1. Alford, Edith Sherer, Personal Interview, March 15, 1941.



## Town Rivalry

From the time of the laying of the two railroads there has been a tendency for the business district of Mullinville to slide up and down Main Street, but it was at this time that the South End gained a firm foothold. In 1907 when the Haynes Store burned there was an effort made to eliminate the "town quarrel," but it did not succeed.<sup>2</sup>

The years 1911 and 1912 were years of boom and many buildings were built. It was during this time that most of the brick buildings were constructed. Both bank buildings, the three Bryan buildings, the Opera House, the south garage, the grade school, and the United Brethren Church were made of brick and two store buildings at the extreme south end of Main Street were made of cement blocks. During this period there were two distinct sets of business places and competition was keen. There was also a great rivalry between the two sections of the town. The good crops preceding the World War and the high prices for farm products during the war helped to foster this rivalry, for the streets and business places of Mullinville were always full of people who had come "to trade." Two draymen were kept busy hauling freight to the stores and hitchings were hard to find.<sup>3</sup>

In the "let down" which came just after the World War the town

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2. Alford, Wayne C., Personal Interview, April 15, 1941.

3. Ibid.  
Alford, Edith Sherer, Personal Interview, March 15, 1941  
Frola, B. C., Personal Interview, March 15, 1941.

of Mullinville began to "fold up" through the process of consolidation. The business places consolidated and in most instances centered around the highway which followed South Street across the town. This street had been the extreme south edge of town on the original town plat, but in the boom years of 1911-15 nine brick buildings had been constructed along the one-third mile of Main Street extending south from South Street to the Rock Island station. An exception to the general trend was the T. M. Deal Lumber Company, which moved south and occupied the brick building of the M. T. Bryan Lumber Company.

The post office and print shop remained in a new brick building about a block and a half south of South Street, and of course the elevators and depot remained beside the railroad.

These years of 1919 to 1924 were years of hard times and poor crops as well as a period of change in the topography of the town.

In 1924 the old controversy of north and south was reopened in the decision as to where the new high school building would be placed. The final decision located it between the post office and the buildings clustered around South Street.

In 1936 the trend of businesses started south again. Perhaps it will always be a game of checkers with vacant buildings in the non-booming end of town. However, regardless of one's sympathy it is fortunate for newcomers to notice the empty brick buildings in the south end and the unsightly empty wooden buildings in the north end. It is somewhat confusing for the stranger to see Main Street stretching almost a mile with more vacant lots than buildings bordering its flat sides. At night it almost reminds one of the grin of a huge jack-o-lantern with hit and miss teeth.

## The Mullinville Rural High School

The growing movement of this period was the newly organized Mullinville Rural High School, which was created in 1919. This district, which is really the Mullinville Community, is nine miles wide and twenty-four miles long. The evaluation of this district exceeded five million dollars and had the largest evaluation of any rural high school district in the state at that time.<sup>4</sup>

In 1913 C. C. Perry, the grade school principal, saw the need for higher education in Mullinville and organized the first class of high school students.<sup>5</sup> Each year more work was added and in 1917 the first class of Mullinville High School was graduated. Misses Oattie and Mary Graham received their diplomas that memorable night.

By the fall of 1924 the new high school had grown until there were four teachers and an enrollment of thirty-two pupils. The school had outgrown its quarters in the east half of the upper floor of the grade school and had spread to various buildings over the town. Home Economics was taught in a cement block building a block from the main building, the vocational agriculture shop was almost two blocks away in the old drug store building, and basketball and dramatics were coached in the old Opera house in the south part of town. The time had come for a new building. After many squabbles and disputes, the high school building was finally finished in the fall of 1925 and the enrollment rose to over fifty students. From that time on the school has grown until in 1937 the enrollment had gone past the one hundred mark and the faculty consisted of seven teachers.

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4. Alford, Wayne C., Personal Interview, March 15, 1941.

5. School Record, Kiowa County Historical Files.

### District No. 36 Consolidates

The grade school grew along with the high school, and soon adjoining districts were consolidating until in 1940 only five of the original fifteen districts included within the high school district have not become a part of the Mullinville Grade School District. A fleet of eight buses convey the high school and grade school pupils to and from school each day. The faculty at present consists of nine full-time teachers for the eight grades.

