A Survey of Early Washington County and A Study of The Development of Hollenberg, Kansas

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A SURVEY OF EARLY WASHINGTON COUNTY AND A
STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF HOLLENBERG, KANSAS.

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

J. Holland Vernon, A. B.

Date July 22, 1949

Approved

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Chairman Graduate Council
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The first permanent settlement in Washington County was made in the late eighteen fifties. Beginning in the 1830's, emigrants from the East had crossed it repeatedly. This small trickle of travelers was to grow to impressive proportions in the late forties and early fifties when thousands rushed westward to the fertile land of the Pacific Northwest and to the gold fields of the Sierras and the Rockies. During the late sixties, the county was settled rapidly and by 1875 it was well beyond the pioneer stage. Its growth and development has been gradual and consistent—typical of numerous other Kansas counties. The early settler found conditions severe at times, but he set about trying to improve his lot and by dint of hard work and an occasional extra boost from a kind Providence he succeeded.

The little town of Hollenberg, located near the old Oregon Trail in the northeastern corner of the county, was chosen for special consideration in this thesis for several reasons. First, the author, having lived there for three years, has a personal interest in it. Second, it bears the name of the earliest settler in this county who, perhaps, more than any other, influenced the early development of the
county. Then again, it is located near several historic sites. The town, lying on the Old Trail, was bordered on the east by the Otoe Indian Reservation. Numerous historic spots worthy of preservation are located within a short distance of this town. Finally, the growth and development of Hollenberg, though unique in many respects, is typical of the development of the county's other small towns. Although it is one of the oldest towns, it has failed to keep pace with others in the county because of its isolation. Changes in the transportation system have apparently doomed it to remain a rather small village.

Information for this study has been gathered from various sources. In 1876 Dr. Charles Williamson wrote the first "History of Washington County" and published it in an edition of the Washington County Republican. This was the account used by Andreas in his History of Kansas. In 1936 the Washington County Register published a special anniversary edition which contained valuable historical material on the county. These and other newspaper items have been studied and used. Information has also been obtained from the publications and Reports of the State's Departments of Agriculture and Public Instruction. The publications of the Kansas Historical Society as well as a study of various old newspapers, bulletins, handbills, etc., housed in the Historical Library at Topeka have been very helpful. The
author has enjoyed numerous enlightening interviews with many of the older people of the northern part of the county. Since many of this rapidly diminishing group were among the first to settle here, he has received from them first-hand information on conditions in the county in the late sixties and thereafter.

Writing about the old trails across this region is almost limitless. Various widely known writers, including Edward Everett Hale, have discussed the subject. We have attempted to limit our study of these trails to the part directly concerning only Washington County. Frank Root, an agent on the old stageline, stated that this is the most beautiful section of the trail. Many others apparently felt the same because much has been written about it.

Some of the material of this paper is trivial. It is hoped that some is valuable. It is the humble belief of this writer that some information has been gathered which, on being preserved, may grow in value and aid later students of the growth and development of our country to a better understanding of the problems involved.
WASHINGTON COUNTY BEFORE SETTLEMENT

Washington County, Kansas, is located in the first tier of counties south of the Nebraska line, and it is the fourth county west of the Missouri River lying 78 miles from this river at its nearest point. Washington County, which was named after the first President, is bounded on the north by Jefferson and Gage Counties in Nebraska, on the east by Marshall, on the south by Riley, Clay and Cloud, and on the west by Republic. As it is 30 miles square it contains 900 square miles which are divided into 25 townships.

The surface of the county varies but, in general, it is an undulating prairie with the northern half somewhat higher and more rolling than the southern. According to an early government study, two per cent of the land was covered by trees. The largest growth of these originally stood east of Morrowville along Mill Creek. Approximately one twelfth of the land is bottom and the entire county is well-watered. The largest stream, the Little Blue River, enters from Nebraska 2 miles northwest of Hollenberg and flows in a south-easterly direction along the eastern border of the county to a point three miles northeast of Barnes where it passes into Marshall County. The Blue's principal tributary, Mill Creek, heads in the western part of Washington and the east-
ern section of Republic Counties. It elbows tortuously
eastward and northeastward across the center of the county
to flow into the Little Blue in Franklin Township. The
tributaries of Mill Creek are: Pierce, Riddle, Devil, Camp,
Ash, and Clear Creeks. Joy Creek in the northern portion
flows into the Little Blue; and Parsons, East Branch, and
Peach in the southwestern portion flow south into the Re-
publican. The streams in the southeastern townships flow
southeastward.¹ There are numerous springs and other ever-
running creeks throughout the county.

Wooded areas are found only on the streams. These
approximate a quarter of a mile in width on Mill Creek and
are proportionately smaller on the smaller creeks. The
native trees most commonly seen are the ever-present cotton-
wood and elm, with some walnut, locust, box-elder, oak, soft
maple, ash and willow. Here and there on the uplands are
patches of wild fruits such as: plums, mulberries, goose-
berries, choke cherries, raspberries, and strawberries.
Grass, originally standing as high as a horse's back in
places, consists chiefly of blue stem with some buffalo, and
covers the unbroken upland.

Fairly heavy sandstone deposits are found in the

¹ Kansas State Board of Agriculture, First Biennial
eastern, northern, and western tiers of townships. Much pottery clay is available on the Little Blue and Mill Creek, while magnesium and common limestone is abundant in all but the southwest corner of the county.\textsuperscript{2} Traces of coal have also been found in the county but it is of an inferior quality and of little value. The clay of the county has been found to contain rich deposits of aluminum compounds.

The earliest inhabitants of this territory of which we have any record were the Caddoan Indians. This was a great linguistic family which at one time covered the region from North Dakota southward to the Red River. They were of three types: the Arick-ara in North Dakota, the Pawnee along the Platte Valley, and the Caddo, Kichai, and Wichita to the south. All of these came into conflict with immigrant, chiefly Sioux, Indians who had left their ancestral homes east of the Mississippi in the Piedmont regions of Virginia and the Carolinas and were moving westward ahead of the Whites. In some places these immigrants had replaced the older tribes when the white man arrived.

The Caddoan tribes also came into contact, and often conflict, with the whites and soon fell victim to his trickery, greed, and diseases. Thousands died from smallpox, cholera, and other diseases. After much suffering at the

\textsuperscript{2} Ibid., p. 354
hands of the whites, a treaty was finally made in 1835 which forced them out of the United States territory toward Texas.³

As has been indicated, rivalry and hatred leading to warfare was strongest between the Pawnee and members of the Siouan family. The Siouan tribes that most often frequented this county and the surrounding region were the Iowa, Missouri, Omaha, and Otoe. These four closely related tribes, who at times lived in the same village, had originally come from the Great Lakes region. The French explorer, Marquette, first locates them on the Upper Des Moines in 1673. In 1700 Le Seuer found them on the Blue Earth River in Minnesota and Charlevoix saw them in 1721 on the east side of the Missouri and north of the Kanza tribe on the West side. In 1804 Lewis and Clark located the tribe on the south bank of the Platte about 30 miles from its mouth. Lewis, who felt that they were once strong and powerful, states that they had migrated into Pawnee territory and after warring with that tribe had finally sought their protection.⁴

Legend of rivalry between the Otoe and the Pawnee has been handed down. The Otoe had a tradition of having once exterminated the Pawnee in Iowa and Missouri. Inas-


⁴. Ibid., p. 165.
much as Griffith visited the Pawnee there in 1765, and Lewis and Clark failed to find them in 1804 this is evidently true. Apparently the massacre had happened between those dates. 5

West of the Missouri the Pawnee were more successful. Major A.L. Greene, an agent of the Otoe, tells of a tradition of a battle between the Pawnee and Otoe in which the latter were almost wiped out. It was a "great many years ago" near the site of Blue Springs, Nebraska. 6 Afterward the Otoe lived in this region at the sufferance of the Pawnee.

In 1826 two trappers came into the region of the Little Blue. One of them, a Frenchman named Moncreave, tells of a traditional battle which took place in southern Jefferson County, Nebraska and Northwestern Washington County, Kansas. Some 10,000 Sioux and Cheyenne came raiding down the Little Blue and Republican on the Pawnee, Otoe, and other East Kansas and Nebraska Indians. This engagement in which 15,000 Indians took part lasted three days and ended only after more than 3,000 Indians had been killed.


Afterward the Pawnee burned several hundred prisoners at the stake. The leader of the tribe was Chief Toc-po-hona, recognized as the greatest Pawnee of the time. The Sioux were led by Oso-no-me-wah, an ancestor of Sitting Bull. After this battle the Pawnee were recognized as supreme and rarely if ever did the Sioux again enter this region. 7

In 1825, at Fort Atkinson, near present Council Bluffs, Nebraska, Otoe and Missouri signed a treaty for peace, promising not to molest American citizens passing to and from New Mexico. In 1833 at the Otoe Village on the Platte another treaty was signed in which the Otoe ceded all their land south of the Little Nemaha. On December 9, 1854 still another treaty was signed by George Hepner, United States Indian agent, and Hick Kapoo, Bil Soldier, and White Water, Otoe Indians, which provided for a final cession of their land. The Otoe retained a tract on the West Bank of the Big Blue, 25 miles long by 10 miles wide. 8 A portion of this land, being 10 miles long and 2 wide, lay in northeastern Washington County. The west line came to the eastern edge of Hollenberg. In 1881 as they were being


crowded by the Whites they removed to Indian Territory and 
their land was incorporated into Kansas and Nebraska.

The Otoe were a relatively weak tribe who did little 
farming and lived mostly by hunting. The word "Oto" meant 
"lecher" and they were guilty of robbing the other Indians 
whenever possible. After the coming of the Whites into the 
regions they begged and pilfered many small articles from 
them. They seem never to have been very warlike but were 
often a nuisance due to their thieving habits.

Major Clifton Wharton visited the Otoe with troops 
in 1844. He had a soldier's contempt for this tribe and 
in the journal of his march he wrote:

The Otoes have of late years been very trouble-
some . . . the Otoes are a thieving, impudent, 
silly, reckless people, as ignorant of their own 
weakness as they seem to be of the power of others 
. . . the Otoes are miserably destitute, afraid of 
other tribes . . . the chiefs are weak . . . 
[there is] little game in their section. . . . They 
and the Missouris [who were a part of tribe] do not 
exceed one thousand.9

Isaac McCoy says that 4000 Pawnee, Otoe, and Omaha had died 
in smallpox epidemic in 1832 and 1837. This number contin-
ued to diminish until there were less then 400 who were 
moved off their reservation to the Indian Territory in 1881. 
This tribe was the neighbor of the white settlers who began

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9. Clifton Wharton, "The Expeditions of Major Clif-
ton Wharton in 1844," Collections of the Kansas Historical 
to erect their rude dugouts and shanties in Washington County in 1857 and thereafter.

White men first came into this region over 400 years ago when Coronado and other Spanish conquistadores explored it. Coronado who traversed Kansas in the early 1540's left the following account of country he visited.

The Province of Quivera is 950 leagues [3230 miles] from Mexico. The place I have reached is the 40° latitude. The earth is of the best possible. I found prunes like those of Spain, some of which were black, also some excellent grapes and mulberries.10 Coronado also gave the first authentic description of the buffalo. These he saw and described as great crooked-back oxen.

Wilder maintained that Coronado entered Kansas between the twenty-third and twenty-fourth meridians and marched northeastward to the banks of the Missouri "Teuca-rea" River. This march apparently led him across present day Barbour, Kingman, Marion, Dickinson, Davis, Riley, Pottawatomie, Nemaha and Brown Counties.11 If Wilder's calculations were correct, though it now appears doubtful that they were, then Coronado would have passed within


a few miles of Washington County.

Although Coronado left "Quivera" in April of 1542, other white men ventured into this region from time to time. Bourgment, the French explorer, visited the Pawnee in 1724. At that time this tribe extended its territory from the Platte south to the Arkansas.

Mrs. Emma Forter tells of a Spanish sword 33 3/4" long found in 1908 on the highest point in Marysville. This sword was of the type carried by the so-called Spanish gentlemen. At what time this was left it is difficult to say. Mrs. Forter feels that this is the surest sign of Coronado's being here, yet this is not necessarily so as it may have been left by any Spanish officer, inasmuch as many of them were in this region until 1800.12

The American frontiersman early developed an interest in this region, as hunters passed through it or trapped along its streams. The first official visit was in 1806 when Zebulon M. Pike replaced the Spanish flag flying over the Pawnee capital on the Republican. This was the first hoisting of the American flag in Kansas.13


In 1819 and 1820 Long's expedition explored "the high prairies about the Vermillion and Blue Earth Creeks." After Long, ever-increasing numbers of trappers, traders, and land-seekers ventured into this region. However, most of them were headed for the newly-opened Northwest. The small trickle of emigrants who passed through in the early thirties grew to be a great rushing stream in the late forties and early fifties. An estimated 90,000 passed through in the years 1849 and 1850 alone. Yet none of them stopped. The lure of gold and the green fertile valleys on the western slopes of the Sierras was too great for any to turn aside. Therefore, at this time, no attempt was made to wrest ownership of this land from the Indians—Indians who were becoming more and more annoyed and consequently more hostile to the passing caravans.

15. Ibid., p. 54.
CHAPTER III

WESTWARD ACROSS THE PLAINS

In an unbroken hay meadow in the Southwest Quarter of section one, town one, and range four is a depression which was evidently an old wagon road. Where visible it runs north along a shallow creek. A break in the vegetation and an evident difference in the ages of the trees indicate where it crosses this creek on the south side of the meadow.¹

This old wagon trail is a segment of one of the several old roads once worn into the soil of Washington County. These passages included the Mormon Trail, the Leavenworth to Fort Kearney Military Road, and that most famous of them all the Overland Emigrant Road, romantically known as the "Oregon Trail."

The Mormon Trail was the path taken by the "Saints" on their trek to Utah, since they were persecuted by the "Gentiles" along the usual trails. This was especially after the "Mormon War" of 1857. They established roads parallel to the "Gentile" roads and by so doing they were able to keep their own company, preserve their secrets and avoid trouble. However, when their trains were larger this

¹. Viewed by the author in July of 1948.
was unnecessary and they could use the regular trails. A Mormon Trail, established from Fort Riley, passed through Washington County from Fort Riley and led nearly due north to the Oregon Trail. It entered Washington County on the south and ran northwest across the county, passing approximately two miles southwest of the site of Washington.

