A History of Wichita County, Kansas

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A HISTORY OF WICHITA COUNTY, 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

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A History of Wichita County Kansas
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Early History

Chapter I
Background and Early History of Wichita County

The Great Plains were inhabited by primitive Indians long before the white man knew the plains existed. Many generations of these Indians failed to develop much culture, and they failed to leave more than a trace of their habitation in this area. It is impossible to determine at what time and by what Indian tribes the Great Plains were first occupied. We do know that the Plains Indians were a nomadic people and that they lived on the plains by following and killing the thousands of buffalo, deer, and elk which wandered about over the area grazing on the native grasses. The buffalo, in particular, was very valuable to the Indians, serving as food, shelter, weapons, clothing and tools.

The major portion of the eastern central plains and that area which is now Kansas was originally controlled by the Pawnee and Wichita Tribes. Anthropologists believe that the Quivira Indians, for whom Coronado searched, were the Indians later known as the Wichita.¹

The Pawnee and Wichita tribes vacated these lands years before the first land cessions were made to the United States Government, the Pawnee moving northeastward, and the Wichita moving southeastward.

Probably no tribes occupied the western two-thirds of what is now Kansas at the time of the land cessions of 1825. The Pawnee and

Wichita tribes had occupied the area until about 1790. About the same time the latter tribes were moving out, the Kansa and Osage were moving into the eastern part of Kansas; the Kansa in the northeast along the Kansas and Missouri rivers; the Osage, in the southeast, along the Osage and Verdigris. ²

On June 2, 1825, the Osage Indians ceded to the United States Government nearly all of the land in Kansas south of the Arkansas River, west to a point about six miles west of the present site of Dodge City.

The Kansa Indians ceded most of the land north of the Arkansas River on June 3, 1825.³ The cession of the Kansa embraced over one-third of the total area of the present state of Kansas, extending from Miami county to the northern boundary of Kansas; and from the eastern boundary to a line running north from the present site of Garden City.⁴

The eastern third of Wichita county lies in the area ceded by the Kansa in 1825. The remaining two-thirds of the county lies in the area ceded by the Arapaho and Cheyenne at Fort Wise in 1861.⁵

The Arapaho and Cheyenne Indians came originally from Minnesota. They roamed from the Black Hills to the Arkansas River, hunting buffalo.


⁵Ibid.
and warring with other tribes. The cession of these tribes in 1861 includes that area west of the original cessions of the Kansa and Osage, and north of the Arkansas River.

The territorial legislature of Kansas had in 1855 formed, among others, Washington county. It included all of the southwestern portion of Kansas, as well as other territory. Washington was attached to Allen county for judicial purposes. The county of Washington was reduced to almost its present size by the legislature in 1857. No name was attached to the remaining territory.

Eight new counties were created by the territorial legislature in 1860. Among these was the county of Peketon, which included all that area west of the present Marion county and south of the present Saline county.

The state legislature of 1865 eliminated the county of Peketon and enlarged Marion county to include all the territory in Peketon. In 1867 Marion was reduced to very nearly its present form and the southwest corner of Kansas was again left without a name.

In 1873 the entire area of Southwest Kansas was divided into

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6Laws of the Territory of Kansas, 1855 (No publisher or place of publication given), p. 187.

7Laws of the Territory of Kansas, 1857 (No publisher or place of publication given), p. 432.

counties and named as follows: Hamilton, Kearny, Sequoia, Stanton, Grant, Arapaho, Kansas, Stevens, Seward, Scott, Wichita, Greeley, Lane, Gray and Meade. A land office for this part of the state was located at Larned in 1874.9

The way now was open for the pioneers to move onto the vast open spaces of this part of the Great Plains. The federal government had cleared the area of Indians and the state government had provided the framework for organizing county governments. But there were few hardy pioneers who were ready to risk the hardships that were sure to face them in this region. Those who dared to migrate to Southwestern Kansas, settled along the railroads. Wichita county, situated about half-way between the Kansas Pacific and the Santa Fe railroads, attracted none of the early settlers in the '70s.

The settlement of Western Kansas began with the cattle drives from Texas. Those drives marked the beginning of that brief period during which the cattle king reigned supreme, one of the most interesting epochs in the development of this region.

The men who made cattle raising their business lived on the edge or just beyond settlement, in order to graze their stock on the uninhabited and unattached ranges beyond. Very few of them owned any land at first. They built temporary shelters for the winter on the open range, trying to locate near running water, and if it were available,  

9Laws of Kansas, 1874 (Topeka: State Printer, 1875), p. 72.
behind a sheltering bluff. Eventually, those who settled permanently on the land, had to buy, or homestead enough land on which to build their houses, barns, and corrals. As long as there was free land to be had, the cattlemen moved on to avoid contact with homesteaders. When the free land was taken, they either bought land or quit the cattle business.¹⁰

As early as 1870, eastern buyers were placing stock on western Kansas ranges. By 1873, the ranges were so well stocked that there was no longer a great demand for Texas cattle. By 1880, nearly all of the area between Dodge City and Colorado was being grazed.¹¹

The counties in Western Kansas remained unorganized for a number of years after the region had been opened for settlement, and the cattlemen were its only occupants. They were the lords of the land, exercising absolute power over their domains. But their reign was short. The barbed-wire fence and the wind-mill had been invented; the older settled areas were becoming congested; and the Great Plains were no longer considered the Great American Desert. The homesteader was just over the hill, awaiting the opportune moment to invade the cattlemen's paradise.¹²


The spring of 1878 opened with abundant rainfall. The plains were a vast green carpet. If grass could grow so abundantly on the soil of Western Kansas, reasoned the homesteader, why wouldn't grains grow just as well. In the next two years, thousands of settlers poured into Western Kansas. All of these, of course, stayed close to the railroads, the Kansas Pacific in the north, and the Santa Fe in the south. The area between the railroads was left to the cattlemen.

The cattlemen naturally resented the coming of the settlers who kept arriving during the years of 1878-79. They tried desperately to dispossess the homesteaders. But the latter were not easily routed. Unexpected help came to the cattlemen in the fall of 1878. Dry weather set in. During the next four years it seldom rained, and the country looked like a parched desert. At the end of that time, there were few of the first group of settlers left in the extreme western part of Kansas. They had packed their goods in wagons, and with their remaining livestock, they headed eastward.13

Wichita county had attracted none of these early settlers who came to Western Kansas in the late seventies. Its location, forty miles south of the Kansas Pacific, and about the same distance from the Santa Fe railroad to the south, was not inducive to settlement

13Garden City Telegram, March 17, 1879.
at that early date. It was too far from civilization, and only after other areas were becoming congested, was Wichita county settled.

The earliest official record of Wichita county is the 1880 census. There were only fourteen people in the county. There were two men picking bones, two men hauling bones, four buffalo hunters, one man hauling buffalo, three men catching wild horses, one man herding cattle, and one ranch owner, Richard Walters. Three of the buffalo hunters and the man hauling buffalo refused to state even their names. The census taker "rendered it safest to not press (his) inquiries." Other people were reported to have been in the county, but after a fruitless search, consuming two or three days, the census taker certified that the fourteen were the only inhabitants of Wichita county.

The earliest cattleman of Wichita county is believed to have been George Edwards, who had a spread on the Beaver Creek which stretches from the county line on the east twelve miles westward. It spread southward from the north county line to about two miles south of the Beaver. The total area covered by this ranch was about 120 square miles. Nearly all of the area was fenced with barbed wire.


\[15\] Ibid.
strung on good cedar posts. Mr. Edwards apparently gave the home-
steaders no opposition. His ranch just dissolved when the settlers
began filing on portions of it.\(^{16}\) He stayed around Leoti until he
was accidentally shot and killed in April, 1887.\(^{17}\)

There were three other ranches in the county in 1885, when
Leoti was first being settled. They were the Kitchen Ranch, on the
Whitewoman, owned by T. C. Kitchen, of Garden City; the "Stone
Corrals", owned and operated by the Sinn Brothers, 6 or 7 miles
southwest of Leoti, on the Whitewoman; and the J. H. Holden Sheep
Ranch, on the Beaver in the northwest part of the county.\(^{18}\)

The reprieve which the free-range cattle industry had
received in the early eighties was short-lived, for the rain-
fall from 1883-85 was abundant, and crops that were planted pro-
duced enormous yields. Accounts of the yields spread eastward and
settlers again began arriving in the extreme western counties of
Kansas. The flow was so great in the eighties that it spread over
into the counties between the railroads. Claims were taken by

\(^{16}\) W. C. Dickey, personal interview, June 22, 1954. Mr. Dickey
has been a resident of Wichita county since 1886.

\(^{17}\) Coronado Star, April 28, 1887. There is no good account of
this shooting. He is said to have been shot by a "friend", acciden-
tally.

\(^{18}\) Hugh Glenn, Letter to the editor, Leoti Standard, August
31, 1933. Mr. Glenn was a resident of Wichita county from 1886
until his death in the forties. He served as a county official
for forty years.
homesteaders for the first time in Wichita county in 1885.

The final blow to the free-range cattle industry in Western Kansas was dealt in the winter of 1886. Thousands of head of livestock were destroyed by the blizzards of that year and many of the biggest cattlemen and cattle companies were financially ruined. The day of the open range was gone. But the cattle industry was not a thing of the past. Within a few years it had become again a leading influence in Western Kansas. The range was no longer free, and the units in later years were much smaller, but the cattle industry has always been important to Western Kansas and Wichita county.
The Founding of Leoti and Coronado

Chapter II
CHAPTER II

FOUNDING OF LEOTI AND CORONADO

The four ranches mentioned in Chapter I were the only signs of civilization in Wichita county early in 1885.¹ The operators of these ranches were the county's only inhabitants. By the end of the year, 1885, the population was large enough to consider the organization of the county. The increased population was due greatly to the influence of two town companies which were organized during the latter part of the year.