### Cooperative Organizations

Another factor which has helped the community to work together is the Equity Grain and General Merchandise Exchange which was organized in March, 1913.<sup>6</sup> This organization, commonly known as the Equity Exchange, is cooperatively owned by farmers; and its chief business is the operation of a large grain elevator. The Equity Exchange proved so successful that in May, 1927, the Mullinville Cooperative Oil Company was organized,<sup>7</sup> consisting largely of the same group of farmers who owned stock in the Equity Exchange. Both of these cooperative corporations have been a big asset to the community.

### Home Talent

The people of Mullinville have always been able to entertain themselves. Baseball had proved to be a popular game and in the

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6. French, E. E., Personal Interview, March 16, 1941.

7. Fellers, F. A., Personal Interview, March 16, 1941.

second boom period Mullinville belonged to an important league and the team was well supported. At this time the diamond was what is now the high school diamond.<sup>8</sup> Regular baseball still has its place in the lives of many of the community, but softball has become the popular summer sport. The high school diamond is equipped with flood lights and teams made up from different sections of the community meet in friendly combat.

The first basket ball game was played in Mullinville on an outdoor court on the grade school playground. This momentous game was played on November 17, 1911, and drew a huge crowd.<sup>9</sup> The spirit implanted that day has grown until now Mullinville is noted all over the Southwest for its fine basketball teams and successful tournaments. In the last decade town team tournaments and grade school tournaments have become an annual event.

Dramatic organizations have played an important part in the lives of the people from the founding of the community. Home talent programs are the rule rather than the exception. Chautauquas and Lyceum Courses had periods of popularity, but often they did not pay out and then the community would decide to put on home talent Chautauquas and Lyceums which were always quite successful.<sup>10</sup> Perhaps the one whose name will be remembered most often in connection with later home talent productions is that of Mrs. Polly Holman. From

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8. Alford, Wayne C., Personal Interview, March 15, 1941.

9. Alford, Edith Sherer, Personal Interview, March 15, 1941.

10. Alford, Edith Sherer, Personal Interview, March 15, 1941.  
Alford, Wayne C., Personal Interview, March 15, 1941.



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1923 until 1937 she was the driving force behind most of the home talent community productions because she really and truly enjoyed directing. Music, too, played an important part in all of these productions. For even today it is not difficult to find soloists, duets, trios, quartets, or even larger vocal groups for religious or entertainment purposes.

#### Fraternal Orders and Clubs

The Royal Neighbor Lodge, the sister lodge of the Modern Woodman of America, was organized about 1905.

The I.O.O.F. was organized in 1908 and the Rebecca Lodge in 1910. The A.F. & A.M. was organized in 1912 and the Order of the Eastern Star in 1917. Other secret organizations have been started but have flared up only to die after a short life. All of these fraternal orders have helped to contribute to the life of this community.<sup>11</sup>

Mullinville is known as a club community. At present there are four active federated women's clubs which have a membership of over seventy women with only two duplicate members.

The first federated club was the Clio Club,<sup>12</sup> which was organized in 1907 and federated in 1910. This club did not last long after it was federated. The next club was the Twentieth Century Club,<sup>13</sup> which was federated in 1915. The Bon Tres Club<sup>14</sup> was

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11. Ibid.

12. Alford, Edith Sherer, Personal Interview, March 15, 1941.

13. Ibid.

14. Relstin, Ruth Price, Personal Interview, March 15, 1941.

organized and federated in 1924. In 1932 the P.T.D. Club, a junior club, was organized and also the San Souci Club. The P.T.D. Club was not federated until 1934.

These clubs were instrumental in the forming of the Kiowa Council of Women's Clubs, for there were only two other federated clubs in the county at that time. This county organization includes all women's organizations in the county.

The depression years beginning with 1933 were years of organization among the women of the community and out of this came all but two of the clubs mentioned above, as well as the Community Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Farm Bureaus. The 4-H Clubs were also organized at this time.

#### The Churches

The Mullinville United Brethren charge was only a part of the Greensburg circuit until 1908, but they had built a church near the schoolhouse in 1903. Until this time all religious services had been held in the schoolhouse and the Sunday School was a Union Sunday School. In 1904 when the church was dedicated the pastor asked that those other denominations who had been using the church for services help support the upkeep of the church or find another worshiping place. The Free Methodists under the leadership of their pastor Mr. Hornish built a church building on lots in the northeast corner of block 27 facing Locust Street and the Church of Christ moved back to the schoolhouse. Then the Sunday School became a strictly United Brethren Sunday School.<sup>15</sup>

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15. Alford, Edith Sherer, Personal Interview, March 15, 1941.  
Alford, Wayne C., Personal Interview, March 15, 1941.