The Mormons set up temporary settlements along the trail to serve as stations for oncoming pilgrims on the route to the New Zion. "Mormon Grove" in Atchison County is an example. "Mormon Springs" on Ash Creek, three miles south of Washington was a favorite camping place for these early travelers. Although not a permanent settlement it was, evidently, a much-used resting place, and on a high rock overlooking the creek numerous names of the "Latter Day Saints" were chiseled. Mrs. Groody, an early settler, tells of having seen a large wheel, a trail marker, carved into the rock. Both the wheel and the names are now gone.

Hundreds of Mormons passed through the county over this route. Andreas relates that they passed as early as 1845 and Connelly tells of a large train that left Westport August 24 and reached Salt Lake City on the 26th of October,

1852. During this period their road was a busy passage-way westward.

Government surveys of Washington County made in 1857 and thereafter show several roads across the county. A "Military Road leading from Fort Riley to the Rocky Mountains" crossed the southwest corner of the county just north of Clifton's town site. The Fort Kearney to Fort Riley road entered the southeastern corner of the county. It ran north along the eastern edge of Kimmo township, thence northwest across Greenleaf, Logan, Washington, and Coleman. It then crossed Mill Creek and Lowe townships, and so on out of the county. As nearly as can be determined this road very closely follows the Old Mormon Trail. Another very old trail that crossed Washington County was a much-traveled Indian Road. It entered the county at the northeastern edge of the Franklin Township line from the Otoe Reservation. It then ran southwest until it struck Mill Creek, thence along the northern bank of that stream westward out of the county. This road was used by East-


5. Wilder in The Annals of Kansas, page 50, states that a Military Road was established by the government from Ft. Leavenworth to Ft. Kearney in 1850.

ern Kansas and Nebraska Indians traveling to and from Western hunting grounds.

A map of the Kansas Territory drawn in 1854 sketches a trail with three branches leaving the Missouri River in northern Kansas. The southernmost branch, called the Independence or California Military Road left Independence and followed the Santa Fe Trail westward along the south bank of the Kansas River to Papan's Ferry--Topeka. It then crossed this river and proceeded northward to about the site of Marysville. The middle fork, called the Leavenworth to Fort Kearney Military Road, left the cantonment at Leavenworth to run slightly north of west to make a junction with the Independence Road. The northern branch left St. Joseph and ran almost due west across the northern tier of counties to the Big Blue River where it joined the Independence Road. This combined road then crossed the Blue to angle northwestward up the Little Blue across the Northeastern corner of Washington County. These trails had united to form the southern half of the Oregon Trail—a trail which was to stretch in a thin unbroken string westward across high dusty prairies, broad arid plateaus, and refreshingly green mountains, to finally emerge at Fort Vancouver on the Columbia 2020 miles away.

Of the earliest travelers over the trail little is known. Perhaps, as has been suggested, the first path had
been beaten out hundreds of years ago by herds of buffalo moving from one watershed to another. Indian hunters and Indian tribes following these all-important animals had in time come to use these trails. The first white traders followed these paths as he moved among the Indians and the trapper found it the best path on his way to the beaver stream in the Rockies. Whenever it was that the first of these white adventurers came to this region is lost in obscurity but we may be sure it was long previous to Bourgmont, Long, and Pike for the latter explorer noted the presence of whites in the villages of the Pawnee living along the Republican. 7 This trail appears to have been a natural roadway from the Missouri River westward.

In 1827 Fort Leavenworth was established as a cantonment and any party traveling to the Northwest was very likely to start from that fort. Jedediah Smith, William Sublette, and David Jackson with 81 men mounted on mules, along with two Dearborn buggies, a milk cow, and 12 head of steers left St. Louis July 10, 1830, for the Wind River in the Rockies. With the exception of some cannon carriage taken into the Salt Lake Valley by General Ashley in 1826, these were the first wheeled vehicles ever to pass over

what was soon destined to be called the "Oregon Trail".\(^8\)

It seems very likely that Smith came in over this part of the trail in the fall of 1830. In the Kansas Historical Society's Collections is a letter written by him from the "Blue Earth Fork of Kansas, 30 miles from the Ponnee Village, September 10, 1830". He later overtook the carrier of the letter and added this postscript: "Having overtaken this letter, the 22nd of September, at the Kansas Fairy, 30 miles from Leavenworth, or rather cantonment Leavenworth, I add we are thus far safe, J.S.S.\(^9\)

Captain Bonneville's expedition crossed over the trail in 1832. This party crossed the Kansas on May 12 and travelled northward up the trail to the Platte Valley and the Rocky Mountains. This expedition was equipped with the first wagon ever to pass up the trail.\(^{10}\)

The importance of this road was finally recognized by the Government when in 1842 Col. John C. Fremont was commissioned to explore this trail through the South Pass. The South Pass had already been discovered twenty years previous to this time. Women had ridden through it eight years pre-

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10. Ibid., I, pp. 146
vious when in 1834 the wives of Whitman and Spalding rode with their husbands up the trail to Walla Walla.\textsuperscript{11} As has been stated Captain Bonneville's wagons had already passed up the future Oregon Trail when Colonel Fremont led by Kit Carson headed up the Kansas River in the late spring of 1842. Although Fremont was by no means the first to go up the trail his exploration and the subsequent publication of his findings brought it to the nation's attention. His name was to bring glamour and romance to this great Emigration Road--The Imperial Highway.

From Fremont's account we learn that his party left Freeport June 10, 1842. They forded the Kansas near the site of Topeka on the fourteenth and by the twentieth had reached the Big Blue. At this time they were following a large caravan composed of 64 men and 16 or 17 families, led by a Doctor White. This group, headed for the Columbia River Settlement, was plagued with much sickness and several of the children had died. On the 17th Fremont was three weeks behind the emigrant party and reports having met one of the families sadly returning. He states that "traveling on the fresh traces of the Oregon emigrants relieves a little of the loneliness of the road."\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., I, p. 142.

Continuing northwestward, on June 21, 1842, Fremont crossed the northeast corner of what today is Washington County. After having encamped the 20th on the western bank of the Big Blue, where antelope were seen and where a deer was killed by Carson, they entered the county early the next day. At noon they halted on a small limestone-lined creek which though not running contained pools of deep, clear water. This appears to have been one of the creeks located in Franklin or Independence townships and seems to fit the description of either Horseshoe or Cottonwood Creek. At 2:00 P.M. on the 21st, Fremont crossed the 40th parallel some two miles east of the site of Hollenberg. He describes the road traveled in the afternoon as being along a dry, high ridge with a dark line of timber indicating the heads of streams in the plains below. The ridge referred to is still rugged, unbroken, upland pasture, overlooking the Little Blue and running approximately two to three miles east of that stream.

His line of travel led Fremont to Rock Creek north-east of the site of Endicott, Nebraska, where he camped on the night of the 21st. Carved into a large sandstone rock on the south cliff of this creek, approximately 60 feet above the present creek bed are the words, "Kit Carson," and

13. Ibid., p. 80.
Kit Carson's name carved into a cliff at Endicott, Nebraska, seven miles north of Hollenberg on the old Oregon Trail.
"1842". The name of Col. John Fremont which was formerly legible has disappeared due to erosion.\textsuperscript{14} From Rock Creek, Fremont continued up the Little Blue, and crossing over to the Platte Valley moved westward out of this region.

After Fremont's historic expedition, traffic on the trail increased rapidly. The next year a great number passed over this road. One of these was Peter Burnett who was later to become the first governor of California.\textsuperscript{15} In 1844 an estimated 7,000 moved up this increasingly important route and in 1846 a party of 130 men, 65 women and 125 children were led by J.Q. Thornton and Missouri's Ex-Governor Boggs over this portion of the trail. Thornton's train consisted of 98 wagons, loaded with 120,000 pounds of supplies while over 700 head of cattle were driven ahead of them.\textsuperscript{16}

After 1847 Mormons, gold hunters, land seekers, adventurers, refugees from the law, as well as various other types of travelers, wore deep ruts in the trail as wagon after wagon pulled by oxen or mules or both, mingled with other vehicles such as two-wheeled carts, buggies, and even

\textsuperscript{14} Information on a Granite Marker at the site on Rock Creek. Other names on the Cliff include J.S. Griffin, 1859; Whitehall, 1853; one that is partly obliterated; 1849.


\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid.}, I, p. 154.
wheel-barrows restlessly moving westward. Captain Stansbury started May 31, 1849 "over the usual emigrant road from Ft. Leavenworth to the Platte River".\(^{17}\) He stated that on his return he met not fewer than 4,000 wagons, with four persons to the wagon bound for California. Almost daily small parties were seen returning.\(^{18}\) The road was littered with the bones of oxen and mules. Sometimes even the bones of men were present. Wreckage of wagons, bits of furniture, and small pieces of civilized living that had been jettisoned, were always present. As cholera traveled with many of the trains, along the roadside an ever-increasing number of graves appeared. Some were unmarked; others were designated only by a few pitifully humble stones. An estimated 4,000 of these graves line the first 400 miles of this road.

John N. Clark leaves this dramatic picture of the death of an emigrant in May, 1852:

Passed the grave of an emigrant just buried, the wife and children still lingering about the new made grave, the company with which they were traveling having moved on. A more desolate looking group than that mother and her 5 children presented would be hard to find. An open, bleak prairie, the cold wind howling overhead, bearing with the mournful tones of that desert ed woman; a new made grave, a woman and three children sitting near by; a girl of 14 summers walking round and round in a circle wringing

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\(^{17}\) "Report of Exploration of a Route for the Pacific Railroad", Senate Executive Document No. 78, 33 Congress, 2 session, 1855, XI, p. 58.

her hands and calling upon her dead parent; a boy of 12 sitting upon the wagon sobbing aloud; a strong man placing a rude headboard at the head of the grave; the oxen feeding nearby and the picture as I saw it was complete.19

In a small clump of oaks in southern Nebraska eight miles northwest of Hollenberg three of these graves are still visible.

Frank Root states that in six weeks during the spring and summer of 1849 at least 6,000 wagons crossed the Missouri at St. Joseph.20 Edward Everett Hale wrote "that travel on a great emigrant road is equal to that on a considerable turnpike at the east."21 Francis J. Marshall, founder of Marysville and operator of a ferry there, stated that "at least 5,000-10,000 crossed the Blue every day from April to July."22 Mrs. Forter's conservative statement is that "Research shows that about 75,000 people ... crossed the Blue ... from 1846-1856."23


20. Frank Root, The Overland Stage to California (Topeka: Published by author, 1901), p. 18.


23. Ibid., p. 65.
The road that these emigrants used entered Washington County at the east central border of Hanover Township and angled northwest to enter Independence about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles west of the eastern border of that township. It then ran northwest across the Otoe Reservation to leave the county about one half mile east of the Franklin-Independence township line. Although no one is definitely known to have permanently settled along this road before 1857, many did camp at various places within the county. One of the favorite camping places was on Horseshoe Creek in Section 16 of Independence Township. This resting place was located northwest of the old Krienseick School about the middle of that section.25

As well traveled as this road was as an emigrant road, it also attained first importance as a freight route. Starting as a wagon road for individual emigrants it was to grow until it was the great freight line to Denver, Fort Kearney, Salt Lake City, and all other army installations along the way. Although much of the hauling was done by private individuals most of the freight was carried by

24. Jay Hatter of Morrowville states that his grandfather settled in the eastern part of the county about 1855-56.

"trains" of wagons owned either by single individuals or companies. These firms often employed large numbers of men and used specially constructed wagons. The business belonging to Ben Holladay was one of these. In February of 1849, he began freighting, having bought some government surplus from the Mexican War. In that year a train of 50 wagons was taken to Salt Lake City to the Mormons. Supplies were also distributed at stores along the way. The following year another train with $150,000 worth of supplies was sent over the trail.\textsuperscript{26}

In 1855, Alexander Majors and William Russell combined to form the Majors and Russell freighting firm. Prior to that they had operated on a small scale but the first two years after joining forces they made $300,000. In 1856, they furnished corn to Fort Laramie and Fort Kearney and in 1857 they held a contract to furnish goods to the United States Army under General Albert Sidney Johnston who was fighting the Mormon War in Utah.\textsuperscript{27} In 1858-59 they were again contracted to haul $16,000,000 of supplies to the

\begin{flushright}

27. This was one of Johnston's last services to the U.S. before he became an officer in the Confederate Army. W.C. Quantrill was a cattle driver on this task.
\end{flushright}
army posts on the trail.  

In order to appreciate the immensity of this freight development, it must be kept in mind that many other firms were operating at this same time. Majors stated that there was no other road in the United States of the same length, where such numbers of men and animals could travel during the summer months as could over the thoroughfare from the Missouri River and up the tributaries of the Platte to the Rocky Mountains. At one time his firm had 75,000 oxen and 6,250 wagons, each of which could carry 7,000 pounds of merchandise. Leaving Atchison alone in the summer of 1858 were a total of 775 wagons, 1114 men, 7953 oxen, 1288 mules, and 3,730,955 pounds of merchandise. The largest train, which was owned by Hockaday, Burr and Company had 105 wagons, 225 men, 1000 oxen, and almost a half million pounds of freight.

During the Civil War period this road continued as an important freight route westward. Samuel Bowles, who traveled with House Speaker Colfax visiting from Fort Kearney in 1865, described the trains as being from one fourth

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29. Ibid., I, p. 160.
to one third of a mile long and as being endless. They were loaded with grain and supplies for the accumulating population in the Mountain States.\(^{31}\)

Another development that aided in deepening the ruts on the Oregon Trail was the Overland stage. These romantic carriages of which so much has been written rolled over this part of the trail during the late fifties and until 1866. Ordinarily a part of the cargo on these stages was the United States mail. As early as 1847 private concerns had carried mail to the Rockies, but in 1850 the Post Office Department contracted with Samuel Woodson of Independence, Missouri, for a monthly delivery of the mail from the Missouri River to Salt Lake City.\(^{32}\) He used pack mules and had great difficulty in delivering the mail. In 1856 Ben Holladay bid $450 for this contract; however, the contract was given to Hiram Kimball. His contract specified that wagons or carriages were to be used, but the Mormon War that broke out brought a cessation to this contract before any mail was hauled. In 1860 with the Civil War threatening the southern route to California, Majors, Russell, and Waddell brought their mail route, the Central, Overland, Califor-


ia, and Pike's Peak Express, over this northern road. In 1861 the first daily overland mail left St. Joseph (the terminus was later changed to Atchison) for Placerville, California. On March 21, 1862, Majors and Company sold their interest to Ben Holladay who had loaned them over $200,000 to keep going. This mail route was continued by Holladay until the summer of 1866, when the first transcontinental railroad was finished.