The Southwestern Development Company was organized in Garden City, Kansas, in June, 1885. Its charter was filed June 22, 1885.² The company directors were: Milton Brown and John P. Wallace, Garden City; Lilburn G. Moore and Leonard D. Cowan, Leoti; William B. Montgomery, MacEvansville, Pennsylvania; D. L. Musselman, Quincy, Illinois; and T. M. Brooks, Tecumseh, Nebraska. In July, the city of Leoti was platted, and the settlers began arriving immediately. The town site was proved up June 10, 1886. The post office was first called Bonasa City. When application was first made to the Post Office Department, there was another Leota in Kansas. So the name of Leoti was refused.

¹Hugh Glenn, loc. cit.
The name of Bonasa was suggested by Milton Brown, secretary of the town company, after a great deal of controversy. A half dozen names had been suggested and turned down by the Post Office Department. Finally, Mr. Brown happened to see the picture of a prairie grouse called "Bonasa" and promptly sent the name to the department, and it was accepted. The name was used for only a short time, for on January 18, 1887, through the efforts of Congressman S. R. Peters, the original name of Leoti was restored.3

The first business house of Leoti was built by Henry Allphin.4 It was a general store, and handled every kind of merchandise. Among the first settlers were John A. Denning, L. D. Cowan, Lilburn G. Moore, William M. Montgomery, P. P. Shearmire and Dr. A. M. Doyle. These settlers filed on land adjoining Leoti in August and September, 1885.5 A newspaper was among the town's first achievements, the Wichita Standard6 being issued November 19, 1885, by C. S. Triplett, who later served as the first representative to the State Legislature. Other businesses were built as their need became apparent.

The city of Coronado was born in Winfield, Kansas, in December,

5 Hugh Glenn, op. cit.
6 Wichita Standard, November 19, 1885.
1885. Its charter was filed October 2, 1885. The directors of the town company were: Edward P. Greer, W. R. McDonald, F. S. Jennings, M. L. Robinson, James H. Bullen, J. A. Cooper, and J. B. Nipp, all of Winfield. 7 McDonald, Cooper and Nipp were also founders of Ashland.

The plat of Coronado was made and the town site laid out in December, 1885. The first building in the town was the Hotel Vendome, built by the town company in February, 1886. The town grew rapidly during the next six months. In August, there were nearly one-hundred buildings. The Reverend J. E. Platt, a Methodist circuit rider from Manhattan, wrote, "This town . . . now contains about sixty houses. They have nine stores, two hotels, two restaurants, two newspapers, and other things in proportion. A Methodist church has been organized here, and they have a good Sunday school." 8

Coronado was located just three miles east of the town of Leoti. Both towns, of course, were determined to be the county seat. Each advertised in newspapers, pamphlets, and by word of mouth that it was the county seat. Even after Leoti had been officially chosen the county seat, the Coronado papers continued

advertising Coronado as the county seat of Wichita county. There was no justification for the two towns being so close together. Whichever lost the race for the county seat had no chance for survival. The discussion between the two towns was friendly at first, but as the time for organization drew near bitterness developed. This sharp rivalry developed into a feud, and the feud nearly developed into a first class war.

Seven other town sites were platted in Wichita county between 1885 and 1893. Only one of them, Marienthal, was ever proved up. The other town sites were: Washburn, Tuell, now called Selkirk, Farmer City, Halcyon, and Elder City.9

9Original plats in Register of Deeds Office, Leoti.
The County Seat War

Chapter III
CHAPTER III

THE COUNTY SEAT WAR

The rivalry between Leoti and Coronado developed when Coronado was first laid out, early in 1886. But the people of the two towns were on friendly terms. The resentment became marked only after the county was well on its way to being organized, late in 1886. The feeling between the two towns is best indicated by the newspapers in Wichita county in the years 1885-87. Each town charged the other with forgery, fraud, trickery, bulldozing and intimidation, and finally with murder. 1

In the spring of 1886 Leoti raised money to send its representative to Topeka with a memorial asking for the organization of the county, and on July 7, 1886, Governor Martin appointed W. D. Brainard, of Coronado, census taker for the county. 2 Both Leoti and Coronado asked to be allowed to send an agent with him on the census tour, that their respective interests might be protected, but permission was refused them. The Coronado Star said, "... as a public official Mr. Brainard intends to do his work impartially, but as a citizen of Coronado he is for the

1 There were five newspapers published in Wichita county during the period, 1885-87.

town first, last and all the time."³

The people of Wichita county lost their right to vote in the general election of 1886 because,

Coronado raised the question of jurisdiction, and secured a ruling from the District Court of Finney County that Wichita was not attached to Finney county for judicial purposes, and under that ruling they secured an injunction to prohibit the probate judge of Finney county from issuing deeds to the citizens of Leoti for their lots. Under the decision the sheriff of Finney county . . . failed to issue a proclamation calling an election in Wichita county as a municipal township attached to Finney county, thus depriving nearly 1,000 voters of their right of franchise.⁴

Mr. Brainard, the census taker, left Leoti for Topeka, presumably to make his report to the governor, on September 28, 1886. Nothing was heard of him during the next month, and both Leoti and Coronado became worried. Coronado accused Leoti of having kidnapped him. Leoti charged him with connivance with Coronado in delaying the organization of the county, "... because they were unable to get enough signers to their memorial to make Coronado the county seat."⁵

A delegation headed by C. W. Garland left Leoti on November 3, 1886, and arrived in Topeka in search of Mr. Brainard.⁶ Whether this

³Coronado Star, July 16, 1886.
⁴Wichita Standard, October 21, 1886.
⁵Ibid., November 8, 1886.
⁶Topeka Daily Capital, November 9, 1886.
delegation was successful in ferreting out their prey or not remains a mystery, but Mr. Brainard appeared before the governor, November 10, at which time he reported a population of 2,607, of which 1,095 were householders, and 817 were voters. $510,572 in taxable property was reported in excess of exemptions. 7

The Governor's Proclamation of December 24, 1886, designated Leoti City the temporary county seat, of the new county of Wichita, and appointed the following temporary county officials: R. E. Jenness, S. W. McCall, W. D. Brainard, county commissioners: Lilburn Moore, county clerk. 8

T. B. Gerow was appointed by the governor to take a poll in the county to determine the location of the county seat. 9 He began his survey on December 7, 1886, and to see that no one interfered with his work, a representative from each of the towns accompanied him. The result of the poll completed December 22, was: 451 for Leoti, 285 for Coronado. 10

Leoti was accused by Coronado of intimidating four townships by imported gunmen armed with six-guns, rifles, and shot-guns.

8Ibid.
9Wichita Standard, December 2, 1886.
10Ibid., December 23, 1886.
Coronado was accused by Leoti of paying $50 for every vote, importing men from Kendall, in Hamilton county, and employing a U. S. Marshal, without authority, to guard the polls. Leoti also claimed that Coronado's polls were guarded by men stationed in stairways and second story windows, armed with Winchesters.

The Scott City Herald declared that:

Anticipating trouble over the county-seat war, Leoti had sent to Wallace after a band of 15 or 20 cowboys, armed to the teeth, to assist in protecting their rights. Not being needed for protection, they proceeded to shoot up the town.

After the Governor's Proclamation of December 24, the newly appointed officers divided the county into three townships, one for each commissioner district. The townships were: Edwards, in the north; Leoti, in the center; and Whitewoman, in the south. The commissioners also appointed voting places, and set the date, February 8, 1887, for the election of county and township officers. The county seat was also to be located at this election.

On February 4, 1887, Governor Martin approved a legislative act which provided for the registration of electors at elections for

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12Coronado Star, March 10, 1887.
the location of county seats, thirty days before the election was to be held. The act was not published until February 5. Since the election had been called for February 8, and it was impossible to register thirty days in advance, R. E. Jenness, chairman of the temporary board of county commissioners, telegraphed to the attorney-general for instructions. The instructions were to hold the election for officers on the date decided upon, but to postpone the county seat question until March 10.

Election of county and township officers was held February 8, as scheduled but Coronado voters did not go to the polls. The Coronado Star announced that the election had been called off and would be held March 10. Leoti, on the other hand, not only voted for officers, but on the county seat question as well. They reasoned that they could lose nothing by voting, and if it were declared legal they would gain by it. The Leoti candidates were elected by an almost unanimous vote, since few of the Coronado backers voted. Leoti was chosen as the county seat, but that part of the election was declared illegal.

In a decision rendered March 3, 1887, at the request of the governor, the attorney-general declared that the county seat question would not be decided until March 10, but the elected officers

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14Coronado Star, February 5, 1887.
should be installed in their respective offices. 15

Had the election for the county seat been held as planned, on February 8, there probably would have been no grounds for any talk of a county seat "war" in Wichita county. There had been only loud talk preceding the election of February 8, but between that election and the election of March 10, blood was shed. The fact that the shooting did not directly involve the county seat controversy did not prevent its being referred to as the county seat "war".

The following is the Wichita Standard's account of what occurred on Sunday, February 27, 1887.