The Southwest Kansas Conference of the United Brethren Church that convened in Greensburg August 19, 1908, constituted Mullinville a station. The first session of Mullinville Quarterly Conference met in the Church Sept. 20th, 1908, with Superintendent Dr. T. W. Perks in the chair.<sup>16</sup>

In 1912 a large brick church building was built on lots in the southeast corner of block 26 facing Locust Street. This was just north across Washington Street from the Free Methodist Church building. The Reverend O. P. Garlock was pastor at the time.

The Women's Missionary Association was organized in 1905 and has been one of the most active organizations in the community.<sup>17</sup> Later the Ladies Aid was combined with the "Missionary" and this eliminated all chance of cross purposes between the two organizations. For years the membership of this body has exceeded seventy-five. Perhaps the biggest thing the W.M.A. has ever sponsored is a pastor in a foreign field. The Reverend C. A. Schlotterbeck was the local pastor when the project was begun. For twenty years Harlan Thomas was supported in the Mission fields of Africa by the Mullinville United Brethren Church. After his return to America in 1937, a medical missionary was selected to be Mullinville's representative in the foreign field. There is also an active Otterbein Guild (girls' missionary society) which works with the W.M.A.

The Mullinville Church has entertained the young people's Summer Conference of the Wichita District of the United Brethren Church twice in the last decade.

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16. Quarterly Conference Record, Mullinville Station, p. 2.

17. Alford, Edith Sherer, Personal Interview, March 15, 1941.



The church is quite well known all over the Kansas Conference of the United Brethren Church and is ranked as one of the four best churches in the conference. It is truly a church of united brethren, for its membership is made up of transfers from all denominations. When the church was first organized there were other church groups in the community but through the years all of them have been absorbed except the Church of Christ. Prior to 1915 there was a Free Methodist Church and in 1915 a Baptist Church was organized, which lasted about one year.<sup>18</sup>

The Church of Christ has been a small but active church group in the community since 1893. Although the first organization disbanded in the fall of 1893, the present organization was started on March 12, 1905, by M. A. Draper, Evangelist. The present membership is near fifty. The white frame church building was erected in 1911 on lots in block 30 on the north side of Wall Street just west of the intersection of Main and Wall. The families of H. W. Hodges, W. K. Sluder, and P. E. McDonald have been active in the Church of Christ from the time of its organization.<sup>19</sup>

#### A Final Impression

Mullinville has had a good heritage; for its founder, A. A. Mullin, was a true Christian gentleman. From its beginning it has

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18. Alford, Edith Sherer, Personal Interview, March 15, 1941.  
Alford, Wayne C., Personal Interview, March 15, 1941.

19. Ibid.  
McDonald, Leslie, Personal Interview, March 31, 1941.

been unusual as is shown by the following clipping from the Mullinville Mallet of September 24, 1886:

Mullinville is essentially a cooperative town and a successful sample of what people can do for themselves without the paternity of a Town company. A well established Bank has recently been set up and a spacious hall for religious and school purposes was erected by the citizens.

The general unanimity of the people in all matters vital to the growth of this "Prodigy of the Prairies" is a refreshing relief from the usual jealousies which seem peculiar to most western pioneer towns.

Truly Mullinville has lived up to this splendid beginning, for aside from the rivalry of the north and south ends of Main Street in the years 1910 to 1920, it has always been a cooperative community. Even in those years the spirit of cooperation was not dead; and today whenever a situation of that kind appears to be brewing, the broad-minded citizens quickly take measure to eliminate the sources of the difficulties; for they know that success comes only from working together. This success through cooperation has made the community of Mullinville outstanding as is shown in the consolidated school system, the United Brethren Church, the various clubs, the Cooperative Oil Company, and the Equity Exchange.

The people of the community are common, unassuming, wholesome, energetic, human, friendly, and taken as a whole, well educated. They are very progressive in the good things of life but extremely conservative in sanctioning anything which would not foster the best interests of all the people.

Mrs. Ovie Pedigo Tanner says, "I am sure we acknowledge that there are definite traces existing [in the Mullinville Community] that breathe of the hope, courage and aspirations, that kept the

pioneers here."<sup>20</sup> Today descendants of the pioneers, with the help of those who have come later, are carrying on in the same dauntless spirit of their ancestors. The early pioneers are almost gone, but their ideals will live in the hearts and lives of those who made their homes in the Mullinville Community.