The stage line as operated by Majors and his successor, Holladay, was well-planned with stations where the horses were changed every 10 to 15 miles. Drivers usually changed every third station. Stops were for approximately 5 minutes with a thirty minute stop for meals and an average road speed of 10 mph. was the goal, though much greater speeds were often reached.

Frank Root, a stage messenger, tells of one trip down the Little Blue from Big Sandy to Thompson's in the fall of 1860. On this trip, a distance of 14 miles was covered in 52 minutes and this run, averaging over 16 miles per hour, was one of the fastest ever made.

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34. Leavenworth Conservative, June 2, 1860.
35. Frank Root, The Overland Stage, 1901, p. 19.
36. Ibid., p. 72.
Stable at Hollenberg Station where Pony Express and stagecoach horses were kept.

Same stable, looking northward.
tions at the stations were generally good. "The food at meal stations is more excellent than that of the hotels and restaurants on the Railroads west of Chicago." Root stated that along the Lower Little Blue in Jefferson County, Nebraska and Washington County, Kansas, the best meals were served. As this was, "the finest agricultural section on the entire line, eggs and chicken, nice cream for the coffee, with fresh butter and plenty of vegetables were a prominent feature of the everyday diet." This menu was enlarged with thousands of prairie chickens, wild turkeys, rabbits, deer and antelopes. These meals could be had for 50 cents or more.

However, there were stations where the fare was much simpler and the conditions were indescribably filthy. One of this type was located on Rock Creek. Frank Burton tells of it as he saw it in August of 1860 with numerous men, women, children, dogs, and lambs, "all fast in the arms of Morpheus or of a much jollier God." At this sta-

39. Conditions on the Western Division were admittedly worse.
tion they "made tea and found some milk which was not more than one quarter flies,"41 which they drank with a meal of cold scraps of mutton. Fortunately, this was not the rule although during certain seasons there was a monotony about the meals on all sections of the road.

Another development that was to add historic picturesqueness to this region was the Pony Express. This romantic, though short-lived, project had its eastern terminus at St. Joseph, Missouri. From this town it closely followed the St. Joseph Emigrant Road westward across northern Kansas to Marysville, thence across the Big Blue to Hollenberg where it struck the Little Blue. It followed northwest up the Little Blue to the divide where it crossed over the valley of the Platte to Ft. Kearney, and thence onward to Sacramento and the Pacific. This trail closely followed the one first taken by the Mormons in 1846, the Argonauts in 1849, and Albert S. Johnston in 1857.

Sitting astride the Pony Express Route was Hollenberg Station. This station had been built by Gerat H. Hollenberg early in 1857 and was one of the first, if not the first, houses built in Washington County. Sensing the advantages of a trading post on the Oregon road, Hollenberg had hauled lumber from Barrett's sawmill in Marshall

41. Ibid., p. 518.
County to build a store 24' long by 15' wide with later additions giving the building 3 rooms in front, three in the leanto and a full attic which was used as sleeping quarters. The lower rooms were first used as a trading post, tavern, and hostel, and Hollenberg or "Cottonwood" Station, situated as it was on a slope overlooking Cottonwood Creek, was a busy stopping place for outbound emigrants. It was also a regular mule-changing station for the stage company. Burton, in his Journal, writes that they passed Hollenberg Station at 6:00 P.M. August 8, 1860. Here they changed mules and took on two new passengers, a man and his "wife". 42

When the Pony Express began to operate in April of 1860 Hollenberg was made a station with the county's first post office, having George Perkins as the first postal clerk. 43 The census taken on the tenth of August of the same year lists ten persons as residing there. One of these was Johnny Mupsy of Pennsylvania, age 30, an express driver. 44 Another rider who later rode from Hollenberg to

42. Ibid., p. 517.

43. Taken from historic sketch in the old ranch house located one and one half miles northeast of Hanover, Kansas.

44. Photostatic copy of census found on walls of old Hollenberg ranch house.
Big Sandy, Nebraska, was Jimmy Clark.45

This old station which is located one half mile north and two miles east of Hanover is still standing as it was in 1860 and 1861. After it had ceased to be used as a trading post it was used as a private dwelling. Interest in its preservation resulted in its being created a historical monument and in 1941 a law was passed providing for the acquisition of approximately $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land and the building there. Three thousand dollars was appropriated by the Kansas Legislature for its restoration and improvement;46 the buildings were repaired, and it is now a public park. Howard R. Driggs, Secretary of the American Pioneer Trails Association, wrote in 1941 that

so far as I know there are along the Old Pony Express Trail only two other stations which might like the old Hollenberg Station, be said to have remained as they were in 1860-1861. These are one across the Platte from Gothenburg, Nebraska ... and the old terminal building at Sacramento. The ... one at Gothenburg covered with a canopy. On the Utah desert and in Nevada are remains of stations and stables ... None of all these relics of a heroic past are better preserved than the Old Hollenberg Station.47

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47. Letter from Howard R. Driggs to Kirke Mechem, Secretary of the Kansas Historical Society, dated April 30, 1941.
Gerat H. Hollenberg, the builder of Cottonwood Station, was a man of tremendous energy as well as one of uncontrollable restlessness. In 1849 he left Hanover, Germany for the gold fields of California. After three years he went to the mines of Australia and later to those of Peru. Early in 1854 he settled on the Black Vermillion near the site of Bigelow in Marshall County, and in 1857 he moved into Washington County where he later became influential in business and politics. In 1862 and again in 1866 he served in the State Legislature as the Representative from the sixteenth District. In 1864 he was commissioned a Captain and a Commander of the Second Brigade of the Kansas State Militia. He had become interested in real estate and acquired large holdings throughout the eastern part of the county and was also an early advocate of a railroad up the Little Blue. Recognizing the need for more settlers in the county he acted as immigration agent and was the one chiefly responsible for the settling of this region with a German-speaking population. The 1860 census referred to above shows that of the ten people living at

50. Ibid., 387.
Hollenberg Station seven of them were from Germany. In 1869 he donated land and plotted the town of Hanover, Kansas. Leaving the county in 1874 for a visit to Hanover, Germany, he died aboard the steamer "Bavaria" and was buried at sea, July 1, 1874.

51. Census data on Hollenberg Ranch House wall, Hanover, Kansas.
Hollenberg or Cottonwood Station, built in 1857, it is the oldest building in the county. Was used as a hostel, stagecoach and Pony Express station.
CHAPTER IV

LIFE IN EARLY WASHINGTON COUNTY, KANSAS

"There is not at this moment a town or village of whites in Nebraska or Kansas."¹ Thus wrote editor Hale in August of 1854. This is probably true for although thousands had crossed through Northeastern Kansas and more particularly Washington County, few if any had stopped.

In 1855 the Kansas Territorial Legislature meeting at Lecompton had attached all land west of Marshall to that county for judicial and military purposes. The boundaries of Washington Township, then a part of Marshall County, were defined in January, 1857. That year marks the beginning of the settlement of Washington County for, as has been stated, G.H. Hollenberg built a trading post on the Old Oregon Emigrant Road and about the same time James McNulty, who had come into the county in search of some stock that had strayed, was attracted by the county's beauty and selected a homestead on Mill Creek. These men seem to have been the first settlers on the land although there is some evidence that others were here ahead of them. C.W. Johnson, a member of a surveying party, tells of surveying the line between Kansas and Nebraska in 1854. He

states that after crossing the Little Blue, buffalo and elk were seen. They also "come across a few squatters cabins". They were informed that the "desert" lay beyond the Little Blue.\(^2\)

In 1858 numerous settlers came in. Among these were D.E. Ballard and George Pierce who both settled one and one half miles north of the site of Washington. They selected their property as a town site but abandoned it in 1860 in favor of the present town of Washington. In 1858 Rufus Darby, his sons, William and James Rezin, also settled in the southeastern part of the county near Ballard Falls. Finding that he had settled on school land, Darby moved to Mill Creek the same year. His neighbors on Mill Creek were Josiah and Daniel Blocker and their families, settlers who like himself had arrived from Maryland the same year. John and William Tarbox became the first settlers in the Little Blue Township in 1858 and S.F. Snider, who was to become the first probate judge, settled in Charleston Township about the same time. William Mercer built three cabins on Mercer Creek the same year.\(^3\)


\(^3\) Washington County Republican, July 14, 1876. This issue contains a history of the county by Dr. Charles Williamson, an early settler in the county.
The year 1859 was a period of considerable immigration into the county and among the many who came were: Jonathan Snider and S. Stonebreaker to Charleston Township; Peter and N. Eslinger, a Mr. Bowmaker and P. Giebar on Parson's Creek; a Mr. Brown and a Mr. Walker to Lincoln Township; Joel Snyder to Hollenberg; and Joe Enoch and W. Welch in Union. All of these were to be responsible in large measure for the development of various parts of the county. John Ferguson, a rather colorful native of Ireland, settled on Mill Creek in the extreme western part of Washington County in 1859. His homestead marked the farthest westward penetration of the whites to the end of that year.

The first election ever held within the present limits of Washington County was in 1858. There were 30 votes cast for Dr. J.P. Miller as Representative of the Sixth District to the Territorial Legislature. In April of 1859 George Pierce was elected Supervisor of the Township with D.E. Ballard as clerk and William Tarbox the treasurer.

On the second Monday of April in 1860 Washington County was organized and the following officials were elected. Commissioners, George Codwell, J. Malin and William Hof-

fhine; Clerk, David Ballard; Treasurer, M.G. Driskell; Sheriff, William Langsdale; Surveyor, James O'Neal; Attorney, Thomas Bowen; Superintendent of Public Instruction, John Hoffhine; Probate Judge, S.F. Snider; Assessor, William Mercer (disqualified) and Coroner, Charles Bruce. Rufus Darby had been appointed Justice of the Peace by the Territorial Governor in 1859. These were the county's first officials.

As there was no town, as such, within the county, the organization of the county created a need for a county seat. This led to a squabble about its location. Washington Town Company had been chartered by G. Pierce, Rezin Darby, M.H. Lott, D. Ballard, and J.W. Darby on September 5th, 1859. This organization was better able to influence the location of the county seat than any other group or person; however, they encountered opposition. Judge Snider was determined that the location should be at "Rogersville", a site four miles north of Washington on Snider's farm. Another group headed by James Darby and Ralph Ostrander was in favor of "West Union", a "paper town" on James McNulty's farm four miles west of Washington. The situation was such that

5. Ibid., p. 1056.

6. Mss. of charter and minutes of meeting located in the office of J.A. Maxwell, Washington, Kansas.
neither group could win. The Town Company offered to donate lots in Washington for various purposes. On the afternoon of the election day they influenced Snider so that he withdrew his choice and threw in seven votes for Washington and it became the county seat.\(^7\)

At the first meeting of the County Commissioners, the county was divided into Mill Creek and Washington Townships. In October of 1862 Clifton was formed and on December 5, 1868, Lincoln was added. The county was now divided into four equal-sized townships. Little Blue, Hanover, and Sherman were organized in 1870 and on July 2, 1870, Strawberry, Union, and Hollenberg were added until,\(^8\) by 1885, the county had been rearranged into 25 standard-sized townships.\(^9\)

The first meeting of the County Commissioners was held in the two-story log house which had been built by E. Woolbert. This building became known as the "Stockade" and was used until 1869 when it was destroyed by fire. The building put up by the county in 1871 to replace the Stockade was, in turn, burned on December 15, 1872. As the


fire was not discovered until it had made great headway, many valuable records were lost.\textsuperscript{10} Indications are that this latter fire was arson. George and John Shriner had gotten into the county office and were engaged in some rather shady real estate deals. They apparently used this method to cover their dealings.\textsuperscript{11}

The building that was destroyed in 1872 was replaced by a frame building which was used until 1886, when a large three story brick and stone structure was erected. With some alterations this served as the courthouse until 1932 when it was destroyed by a tornado. The corner stone for the present courthouse was laid March 11, 1933.\textsuperscript{12}

Immigration into Washington County was retarded somewhat by the Civil War so the population increased from 383 in 1860 to only 4,081 in 1870. However, the census of 1875 showed 8,621 and five years later there were 14,911 people residing here.\textsuperscript{13} There was a steady climb in the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{10. Andreas, Op. cit., p. 1056.}
  \item \textit{11. Interview with J.A. Maxwell, August 2, 1948. There are numerous conflicting ideas among the older residents concerning this. Some would involve G.H. Hollenberg who was a county commissioner. All questioned felt that there had been shady transactions involved.}
  \item \textit{12. Washington County Register, March 17, 1933.}
  \item \textit{13. Kansas State Board of Agriculture, Second Biennial Report, 1879-1880, p. 534.}
\end{itemize}
county's population after 1880. In 1885 it had reached 20,753 and in 1889 it was at 21,894. The highest point ever attained was in 1893 when the figure stood at 21,978. A gradual but steady decline began after this peak. The figure in 1912 was 20,014 and for 1922 it was 17,233. The 1940 census showed 15,741 or about the same number as had lived in the county in the early 80's. The 1948 census registered less than 14,000 residents in the county. 14

The First Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture lists several of the county's earliest post-offices. The oldest was Hollenberg or Cottonwood Station, established in 1859, with George Perkins as the first postmaster. Others were Clifton, started in 1862, with James Fox, postmaster; Joy Creek in Hollenberg township, with J. Palmer as postmaster; Strawberry, with Peter Gieber; Doane in Union Township, with John Green; Ballard's Falls, with Chockley Hollowell; and Donald in Lincoln Township, with J.B. Giles as postmaster. 15

The majority of the early settlers in Washington County were American born. The 1860 census shows 324 persons as native born and 59 who were foreign born. In 1870

14. These population statistics were taken from the State Board of Agriculture's Report for the year indicated.

there were 3,513 native and 568 foreign born.\textsuperscript{16} Five years later 6,982 of the 8,621 inhabitants were born in this country. Of the 1,639 foreign born, 621 had come from Germany, 370 from the British Isles, 217 from Scandinavia, 297 from British America and 118 from Southern Europe. Of the American-born immigrants to Washington County, 1,559 had come from Iowa, 1589 from Illinois, 523 from Missouri, 489 from Ohio, and 416 from Wisconsin.\textsuperscript{17} It is evident from these statistics that the present population is descended from settlers from the northern part of the country. We also note that there are few of Southern European ancestry here. The preponderance of the Republican Party in this county may be partially explained by the large number of settlers from the North.