... about 10 A.M. a messenger was sent from Coronado inviting Charles Coulter and others to go over and have a good time. About one P. M. Mr. Coulter, Frank Jenness, William Raines, Albert Borey, George Watkins, A. Johnson, and Emmett Denning went over to Coronado in one rig. They met a few of the boys at the drug store of Doctor Wright, and after a half hour visit got in their wagon to return, when Coronado men began an abusive tirade. Coulter and Raines got out of the wagon, and the fight began. Several volleys of shots were fired into the Leoti boys, killing Charles Coulter and William Raines and mortally wounding George Watkins .... The other four men were sitting in the wagon unarmed, but none of them escaped without four or five severe wounds from large Winchester balls. They all fell out of the wagon at the first volley except Albert Borey, who with Frank Jenness, escaped to Leoti with the runaway team. The scheme was concocted by the Coronado gang, stationed on the streets and in their houses, a large part of their shots coming from

15Wichita Standard, March 17, 1887, reviews the whole election controversy.

For the Coronado side see Coronado Star, March 17, 1887.
second-story windows.\textsuperscript{16}

The simple version of the different Coronado accounts is that the Leoti "rowdies", particularly Coulter and Raines, spent the afternoon in Coronado drinking and making life miserable for its inhabitants. When one "Red" Loomis was made the target of some abusive talk by Coulter, and still refused to fight the latter, Coulter drew his gun. Loomis was unarmed, and the shooting started to defend an unarmed man.\textsuperscript{17} The Coronado accounts plead self-defense, yet four unarmed men from Leoti were all victims of several severe wounds. Coulter, no doubt, was a gunman. Raines carried a gun, but he had never been known to use it. The remainder of the party were definitely not gunmen.\textsuperscript{18}

Whatever the reasons were for the shooting, three men died, and one, Emmett Denning, lost a leg, which was amputated just below the knee. Denning is the only one of the survivors who stayed long in Leoti. He remained there until his death in 1926. Little was ever learned from him about the shooting in Coronado, however.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{16}Wichita Standard, March 10, 1887.
\textsuperscript{17}Wichita County Herald, March 3, 1887.
\textsuperscript{18}W. C. Dickey, personal interview, June 22, 1954. Also, Mrs. Pauline Tipton, interview, January 16, 1953. Mrs. Tipton is the daughter of the late Emmett Denning.
\textsuperscript{19}Pauline Tipton.
In answer to Leoti's plea for help, the governor ordered the militia to give its assistance. Monday morning, February 28, General A. B. Campbell and Lieut. Col. J. H. Ricksecker, of the Second Kansas Militia arrived in Leoti. They found the town closely guarded to prevent a surprise attack by the enemy. A large rifle pit had been dug near the town well at the center of town. Pickets had been placed around Coronado to prevent the escape of any of its citizens before the authorities could act.

General Campbell, Col. Ricksecker, and Sheriff John Edwards rode over to Coronado Tuesday morning and arrested fourteen citizens of that town. Four of the prisoners were sent to Garden City, and the others were sent to Dodge City to await trial. The trial was held in Great Bend in February, 1888. The verdict of not guilty was given by the jury on February 17, 1888.

On March 12, 1887, the long awaited county seat election was held, and although both Leoti and Coronado were on guard against the other, nothing happened. Leoti won the county seat by a large majority. The Coronado Star stated, "Coronado casts 349 legal votes, while Leoti as usual casts a fraudulent vote of 822." Leoti actually cast only 451 votes, while Coronado cast 285, a majority of 166 for Leoti.

\[\text{References:}\]
\[\text{20} \quad \text{Wichita Standard, March 10, 1887.}\]
\[\text{21} \quad \text{Ibid., February 23, 1888.}\]
\[\text{22} \quad \text{Coronado Star, March 10, 1887.}\]
\[\text{23} \quad \text{Commissioners Journal, Vol. A, p. 56.}\]
Coronado verbally fought the decision of March 10, until September, 1888. The Leoti town company offered free lots to anyone in Coronado who would move to Leoti. Many accepted the offer, but there were still some who were too stubborn to give up. An attempt was made in March, 1889, to stir up the county seat fight once more. A Mr. McQuown, of Coronado, secured names to a petition asking for a change in the county seat. These signatures were obtained through a hoax as was discovered before many names were written on the petition. It stated that the undersigned favored the site of Farmer City as the new county seat. Farmer City did not exist. It was platted later in March, on the western boundary of Coronado, on land owned by Coronadoans. The attempt was an illegal move, since the law states that an election to change the location of the county seat cannot be held until five years have elapsed since the last such election.

Two of the county commissioners took the law into their own hands and decided that Farmer City was the new county seat. They then removed the records from Leoti and took them to Farmer City. However, a deputy sheriff returned the records to Leoti, and the affair ended. These two county commissioners were allowed to serve out their terms, and one of them, H. T. Treville, was later

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24 Wichita Standard, March 15, 1888.

25 Ibid., March 22, 1888.
elected county clerk. This was Coronado's last attempt to gain the county seat. As a town, it gradually died. Today, an elevator, a depot (unused), and a farm house are all that mark the site of Coronado.
The New County and the Railroads

Chapter IV
CHAPTER IV

THE NEW COUNTY AND THE RAILROADS

Wichita county took its place among the organized counties of the state of Kansas December 24, 1886, as a result of the governor's proclamation of that date.

The county of Wichita is bounded as follows: commencing at the intersection of the east line of range thirty-five west with the third standard parallel; thence south along range line, to its intersection with the fourth standard parallel; thence along said fourth standard parallel, to where it is intersected by the east line of range thirty-nine west; thence north along range line, to its intersection with the third standard parallel; thence east, to place of beginning.¹

Wichita county is the second county east from the Colorado line, and the fourth south from the Nebraska line. It is bounded by Wallace and Logan counties on the north, by Scott county on the east, by Kearney county on the south, and by Greeley county on the west. It has an area of 720 square miles, being 24 miles wide from east to west, and 30 miles deep from north to south. The general surface is undulating prairie, with bluffs and rough lands occurring along the Beaver, in the northeast portion of the county. Bottom lands make up about 3% of the total area of the county. Two creeks cross the county; the Beaver, from northwest to northeast; and the White-woman, from northwest to southeast. The Beaver has running water

throughout the year, but the Whitewoman is frequently dry.

The first official election of Wichita county was held February 8, 1887. The Coronado backers refused to vote at that election, declaring that it was not legal. Consequently, no Coronado men were elected. The commissioners elected were Frank Harper, A. Magguiness, and Albert C. Johnston. The other officers elected were: Lilburn Moore, county clerk; S. E. Gandy, treasurer; John H. Edwards, sheriff; Charles W. Garland, probate judge; Julius S. Newby, county attorney; Thomas F. Calhoun, register of deeds; Mrs. Martha Gray, superintendent of schools; Ethan A. Miles, county surveyor; and Dr. V. M. Reynolds, coroner.  

One of the first acts of the new board of county commissioners was to divide the county into three townships; Edwards, in the north; Leoti, in the center; and Whitewoman, in the south. This action had previously been taken by the temporary board, but the new board felt it had to take "official" action. They apparently were not satisfied with their first decision, for on December 20, 1887, they added three more townships: Sumner, Beaver, and Yates. Still not satisfied or perhaps having nothing else to do, the county commissioners added two more townships early in 1889. One was named Coronado to placate that

3Ibid., p. 20.
section of the county, and the other was named Sinn, after the former owners of the "Stone Corrals".5

On March 12, 1897, the state legislature abolished all existing townships in Wichita county, and created three new townships, one for each commissioner district. The names of the original townships, Edwards, Leoti, and Whitewoman were applied to the new townships.6 Beaver township was added in 1921 to complete the present township organization in Wichita county.7

RAILROADS IN WICHITA COUNTY

A petition, signed by 322 residents of Wichita county was presented to the board of county commissioners May 6, 1887, on behalf of the Chicago, Kansas, and Western Railroad Company. The petition asked that the county commissioners call a special election for the purpose of raising $80,000 by bond issue to assist in the construction of a railroad in Wichita county.8

The railroad company agreed to make a connection with the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad; complete the road from


7Beaver Township appears in tax rolls in 1922, but does not appear in the 1921 tax rolls. See Appendix A, Map 5.

the east county line to the west county line, by December 31, 1887; build stations at Halcyon, Leoti, and one or more between Leoti and the west county line. The bond election was held on June 26, 1887, and the electors voted strongly in favor of the bond issue. The railroad went ahead immediately with the construction of the road. In September, trains were running between Great Bend and Selkirk, in the western part of Wichita county.

The railroad never completed its road to the west county line. It stopped at Selkirk. Since the railroad did not meet the conditions agreed upon, the board of county commissioners refused to issue the $80,000 in favor of the railroad.

On January 1, 1892, as a result of a compromise between that railroad and the Wichita county board of commissioners, bonds for $44,000 were issued in favor of the Chicago, Kansas and Western railroad. In May, 1896, the railroad ceased to operate in Wichita county, and an attempt was made to force the railroad to operate. Failing in this, the commissioners compromised with the railroad a

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9Ibid.

10Ibid.

11Ibid., p. 95.

Wichita Standard, January 12, 1888.

second time. The latter agreed to pay to the county $40,960 cash as full payment for the $44,000 bond issue of January 1, 1892, in favor of the railroad company.  

The second experience with railroads in Wichita county was a much happier one. A petition was placed in the hands of the county commissioners May 30, 1887, on behalf of the Denver, Memphis and Atlantic Railroad Company. The petition asked for a bond issue of $55,000. The railroad company agreed to: complete the line from the east county line to the west county line by December 31, 1887; connect with both eastern and western railroads; and build stations at Leoti, Halcyon, and at some point between Leoti and the west county line.  

The bond election was called for July 21, 1887, and the issue was approved by the voters. The Denver, Memphis and Atlantic Railroad began laying their roadbed before the bond issue was passed. All the conditions were met by this railroad and the bonds agreed upon were issued in its name. The first time table of the Denver, Memphis and Atlantic appeared in the Wichita Standard, September 22, 1887. The name of the road was changed to Missouri Pacific, in October, 1887. The railroad has been operated continuously by the Missouri Pacific Railroad since October, 1887.