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20. Tanner, Ovie Pedigo, Personal Letter, June 18, 1940.

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### Books

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Embraces events, institutions, industries, cities, towns, prominent persons, etc.

Standard Atlas of Kiowa County Kansas. Chicago, Geo. A. Ogle & Co.,  
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County and township maps, town plats, etc.

Webb, W. E. *Buffalo Land.* Cincinnati, E. Hanaford & Co., 1873.

503 p.

A description, principally, of western Kansas and eastern Colorado.

### Articles in Newspapers Signed Articles

Alphin, Carrie. *Buffalo Hunts on Kansas Prairie Recalled by*

*Kiowa's Oldest Citizen.* (In the Hutchinson News-Herald.

May 26, 1940).

Printed Kennedy interview emphasizes Mr. Kennedy as an Indian Scout and buffalo hunter.

Anderson, Lina S. *Memories.* (In the Greensburg News. September 27,  
1937).

Vivid description of the prairie and settlers of Kiowa County in the spring of 1884.

Carey, Henry L. Indians Worshipped Them, White Men Destroyed Them.

(In the Hutchinson News-Herald. February 4, 1940).

Describes buffalo hunting around Dodge City during the 1870's.

Guthrie, J. E. Old Timers' Reminiscences. (In the Greensburg News.

August 20, 1936).

Reminiscences of people who attended the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Bethel Church

#### Unsigned Articles

Among the Pioneers of Kiowa County. (In the Mullinville News.

November 7, 1929-January 9, 1930).

A series of eight articles based on personal interviews and prepared by an English Class of Mullinville Rural High School under the direction of the English teacher, Miss Margaret Moore.

Celebrate Golden Wedding Anniversary of First Wedding in Kiowa County.

(In the Mullinville News. November 14, 1929).

Describes the wedding of Mr. and Mrs. Washington Kennedy. Published at the time of their Golden Anniversary.

Comanche Pool Rides Again in Southwest. (In the Hutchinson News-Herald.

April 28, 1940).

Gives details about the first Comanche Pool which tried to drive the settlers from the cattle country along the creeks in the south third of Kiowa County.

Dramatic Story of Pioneer Days Told by Brief Notes in Diary.

(In the Hutchinson News-Herald. December 24, 1939).

Feature story about Charles Epley and his diary. Some passages are quoted from the diary.



Scanning the First Mallets. (In the Mullinville News. March 9, 1939).

Compilation of items from the first few issues of the Mullinville Mallet.

#### Newspaper Files

Ford County Globe. Weekly. January 1, 1878-1879. Dodge City 1878-1940.

Items about Chief Dull Knife and Indian Scares.

Kiowa County Signal. Weekly. March 5, 1886-December 28, 1900.

Greensburg. 1886-1940.

This is the only paper that has been continuous in Kiowa County since 1886. It has always carried scattered items concerning Mullinville and the surrounding community. From 1888 to 1905 there was no paper in Mullinville.

Kiowa County Times. Weekly. August 17, 1888-1895. Greensburg.

1888-1895 [Consolidated with Signal in 1895]

Scattered items about people of Mullinville.

Mullinville Mallet. Weekly. September 30, 1886-1888. Mullinville.

1886-1888.

Founded April 9, 1886, by L. F. Grove and edited by him until August 13, 1886. J. M. Divine was the editor from August, 1886, to September 2, 1887, when L. F. Grove resumed the management. January 20, 1888, C. A. Robertson became the editor and the paper soon was discontinued. L. F. Grove was an excellent town booster as is shown by some of his descriptions of Mullinville and its happenings.

Republican Banner. Weekly. April 18, 1891-1895. Greensburg. 1891-1895.

Scattered items about Mullinville and surrounding community.

Weekly Telegram. Weekly. September 30, 1886-1887. Mullinville.  
1886-1887.

Information concerning community affairs. Mr. H. L. Van Zandt, the editor, used a more quiet style of writing than Mr. Grove, the editor of the Mallet.

#### Printed Program

Fiftieth Anniversary Program. Bethel Methodist Episcopal Church.

Kiowa County, Kansas. September 5-12, 1937. 8p.

Brief history of Bethel Church.

#### Manuscripts: Bound Books, Diaries

Epley, Charles. Diary. Mullinville [etc.] 1877-1941. 10v.

Ordinary blank books jotted full of briefly stated everyday happenings. Diary of 1885 to 1900 was used for verification during personal interview.