A further study of the vital statistics reveals that the first death took place in May of 1859 when Daniel Sigmun of Missouri was found lying dead on the Old Mormon Trail three miles southeast of Washington. He had been stabbed and shot. He was discovered by E.B. Cook and W. Hemphill who were returning from the Republican where they had been building a ferry for a direct route from Atchison

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\item \textsuperscript{16} The Statistics of the Population of the United States, Ninth Census, 1870, (Washington, 1872), I, p. 310.
\item \textsuperscript{17} State Board of Agriculture, Fifth Annual Report, 1876, pp. 214-215.
\end{itemize}
to Denver. On the day that he was found a band of Otoe had been driven from Wildcat Creek where they had stolen some horses. They may have killed him, however, suspicion pointed to James McCarty who had sold out his claim and was on the trail the same day. McCarty was tried before Rufus Darby, he having just been appointed Justice of the Peace. A large crowd gathered and there were some who talked of lynching McCarty, but Darby released him on grounds of insufficient evidence.\(^{18}\) The murder of this man gave rise to a persistent and popular saying that Washington County was so healthy that they had to kill a man to start the first graveyard.

The early settlers in this county were subject to many hardships. All that they had was brought in by wagons or made on the spot; therefore, household furnishings were often scarce. As lumber was not plentiful, many of the first homes were built of earth or sod. A home of this type was usually a half dugout with sod covering the upper half. Blocks of wood or benches often served as chairs.


Herman Rea who knew McCarty personally says that this man's name was Aaron S. McCarty. Rea states that another man by the name of James Foster was also involved. There was much reason to believe that McCarty and Foster actually committed this murder as well as numerous other crimes. Interview with Herman Rea, September 20, 1948.
Mrs. Emma Bullimore came to Coleman Township when her father homesteaded in February of 1870. Their first home was a dugout such as has been mentioned. The floor of large flat stones was covered with homemade rugs. This provided a very comfortable home—the envy of all the neighbors. This is better understood when it is known that their door had the only doorknob (no latch string) and their window was the first glass pane in Coleman Township; but even so well appointed a dugout had its drawbacks, for on one rather rainy night a water-soaked wall fell out leaving the family exposed to the elements. After this and other dugouts had been replaced by a more substantial structure, the housing problems were not completely solved. Often, the only covering for the walls was newspaper and, as reading matter was sometimes scarce, the husband would spend his spare time reading around the walls. Whenever a page was upside down he presented an awkward and amusing picture as he contorted himself into a position suitable to read.

One of the last of these old homestead shacks was torn down in 1948. It was located one half mile west of the Dewey Church in Farmington Township. This building,

19. Interview with Mrs. Emma Bullimore, August 13, 1948.
the homestead of William Shaw, had been used as a poultry house for several years. Its destruction removed one of the last, if not the last, original homesteads in Washington County. 20

Although the soil was new, rich, and productive, weather conditions were sometimes unfavorable to the settler. The summer and fall of 1860 was such a time. Drought had almost completely ruined the crops as for sixteen months, from June 19, 1859 to November, 1860, scarcely enough rain had fallen to wet the earth to a depth of two inches. Many settlers had just arrived and had produced no crops and, of those who had been settled a year or so, very few had a surplus. John Ferguson who lived near the site of Haddam wrote in June of 1861, that it was a tremendous hard winter and if they had not gotten aid from the East a number would have starved, but he deplored the partiality displayed in the distribution of this aid. 21 Statistics given by G.H. Fairchild, Treasurer of the Kansas Relief Fund, show that Washington County received 42,000 pounds of supplies including food, feeds, and seeds. 22

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David Ballard, addressing the Kansas Historical Society in 1907, recalled the hard times of the early sixties with these words:

The summer and fall of 1860 were not exactly propitious for the squatter and there were few 'away out here in Kansas' in the spring of 1861 who had better clothes, than blue jeans, unless the Aid Society had contributed them out of the cast-off garments of the opulent East. But in blue jeans, I felt equal to the occasion, and mind you, they were blue, and not butternut.23

The abundance of wild game was an aid to survival at this time. Peter Gieber who settled in Strawberry Township early in 1861, stated that on his way out he met many people returning from this locality and from farther west. They told discouraging stories of conditions but he was determined not to go back so settled on Parson's Creek where he found buffalo, elk, and other game plentiful. It appears that some of these animals had moved in from the West to escape more serious conditions in that direction, for the last year that he saw them in this region was in 1863; nevertheless, they were a Godsend while the drought period existed.24

During the Civil War there was a ready market for


all grains produced in this region, but the end of the war and the stoppage of military travel over the western roads brought a drop in this market and prices slumped badly. John Ferguson reported a very good crop in 1863. In fact, he was able to keep two teams busy throughout the winter hauling grain to Fort Kearney, but by 1867 conditions were decidedly changed. He wrote that,

money is getting tight out here more so than it has ever been since I have been (here) and what we have to buy out of the stores is very high-for instances Caligos the poorest artical twenty and twenty five cents per yard.  

Coffee was $.40 per pound, tea $2.80 and everything else in proportion. "Wheat and corn there is not sale far at no price." Cattle were high but very few people had any at that early date.

Not only were unstable markets and droughts hard to overcome but at times there was the problem of too much water. The Little Blue and its tributaries often flooded the surrounding lowlands. There was such an occurrence in August and September of 1869 when a flood devastated the settlements along Mill Creek and the Little Blue. With the


The spelling is Ferguson's.

26. Ibid., p. 346.
water already at the then highest known point, an 1 1/4 inch rain fell. It rained continuously for 16 hours. The flood centered on the Little Blue, Mill, Rose and Coon Creeks. The flour mill of S.S. Penwell and the saw mill of J.R. Hollowell located on Mill Creek were washed away. There was no property left on thickly settled Rose Creek where water by actual measure stood at 36 feet where it had been only 10 feet in previous floods. Water came in a four foot wall on the Little Blue and rose 15 feet higher than ever known before. Dwellings, barns, livestock, crops, and feed stuffs were swept away in what was estimated as a $1,000,000 flood. The little towns of Jenkins Mill and Freeport near the site of Steele City were almost completely destroyed.27

Mrs. Harry Elder relates that her father, Frank Pursley, had brought cured meat from the East as he had come out to homestead near Mill Creek. Some of this he had traded for a wagon load of wheat. His wagon was at the mill at Washington the night the flood struck; therefore, it was lost. A normal 12 mile trip back up Mill Creek was over 30 miles due to the flood water. As they could get no more

27. The Little Blue, September 11, 1869. (Jenkins Mill, Nebraska.)
wheat they ate meat and potatoes until corn was ripe. 28

Along with the caprice and whims of the weather came the problem of insects. In 1874 and '75 there were plagues of grasshoppers—"Rocky Mountain Locust". They covered Montana, Dakota Territory, Wyoming, Colorado, Nebraska, and Kansas and did damage in Texas, New Mexico, and Missouri. Washington County, Kansas appears to have been particularly hard hit considering that this region, in general, suffered a relatively mild invasion.

The grasshoppers came as a black cloud from the northwest and the sound has been described as being like a thunder storm. Once they settled down nothing was left before them. Mrs. Eliza Rust remembers that they quickly ate a five acre orchard. Her favorite peach tree she covered with a bed tick and the "Colorado Devils" ate the tick also. 29 Many families left the county and numerous schools that had been in operation were closed from a lack of children.

Thus, life in the county proved very different to what had been expected before homesteading here and not a few went back. Mrs. Alice Palmer who was eight years old


29. Interview with Eliza Rust, April 2, 1948.
when her father came in 1875 recalls they were "awfully poor, all were, but very happy." Food was sometimes scarce and the variety was often limited. Barrels of sorghum were made and this they ate with cornbread, cornbread which was made without milk or eggs. She mused, "Somehow, I don't care for sorghum". Conditions were alleviated somewhat when an older brother went back to Missouri and earned $20 per month. This enabled the family to live and hold on under pioneer conditions.

Mrs. Palmer's story is the story of large numbers who came to open up this new region. Those who were hardy and had courage remained. They prospered in the good years and existed in the poor ones and so by one means or another added to their resources as the county developed.

In addition to these hardships mentioned, Indians were a threat at times. The evidence is that no white person was ever killed by Indians within the limits of Washington County. Yet, their actions were such as to keep the settlers in fear, which on one occasion caused a white person to be killed.

The first Indian trouble in this region came in 1835.

30. Interview with Mrs. Alice Palmer, August 23, 1947.
31. Ibid.
when a 15 year old Indian girl was stolen by a band of Sioux and murdered near Hollenberg Crossing on the Vermillion in Marshall County. She had been living with her sister, the squaw wife of a French trapper named Changreau, the first settler on the Vermillion. This was followed by the massacre of a group of Overland travelers by the Pawnee near Republic City in 1857. However, it was only after the settlers had advanced to the Republican and the troops were removed for Civil War service that the Indians really became a menace. Beginning in 1861 when approximately 6,000 or 7,000 Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Kiowa met and encamped about 40 miles west of the county line there were recurring threats.

The Indian that the settler saw most often was the Otoe. As his reservation extended into the county, he was often seen going to and from the hunting grounds. In June, 1861, the Otoe came down from the Northeast for a big hunt on Spilman Creek. The Cheyenne sent 300-400 warriors to drive them out. Though the Otoe had guns they were forced to retreat but not without scalps, ears, and other articles as trophies.

Peter Gieber says that in 1861 he was surrounded by

33. Ibid., p. 52.
Indians who, though generally peaceable, were more or less troublesome at all times due to their pilfering and quarrelsome habits. The disappearance of the buffalo in 1863 also marked the disappearance of the Indian from the Parson's Creek region.  

In the spring of 1864, a band of Cheyenne came down Mill Creek from the Republican. They were on the warpath against the Otoe and were following them to their villages. They plundered the home of John Ferguson, raped Mrs. Canfil and captured Rufus Darby. Darby was released a few hours later when the settlers attacked the Indians. Wherever this band took property, they left articles such as buffalo meat evidently as pay for the goods taken. They appeared to avoid unduly antagonizing the settlers.

In August of the same year other bands of Cheyenne, Arapaho, and possibly some Sioux appeared along the Little Blue in Southern Nebraska. At Oak Grove ten of the Eubank's family were murdered. Six others were killed in the same locality and Laura Roper was carried into captivity. All the settlers in Washington County fled into Marysville and


Clay Center for protection. The militia was organized with Rufus Darby as chairman and G.H. Hollenberg, the treasurer. This organization succeeded in driving the Indians toward the Republican. The soldiers plundered almost as badly as the Indians. They ate the settlers chickens, pigs, etc., until it became a question as to who was least desireable, Indian or militiaman.

The following year Washington County was again excited by Indian depredations in Thayer County, Nebraska, and again in 1869 Washington County settlers were called upon to furnish horses and equipment to be used against the Indians who had engaged in the White Rock Massacres. At the same time a welcome was extended to refugees who had entered the county from the west and excitement ran extremely high as these newcomers told of the horrors of the massacre.

That the Indian indirectly caused a death is shown in an incident that occurred on Parson's Creek. A young


Garfield cites the Marysville, Kansas, Enterprise, for August 13, 1864.


girl who had gotten lost while looking for some cows wandered to a neighbor's cabin. His barking dog made him fear wolves or Indians so he opened the door and fired his gun into the darkness. The next morning he found the body of the girl a few rods from his door.\footnote{Ibid., March 25, 1869.}

John Ferguson's letter written in 1864 is an indication of the trouble that the Indians caused the early settler in the county:

Fort Desmoin Iowa  September 30th 64

Frein[d] Cephas

I once more write you a few lines to let you know of our whereabouts I presume you have heard of the indian desperations on the little Blue in Kansas and Neberasky that is the cause of me being in Iowa I left Kansas about the first of this month and it is going to pretty near break me up I had forty acers of first rate corn besides other crops in proportion and had to leave the hoal and come out heare and have to work for to pay for wintering my stock what I have left I think it is pretty tough I think it strange that goverment wont protect settlers from those Indians the Indians has to Masacre four, or five hundred whites before the\footnote{Ibid., March 25, 1869.} will do anything with them about one half of the Men that went into the service from North Western Kansas went in with the expectation of being plased on the fronteer to protect it and instead of that the\footnote{Ibid., March 25, 1869.} have been sent down to Arkansas and Mississipia and I am afraid that Lincoln is going to loose a good many votes this fall on account of it but Kansas will go Lincoln and no mistake but where I am now I have got into a nest of copperheads I loose my vote here but I am going to do all
I can for Lincoln if you get this in time to send me before election the report of the congressional committee on the army of the Potomic why [Gen. George B.] McClellan was removed, How to prosecute and how to end the war speach by General Butler those or any other I want to convince some of those McClelland men that he isent what they think he is I cant do any thing at the balat Box but I am going to do all I can every other way Well Cephas I expect to stay here to Spring I am going back to Kansas as soon as those Indians is drove out and its safe to stay there this trip has been over a thousand Dolars dammage to me my neighbour-hood in Kansas was growing and improving fast this summer we had succeed in getting a post office establishd within one mile of my house and I sussseed in getting it named Haddam so I expect to live in Haddam when I go back to Kansas

the crops throught the west is verry light this season on account of dry weather My family is well give My best respects to your wife and Martha & Cynthia

Please write soon to your Old Friend

John Ferguson

Direct to Fort Desmoins

Iowa for me 41

Washington County is and always has been primarily an agricultural county. After building living quarters the first task of the early settlers was to get the land into production. The early impression being that only the bottom land was productive, the first settlers established

themselves along the creeks, broke sod, and let their livestock forage on the uplands. Although misinformed concerning the uplands they were not mistaken about the fertility of the bottoms for these produced extravagantly. Ground along the Little Blue that had been broken but never plowed produced 50 bushels of corn per acre in 1869.

J.R. Hollowell, who came to the county in 1860, reported that in 1861 twenty-five acres of corn on new land produced 25 bushels to the acre. A neighbor's corn on "old land" produced 50-75 bushels. Hollowell's spring wheat averaged 25 bushels in 1862 and by 1872 he, with most other farmers in this locality, produced 75 bushels of corn, 40 to 80 bushels of oats and 26 bushels of wheat per acre. In addition to grain, an increasing number of sheep and cattle were being raised with good results.42

Corn soon became the chief crop planted. In 1872 there were only 12,482 acres planted, but by 1877 Washington ranked third in the state in total acreage of all crops and first in corn with 90,095 acres of that crop being produced. Yet large amounts of wheat were also being raised for in 1875 this was the third ranking county in the production of that commodity.43 A broadside advertisement


took advantage of this production to boost that this was "The Banner Corn County of the West." Yet only a small amount of this 91,000 acre corn crop was being shipped out as it was being fed to livestock.