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13 Ibid.
15 Wichita Standard, October 27, 1887.
Early Years in Wichita County

Chapter IV
CHAPTER V

EARLY YEARS IN WICHITA COUNTY

The winter of 1888 was very severe and the people of Wichita county were little prepared for it. The newspapers of eastern Kansas and eastern states wrote in detail of the suffering among the stricken settlers in the western counties of Kansas. Nine deaths were reported in Wichita county alone. Charles Triplett, editor of the *Wichita Standard*, at first denied any knowledge of deaths due to the severe weather but later stated that one man died because he was foolhardy enough to go out in a blizzard. He finally conceded that Wichita county had had

... a pretty severe winter, for western Kansas, many of our settlers were illy prepared for its emergencies, but with it all there is but little discouragement manifested, and in nearly every instance we hear repeated anticipations of a favorable season and good crops for 1888. But very few, if any, will forsake the country in the spring, while the migration promises to be unusually great.1

As there is no natural fuel in western Kansas, and shipments from the east did not fill the needs of the people the severe winter resulted in the fuel supply running low. A party of Leoti residents were said to have boarded a train and forcibly taken a large shipment of coal, an incident which Mr. Triplett admitted, but, he said, "the coal was taken with no show of force."2

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1 *Wichita Standard*, January 19, 1888.

A public meeting was held February 2, 1888, to draw up and publish a pamphlet denying the disaster caused by the late blizzards. This pamphlet, published the same day by the Wichita Standard, and the Leoti Transcript, was distributed in eastern Kansas to dispel the fears of would-be settlers.

The wheat crop of 1888 which had been the last remaining hope of the settlers throughout the winter of 1888, failed to come up to expectations, with few harvesting enough for seed. The 1889 crop was no better than the crop of 1888, resulting in about 700 of the 2750 people leaving Wichita county. The Leoti Standard, previously the Wichita Standard, continued giving optimistic praise to the future "Garden spot of the world." However, notices of lands to be sold by the sheriff for taxes began appearing in the pages of the Standard in the spring and summer of 1890 by the hundreds. Publications of mortgage foreclosures appeared in even greater number. The editor of the Standard still came to the defense of the county and explained that these lands were not the lands of the bona fide settlers. They were lands which had been taken up by school teachers, fortune hunters, boomers, and others who had never planned to stay in the county. However, among the owners of these lands were many of the men previously classified by Triplett as the "real old settlers."

Throughout the spring of 1890 the crops suffered from violent wind and dust storms. In April, even the indomitable Mr. Triplett was beginning to get discouraged, and admitted that the crops were being ruined by the hot, dry winds. Sealed bids were let by the county
commissioners for the keeping of the poor, indicating that the picture in Wichita county was not too bright.¹

1891 is a year that the old timers remember above any other. Little of anything had been produced in Wichita county in the three preceding years. Supplies were short, and so were tempers. Vacant buildings were in the majority in Leoti and Coronado was almost vacant. Many of the merchants had lost everything, while others were just barely hanging on. Mr. Triplett complained of wanton destruction of vacant buildings, trees, and shrubs, streets and sidewalks by wandering livestock. The herd law and a city ordinance prohibiting livestock running loose on the streets had been in effect for about five years, and Mr. Triplett thought that it was about time to enforce the law.²

The fortunes of the settlers took a turn for the better in the summer of 1891 with the production of the first profitable wheat crop. This crop, valued at $200,000, was more than the total production of wheat in Wichita county in the preceding three years. By December the Standard was able to report that the county and town were both enjoying the "greatest prosperity".³ Six new business

³A contract to feed and clothe the poor and needy in the county was awarded to that person who agreed to fulfill the needs of these people for the least amount of expense to the county.


⁵Standard, December 31, 1891.
establishments had been built during the preceding three months; a wholesale flour and feed store, a photography gallery, a general merchandise store, a short order lunch room, and a feed mill. A new bank opened for business for the first time February 9, 1892. This bank has operated in Leoti since that date as the First State Bank, and is the only bank in Wichita county.

The most significant development of 1892, resulting from the wheat crop of 1891, was the arrival of about 26 German families from Ellis county. The advance guard arrived in Leoti March 25, in search of a suitable location for a settlement. The prospects in Wichita county seemed excellent, so land was purchased, and the new settlers immediately went to work turning sod. The Standard said, "It begins to look like we would soon have our county well settled again, but by a class we have not had yet -- good farmers . . ." 7

Little wheat was harvested in 1892, and the prospects in the spring of '93 were not good. The new German settlers applied to the county commissioners for assistance, asking that the county either care for them until the next crop season, or stand good for their account at the stores. 8 The commissioners told them that they could not do their "pauper business in that wholesale manner," 9

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6Standard, February 11, 1892.
7Ibid., March 31, 1892.
8Ibid., June 29, 1893.
9Ibid., June 29, 1893.
and fourteen families left the county.¹⁰

In spite of the hard times of the late eighties and early nineties, the people of Wichita county enjoyed themselves. During any week one could attend a box social, a pie social, a party, or just a get-together at one of the churches or schools in the county. School picnics were a favorite, especially among the young people. The school terms in Wichita county during this period varied from three months to nine months, and a picnic or party was held at the end of each term. Anyone who would add to the refreshments was invited, and everyone had a good time.

There were many social organizations, the most prominent during the nineties being the Sons of Veterans. This organization was very active, not only socially, but in the affairs of the community and county they were the driving force.

The Old Settlers' Picnic and the County Fair were the outstanding events of the year. The first County Fair was organized in 1890, one year after the first Old Settlers' Picnic at Sunnyside, in the northeastern part of the county.¹¹ In addition to the social activities already mentioned, bicycle riding and bicycle clubs became a fad in the late nineties.

The United States, as a result of the Spanish-American War


¹¹Standard, August 16, 1889.
of 1898, became a world power and embarked on a career of imperialism, but apparently the people of Wichita county were not the least bit impressed. A few boys "joined up", and there was some talk of forming a National Guard Company in Leoti, but except for the flag-waving, that was all of Wichita county's contribution to the Spanish-American War.

The downward trend in the population which had started in 1888 reached its lowest point in 1898, and began slowly to move upward. A very good wheat crop in 1898, and the improving economic conditions encouraged new settlers, as well as making life more bearable to the hard-pressed settlers of Wichita county. The first eleven years of Wichita county's economic history may be characterized in four words: drouth, blizzard, depression, and failure.

SCHOOLS

The first school in Wichita county was held at Leoti in a 14 x 24 foot building erected on the corner where the Methodist church now stands. The first term began in October, 1886 and lasted about three months. Since that time the school system

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11Standard, August 16, 1889.
12Ibid., June 8, 1899.
13See Appendix, Graph 4. The total value of the crop was $108,390.24.
in Wichita county has experienced several reorganizations, and the little school building which served as the first school was replaced in 1889 by a two story brick building built on the site of the present grade school. It was a $10,000 structure, and the pride of Leoti.

Leoti is in school district #1, organized in 1886. Mrs. Martha P. Gray, elected County Superintendent of Schools in the February 8, 1887 election, organized districts 2 to 19 inclusive. Mr. E. Corman, elected in November, 1887, organized districts 20-48, completing the organization April 23, 1888. Each succeeding county superintendent reorganized districts as the population fluctuated, but few of these were recorded. By 1930, there were still 39 school districts in Wichita county. These were further reduced to 35 in 1943. A school reorganization meeting was held January 9, 1947, at which the number of elementary districts was reduced to the present number, twelve.

The first high school in the county was held in Leoti in 1891, and the first class graduated in the spring of 1894. The class included: Maude Jones, William Caldwell, Clayton Dickey, Darrell Riley, Clyde Allphin, and James Ford.

15School Record of Wichita County, pp. 1-10.
17Ibid., May 17, 1894.

Clayton Dickey and Clyde Allphin later served Wichita county as county attorneys. See Appendix C.
The high school was organized as a county high school in 1910, but classes were still held on the second floor of the Leoti Grade School building, until 1923, \(^\text{18}\) when the high school moved into an old garage building purchased and fitted out for classes by the county commissioners. This structure, with the addition of an auditorium-gym, served as the high school until the present building was constructed in 1926. \(^\text{19}\)

**CHURCHES**

The First Methodist Church was the first church built in Wichita county. It was organized in January, 1886, by people of different denominations who felt the need of a church. In March the Reverend C. K. Woodson was sent as pastor. Two hundred and fifty dollars was secured from the Methodist Board of Church Extension and the building was soon ready for dedication. The money could not be raised among the congregation to complete payment for the church, so the presiding elder, A. P. George went to the saloon and collected the needed amount from the cowboys. \(^\text{20}\) The church was built on the corner where the electric power plant stands, and was

\(^{18}\) The Grade School building, built in 1889, was destroyed by a tornado in August, 1923. See Chapter VII.

\(^{19}\) Standard, March 6, 1924.

\(^{20}\) Ibid.
later moved to the location the Methodist Church now occupies.\textsuperscript{21}

The Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Leoti was organized on August 8, 1886, with twelve charter members. The first church building owned by the church was a square front business building purchased and moved to Leoti from Coronado, in 1890. The cost of the building was about $800.\textsuperscript{22}

The history of the St. Mary's Catholic Church in Marienthal began in 1892 with the arrival of the German settlers in Wichita county. They settled east of Coronado, and were undecided whether to build their church in Coronado or Halcyon. They finally compromised on a location half way between the two towns, and named their new community Marienthal after the village from which many of them had come in Russia.