Quarterly Conference Record. Mullinville Station. September 20, 1908.

United Brethren Church records.

Treasurer's Book School District No. 36. Kiowa County, Kansas.

July 17, 1887-February 8, 1906. 30p.

Contained record of teachers employed and salary paid each. Also length of terms of school.

#### Manuscripts: Unbound Letters, Papers, and Maps

Kiowa County Historical Society File. Mullinville, Kansas

Four Kennedy manuscripts based on personal interviews written by four high school girls in October and November, 1929. One J. Sherer manuscript and one Burgess Barnes manuscript based on personal interviews and written by two other high school

girls. One manuscript on Kiowa County prepared by Dean Burtsfield. An unsigned Kennedy interview dated December 15, 1938. An unsigned manuscript entitled "Start of Mullinville" and another such manuscript called "Start of Mullinville."

Town Plat. Mullinville, Kansas.

This plat, which is inked on silk, was given to my mother by J. D. Harp in March, 1921. The plat is 46 inches wide and 30 inches long. Although it carries no date, it is thought to be one of the first.

Sherer, J. A. Private Papers. Mullinville, Kansas.

No date. A piece of tablet paper on which the names of the charter members of the Mullinville United Brethren Church were written in Mr. Sherer's handwriting. This was found in an old billfold after his death.

Fink, H. B. Personal Letter. Topeka, Kansas. February 20, 1940.

Information regarding Wichita and Western Railroad.

Kilgore, Opal Cope. Personal Letter. Mullinville, Kansas.

February 20, 1941.

Information regarding Free Methodist and Glendale Friends Churches.

McElroy, V. M. (County Attorney of Kiowa County) Personal Letter.

Greensburg, Kansas. February 11, 1941.

Summary of records found in Kiowa County Court House concerning removal of Wichita and Western Railroad. Contains a sworn statement witnessed by notary public.

Tanner, Ovie Pedigo. Personal Letter. Mullinville, Kansas.

June 18, 1940.

Information about entertainment in pioneer community life.



### Personal Interviews

Alford, Edith Sherer. Mullinville, Kansas, August 3, 1939; March 23, 1941.

Verification of stories which I have heard from my family during my lifetime.

Alford, Wayne C. Mullinville, Kansas, August 3, 1939; March 23, 1941.

Verification of stories which I have heard during my lifetime. Specific history since 1905.

Briggs, Elizabeth. Greensburg, Kansas, November 15, 1939.

Told interesting stories of ranch life in the pioneer days.

Cope, Don. Greensburg, Kansas, December 29, 1939.

Supplied details of the Chapman murder story and told incidents which happened in the Westland district.

Epley, Charles. Hutchinson, Kansas, December 2, 1939.

Expounded from memory on incidents which had been jotted down in his diary.

Fellers, F. A. Mullinville, Kansas. March 16, 1941.

Verified date of the organization of Mullinville Cooperative Oil Company.

Frala, B. C. Mullinville, Kansas, March 15, 1941.

Told incidents which happened in Mullinville during the boom of 1910-1920.

French, E. E. Mullinville, Kansas, March 16, 1941.

Verified the date of organization and official name of the Equity Grain and General Merchandise Exchange of Mullinville, Kansas.

Graven, Rosie Reed. Greensburg, Kansas, November 15, 1939.

Told stories of pioneer life along the trail from Protection to Kinsley.

Harp, Eunice Kennedy. Mullinville, Kansas, June 23, 1940.

Added interesting details to the stories her father, Washington Kennedy, had told me.

Kennedy, Washington. Mullinville, Kansas, November 15, 1939;

June 23, 1940.

Told history of Mullinville Community from 1875 to 1900. Is 90 years of age but has a perfect memory of pioneer days.

Massoni, Harry. Mullinville, Kansas, August 15, 1940.

Recalled incidents during the hard years and the taking up of the railroad.

McDonald, Leslie. Mullinville, Kansas, March 31, 1941.

Supplied information about the Church of Christ.

Morford, Cary. Mullinville, Kansas, August 14, 1940.

Recalled incidents pertaining to the taking up of the railroad and the Westland district.

Sherer, Marilla H. Mullinville, Kansas, March 25, 1939; April 13,

1940.

Verified stories she and her husband, J. A. Sherer, had told me during my lifetime.

Ralstin, Ruth Price. Mullinville, Kansas, March 15, 1941.

Verified date of organization of Bon Tres Club.