Other crops were being planted along with the corn, wheat, and oats and many orchards were being set out. In the spring of 1866, E.B. Cook set out 130 apples and 30 peach trees. The peaches froze down the first winter but were replanted and produced some 45 bushels of fruit in 1872. Twenty bushels were gathered from the apple trees five years after planting. The State Board of Agriculture in 1885 reported 69,470 fruit trees in the county. Other crops harvested were flax, sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, buckwheat, barley, rye, sorghum, hemp, tobacco, broom corn, millet, timothy, clover, orchard, blue and prairie grass. Alfalfa, the chief source of hay at the present time, was not listed until the beginning of this century.

The growth of population and the improvement of the property resulted in an increase in land prices. In the late fifties and the sixties land could be homesteaded or

44. "Handbill" by Groody and Emmons, real estate agents, Washington, Kansas. This article is located in the Kansas Historical Library, Topeka, Kansas.

preempted at little cost. By 1879 the price of grazing land was from $2 to $3.50 per acre while school and railroad land could be had for from $5.00 to $8.00 with improved farms somewhat higher. One half section, described as "highly" improved was listed at $5,000. \textsuperscript{46} In 1888, land could be had for $10 to $30 per acre with raw land at $10 to $20. \textsuperscript{47}

It has been stated that farming was the chief industry in the county, yet other types of work were followed to a greater or lesser degree. Most of these occupations such as stores, mills and shops (concerned chiefly with supplying the farmers' needs) grew up as the need arose. The early settler often found the prices of manufactured goods too great so he made the necessary articles himself or had them handmade within the county. In 1858, the first trading post was established. It was built by G.H. Hollenberg and located in Hanover Township on the Old Immigration Road. Other stores were later opened throughout the county but these were of only local importance until the coming of the railroads.

Much more important than the stores were the mills

\textsuperscript{46} "Handbill" Groody and Emmons, August 15, 1879.

\textsuperscript{47} Fifth Reunion Bulletin, 1888, Located in the Kansas Historical Library, Topeka, Kansas.
built along the streams. The first of these was a flour mill built in 1865 near Washington on the south side of Mill Creek. In 1869 another was built one mile northeast of Washington but it was destroyed by a flood the same year but, by 1878, there were at least four sawmills and six flour mills throughout the county, most of which were along Mill Creek and the Little Blue. Reports to the State Board of Agriculture in 1876 show that Mill Creek's motive power was fully employed three fifths of the year. Washington boasted two water saw mills, two water flour mills, one power flour mill, one power saw mill, as well as one cheese and one furniture factory. Meanwhile, Hanover could exclaim over a water power flour mill as well as a pottery, a brewery, and a brick factory. Numerous brick kiln were located throughout the county. Robert Lichtenberger recalls cutting wood to fire the brick used in the courthouse erected in 1886. This kiln was located southeast of Washington on Mill Creek. Many of these kiln still remain. One such stands in Coleman Township and

49. Kansas State Board of Agriculture, First Biennial Report, 1877-78, p. 139.
is in relatively good repair.

Throughout the eighties the quarrying of limestone was an important business in the eastern part of the county. Three quarries were opened near Hanover, three south of Hollenberg, two on Spring and one on Joy Creek. The products of these quarries were used both for consumption within and without the county. Great amounts were shipped to Hastings, Nebraska.52

Other products of the county were cigars, wagons, (chiefly rebuilding) and barrels but these were local products and had little importance in trade. In the late eighties Dr. Charles Williamson introduced the silkworm to Kansas and S. Salvany experimented with the production of silk. Although some silk was produced it was found unprofitable and the project was abandoned.53

Many of the early pioneers plastered their homes with home-produced gypsum plaster. An abundance of gypsum was found in the county yet only a small amount was produced commercially. However, a factory was located in Blue Rapids

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53. A U.S. Flag made from this silk as well as some raw yarn may be seen in the Kansas Historical Museum. An old shuttle is in the possession of Margaret Barley, daughter of Dr. Williamson and former editor of the Washington County Register.
in Marshall County as early as 1872.

Numerous shallow coal mines were opened throughout the county. An advertisement in the Western Observer in 1869 offered any amount for sale delivered or at the mine on Bowman Creek, (Haddam Township). In Coleman and Mill Creek Townships some of these old pits and holes are still evident although none of them have been in production for approximately 50 years or longer. The coal found was of very poor quality as it contained a large amount of sulphur; nevertheless, it was often used to heat the county schools. It was then a common practice for certain schools to fumigate for contagious diseases and parasites. This practice was hardly necessary in those districts that used the sulphurous coal inasmuch as they underwent continuous, if unintentional, fumigation.

So determined were the citizens of the county to get industries here that in 1880 they formed an organization called the "Washington County Immigration Society" for the purpose of interesting mills, businesses, and people to come into the county. Members were to report on the land, stock, streams, and other resources available. Very little

54. The Western Observer, July 15, 1869.

resulted from this beyond a natural increase in the county's population.

The increase in population as well as the general improvement of the county had been rather slow and retarded until the completion of the Central Branch Railroad to Waterville in Marshall County in 1869. After that event homesteaders began to come in on the trains and the population increased from less than 4,000 in 1870 to over 8,000 in 1872. The two trains daily from Atchison to Waterville had brought many of these new citizens to Washington County. 56 The first railroad to enter the county was the St. Joseph and Denver City. It was extended to Hanover in 1871 and crossed the northeast corner of the county in 1872. Stations were established at Hollenberg and Hanover. The southern part of the county was served in 1876-78 when the Missouri Pacific Central Branch established stations at Barnes, Greenleaf, Linn, Palmer, and Clifton with a spur line to Washington. In 1884 the Burlington was extended across the county with stations at Laham, Gerardy, Hanover, Emmons, Washington, Morrowville, and Haddam. 57

Previous to the entrance of the railroads all freight had been transported in wagons. Their coming did not com-

56. The Western Observer, August 5, 1869.
pletely do away with this type of transportation, yet most of the long distance hauling was done by trains. Of the earliest roads that the wagons traveled, little can be definitely determined. Numerous roads records were destroyed by the courthouse fire in 1872. It is known that they were ungraded, rutted out, and poorly bridged. At a meeting of the County Commissioners in July of 1869, a number of roads were located but no taxes were levied to build much needed bridges. 58

The official record of the roads begins in 1870 when the Board of Commissioners required the Surveyor to replace the records destroyed by the fire of March 31, 1870. The following roads were located as the main passageways through the county. Road Number One ran southeast from Washington to the county line near Waterville. Road Number Three ran west from Washington to Blocker, Haddam, and westward out of the county. Number Four ran southeast in a diagonal direction to the southeast corner of the county where it joined the Manhattan Road. Number Five connected Hanover and Washington. With the exception of its crossing the sections diagonally this road followed the same general route as the present County Road between those towns. Number Six, the Peach Creek and Washington

58. The Western Observer, July 15, 1869.
Road, followed the section lines south from Washington to Palmer and on southward to Clay Center. Although this road had been used for some time, this is its first official recognition. Many other roads were later established giving access to all parts of the county as well as providing outlets into other territories; yet, much of the traveling did not follow established roads but followed the convenience and inclination of the traveler.

One of the busiest of the early roads was that from Hanover to Washington and westward to Haddam. It followed a course north of Mill Creek and the other small creeks were forded or spanned by crude log bridges. This road was used as a stage road for the Kansas, Nebraska, and Denver Stage Line. Herman Rea recalls that in 1874 his father, Levi Rea, bought the stage station two miles northeast of Haddam. At that time the stage came from Hanover, meeting a schedule at Washington, Rea's Station, Belleville, Scandia, and other towns toward Denver and was to continue in operation until 1879 when the government's mail contract was let out to short buckboard runs. E.N. Morrill, later governor of Kansas, was one stage superintendent who often stopped and ate at Rea's Station. Tommie Dodd was the

last stage driver to work on this section. 60

By 1884, parts of this road had fallen into disuse and the movement was toward roads built along section lines. As more fence was built this became more and more customary until in the 1890's when most new roads ran on section lines. 61

That the early citizen of Washington County was interested in the education of his children is illustrated by the election of a County Superintendent in the first election and by his energy in building and providing for schools. Many of these early citizens were from the older states so they knew the advantages of schools; therefore, it is not surprising to find them developing early.

The County's first school was organized in Washington in 1861 with an enrollment of 25 and it was taught by Miss Agnes Hollowell. 62 Only 25 years later a building large enough to accommodate 500 children replaced this early structure; yet, on the open prairies schooling was often carried on under extreme handicaps. Rosella Haney, who taught a school in the southwestern part of the county in the early sixties, related that the schoolhouse was

60. Interview with Herman Rea, August 13, 1948.
61. Interview with Herman Rea, August 13, 1948.
built of cottonwood logs, partly smoothed off to avoid splinters and the seats (wooden chairs with peg legs and no backs) were similar to those used in the homes. The first term lasted only three months and as there were no taxes the salary consisted of what the people gave, which happened to be eight dollars per month. Mrs. Elder recalls that she did not start to school until she was eight years of age as the school had closed the year before due to many settler's leaving the county because of the grasshopper infestation. At this time, 1878, Pursley School was a dugout and snakes, rats, ground squirrels, and other animals that sought the room's warmth could be seen from time to time. The dull, lazy monotony of the schoolroom was occasionally relieved as clods rattled down bringing a welcome diversion to the 12 to 15 students usually in attendance there.

By 1865 ten school districts had been organized over the county with a total enrollment of 107. The length of the school term averaged about three and one half months and the teachers were paid a total of $390. In 1870 the number of districts had risen to 56, with 21 schoolhouses and 648 children enrolled. The total value of the property had

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64. Interview with Mrs. Addie Elder, August 3, 1947.
risen to $12,449 and the teachers were paid a total of $1,895. In 1878, there were 110 school districts and one hundred school houses, six of which were of log, 77 of frame, and 17 of brick construction. Enrollment had arisen to 2,908 and the teachers' salaries averaged $25 and $30 per month for women and men teachers respectively. The number of organized districts reached a peak of 150 in 1892 when a trend toward consolidation into larger units began.

In order to improve the quality of teaching the Washington County Teacher's Institute was established. The first Institute was held in Washington June 15-17, 1869, under the direction of the Rev. John Palmer, County Superintendent. Of the three speakers engaged, Dr. C.W. Walker, formerly a seminary professor, was the principal one. Among his topics were these: "What is your Aim" and "The March of Mind".

Years later many of the county's teachers were educated at the Friend's Academy, the county's nearest approach to an institution of higher learning. This school was founded in 1888 by the Friend's Church in a six acre park one half mile north of Washington with an enrollment of ten


66. The Western Observer, May 27, 1869 - an announcement.
for the first term. B.L. Rust, now of Topeka, was the first student there, having arrived an hour sooner than anyone else. E. Henderson and a Miss Watson were the first teachers, while a Reverend Jackson was the first president. 67

In 1890, seventy pupils were enrolled in the grammar, intermediate, and academic departments. The faculty at this time was William Pidgeon, principal, and Maggie Core, assistant. 68

In 1892-93 the enrollment reached 150 and it boasted of being the only college or academy within 80 miles. It owned over $20,000 worth of property, and offered courses in mathematics, language, elocution, music, art, and business, with special emphasis on normal training; but the tuition of from $23.40 to $30 per year was not sufficient to cover the cost and the growth of the public high schools made inroads into the student body, therefore, the officials were faced with insurmountable difficulties. In June, 1902, the Academy was transferred to the Baptist Church and it became known as the Washington Academy. Three years later it was disbanded and the proceeds from the buildings were turned over to Public School District Number One. 69

67. Interview with B.L. Rust, September 1, 1948.

68. Kansas Department of Public Instruction, Seventh Biennial Report, 1889-1890, pp. 159-160.

69. The Washington County Register, July 12, 1935.
Not only did the early settler establish schools for their mental growth but he organized churches to provide for his moral and spiritual development. Although early records are incomplete we do know that the first religious services in the county were held in Washington in 1860 by Elders Hartford and Robertson of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The meeting was held in a log cabin on a farm owned by John Penwell. These "Circuit Riders" continued to preach here from time to time thereafter. 70

Following this early beginning other meeting places were established over the county and John Ferguson was able to write in 1863 that a Sunday School had been started about 15 miles from him and that there was a preaching service every two weeks only eight miles away. He did not give the denomination sponsoring it nor the type of meeting place but it was the common practice to use the school building, where such existed—a practice which was to persist even up until the time of the First World War.

It is difficult to determine where and when the first church was erected. In 1866, the Roman Catholics built a large frame church three miles north of Clifton. It was later destroyed by lightning and was never replaced al-

70. Washington Weekly Republican, July 14, 1876. From a Washington County History written by Dr. Charles Williamson.
though the churchyard has continued to be used as a burial ground. This church appears to be the first in the county.

Various religious organizations sprang up over the county as it was developed. The figures available show that in 1876 the Roman Catholic had at least 1,200 members, five organizations, and two church buildings. The Baptist had six organizations and 239 members, and the Methodist listed 17 organizations with 297 members.71 Ten years later the largest religious groups in the county were the Roman Catholics with 2,023 members, the Methodist Episcopal with 940, and the Lutheran with a membership of 378.72

Religious services were usually well attended as they afforded opportunities to visit with the neighbors. This was especially true of "protracted meetings" or revivals. People came great distances in ox wagons, on horseback, or on foot. Wagons full of youngsters asleep in straw beds surrounded the meeting place, a schoolhouse or "brush arbor". Nor were the services always quietly formal for the early pioneer was not one to sit idly by when someone else was enjoying himself. These revivals were often concluded with the organization of a church or Sunday School and some-


times the minister would marry couples who had awaited his arrival. Such an incident took place at the Blocker schoolhouse about 1875. The Minister, a Reverend Griffith from Concordia, asked for the couples who wanted to marry to come forward. One of the group who came was a young lady who during the meeting had done much shouting and fainting as she had been "blessed". Few would deny that the meeting had been a blessing to her.  

The early settler had little time for recreation such as we know it and as money was scarce he could hardly hope to buy it had that been possible; therefore, he was forced to make his own. His recreation consisted mainly of visiting with his neighbors. A common practice was for a family to "go home" with a neighbor from church. Meals, though usually simple, were ample and the visiting families often helped out by bringing "along something to eat". Often the evenings were spent by entire families visiting back and forth or perhaps the entire neighborhood would "drop in" on a family who had been previously chosen and the evening would then be spent in games in which almost all ages took part. Frank Pursley's home with its big family of girls and boys was reputedly a favorite place for this type of recreation.