An occasional Mass was held at the home of Adam Ernst in Coronado until the spring of 1893 when an old frame house was bought in Coronado and a church erected from the lumber. Its dimensions were 43 feet long, 21 feet wide and 14 feet high, and its turret housed two inharmonious bells.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{21}The Methodist Church in Leoti was destroyed by the tornado of 1923, and the present building was built the following year.

\textsuperscript{22}This building was also damaged by the tornado of 1923, and replaced by a building donated by the Presbyterian Board of Church Erection, secured through the efforts of one J. G. Donnell of Hutchinson, and dedicated in September, 1924. This information was taken from "A History of the Leoti Presbyterian Church", compiled by its members in 1938.

\textsuperscript{23}Advance Register, March 17, 1953.

This church was replaced by a $20,000 structure in 1909, and was the most valuable church in the county until 1953, when the new First Baptist Church was built in Leoti at a cost of about $50,000.
By 1915 there were twelve churches in Wichita county, one less than there are in the county in 1954. Four of the present churches are in Leoti, one in Marienthal, and the others in rural areas. There are three Methodist Churches: at Leoti, Pleasant Valley, and Lydia; two Catholic, at Marienthal and St. Theresa; two Baptist, both in Leoti; two Presbyterian, at Leoti and Garwood; one Lutheran, at Lydia; one Nazarene, northwest of Leoti; one Free Methodist, northeast of Leoti; and the Community Church, south of Leoti. 24

24Many of these churches have been in the county for years, some of them since the '80's, but no record was available of their organization dates. The First Baptist Church has been in existence since 1890. The most recent church is the Second Baptist Church which was organized in Leoti in 1954 and now occupies the old church which the First Baptist congregation had abandoned.
Progress to World War I

Chapter VI
Those hardy souls who stayed in Leoti and Wichita county during the trying times of the nineties were not only willing to stay, but were eager to make some improvement in their environment. It was difficult work, but gradually improvement was made.

The first important development in manufacturing was the building of a flour mill. ¹ Talk of a mill began in 1891. The Missouri Pacific railroad had promised a bonus to the first person who would build a mill. A Mr. Shockney agreed to put up the mill if he could find financial backing. This he received from a Mr. Hawkes, and the contract for building the mill was let in January, 1893. By June, the mill was completed, and the machinery was put into operation. ² The mill was expected to add to the prosperity of the community, but it was built at a very unfortunate time. In the same year, drouth and depression struck. The mill was never a paying proposition, and was shut down more often than it was running during its thirty years of existence.

The next experiment with industry was a creamery. In November,

¹The Cowan Brick Works was actually the first industry. It operated for a few months in 1887, producing brick for three stores and one house. Vet Coats still lives in the house built from the brick. None of the stores remain.

²Standard, June 8, 1893.
1895 Eugene Tilleux spoke to a group of Wichita county citizens, about building a creamery. By December, an organization had been formed, and subscriptions were being sold. On April 30, 1896 the Lecti Skim House began business. This venture, though not a complete failure, was never a real success. It alternately opened and closed over a period of about 20 years, never doing quite enough business to pay dividends.

The first telephone company began stringing wires in Leoti in January, 1904. The Dickey brothers, John, Lew, and Clayt, received a carload of poles and wire in that month, and within a few months, most residents of the county had telephone service. This was not as big a project as it would appear. The population of the county in 1904 was 1291, 157 of whom lived in Leoti. The rural lines were barbed wire wrapped around fence posts. Higher poles were used only over roads. It was a simple system, but apparently very satisfactory.

About the same time that the telephone system was established, the people of Leoti began to discuss the need for electricity. A few meetings were held to discuss a lighting system, but the cost seemed prohibitive. Finally, in 1906, L. M. Kimsey, of the

3Standard, April 30, 1896.

4W. C. Dickey, personal interview, June 22, 1954. This is the same "Clayt" Dickey, mentioned above.

Leoti Flour Mill, offered to furnish lights from a "200 light system" for $250 a month. He agreed to install the generator in his mill. This was approved, the contract was made, and the plant began to function in June, 1906.  

As the population of Leoti increased and as more appliances were developed, the little system in the mill became entirely unsatisfactory. But for the time being it served the needs of Leoti residents.

An improvement for the county was realized March 17, 1917, with the dedication of the Wichita County Court House. Until that time, Wichita county had no satisfactory court house. The county offices were in rented space until 1897 when the abandoned Santa Fe depot was purchased. The depot was fitted out for court room and offices, however some of the offices remained in the Wichita House, which was rented by the county.

Court house bond elections had been called in 1890 and 1893 but both elections had been rescinded by the county commissioners. A third bond election in November, 1905 failed because the voters felt the cost was too high and it was not until April 25, 1916 that the issue was settled with approval and funds granted for a court house.

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7Ibid., March 17, 1917.
The $34,312 contract for building and furnishing the new court	house was awarded to William Foley of Hutchinson. The corner stone was
laid in September, 1916. The main speaker at this ceremony was Wichita
county's nineteen year old county attorney, Herschel Washington, who
was still a student at the Kansas University Law School.\(^9\) The building
was dedicated March 17, 1917, 30 years and 3 months after the county
was organized.

The farmers of Wichita county suffered another series of poor
crops from 1908-1918, and all thought of improvement was dropped. By
the time another good crop was harvested, the United States had
entered the first World War.

In spite of the poor crops and lack of prosperity in Wichita
county, there seemed to be enough entertainment to keep the minds of
the people off their misfortunes. During the month of January, 1904,
there were two masquerade balls, two box socials, four parties, and a
dance sponsored by the city baseball team.\(^10\)

The Leoti Military Band gave a public concert January 3, 1907,
which was so well received that a meeting was held to discuss raising
money to hire a full time bandmaster. The money was raised and feelers
were sent out for a good band leader who would like to make $82.50
a month.\(^11\)


\(^10\) Standard, January 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31, 1904.

\(^11\) Standard, January 10, 1907. There is no record that a
bandmaster was ever hired.
The first World War had begun in Europe in 1914 and President Woodrow Wilson was trying desperately to keep the United States out of it, but the people of Wichita county were little disturbed by the "goings on" in Europe. They showed little interest in the war until 1917 when the United States entered the conflict, then all seemed eager to do their part. The first to volunteer in Wichita county were Charles Swan, Paul Cope, Theo Glenn, Walter Frank, and H. Farmer, who enlisted in the Navy. Seventy-three men from Wichita county served in the armed forces during World War I.

Little improvement was made in Wichita county during the course of the war, as the men were busy with "war councils," agricultural meetings, and Victory War Loan Drives. The women were busy sewing and knitting for the boys in khaki either directly or through the Red Cross.

The first war fund for the Red Cross gave Wichita county a quota of $1,000, which was exceeded by $500. The "War Council" was organized on March 21, 1918 with C. A. Freeland, president, and M. J. Musser, secretary. Mayor Leonard Rewerts appointed the following committee to hold meetings throughout the county: Vet Coats,

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12 Ibid., April 12, 1917.
13 Memorial to Wichita County Veterans of World Wars I and II, on the court house lawn in Leoti.
14 Standard, May 23, 1918.
W. C. Dickey, Dean Trueblood, Ross Hollister, and G. W. Sidwell. On January 10, the farmers met and organized a committee to solve "perplexing agricultural problems . . . make farming easier and help to win the war . . ." An interesting advertisement which appeared in the Leoti Standard in 1919-18 was the "Stande-Make a Tractor". A pair of rear wheels with lugs were to be attached to the rear axle of any automobile, so that that automobile could serve as a tractor. The ad stated further, "Enlist your Ford -- Your Country Needs It."

\[^{15}\text{Standard, March 21, 1918.}\]
\[^{16}\text{Ibid., January 10, 1918.}\]
The Post-War Boom

Chapter VII
CHAPTER VII

THE POST-WAR BOOM

Crops in Wichita county were generally poor from the turn of the century until 1918, with the exception of the wheat crop of 1906. From 1918 to 1932, crops were generally good.1 The crops of 1924, 1928 and 1932 were especially good.2 During many of these years, however, the price of farm products was so low that it was actually not profitable to harvest and market them.

The outlook was good enough from 1914 to 1926 to encourage a great number of new settlers to move to Wichita county. The population of Wichita county in 1914 was 1410, from that year to 1926 there was an increase of almost 58%. During the twelve year period, the population had risen from 1410 to 2219. In the next two years, owing to poor crops, the population decreased. A bumper crop of corn was harvested in 1928, and the trend in the population turned upward once more. The peak of the population curve was reached in 1932, just at the time that the general depression of the 1930's was seriously felt. The population in 1932 was 2612, within 400 of the census report of 1888.3 Leoti, in 1932 had a population of 805, the largest in its history to that time.

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1See Appendix B, Graph 3.

2The only big corn crops in Wichita county were recorded in these years, and 1938.

3See Appendix B, Graph 1.
On August 4, 1923, Leoti suffered its greatest disaster. About 5:10 P.M. of that day, a tornado swept through the town, leaving in its wake several people injured, some buildings completely destroyed and few standing that did not show marks of the catastrophe.  

The storm entered the town from the west but did no serious damage until the residence of D. F. Carter was partially unroofed. From there, it went almost due east, taking most of the shingles from Mrs. Reinheimer's residence, the roof off the Broadway Hotel, demolishing the Methodist Church, J. R. Stuarts Livery barn, the post office and printing office, G. R. Sharp's Confectionary, the Leoti Mercantile Building, Metheney and Tedrow's storage building, and J. Cibulski's implement shed. The Leoti State Bank building, D. F. Carter's office, W. B. Washington's law office, E. F. Clayton's building, Mrs. Leverich's store, and the Acacia Hotel were badly wrecked, but were soon repaired.