73. Interview with Mrs. Addie Pursley Elder, August 3, 1947.
of entertainment. For those young in body and spirit there were numerous private dances. Another favorite pastime in winter was ice skating and many warm romances were begun on icy nights.

Patriotic and national holidays were observed religiously and were the occasion for much celebration. A parade was usually the first activity. That is, the first mass activity for often the first individual or group act was to imbibe a little of the "spirit" provided for the occasion. After a parade there were impassioned pleas for more patriotism given by a speaker secured especially for his ability to "make a speech". Picnic dinners were an enjoyable feature of these events.

For the literary-minded there were literary societies such as the "Jolly Owls" in Farmington township. These groups stressed mental culture through debates, spelling bees, book reviews and other activity of this nature.

By the late eighties the citizenry of Washington County was very well established and the period of the pioneer had passed. The dugouts and frame shacks had been replaced by more substantial dwellings. Substantial yields from farm crops were being had from the upland prairie lands. The cultivation of these acres was the chief industrial interest of the county. The educational, spiritual, and social needs of the citizenry were being attended. The
methods of attention to these needs had become fixed and staid. The period of rapid development and marked change had passed and Washington County had become of age.
CHAPTER V

THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF HOLLENBERG, KANSAS

The city of Hollenberg is located in Franklin Township and is not to be confused with Hollenberg or Cottonwood Ranch, G.H. Hollenberg's old home. Hollenberg Ranch is located two and one half northeast of Hanover, whereas Hollenberg is located 13 miles northwest of that town. Hollenberg Ranch was on the old Oregon Immigration Road while Hollenberg is three miles west of that old trail. The various township re-organizations have placed Hollenberg in Hanover, Hollenberg, and Franklin townships respectively at different times in its development.

First mention of settlement in this locality was made in 1869 when the Little Blue reported a great many new houses going up on the prairie between Joy Creek and Jenkins Mills, now Steele City, Nebraska. From this item, we are led to believe that the land along the Little Blue as well as the smaller creeks had been taken prior to this time. Little can be determined of those who came before 1870, but among the earliest into this part of the county were: William Joy, Joe and Caroline Martin, J. Miller and his family of 13 children, Joel Snider, P. Perdeaux, S. Rinehart, 

1. The Little Blue, Jenkins Mills, Nebraska, Dec. 18, 1869.
Captain Anthony Vought, H. Talcott, J.K. Brown, Hiram Reddick, Leonard Hatter, James V. Hammon, Jesse Elliott, Charles Fuller and J.A. Clapp.2

Hollenberg is located on land that was part of James Hammon and Jesse Elliott's homesteads. Hammon received a patent to the northwest quarter of section nine in January, 1870, and sold the same to J.A. Clapp in November of the same year. In May of 1872, Clapp sold this land to G.H. Hollenberg. The land directly west of the Hammon claim was homesteaded by Jesse Elliott who received his patent in 1871 but sold it to Mr. Hollenberg the same year.3

Hollenberg, who owned various other tracts along the Little Blue, acquired these claims in anticipation of the building of the St. Joseph and Denver City Railroad and, in 1872, he agreed to give 120 acres of land to the Northern Kansas land and Town Company upon completion of a depot at Hollenberg. As a result of this gift the settlers, town company, and the railroad decided to call the town Hollenberg. His interest in the town is further indicated by clauses in his will in which he promised 400 dollars to the first church to be built there. Six hundred was also to be

2. Interview with Elmer Talcott, June 26, 1948.

given for the building of a hall to be called "Hollenberg Hall". The church was to be built within one year and the hall within two years after the will was opened but neither of these provisions was met.\(^4\)

With the railroad completed through this point and a depot assured, Hollenberg built a general merchandise store which he soon turned over to R.T. Kerr, acting postmaster after 1872. About the same time Charles Fuller operated a grocery store and saloon as well as served as the justice of the peace. A little later Jesse Elliot built the Otoe House, the town's first hotel or boarding house. This was followed by a depot southwest of the stockyards. Considerable other building followed and Hollenberg began to flourish. Although no figures are available on the population of the village, the township had 427 people in 1875.

In 1881 S.F. Benson and A.@. Hobbs began to operate which had been built on the Little Blue one mile south of town at a cost of $8000. By this time Hollenberg had over 100 population and contained two general stores, one hardware store, one drug store, two blacksmith shops, a grain elevator, one agricultural implement depot, one hotel and one

\(^4\) Hanover Democrat, Hanover, Kansas, Dec. 7, 1937. Taken from Hollenberg's papers located in the Thiele safe in Washington, Kansas.
boarding house. The Ohio House was opened in 1882. Among the business men at this time were A.C. Herring, John Mann, J.K. Brown, a Mr. McColleny and R.T. Kerr.\textsuperscript{5}

The year 1889 was eventful in Hollenberg for the population reached a peak of 212 while that of Franklin Township went to 669,\textsuperscript{6} and Prairie Schooners were still passing through on their way westward.\textsuperscript{7} The population fluctuated, however, for when a case of smallpox was reported in the summer of 1889 sixty people rushed out of town and only the most courageous of the farmers came in so fearful were they of the disease. Vaccinations were promptly given and fortunately no one died, but one of the sixty who had left brought a case of mumps back into town when she returned so that an epidemic of mumps followed. All this had been preceded by a tornado which had damaged the town considerably.\textsuperscript{8} Yet, through it all, Hollenberg made marked progress in the eighties and the following business establishments were in operation in 1889: two hotels, one livery

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\textsuperscript{6} Kansas State Board of Agriculture, \textit{Seventh Biennial Report, 1889-1890}, p. 264.
\textsuperscript{7} The Hollenberg Record, Hollenberg, Kansas. June 14, 1889.
\textsuperscript{8} \textit{Ibid.}, August 16, 1889.
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and harness shop, two churches, one G.A.R., I.O.O.F.,
Women's Relief Corps, Daughter of Rebecca, newspaper, two
implement depots, two lawyers, two doctors, a postoffice,
a Soldiers Armory, graded school, three general stores,
two hardware stores, one dress and millinery making establish-
ment, two grain and livestock dealers, two money lenders,
an insurance and real estate dealer, two wagon dealers,
two blacksmith shops, two carpet weavers, a grain
elevator, and one flouring mill. 9

Although it is difficult to determine how much
business actually was transacted, advertisements from time
to time are an indication as to the amount and type of
business carried on. C.E. Williamson, editor of the town's
newspaper, advertised as having money to lend and also as
an Attorney-at-law. Coleman and Garle advertised the pro-
ducts of the water-powered Hollenberg Flour Mill one and a
half miles south of town. C.E. Miller operated the eleva-
tor and dealt in grain and lumber while A.B. Prouty handled
hardware. James Algeo opened a "new" flour store and M.
Hilts was the proprietor of the National House where a good
bed could be had for one dollar per day. In addition, he
operated Hilts and Company and sold "dry goods, tinware, and
groceries." Here fancy shirts could be had for one dollar,

9. Ibid., May 4, 1889.
bustles for 10-15 cents, corsets for fifty cents and mens' wool mittens for twenty five cents. If the customer wanted groceries eleven pounds of sugar, eighteen pounds of prunes, four pounds of green coffee, or twenty-two bars of laundry soap could be had for one dollar. A bridle was from seventy-five cents to one dollar whereas a "good" fry pan cost only 15 to 25 cents. For those who used the "weed" a spittoon only amounted to twenty-five cents and the "best quality" denim could be had for seventy-five cents. For the young blade in need of a pair of Sunday pants a pair "worth $5.00" only amounted to two dollars.  

Hollenberg markets for January 1889 listed wheat at one dollar per bushel, corn at nineteen, oats at sixteen, rye at thirty-five, and potatoes at thirty cents a bushel. Beans were five and butter was twelve cents per pound, eggs were a penny a piece and cheese was twelve and one-half cents a pound. Hay was three dollars per ton, hogs four dollars and one-half per hundred and flour one dollar and thirty-five cents a sack.

The paper carrying these advertisements and this information was a boost to the young town. A five column four page paper, it was published weekly from October 1888 until October 19, 1889, under the title "The Record", 11 and

10. Ibid., January 19, 1889.
11. Ibid., October 19, 1889.
was edited and published by Charles Williamson, son of the county's first doctor and historian. Williamson used the basement of Prouty's store as news-office and print shop as well as headquarters for his legal and financial dealings. This paper lasting for almost a year did yeoman service in advertising the little town overlooking the valley of the Little Blue.

Hollenberg had two doctors during this period. One of them, Dr. S.S. Welch, who advertised as a physician and surgeon, had an office and residence built at the corner of Main and Church Street, now the home of Mr. Ernest Funke. The other, "Doctor" Joseph (Joe) Hoxi advertised as a Homeopathic. Hoxi, with evidently little or no formal medical education relied on natural or "Indian" remedies for his cures. Being given to occasional intemperance he was not the type to inspire too much confidence as he walked down the street with his office, medicine, and equipment stuffed into three or four cigar boxes and tucked under his arm. He delighted to tell of the operations he had performed. In one of these he told of removing the stomach of a man suffering from ulcers and in its place he had successfully inserted a sheep's stomach. The only drawback was that ever afterward the man had a "terrible Hankering for green grass". 12

The erection of a new iron bridge across the Little Blue in 1889 was responsible for a new burst of business in Hollenberg. Before the building of this bridge, traffic had crossed a rather unsafe, stone abutted structure that had been built in 1881. The completion of the new bridge brought glowing, though perhaps, short-lived prosperity to the town.\(^\text{13}\)

The prosperity peak of 1889 was followed by a period of business decline. By 1895 the population of Hollenberg had fallen to 169 whereas the township had 681 and two years later the town had only 121 but the township still retained 681. In 1900 the figures were 174 and 603 respectively. During the latter part of the decade the town also suffered from fires which did considerable damage for on July 4, 1896 a row of buildings on the east side of the main street (Fuller) were burned and in November of 1899 an elevator operated by Charles Whitbeck was also destroyed.\(^\text{14}\)

These buildings were not rebuilt and the basements are still evident. However, several new residences as well as certain business buildings were erected during the late nineties and early 1900's. The large frame building known as the "Hyland Building" was built as was also the "Moss

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Brother's State Bank. This bank, with the name changed to the Hollenberg State Bank in 1909, operated until 1934. With the building of these buildings commercial construction ceased and there have been no new residences built since 1906 when the population was 161.

The population of the village remained fairly constant from 1910 to 1920. Yet the development of the automobile and the construction of better roads was having a marked effect on its business life as more and more trade moved toward the larger centers. R.W. Lichtenberger relates that in the early days he and his family made a wagon trip to Washington annually. At that time he bought clothing and other provisions for the family whereas the rest of the year he traded in Hollenberg. But with the coming of the automobile, he and his neighbors traded more and more frequently in larger towns. Business men in Hollenberg grew cautious of any unnecessary investments. This resulted in further stagnation and slowing down of business.

This trend away from Hollenberg continued throughout the twenties. The general decline of population throughout the county had its counterpart in Hollenberg and in Franklin township. Partly to reverse this movement but chiefly to combat what were considered exorbitant prices certain cooperatives were established. The first, the Hollenberg Cooperative Mercantile Company, was organized in 1920 with
C.C. Asch, J.T. Lewis, C.W. Henke, Joseph Wathor and T.N. Reiber as directors. This concern owned chattels amounting to $11,000 and had a capital stock of $25,000 but it lasted only a few years before it became a private business.

Another cooperative enterprise was the Kansas Oil and Supply Company, chartered in April of 1928 with L.H. Wilsey, M.J. Wilsey, W.E. Stewart, C. Jones, and Clyde Dull as directors. W.E. Stewart operated this fuel and gas business until 1940 when Tom Baumfalk took over the management. Baumfalk continued to operate it until 1946 when he bought it and it became a private enterprise.

The last organization of this sort came in October of 1936 when the Hollenberg Electric Association was formed with George Lewis, Geo. Parks, Roy Law, L.D. Else and Harry Henderson as directors. There were 52 fifty dollar shares sold and with this capital lines were built and electricity was made available for the first time. In 1945, the Association sold its interest to the Nemaha-Marshall Electric Company and the last "co-op" to be formed in Hollenberg no longer existed.

Improvements on the streets were made in the early


16. Ibid., V. 122, p. 227.

thirties when the W.P.A. laid cement curbing along the main street but as most of the town already had cement walks, none was laid at the time. Gravel surfacing has since been applied to the streets from time to time.

In July of 1937 the town was incorporated into a city of the third class and Mrs. G.R. Barr was elected mayor. The population of the city at the time of incorporation was 137. There has been a gradual decrease since as the figure was 97 in 1946 and though all available living space is usually taken there is no new building and little to indicate any future growth or development. Hollenberg is now a town that is gradually dying.

Early in the thirties a fire destroyed several old store buildings on the west side of the street. These buildings were not replaced but in 1946 the old basements were filled in with an idea of making a city park. With the exception of leveling the ground, very little has been done on this project as yet.

In 1935 Tom Baumfalk began a trucking concern which now operates four trucks. He also operates a garage and filling station in addition to the Baumfalk Grain and Milling Company, which has headquarters in Steele City, Nebraska, but an elevator and a feed store in Hollenberg.

A survey of the town in 1947 showed the following businesses and organizations: one Baptist church, one Meth-
odist church, one school building housing a grade and high
school, two groceries, two restaurants, one beer joint and
pool hall, one postoffice, one telephone office, one rail-
road depot, one lumber yard, a filling station and garage,
one produce dealer, a grain elevator, and one welding and
implement repair shop. There is little likelihood of the
number of these businesses being increased for since the
survey was made one of the restaurants has closed and the
railroad has transferred the depot operator to another loca-
tion leaving Hollenberg with only a part-time caretaker.

Through the years, Hollenberg's economy has been tied
to that of the farming community around it. The fertile
land along the Little Blue has made this an important corn-
producing region though wheat and other small grains have
also been important. There is still much unbroken or native
pasture as well as some ground that has been reseeded with
native grasses making cattle-raising profitable. When the
farmer has prospered, Hollenberg has also had its share of
the prosperity.

Hollenberg has also received income from its mineral
deposits. Numerous limestone quarries were opened south of
Hollenberg which have been used for both private and public
building. In the early eighties four quarries were opened
between Hollenberg and Spence and railroad tracks were laid
Gravel and sand pits have also been opened and are another source of income to the community.

Still another source of employment has been the St. Joseph and Grand Island, now the Union Pacific Railroad. As this is a busy freight route there is much track work and road bed repair to be done. This usually employs a crew of from four to ten men.

As has been indicated, a factor influencing the development and economy of Hollenberg has been transportation. The earliest roads had been ungraded trails across the pastures, but the first established roads leading from Hollenberg were those to Hanover and to Washington. As early as 1873 the road to Hanover was a much-traveled route, whereas the one to Washington developed soon afterward. As the Little Blue had to be forded or ferried, it was a barrier until 1881 when the first bridge was built. In 1889 an iron bridge, the "West Bridge", was also built. In 1903, when a record flood on the Little Blue backed the water to the Union Pacific tracks, both of these bridges were dam-


These notes are located in the Washington County Engineer's office, Washington, Kansas.

aged. The west bridge was rebuilt and and the south one repaired in 1904, but a flood and ice jam a few years later destroyed the "South Bridge" leaving only the present structure west of town. The road over this bridge received its first surfacing when in 1932 gravel was donated and volunteers graveled the road from Washington through Hollenberg. This road has since been re-graded and graveled and is usually in fair condition; however, the township roads are still untreated and travel is very difficult in wet seasons.

Formal education in this community had its beginning when schools were established at Bond's and Mr. Zion in the late sixties. In 1872 a small weatherboarded school was built in Hollenberg and Miss Reynolds was hired to teach it, but she had only two children, those of R.T. Kerr, the first few weeks. Lillie Kerr, now Mrs. J.T. Lewis of Fairbury, Nebraska, was one of these first students. This school building, located northeast of the Methodist Church approximately where the county road leaves Hollenberg, was replaced by a two story stone structure about 1883. In 1915 a cement block addition was made, but in 1915 as the result of a fumigation the building was destroyed by fire. The present brick building was

22. Washington County Register, March 18, 1932.
built on the site in 1917 at the cost of approximately $20,000.

Early records of Hollenberg's school are meager. Yet we know that by 1888 two teachers were employed. The principal that year was M.X. Laisure and the primary teacher was a Miss Romelle, and of the 133 children living in District 30 (Hollenberg) 99 were enrolled in the two rooms and the average daily attendance was 61. The school, when it closed the latter part of April after seven months, had been operated for a total cost of $813.75.

Hollenberg was listed as a high school in 1910 when only one year of high school was offered and three teachers, including the principal, were hired for eight months. A.R. Shanman, the Superintendent, received a salary of $480. This was comparatively low as Barnes paid $810; Haddam, $630; Hanover, $1,000; Morrowville, $540; and Washington, $1,300 for the same position. Roscoe Ahlers, superintendent (1912)

25. The Record, May 4th, 1889.
26. Ibid., August 2, 1889.

Hereafter, all school statistics will be taken from the Educational Directory for year indicated.
to 1914) was followed by S. McMorris in 1915 and 1916, and in 1916 William Van Orsdal opened the first school in the brick building, and the two-year course started in 1913 was extended to three years. At this time a second high school teacher was added. In 1917 a four-year course was offered, three years of which the state approved; and the following year with A. Johnson as superintendent Hollenberg became a four year class D school. 29

Attendance during this time was extremely low as in 1913 only sixteen were enrolled. This figure rose to nineteen in 1917 but dropped to nine in 1919. A survey of four other county high schools for 1917 shows Barnes with 32, Haddam with 59, Mahaska with 23, and Morrowville with 14 enrolled.

The salary scale was also slightly below the county average; for although the salary rose from $520 in 1912 to $900 in 1919 this did not keep pace with the advance generally made. A study reveals that Mahaska's superintendent's salary rose from $560 to $945, while Morrowville, the county's low, rose from $520 to $720. In 1916 the administrators of Washington, Greenleaf, Barnes, and Hanover received $1,300, $1,170, $810 and $1260 respectively.

In 1933 the school became a class C high school. The

29. Ibid., 1918.
enrollment ranged from eight to twenty in the 1920's with 31 being enrolled in 1934. The superintendent's salary advanced from $1,125 in 1919 to $1575 in 1931; yet in 1924 the salary of $1250 was one of the lowest in the state and slightly more than one half the state average. An explanation for this can be found in the extremely low tax evaluation, which was $658,000 in 1920 but had fallen to $344,000 by 1933.

Under the superintendency of E.G. Skeen a third teacher was added; the school was certified as class C; the enrollment was boosted to a peak of 43; and many other significant improvements were made. The enrollment dropped to 16 in 1942 but since 1943 the enrollment has been about 25.

In the spring of 1947 a move was inaugurated by the writer, who was then superintendent, to create a rural high school district. This district, when organized late in the summer, contained property evaluated at $2,274,903 as compared with $349,838 for the old school district. The establishment of the rural high school has largely solved the financial problems and the way is now open to make any needed improvements. There is some question, however, that the enrollment is or will ever be such as to justify the expendi-

ture of the amount necessary to maintain a first class high school in Hollenberg.

From the early eighties the grade school has followed a practice of employing two grade teachers. In 1910 the teacher in the upper grades began to teach subjects beyond the grades and, as has been shown, this led to the development of the high school. The local superintendent continued to have oversight over the grades but the county superintendent's directions were followed more and more as time went on. Enrollment in the grade school has declined from a high of 99 in 1889 to below thirty in 1940. The problems that have faced the school have been chiefly financial. Howard Lichtenberger, who in 1948 completed 22 years as clerk of the board, recalls that it has been a "very interesting experience." 31

At about the same time Hollenberg's first school was being organized, its first church was also being formed. In 1872 C.Y. Van Deventer organized the Methodist Episcopal Society; 32 and on May 22, 1880 J.K. Brown, James Russel, A. D. Maurer, A. Driskell, and Samuel Algeo, acting as trustees, received a charter for this organization. 33

After much discussion and in no small faith the Methodists made plans to build a sanctuary. Doing much of the work themselves they completed it in time for a dedication in August of 1882. This dedication proved quite an event with wagon loads of people from as far as Hanover and Washington in attendance. The Steele City Baptist congregation came en masse. Altogether about 400 crowded the grounds. A debt-free dedication had been planned but there was still $660 indebtedness when the program started, so they set about soliciting and after an hour of "hard pulling" the needed amount, with $20 extra, was raised. When this was finished the Reverend Walter of Washington proceeded to preach the dedication sermon to a full house as over 100, unable to get in, waited outside. 34

Even with such an auspicious beginning all did not go well. Dissension, misunderstanding, and slanderous criticism retarded its growth and by 1889 the church was in dire need of both physical and spiritual repairs. 35 Fortunately, this situation brightened when in March of that year the Rev. Parlette arrived on the scene. An unusual man in many ways the Reverend immediately, boldly, and persistently attacked the Devil and those who did his work. His voice

34. Washington Republican, August 18, 1882.
35. The Record, Jan. 19, 1889; March 23, 1889.
could be heard for great distances as he denounced evil and called sinners to repentance. Within a short time the spiritual tone of the church improved, meanwhile the problem of physical repairs was being solved from another quarter for in April a tornado struck the town and destroyed much property. The church was almost leveled.\textsuperscript{36} It was rebuilt at the cost of \$1500.

An interesting story has come from this incident. The southwest corner of the church was used almost exclusively by young people and as they were somewhat noisy and created minor disturbances the minister referred to their corner as the "Devil's Corner". He was somewhat chagrined when, after the storm, the southwest corner of the church was all that remained standing.

On September 4, 1904, a Methodist Episcopal Church was dedicated at Silver Cliff\textsuperscript{37} and became a part of the Hollenberg circuit. Other places of worship which have been connected with Hollenberg at various times are Hanover which was joined about 1894, Bond's School around 1892, and Plane View School during 1910 and shortly thereafter. Although there was never any organic connection between Hanover and Hollenberg's churches, they did use the same minister at

\textsuperscript{36} Interview with George Parks, Aug. 23, 1948.

\textsuperscript{37} Washington Republican, September 30, 1904.
The peak in attendance at the Methodist Church seems to have come shortly after 1910. The membership of 73 in 1912 reached a record of 120 members in 1914. The average attendance in Sunday School was 75 that year. The minister's salary for 1912 was $660 but rose to $825 in 1914. This figure indicates that Hollenberg would have been considered a substantial "charge" in the Kansas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

After 1915 there was a period of steady decline in attendance and a Union Sunday School of Methodists and Baptists was organized. Eventually, a misunderstanding disrupted this organization and a separate one was again established. However, as there was no regular minister after 1919, the decline continued until the early thirties when the church was closed. In 1937 and 1938 through the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Lichtenberger, Mr. and Mrs. H. Hefling, Mr. and Mrs. G.R. Barr, and others a Sunday School was re-established and Rev. Lester Edgett was called to serve as pastor.

These and other efforts were rewarded by a revival of interest and in 1942 a parsonage building was bought and in 1946 under the leadership of Trustees Earl Dean, Ralph How-

38. Church Record Book, Hollenberg Methodist Church.
land, Ralph Muir, Howard Lichtenberger, Homer Else, and the pastor, J.H. Vernon, a church basement was constructed. Other improvements such as gas furnaces, remodeling, re-roofing, and painting were made at a cost of over $6,000 in labor and material. Early in 1948 all indebtedness was paid. Frank Mahlman has been the leading figure in many of these later improvements. The membership of 45 is gradually increasing, all of which indicates a continuation of the church's usefulness to the community.

Shortly after the first Methodist Society was formed, a group of Baptists began to meet for worship. Meetings were held in various homes until 1886, when through the efforts of J.T. Lewis, the organization bought the old frame schoolhouse and remodeled it into a church building. Mr. Lewis continued to serve as Sunday School superintendent for a number of years. On March 22, 1901, the Hollenberg Baptist Church received a charter which listed the seven trustees as J.T. Lewis, E.M. Shields, Jeremiah Shields, J.L. Minefer, J.C. Vailer, Dr. J. Hoxi, and J.T. Willeford. At this time the present frame building was built.

During the years immediately following 1900, the services were well attended and the church prospered; however,

39. The Republican, April 23, 1886.
after 1910 there was a lessening of interest and a decline in the congregation, until this and the Methodist Church carried on a joint Sunday School. After the dissolution of this union, the Baptists continued to carry on and from 1933 until 1937 it was the only church functioning in Hollenberg, but since the early thirties interest has been decreasing. Few new members have been added and decline, though gradual, is steady. These conditions are the result of several factors, the chief being the shortness of minister tenure. The resulting instability has been a serious handicap to the church's progress.

The only other church ever built in Hollenberg was located across the street southwest of the Methodist Church. This building, a cement block structure, was built by the Church of God, or "Saints" as they were then commonly called. Those most regular in attendance were Mrs. R.T. Kerr, Mrs. Laurie Townsend, and the Algeo family. Others who comprised the congregation moved on and shortly after 1915 the services were discontinued; the building sold, and more of the remaining members began to worship at the Baptist Church.41

Other churches have exerted an influence in the community. One of these is the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran, located 9 miles east of town on Horseshoe Creek. This con-

41. Interview with Mrs. George Parks, Aug. 28, 1948.
gregation, founded in 1880 as a branch of the Immanual Lutheran Church of Bremen, Kansas, joined the Missouri Synod in 1888. In 1892 the present frame building was constructed and a parochial school was instituted. The present school, with an enrollment of approximately 60, was built in 1911. In 1942 the new pastor, Theodore Kauffeld, introduced English into the evening worship service and in 1947 this was extended to certain morning services. The German has now been almost entirely replaced with the English.

Although the church has been prosperous since 1905, when the congregation numbered 359, there has been no great increase in membership. Today there are 373 in the congregation with 253 communicants and 73 voting members. These members are scattered throughout the community some living even west of Hollenberg.

The Zion Lutheran Church, located four miles north-east of town, was dedicated in 1910 and is affiliated with the United Lutheran Church of America. The language issue has been a problem with this congregation also and the church was badly disrupted 15 years ago by this matter. Today, English is the accepted language, with German being used only

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42. Manuscript History of Church, by Rev. Grupe, 1905.
on the last Sunday of the month.

The church buildings include the church, parsonage, and a small school. The parish summer school formerly held has been discontinued. The church has some 90 members, most of whom live in Nebraska. 44

In addition to these organized groups, other religious bodies have affected the community from time to time. Many of the schools were used for revival meetings as well as regular meeting places for Sunday Schools. This practice was especially prevalent in the eighties and nineties when a Sunday School Association, including the entire county, was organized. Numerous all-day meetings were held with outstanding speakers as the attractive feature or, if this were insufficient attraction, basket dinners were also offered. 45 In addition, the Kansas Pentecost Band conducted meetings in or near Hollenberg and on one occasion the Salvation Army built a "brush arbor" on the site of the lumber yard. 46 The Methodists usually led the way in promoting revival campaigns and campmeetings and a number of the latter were conducted west of Hollenberg in a grove on the Little Blue River.

44. Interview with the Reverend P.O. Spehr, August 4, 1948.

45. The Record, June 21, 1889.

46. Interview with George Parks, August 27, 1948.
Such a campmeeting was held in July of 1889 when a tent large enough to accommodate 2000 people was raised and 30 ministers were invited. The main speaker was Dr. Davis, of Baldwin, Kansas, a college professor and army colonel. Although the tent never overflowed and all invited ministers did not attend the meeting was considered a success as the tent was often crowded with worshippers, while many others also came to look on or visit with acquaintances. As many believed in expressing their joy, the shouts of the saved were heard almost constantly throughout the encampment whereas others gave release to their feelings in beautifully rhythmic "holy dances". All these services had their affect on Hollenberg's development.

Although Hollenberg has had churches, schools, and other organizations for character development, she has nevertheless had some crime and lawlessness. Situated less than two miles from the Nebraska line it has been difficult to enforce prohibition and, throughout the eighties, open saloons operated on both sides of the Kansas-Nebraska line in Lanham, eight miles east of town. Although no open saloons were operated in Hollenberg, liquor could be had

47. Ibid., June 28, 1889.
49. The Record, Feb. 9, 1889.
readily at any time in two or three places, notably the old stone hotel and the old stone residence now owned by Raymond Odgers. Drinking often led to street fights and brawls and served to classify Hollenberg as a "tough town". Therefore, mothers warned their daughters about the "Hollenberg boys". The condition improved slightly after 1889 when the news editor deplored the drinking and gambling that went on in the railroad depot. He complained that the floors and platform were slimy with vomit all too frequently.

Hollenberg's most shocking crime came in 1898 when Bill Hoxi shot and killed the sheriff who had come to arrest him for armed robbery. Hoxi, only a young man, was taken to jail in Washington, but was transferred to Clay Center for fear of the mob. He was later tried without a verdict. He then broke jail but was captured and after conviction served a five year sentence.