The old school building which had been built of soft brick and limewater mortar in 1888 was damaged by the tornado. The north end caved in, and a committee was formed to try to start a movement for a new school. The report of the committee stated in part, "... the building had been condemned and considered unsafe, not so much from the inside but from falling bricks and window keys ..."  

Standard, August 9, 1923.

Standard, August 30, 1930.
A grade school bond election was held September 6, 1923, and the issue passed. Work began on the new school building in the first week of October, 1923, and was finished in time for school to be held in it in the fall of 1924. In the meantime the elementary classes were held in the T. Cibulski building until the new building was completed. High school classes were held in the court house until the county commissioners purchased a garage and fitted it for classes.

The county high school had been organized in 1910, and since then had held classes in the Leoti Grade School building. In July, 1925, a County High School bond election was held and the issue passed, 442-242. The bonds were sold the first of September, and a site was purchased from H. H. Spear two weeks later. The site was north of the Kansas-Colorado Boulevard, and east of the Leoti-Wallace Road. The $58,500 contract for the construction of the building was awarded to William R. Sterrer, of St. Francis, just four weeks after the bonds had been sold. The building was completed in August, 1926.

Leoti had been plagued throughout the first half of the twentieth century with a lighting problem. In 1906, the problem had been temporarily solved by installing the little generator in

6 Ibid., September 2, 1924.
7 Ibid., September 24, 1925.
the Leoti Flour Mill. This arrangement was not only unsatisfactory, it failed to function about one-third of the time.

Serious talk about a municipal electric plant was resumed in 1919. The city council finally called a bond election in December, 1920 to raise $17,000. This bond issue passed, but nothing came of it. In May, another bond election was held, raising the amount to $24,000. The contract for the plant was awarded and by September 29, 1920, the plant was in running order.

In January, 1926, Mayor D. F. Carter was doing all he could to reduce the maintenance cost of the electric plant. However, all effort seemed to be useless. Then in November, 1928, the plant burned and was almost a total loss. The next week temporary arrangements were made with the Western Light and Power Company for installation of a temporary plant.

Several alternatives were offered to the voters of Leoti during the next year. The plant could be rebuilt, leased to a utility company who would rebuild it, or sell it. In March, 1930, the voters decided to sell and in May the Inland Utilities Company bought and rebuilt the plant, continuing to provide power for Leoti until 1951. Electricity has since been furnished by the Wheatland Electric Cooperative Association.

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8Discussed in Chapter VI.

9Standard, September 29, 1920.
During the "roaring twenties" three other major improvements were made or started in Leoti. On July 8, 1922, for the first time, a public library was opened. In February, 1928, a volunteer fire department was organized and in 1931, the city water system was installed.

As early as 1920, there had been talk of a city water system, however, nothing was done about it until 1930. In September of that year bonds were issued, and bids were called for. The contract for the well drilling and pipe laying was awarded in October, and by the end of that month, the well had been drilled and the mains were ready to lay. The system was tested the day after the new year began, and water flowed in the system on January 8, 1931.\(^{10}\)

Two fires have created havoc in Leoti. The first was in 1890, when three business buildings were destroyed by fire. The other destroyed two buildings on Main Street in 1893. Every fire was a hazard, and if it had any start at all, the bucket brigade had no chance of putting it out. The first fire-fighting equipment purchased by the city was the "chemical outfit" purchased in December, 1927 at a cost of $600.\(^{11}\) They also purchased a new truck and building to house it. The total cost of the new equipment was slightly over $1,000. A volunteer fire department was

\(^{10}\)Standard, January 8, 1931.

\(^{11}\)Standard, December 29, 1927.
organized in February, 1928,\textsuperscript{12} with the following officers: C. E. Gorsuch, chief; S. F. Askey, assistant chief; and O. A. Holmes, secretary-treasurer. The volunteer fire department has functioned since 1928 in Leoti.

\textsuperscript{12}Standard, February 9, 1928.
The Depression Period

Chapter VIII
CHAPTER VIII

THE DEPRESSION PERIOD

The wheat crop of 1931 in Wichita county was a record breaker. Over two million bushels of wheat were raised for the first time on record. Two million bushels of wheat -- at 25 cents a bushel.

The Leoti State Bank failed to open its doors Friday morning, August 11, 1932, following a decision of the directors to suspend banking operations and so notify the banking department. The closing was brought about by overloaning, slow collections, and the growing tightness of money due to live stock and farm prices in general. The depositors were assured that they would suffer only a small loss. Little excitement was caused by the bank's closing, and there appeared to be no panic shown among its depositors.\(^1\)

The people of Wichita county were apparently little disturbed by the bank closing, and they were able to joke about the 25 cent wheat. Few were disturbed greatly by the dry weather. All of these conditions were fairly normal in Wichita county. There was only a small decrease in population from 1932 to 1933, and an even smaller drop from 1933 to 1934.\(^2\) The decrease which began in 1932 continued until 1944. The total decrease during the twelve year period was 593, or about one-fifth of the total 1932 population.

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\(^1\)Standard, August 18, 1932.

\(^2\)See Appendix B, Graph 1.
Those who stayed in Wichita county experienced some of the worst times known to Western Kansas. Dust storms, jack-rabbits, grasshoppers, green worms, roaches, centipedes, — these are many uncomfortable experiences that the people of Wichita county and Western Kansas experienced during the next five years.

Reemployment service, relief rolls, W. P. A. and P. W. A. kept many people employed during the dark days of the early thirties. Through these agencies, the city of Leoti was able to build some long needed sidewalks, a city hall, and an addition on the grade school building. The A. A. A. was organized to help the farmer stay alive and on the job. Many of the practices inaugurated by the latter came to stay and have made farming more profitable in Western Kansas. The outstanding practice which the A. A. A. forced the farmer to use was that of summer-fallowing, the purpose of which is to conserve the limited moisture. This practice had been used to a limited degree before the thirties, but it was not then a general practice, as it is now.

Many of the boys of the county went to the C. C. C. camps. The first quota of boys: Charles Fetsch, Andy Askey, Tom Riddiough, and Robert Anderson, left the county May 1, 1933.

The County Relief Group was organized in October, 1932. This was the first relief organization in Wichita county. W. P. Kliesen, chairman of the group enumerated the requirements for receiving relief as follows: "There will be no aid given to any one who maintains an auto for pleasure; plays pool; attends the movies;
smokes cigarettes ... a 60 day residence in the county is necessary also."

The Wichita County Reemployment program was inaugurated in January, 1933. The first project undertaken by this program was hauling trash from undesirable places. They later were responsible for putting in sidewalks, sanding streets and other similar projects. The Reemployment program was superseded by the later W. P. A. and P. W. A.

Through the W. P. A. Leoti was able to improve its city park and build a shelter there. The P. W. A. helped to build a city hall and an addition to the Grade School building.

The school board of District #1, Leoti, asked for funds with which to build an addition to their building, in September, 1933. The building was contracted through the P. W. A. Actually, the federal government loaned the school district $11,000 and made it a gift of $4,000. A bond issue was approved by the voters on July 27, 1934. The addition was begun in the fall of 1934, and completed in June, 1935.

In the summer of 1934, the farmers of Wichita county declared war on the jack rabbit. In recent years the jack rabbits had become so numerous that they were severely damaging crops. Strychnine

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3 Standard, October 6, 1932.
4 Standard, July 26, 1934.
poison bait failed to reduce the rabbit population, organized hunts were hardly more effective. Finally, rabbit drives were organized to round up the thousands of rabbits. A big percentage of the population of Wichita county was involved in these drives. A certain area would be selected and surrounded by men and boys. In the center of this area a corral was constructed of snow-fence. The circle gradually closed in toward the corral driving the rabbits before it. A few men were stationed outside the circle to shoot any rabbits that might break through. The rabbits were driven into the corral and killed with clubs. Thousands of rabbits were killed in this manner during the fall of 1934.

On Thursday afternoon, February 21, 1935, a huge black cloud rolled into Wichita county from the north. It blotted out the sun, turning day into night. It created a more total darkness than an eclipse of the sun. There was nothing in the cloud except wind and dust. The cloud was so dense that electric lights would pierce it for only a few feet. Automobiles were stalled on the roads by the suffocating dust. Those who were unfortunate enough to be caught away from home were forced to wait until the cloud had proceeded southward before they could find their way home. This was the first of the dust storms which rolled over the Great Plains area in the middle thirties.5

The following Sunday another severe dust storm struck the county. This one was as bad as the first storm. Porches were filled with dirt. Fences and entire homesteads were covered with the fine silt. The short buffalo grass was covered, making it impossible for cattle and other livestock to find grazing. The storms continued throughout the spring and summer of 1935. A few less severe storms appeared in the spring of 1936. Several years of hard work were required to clear fence rows, farmsteads, and level the fields into which the dust had drifted.

As if the jack rabbits and the dust storms were not enough, the farmers were plagued with more grasshoppers than usual during the thirties. Many a field of wheat was destroyed by these insects. It became necessary to spread poison bait for grasshoppers whenever anything was planted.⁶

No good crop was harvested in Wichita county from 1932 to 1940. The crops had been improving since 1936, but the first really good crop to be harvested was the wheat crop of 1941, which was valued at almost one and one-quarter million dollars. During this eight year period, the population of the county had decreased from 2612, to 2061, about twenty-one percent. In other words, about one out of every five persons in Wichita county in 1932, were no longer there in 1941.