Still another example of lawlessness was the "Whitling gang" run by Fred Whitling. With headquarters at Gerardy, a railroad siding on the Burlington line seven miles east of Hollenberg, they were the most notorious law-breakers ever

51. The Record, March 30, 1889.
52. Interview with Ernest Funke, August 4, 1947.
to operate in this vicinity. When the siding was put in in 1892, an elevator, a small store and saloon had been built. About 1895 Fred Whitling bought the saloon and it soon became a rendezvous for bums, crooks, and other shady characters. From this place they robbed numerous stores in neighboring towns. The loot was brought in at night and was peddled throughout the surrounding communities. Very good merchandise could be had at low prices, it being possible to place an order for some particular article of clothing or shoes.

Neighbors were afraid to complain as these hoodlums were numerous, there being 28 there by actual count on Christmas day in 1899. Joe Schniederjan, who lived one mile north, found two bums asleep in his barn, chased them out, and a few days later found five large brood sows dead, evidently as the result of poison. However, as a rule, the farmers who lived close were seldom molested except for the loss of a few chickens now and then.

The legal authorities bothered them occasionally and in 1901 the U.S. Marshal and his men raided the place chaining Whitling and five of his men and taking them to Washington. They were tried and freed; however, the authorities had begun to move in and soon some of the gang were sentenced to jail and penitentiary terms. In 1907 Whitling's mistress was jailed and shortly afterward he left the community for
the last time. His old store building was left standing until 1947 when the remains were cleared away and a rural school building was moved on the site.53

The earliest settlers who entered this region found themselves neighbors to some 400 Indians. There was little social contact; however, although some of the Indians spoke broken English and some of them did visit back and forth with the white families. These Indians were moved out in the early eighties when the government paid local citizens three dollars a day to haul them to Oklahoma,54 but other Indians came into the community from time to time until 1885. Bert Rust tells of visiting a village of approximately 500, encamped in tepees near Bond's Mill, at about that time. They were living on meat taken from carcasses of cows that had died of stalk poisoning. He visited them there at breakfast time and saw beef being cooked over an open fire in the middle of the tent. The grease and water that ran out of the meat was caught and drunk like coffee. He was offered food but as time was limited he did not eat

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53. Interview with Ernest Funke, August 4, 1947. Mr. Funke lived near Gerardy as a boy. Vern Justis tells of buying expensive shoes from the Whitlings for one dollar.

54. U.S. Statutes at Large, XXI, pp. 380-381. Indians given permission to remove to Indian Territory March 2, 1881.
Although there was little sociability between the Indians and the Whites, the white settlers seldom failed to visit among themselves. The following account illustrates the type of recreation which was much enjoyed. On November 15, 1887, 70 neighbors of Mr. Squire, a farmer south of Hollenberg, came in for a surprise gathering. The group entertained themselves with games and music until 9:00 when supper was announced. The table was seated six times but as some food had been brought by each family there was enough for all. After supper there was organ music, singing, and games for an hour or so before the guests began to unhitch their teams and go home.

Private dances, featuring folk dancing, were common. Although there was some objection to dancing, most parents seemed to agree with the mother of Mrs. Alice Justis Palmer who preferred Alice "to go to dances rather than to kissing parties". For those so inclined and financially able, public dances were available. In the nineties Elmer Talcott

55. Interview with R.L. (Burt) Rust, September 2, 1948. Mr. Rust states that in this group was a young man who claimed to be a graduate of Carlisle University. Rust also visited a similar encampment on Mill Creek southeast of Blocker School.

56. Washington Republican, November 25, 1887.

57. Interview with Mrs. Alice Palmer, August 13, 1947.
ran dances in the Armory. Music was furnished by Lon Rhodes, a local musician, and his orchestra of two violins, one horn and an organ pumped and played by Mrs. C. Whitbeck. Attendance at 50 cents a couple was usually sufficient to allow Mr. Talcott to pay this orchestra $15.00 a night. There was a little drinking but according to Mr. Talcott "the man who got a little too much got no partners."58

Ice skating was a favored pastime with both old and young in the early days but about 1910 this sport gave way to roller skating. A rink was made in the Hyland Building. Another rink, as well as a swimming pool, was built by John Martin in the open country south of Hollenberg at a place called "Socialdale".

Many fraternal groups were organized. One, the I.O.O.F., was organized by W.H. Johnson in 1881 and the membership was chartered in 1884. On the corner of Main and Fuller Streets, they built a hall which was later purchased by the Woodman Lodge and today is used by the Royal Neighbors. The Grand Army of the Republic was also organized in the eighties. In 1886 they built an Armory just north of the present telephone office. This organization known as the Gettysburg Post was chartered by Asa Talcott, Samuel Welch, Joy Wright, Jonathan Alden, and William Fielder in

58. Interview with Elmer Talcott, June 26, 1948.
These organizations and their auxiliaries as well as the churches gave benefit socials, watermelon feeds, and in various ways provided recreation for their constituents. They also provided for patriotic programs on the national holidays. On Decoration Day, they provided for speech-making, floral decorations, and a military salute, all held at the cemetery. The Fourth of July was the day reserved for the greatest celebrations. It was the usual custom to begin the day with a parade led by a small but noisy band. One such parade had the thirteen original colonies represented by "thirteen of Hollenberg's most beautiful young ladies". After basket dinners in the Ash Grove west of town the crowds listened to speeches, watched or played games, and enjoyed the other features. These features included balloon ascensions, parachute jumps, and from 1910 to 1915 horse races. The wide use of the automobile is given as the reason for the discontinuance of these events.

The nearest approach to a carnival ever supported by Hollenberg was a home made merry-go-round owned and operated by "Whistling Rufus" Reed. This wooden contraption

60. The Record, May 31, 1889.
61. Washington Record, July 11, 1890.
62. So known because of a set of ill-fitting false teeth.
Hollenberg's Baseball Team, 1910

Hollenberg's Band, 1910
had four arms extending from the top of the center pole. Seats large enough to hold two or more youngsters were suspended from these arms, and rides were a bargain at two for a nickel. Motive power and the musical serenade were furnished by a small donkey that went round and round on the end of a sweep. The music consisted of the donkey's braying.

Other forms of recreation and entertainment have included debating societies, Lyceum courses, and a community club. This community club has been a source of recreation as well as opportunity for dramatic expression for the last fifteen years. Many unusually entertaining programs have been produced by local talent. The community has also supported a band on at least two occasions. The first of these was started in the eighties and the last was organized by George Parks about 1910 and contained from 16 to 20 instruments. An instructor from Fairbury was hired to direct them.

The first mention of organized athletics in this community was made when a baseball team was organized in 1870. Twenty men north of town organized the Freeport Baseball Club. W.D. Jenkins and M. LeBlanc were captains of two teams. It is not known that any Hollenberg men participated although this group was formed five miles north of town.

63, The Little Blue, January 1, 1870.
Nevertheless, there was a team functioning here a few years later. The first mention of this was in 1889 when the local sports editor announced that Hollenberg had "scooped the Steele Citizens 2 to 1 on their own ground the fourth."64 This beginning was auspicious for this team remained a very potent organization for many years with the strongest teams being fielded between 1905 and 1912. The players of this rather outstanding aggregation included George, Perry and Dwight Parks, Willkie and Roscoe Ahlers, C.O. Tapman, Charlie McCormick, Frank Rose, and C. Brenneis. Due to the size of these young men they were called the "Kansas Giants". Their home ground was in Clapp's (Decker's) pasture. Interest was usually good and the grandstand was ordinarily filled. Teams from as far as Clifton, Marysville and Waterville were played. One memorable game was played with Fairbury. A special train, loaded with fans who were expecting to see their team beat the highflying "Clodhoppers", ran from Fairbury to Hollenberg. They were humiliated as Hollenberg won easily and after a flurry of fisticuffs went home rather angry.65 After this team broke up, interest in the game waned and no outstanding teams have since been produced.

True to the nature of small towns, Hollenberg has re-

64. The Record, July 12, 1889.
65. Interview with Willkie Ahlers, July 5, 1948.
ceived enjoyment and relaxation from gossip and rumor. Mrs. Florence Hayes remembers the first woman's hat ever worn. All the ladies wore bonnets. These were of two kinds, the plain everyday work bonnet and the starched ruffled-edged one reserved for Sunday and dress-up wear. About 1885 Mrs. Joe English created a sensation and almost a scandal by appearing on the street in the town's first hat. In 1897 certain school girls scandalized and shocked the community by sneaking out of school and smoking cigarettes. They were found out and put to shame for their misdeeds. Later the same year when the first airship appeared over town, there were those who "had the vague idea that it was filled with Cubans for the purpose of throwing bombs".

Perhaps the greatest sensation occurred in February of 1896 when a report of the discovery of gold was circulated. The Kansas City Star carried an account of this discovery. The report was that the gold, assaying at $16 to $20 per ton, had been found in the sand on Joy Creek. Excitement ran high and people flocked into town from all directions. An estimated 1000 rushed in, but they were all doomed to disappointment for the claim was soon found to be

67. Washington Republican, March 5, 1897.
68. Ibid., April 16, 1897.
false. The "gold" was probably iron pyrites, a mineral sometimes found in this locality, and almost as quickly as they had come the crowd departed, leaving Hollenberg to pursue "the even tenor of its way" as a quiet little village in northeastern Washington County.

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An account of a trip across the western part of the country.


A study of the towns and townships in Washington county.


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This contains much material on the early development of the county.

A study of the condition in the pioneer days of Marshall County and the region to the west of it.


A study of the early mail companies that operated through this region.


A tourist's view made in a general way and of little value to this study.


A treaty dealing with the Otoe Indians.


This is Pike's Journal of his explorations.

A report on the staging days of the old Western Trails by one who knew them firsthand.


Charters

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Deed

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U. S. War Department, *Reports of Explorations and Surveys, to Ascertain the Most Practicable and Economical Route for a Railroad from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean*. Made under the Direction of the Secretary of War in 1853-6, vol XI: Washington: Beverley Tucker, Printer, 1855. 120 pp and maps.

Kansas, *Session Laws*, 1941. Topeka: Kansas State Printing
Office, 1941, pp. 104-105.

**United States Statutes at Large.** Washington: Government Printing, XXI, pp. 380-381.

Continued Publications


Contains an account of the hardships of the early settler in Kansas.


This article is a study of conditions along the route. It contains a portion of John Hawkin Clark's account of his journey over the trail.


The experiences of Rosella Haney. She taught school in the early sixties.


A study of the Indian Tribes of the Plains area.

These letters were written in the 1860's and are perhaps the best information that we have on western Washington County during the early sixties.


An account of the Indian raids into Washington and the surrounding counties.


A study of the hardship of the early Kansan due to the drought of 1860.


This survey was made 108 miles west of Missouri River but was not accepted by the government. Mention is made of the Washington County region.


This Report along with the Seventh and Eighteenth were used to obtain school statistics.

Issued yearly, they contain school statistics.


The Second, 1880; the Third, 1882, and the Fifth Biennial Reports, 1886; were also used for statistical information on the population and economic growth and development of the county.


A study of the conditions on the Kansas frontier.


He cites Richard Burton's *Journal*. Burton, an English explorer, went over the Platte Route in 1860. He has numerous references to incidents that occurred.


Relates incidents that happened on the trail.

Wrote of his dealings with the various Indian tribes of the Kansas-Nebraska Territory.


A study of the Pawnee Indian tribe. Contains information on the wars between the Pawnee and Siouan tribes.

Proceedings


Newspapers

Freedom's Champion, (Atchison, Kansas), October 30, 1858.

An account of overland freighting.

The Hanover Democrat, (Hanover, Kansas), December 7, 1937.

Contains a translation of G.H. Hollenberg's will along with other historical material.

The Hollenberg Record, (Hollenberg, Kansas), January 19, 1889, - October 19, 1889.

Contains much information on this particular period.
An account of gold rush to Hollenberg.

The Leavenworth Conservative (Leavenworth, Kansas), June 2, 1860.

The Little Blue, (Jenkins Mill, now Steele City, Nebraska),
Sept. 11, 1869.
Description of the flood of that time.

The Marysville Enterprise, (Marysville, Kansas), August 23, 1864.

The Western Observer, (Washington, Kansas), March 25, 1869-July 15, 1869.

Washington County Republican, (Washington, Kansas), Issues examined extend from 1882 until 1948. The county's first newspaper.

Personal Interviews

Ahlers, Ralph, Hollenberg, Kansas, August 14, 1947.
A life-long resident of Hollenberg, Kansas.

Member of Hollenberg's outstanding baseball club.

Baumfalk, Thomas, Hollenberg, Kansas, August 4, 1948.
Owner of Elevator and a Trucking concern.
Bullimore, Emma, Morrowville, Kansas, August 13, 1948.

An early pioneer in Coleman Township. She told many interesting incidents of the seventies.

Elder, Mrs. Addie Pursley, Hollenberg, Kansas, August 3, 1947.

An early pioneer in the Blocker Community. Her father founded Pursley School. A good source.

Funke, Ernest, Hollenberg, Kansas, August 26, 1947.

A neighbor of the Whitling Gang at Gerardy, Kansas.


Daughter of Charles Williamson, early historian of county.

Hatter, Jay, Morrowville, Kansas, April 30, 1948.

Son of early settlers in the county.


Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church.

Lewis, Mrs. J.T., Fairbury, Nebraska, August 19, 1948.

First student in Hollenberg's public school.

Lichtenberger, H.F., Hollenberg, Kansas, August 10, 1948.

Clerk of school board for over 20 years.

Lichtenberger, R.W., Hollenberg, Kansas, August 10, 1948.

In his eighties, he has seen much development in the county.
An early resident in the county.

Palmer, Mrs. Alice, Steele City, Nebraska, August 23, 1947.
An early resident in the Hollenberg Community.

Parks, Mr. and Mrs. George, Hollenberg, Kansas, August 28, 1948.
Mr. Parks was a member of the highly regarded baseball team.

Rea, Herman, Haddam, Kansas, September 10, 1948.
Member of the Kansas Historical Society and a very interested observer of all things historical.

Rust, Eliza, Washington, Kansas, April 2, 1948.
The wife of a Civil War veteran who homesteaded here. She was 103 years of age in 1948.

Rust, R.L., Topeka, Kansas, September 2, 1948.
The first student to attend the Friend's Academy.

Talcott, Elmer, Hollenberg, Kansas, June 26, 1948.
An old resident of Hollenberg.