⁶Standard, September 6, 1934.
The outlook was better as the thirties ended. The wheat had proved much better the last two seasons, and in March, 1939, Walter Gorsuch, of Selkirk, had drilled an irrigation well which was proving that irrigation for Wichita county was possible.\footnote{Standard, March 30, 1939.} There were other wells drilled in 1939 and 1940, and more were going down. This was the real beginning of the industry which had been foreseen in 1888.\footnote{The history of irrigation in Wichita county given in Chapter IX.} A living can be made by raising wheat on dry land in Wichita county, but wheat farming will not support a larger population than is at present living within the county.
The
Recovery Period

Chapter IX
The recovery period, as far as better crops are concerned, began in 1937. But in spite of better crops and rising prices for farm products, the population of Wichita county continued to drop until 1944 when it reached the lowest figure the county had known since 1928. From that date to 1954 Wichita county experienced a steady increase in population. Several factors contributed to this decrease in population after the economic situation began to improve. Many farmers who had stayed in the county throughout the worst period were simply worn out from the long struggle, and when they were financially able, they left for what they considered more desirable environments. Many young men joined the armed forces, either voluntarily or through selective service, and many others left to enter defense plants.

During the period of World War II there was a tremendous shortage of farm labor. In spite of this shortage of help, Wichita county produced far more wheat and other grain crops than during any other period in its history, up to that time. The value of the wheat crop during the six-year period from 1941-1946 averaged $2,497,666. This figure is more than four times the value of any single wheat crop previously harvested.1

1Appendix B, Graph 3.
The first "draftees", Julian LeRoy Heath, Carl F. Bauck, Melville Hayes, Gordon Oberheim and John Sherman Heath, left Leoti in February, 1941. One hundred and seventy men from Wichita county served in the armed forces between 1941 and 1946.2

The first casualty suffered by Wichita county in the war was Lt. Morgan McGowan, who was with the U. S. Army Air Force in the Philippine Islands. He was shot down in combat with Japanese planes in the islands in December, 1941.3

Tire rationing, food rationing, gas rationing, junk rallies, bond rallies, fund-raising campaigns for the U. S. O. and the Red Cross, and victory gardens helped to keep the people at home busy. In the meantime, the farmers were busy trying to handle their work with little help, while contributing heavily to money raising campaigns.

In January, 1943, even the engine from the old light plant went to war. It was removed by the Inland Utilities Company and shipped to Fort Sumner, New Mexico. The engine had been used in recent years only as a standby in case the lines went down between Scott City and Leoti.4

2Memorial to Wichita County Veterans of World Wars I and II, on the Wichita County Court House lawn in Leoti.

3Standard, December 25, 1941.

4Ibid., January 7, 1943.
For a time in 1943, Leoti was not only short of farm labor, and a standby electric system, but they also were without a barber.⁵

Numerous advances have been made in Leoti and Wichita county since World War II ended in 1945. Leoti has improved its streets, put in a sewer system, secured natural gas, made an addition to its Grade School building, and has made a number of other minor improvements in the last nine years. The county has built a county hospital, brought in R. E. A., improved its county and state roads, and has recently voted bonds for a much needed building program for the Wichita County Community High School.

The need for a sewer system was discussed at length in 1931. But due to the depression and drought years, nothing came of the talk. It was again postponed by the lack of labor and materials during the course of the war. The city council began proceedings to secure a sewer system in May, 1946. The contract for the system was awarded to Burt and Binford of Hutchinson for $89,324.05.⁶ The materials for the sewer began arriving in September. In June, 1947, the city council set up a series of rules to be followed in installing plumbing, preparatory to hooking up to the new sewer system. In October the sewer was inspected and declared ready for use.⁷

⁵Standard, September 2, 1943
⁶Ibid., May 23, 1946.
⁷Ibid., October 30, 1947.
Natural gas was also talked of in the early thirties before the depression became serious. Interest in it was resumed in September, 1945, when a survey of probable gas users was taken. Mayor R. B. Stewart and the city council began making inquiries, and in September, 1946, the Kansas-Nebraska Natural Gas Company indicated that they were interested in developing a project in Leoti. After nearly two years of discussion and making preparations, work began on laying the gas mains in May, 1948. The lines were laid in June, and in August Leoti had natural gas.

A rural electrification drive was begun in July, 1946. The first meeting was held in September. The Wheatland Electric Cooperative Association was organized to furnish electricity for Scott, Wichita, and Greeley counties. The line from Scott City, where the plant is located, to Leoti was started in August, 1951. The first line in Wichita county to be energized from the new plant was the line northeast of Marienthal, on March 3, 1951.

A $50,000 bond issue passed in the county in October, 1947 for the purpose of building a county hospital. An earlier bond issue had passed, raising $75,000 for the same purpose. The new, modern 12-bed hospital was completed in August, 1949, and dedicated December 18. The hospital opened the following week and the first patient admitted to the hospital, Mrs. Dave Moffat, gave birth to a...

8 Standard, August 2, 1948.
9 Ibid., December 27, 1949.
son, Robert Gene Moffat.

Trouble appeared in the new hospital setup in April, 1951.

The entire hospital board resigned following the resignation of the hospital supervisor, Miss Edith Hinthorn,

... and a heated community argument about whether a doctor's office space should be rented out in the building. The board had appointed a new supervisor, Miss Inna Olson. Later, she resigned effective April 24, Mrs. Clarence Heath, the laboratory technician, resigned effective April 30. All of the resignations have been effective this week.

The present ... board is making arrangements to rent the hospital to some ecclesiastical organization which will operate the business and have charge of the entire procedure.

Up to this time this community has tried to run the hospital as a public venture, but it has been a failure insofar as a peaceful, cooperative picture in this city and county is concerned.

If the premises cannot be rented, the board says the building will be locked up. 10

The board could make no satisfactory arrangements so the hospital was closed in November, less than two years after its grand opening.

Early in 1952 a joint meeting of the hospital board and county commissioners was held with Dr. E. R. Beiderwell, of Garden City, in attendance. With Dr. Beiderwell's promise to locate in Leoti, the board decided to reopen the hospital. It was opened in February, 1952, and has operated since.

A bond election for an addition to the Grade School in Leoti was held in 1945, and the issue passed. Nothing could be built at

10 Standard, April 19, 1951.
that time because of World War II, so the actual construction of the new addition was delayed until the fall of 1948. The construction was completed a year later. The old gym was made into a lunchroom, with a very modern kitchen on the old stage. A new auditorium-gymnasium was added to the building, along with a new library and study hall.  

A bond election was held at about the same time for a much needed building program for the high school, but that issue failed to pass. Another election was held in May, 1954, and this time the issue passed. Plans are not yet complete for the high school addition, but a new auditorium-gym, shop, class-room space, and other improvements are in the plans. It is an ambitious program and will give Wichita county a first class high school building.

IRRIGATION IN WICHITA COUNTY

As early as 1888 irrigation was the object of a good deal of thought and talk. The first actual experiment in irrigation in Wichita county was begun in 1890. The Southwestern Irrigation Company tried to draw water from the dry bed of the Whitewoman Creek by digging a series of ditches and building small dams. This attempt was a total failure.

A forty acre tract on the C. R. Allphin farm just west of

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11 R. B. Stewart, interview, June 23, 1943.  
Mr. Stewart is the principal of the Leoti Grade School.
Leoti was leased to the state for an experimental well and irrigation project in May, 1895. G. B. Lawrence, of Tribune, was given the contract to put in the well, and Orra Wikoff was given the contract to construct a reservoir.\textsuperscript{12} The output of the well was estimated at 40 gallons a minute, and it was to have irrigated 10 acres. On August 20, 1895, this item appeared in the Leoti Standard, "The pump that fell to the bottom of the state irrigation well a few weeks ago has been raised after considerable difficulty and is now in running order once more." Judge Sutton, overseer of the irrigation project stated in October that the project had been delayed by gross negligence and carelessness.\textsuperscript{13} By January, 1896, the high winds and improper care of the mill, pump and well had about destroyed the project, and it was given up as a total failure.

Several private projects were being tried out during this same period. One of the most notable was that of G. W. Wineinger, who had several acres of orchard under irrigation. He had apple, plum, cherry, peaches, and mulberry trees. This orchard was about 12 miles north-west of Leoti. There is no existing evidence that this experiment was ever successful.

Frank E. Grimes, the representative from Wichita county said in 1894, "... All that the people of the western counties ask is that the state determine if there is sufficient water under us to

\textsuperscript{12}Standard, May 8, 1890.

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., October 17, 1895.

A windmill was used for the pumping.
irrigate 10, 20, or 40 acres on each quarter section of land...

The people of Wichita county did not want half-baked experiments. They wanted evidence that irrigation was a paying proposition. The experiment of 1895 on the Allphin farm proved nothing, and a later experiment in 1913 was almost as useless.

Near the location of Walter Gorsuch's first well, the state had dug six wells in 1913. They were connected by an underground tunnel and pumped with one centrifugal pump. The experiment was carried on for several years, but was not successful due to the lack of proper equipment. The land was deeded back to the county in 1917.15

H. C. Wolfenbarger installed an irrigation pump on the Beaver to utilize the water from that stream for irrigation purposes in the fall of 1925. He used a large gasoline engine which pumped about 2500 gallons a minute.16 This was an expensive experiment, but it about paid for itself.

Irrigation as a full time business began in Wichita county in 1939. Walter Gorsuch, of Selkirk, drilled a 150 foot well in March, which produced from 1150 to 1500 gallons of water per minute.17 In 1954, Walter Gorsuch and Son have seven irrigation wells and are

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14Topeka Daily Capital, September 26, 1894.
16Standard, December 31, 1925.
17Standard, March 30, 1939.
irrigating roughly twelve hundred acres of land.\(^{18}\)

At about the same time that the first Gorsuch well was going in, Tony Berning and John Bauer were drilling wells. Before the end of 1939 there were at least a half dozen wells in the county. World War II slowed the movement, but did not stop it.

After the war irrigation became "a million dollar industry in Wichita County, growing from a half dozen wells to nearly fifty . . ." by the summer of 1948.\(^{19}\)

Testing, drilling, purchase of new equipment and the preparation of land for each well runs into thousands . . . Wells are going down so fast one finds it difficult to keep up with the activity of some 2,880 quarter sections in Wichita county. Even the local farm bureau office is having a bit of trouble keeping up with our oldest industry, irrigation . . . it appears it is here to stay . . . with new methods for drilling . . . new power units, and heavy, modern machinery to level and contour the nearly level countryside. The go sign for irrigation was given by the announcement of the geologist that there is plenty of water down below the irrigation district here.\(^{20}\)

Wichita county rated fifth in Kansas counties in total acres under irrigation in 1949. The leading county at that time was Finney county with 65,000 acres compared to Wichita county's 9,000 acres under irrigation. Five years later, the total acreage of irrigated land in Wichita county is approximately 25,000

\(^{18}\)Paul E. Harbison, personal interview, June 23, 1954. Mr. Harbison is the director of the Soil Conservation Service in Wichita county.

\(^{19}\)Standard, March 25, 1948.

\(^{20}\)Ibid.
which acres are being irrigated from 123 wells. 21

Twenty-five dollars an acre is considered a fair return on dry land in Scott county, compared to a return of $125 an acre of irrigated land. 22 No estimate has been made on the same comparative basis in Wichita county, but it is not likely to vary very much. If one-third of Wichita county could be put under irrigation the annual income of the county would be increased by approximately $15,000,000. This increase would support a much larger population than there is in Wichita county today.

Sugar beets are apparently the best short term cash crop under irrigation. But the beets are hard on the soil and can not be grown for more than two or three years without damaging the soil. Livestock have been increasing in Wichita county with the increase in irrigation. Many of the irrigation projects are centered on the feeding of livestock. Deferred feeding of cattle is very profitable with irrigation farming. Steer calves, weighing about 400 pounds are purchased in the fall or early winter, and wintered on silage, supplemented with protein food. The calves are put on pasture as early in the spring as it is available, and pastured until about the first of September. They are brought into the feed lot and put on full feed, silage, hay, and grain, for about three months. The goal is to produce steers weighing 1000 pounds by the time they are

21 Paul E. Harbison, personal interview, June 23, 1954.

22 Ibid.
shipped to market. All of the feed, the silage, the hay, and the
grain can be grown profitably on the irrigated farm. It can be
utilized most profitably by feeding it. During recent years,
cattle prices have fallen off so severely that most of the profit
was lost, but normally feeding cattle is as profitable as any
other method of farming irrigated land.

Irrigation is in Wichita county to stay. It may not make
the county the wealthiest area in the country, but it will definitely
stabilize the economy of an otherwise unstable agricultural area.
Summary

Chapter X
CHAPTER X

SUMMARY

Wichita county in 1954 has a smaller population than it had the year after it was organized. The population today is about 2500 compared to the 2989 of 1888. But the people today are much better off than they were in 1888. Not only do they have electricity, natural gas, telephones, automobiles, and all of the other modern improvements, but their assessed valuation per capita is almost ten times as great. The assessed valuation per person in 1888 was $461, while in 1950 it was $4400. The average for the state of Kansas in 1950 was $3000.

Schools have also decreased in numbers, but with increased property value. In 1888 there were 48 schools in the county with an estimated property value of $4320. The value of school property for 1954 is not available, but the construction of the addition to the Leoti Grade School building in 1948-49 cost over $100,000, and the proposed addition to the Wichita County Community High School will cost something over $300,000. There is a brick school house at Selkirk, which is valued at more than the total value of school property in Wichita county in 1888.

There were four banks in the county in 1888 with total deposits of about $80,000, compared to one bank, the First State Bank, with deposits of about $3,000,000 in 1954.

The three church buildings in Wichita county in 1888 were
valued at $5900. A conservative estimate of the present value of
the thirteen churches in the county would be $150,000. The church
membership in 1888 was 327, a membership less than that of any one
of three churches in Leoti in 1954.

The fifty-nine miles of state highway through Wichita county
is all surfaced with black-top and there are over six hundred miles
of graded county roads. In 1888 there were no graded roads, and
few roads of any kind.

There were ten post-offices in Wichita county in 1888. Until
very recently there were three, at Leoti, Marienthal, and the post
office at Selkirk which was discontinued in the spring of 1954.

In 1888 there were seven townships, which were decreased to
three in 1897, and increased to the present number, four, in 1921.
Beaver, in the northwest part of the county, includes four geographical townships, as does Edwards in the northeast corner. Leoti
township includes the four townships which are in the center of the
county from north to south, and the remaining eight geographical
townships in the south part of the county are in Whitewoman township.¹

Wichita county boasted two railroads in 1888, both of them
having been built in 1887. The Chicago, Kansas and Western, operated
by the Santa Fe railroad, and the Denver, Memphis and Atlantic,
operated by the Missouri Pacific railroad continued to operate, side
by side, until the former ceased to operate in 1896. Since the

¹See Appendix A, Maps 4 and 5.
latter date, only the Missouri Pacific has operated in Wichita county.

The primary source of income for most of the farmers of Wichita county has always been wheat farming. The raising of livestock has been more important in certain periods when crops were poor, but for money to spend, the majority of farmers of the county have depended on the wheat crop. The livestock industry has increased with the introduction of large-scale irrigation farming. For the first time in the history of the county, cattle are being put into feed lots and fattened. A few cattle had previously been fattened, but not as the primary industry of the producer. Wheat farming has too many ups and downs, because it is dependent on the forces of nature almost altogether, and the raising of livestock has been almost as dependent on weather conditions. Irrigation will remove at least one cause of failure, the lack of moisture.

The prospects of growth in Wichita county are good in spite of several crop failures in recent years. Irrigation wells are being drilled almost daily, and with improved methods of dry land farming, there is reason to believe that Wichita county will continue to grow in population as well as in the production of agricultural products.
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C. GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

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First official record of Wichita county.

Term Register of Teachers Employed. Available in the County Superintendent's office, Court House, Leoti.

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F. NEWSPAPERS

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Published in Coronado; account of county seat fight.

Changed in January, 1889 to the Leoti Standard, has been published continuously since November 19, 1885; official county and city paper except for a brief period in 1887; the most valuable newspaper to this study.

G. PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

**Coats, Vet.** June 21, 1954.  
Came to Leoti in 1886, helped lay track for Santa Fe railroad in county; sheriff, 1904-08, 1922-24; still lives in house built from brick made by Cowan brick works in 1887.

**Dickey, W. C.** June 22, 1954.  
Came to Leoti in 1886 with his parents and brothers, and has lived in the county since; law degree from K. U. in 1898; served four terms as county attorney, one term as representative from Wichita county; helped to build telephone company in 1904.
Harbison, Paul E. June 23, 1943.
Director of the Soil Conservation Service in Wichita county; data on irrigation in this study was secured from Mr. Harbison.

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Mayor of Leoti, Principal of Leoti Grade School, former coroner of Wichita county; information on school program.

Tipton, Mrs. Pauline. January 16, 1953.
Daughter of former Emmett Denning, who lost his leg in the "County Seat War". Version of county seat war.
APPENDIX A
1. The State of Kansas, showing the Position of Wichita County.

2. The State of Kansas, showing the Indian Land Cessions.¹

3. The State of Kansas, showing Washington county in 1855, Peketon county in 1860, and Marion county in 1865.²

4. Wichita County in 1888.³

5. Wichita County in 1954.


²The description of Washington county may be found in Laws of the Territory of Kansas, 1855 (Place of Publication and Publisher not given), p. 187.

The description of Peketon county may be found in Laws of Kansas, 1860 (No Publisher or Place of Publication given), p. 83.

The description of Marion county may be found in Laws of Kansas, 1865 (Topeka: State Printer, 1865), p. 73.

³This map was drawn from a map appearing in the Sixth Biennial Report of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture (Topeka: State Printer, 1889), p. 919.
Map 1. The State of Kansas—showing the Position of Wichita County
Map 2. The State of Kansas

Indian Land Cessions
Map3. The State of Kansas

Washington County - 1855
Peketon County - 1860
Marion County - 1865
Map 4.
Wichita County
1888
Map 5
Wichita County
1954

Wallace Co.        Logan Co.

BEAVER             EDWARDS

Greeley Co.        Scott Co.

LEOTI

WHITETOMAN

Kearney Co.
APPENDIX B

1. Evolution of Blunt's County, 1880-1900
2. Density population (estimated) per person of Blunt's county
3. Land use types of Blunt's county
4. Employment (in Blunt's county)
GRAPHS

1. Population of Wichita County, 1885-1950.\(^1\)
2. Property Valuation (assessed) per person in Wichita county.
3. Leading Crops of Wichita county.
4. Livestock in Wichita county.

\(^1\)All of the data shown by these graphs may be found in the Biennial Reports of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture (Topeka: State Printer, 1889-1951).
Population of Wichita County

Graph 1.

1885-1950

1885 90 95 1900 95 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50
Graph 2.

Assessed Valuation Per Person in Wichita County

Average for Kansas in Red
Graph 3. Leading Crops of Wichita County

Wheat —
Sorghums —
Corn —
Barley —

Hundreds of thousands of dollars
Graph 4. Livestock of Wichita County

thousands

Horses
Cows (Milk)
Mules & Asses
Other Cattle
Sheep
Swine
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