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Russell County, Settlement and Economic Development

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RUSSELL COUNTY
SETTLEMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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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The map opposite page 79 shows Russell County and the surrounding counties illustrating the distribution of the oil pools. Russell County is the area outlined in red.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study is a history of Russell County, Kansas. It has been limited, in the main, to the economic aspect of the county's history. However, there are three chapters concerning settlement. The first chapter deals mainly with the physiographic nature of the Great Plains; the second treats the coming of the railroad; a chapter on the actual settlement of the county follows. The remaining four chapters deal with agriculture, oil and population. Thus this thesis will relate the events leading to settlement, economic life and a brief demographic study of the county.

No attempt has been made to develop the social, political or intellectual aspect of the county's history. Such things as schools, social organizations, churches, political trends and the numerous other phases of the county's development are not included in this account.

Prior to this thesis there has been no recent history of the county written. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century several histories of Kansas emphasizing local history were written such as William G. Cutler's Andrea's History of Kansas. These volumes contained information pertaining to Russell County. However, since these histories were written
in the late nineteenth century, no one has compiled a new, modern history of the county. There have been several articles concerned with the county's history published in the state historical journals, and the local newspapers teem with historical items. Yet no one has written a comprehensive history of the county.

The Kansas Historical Collections and the Kansas Historical Quarterly provided some of the information used in this paper. Many of the accounts of the settlement, particularly, of the German-Russian immigrants found in these publications were extremely valuable to the author. One source which proved to be immensely valuable was the Russell Record. This local newspaper was first published in 1874 and is still in print. Thus it provided an excellent source for contemporary accounts of pertinent events. For the chapters on agriculture the Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture supplied the statistics concerning crops and livestock. The bulletins of the State Geological Survey of Kansas were an indispensable aid in securing the information for the chapter on the oil industry. The reports of the Federal Census also were important to the author in the study of the population trends of the county. Then, of course, the numerous histories of Kansas and the American West were used to glean the information necessary to construct this thesis.
A history of Russell County has been needed for many years. It is the author's hope that this thesis will in some way help remedy this situation.
CHAPTER II

PHYSIOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE
PLAINS OF RUSSELL COUNTY

Kansas is part of the Great Plains area. More specifically, Russell County lies in the transitional area between the High Plains and the Prairie Plains. Many geographers have set the eastern boundary of the High Plains between the 96th and 98th meridian.¹ Using either of these as the eastern boundary, Russell County would fall in the High Plains, but if these are not satisfactory and one desires a boundary farther west, then the county would lie in the transitional zone. The plains area for many years was considered uninviting to settlement; in fact, this area was often referred to as the Great American Desert. During the first half of the nineteenth century this classification of desert remained synonymous with the western plains. Ralph H. Brown wrote of this concept of the desert that for

a half century the idea of a Great American Desert extending eastward of the Rocky Mountains existed in the official records, and for a long time in the unofficial, but equally influential, popular writings.²

² Ibid., p. 370.
However, this popular belief in the Great American Desert began to fade with the encroachment of settlement upon the western plains. Pioneers soon learned that much of the fact and the fiction were not as serious as they had previously feared.

People moving on to the plains had much to learn since there were many adjustments they had to make and conditions to which they had to adapt themselves. They found a very different environment from which most of the pioneers were accustomed. Perhaps the most difficult to master were the absence of trees and lack of sufficient rainfall to support intensive agriculture. Water or actually the lack of water, caused the most concern among potential tenants on the plains. These fears were not unfounded. Walter Prescott Webb in his book *The Great Plains* writes that the lack of water did present the settlers with problems, stating that:

> The most distinguishing climatic characteristic of the Great Plains environment from the ninety eighth meridian to the pacific slope is a deficiency in the most essential climatic element — water.3

Generally speaking, the plains exhibit broad expanses of level land. The flat nature of the land presented a

favorable attitude toward agriculture, but that same level-
ness of land was also favorable to climatic conditions
that wreaked havoc upon the inhabitants of the plains.
Hot winds during the summer in the southern portion of
the Great Plains, principally in the High Plains, between
34 degrees and 45 degrees latitude, often brought disaster
to crops. Professor Webb writes that:

... the economic disaster occasioned by these hot
winds is terrible. Everything goes before the furnace
blast. It has been reported that over ten million
bushels of corn were destroyed in Kansas in one season.
It is not uncommon for fine fields of dark-green corn
to be destroyed in two days. . . . 4

Then the other extreme exists during the spring and summer
months. Torrential rains, hail, and tornadoes are highly
destructive to life, property, and agriculture. Rains and
especially hail can destroy crops in a few minutes. The
heavy rains cause erosion problems and since water runs off
the plains into the creeks and rivers so rapidly flooding
occurs. These floods are usually not great in size but cause
much localized damage. Tornadoes are the most spectacular
weather phenomena on the plains. The tornado is an awesome
sight. It usually affects small areas but it demolishes
property and takes a heavy toll of lives. The "twister" has
remained an object of fear and a symbol of death and destruct-
ion to the plains people. On the other hand, in winter there

4 Ibid., pp. 23-23.
are special features to be met. These are the chinook, the norther and the blizzard, named in the order of descending temperature. Heavy tolls of lives and cattle have fallen prey to these icy blasts. The flat and unforested surface of the plains presents little opposition to the air currents and, in both summer and winter, the inhabitants of the plains are almost totally at the mercy of the elements.

The High Plains had some redeeming traits. One such was the grasses of the plains. These are the grama, buffalo and the short and long bluestem grasses; each was fairly abundant and supplied food for livestock. Buffalo and grama grasses are the most significant. They supported huge herds of wildlife easily, and eventually, they were converted into range for cattle.

Wildlife, in many cases, was beneficial to the pioneers. The buffalo, antelope and other animals supplied food for the early pioneer and most of them had a commercial value. At first the buffalo was looked upon as an ample and easy source of food. However, buffalo hides became a valuable commodity and brought on the all-out slaughter of the buffalo. Great herds of buffalo roamed the prairies, just how many will never be known. General

5 Ibid., p. 22.
6 Ibid., p. 31.
William T. Sherman estimated that about ten million of the great beasts were on the plains in the early 1870's. General Nelson A. Miles was more conservative in his estimate of six million. The fact remains that until after the Civil War the buffalo had lived in comparative peace. He was attacked only when the Indian wanted food or the white man wanted food or sport. However, the 1870's brought evil days to the buffalo. Commercial hunters began to exterminate the shaggy beasts in a fearsome carnage of destruction. The gunmen became extremely adept in killing the buffalo. One of the most destructive methods was the "still-hunt." For a skilled marksman this was a relatively simple process:

... a herd sighted, the hunter secreted himself and fired, killing the leader. The herd confused and puzzled and lacking their accustomed general, stood still. Then, it was an easy matter for the gunmen, picking his animals and always killing those who started to run, to soon exterminate a large band. Many a hunter killed in a season fifteen hundred to two thousand animals.

Under this method of hunting the buffalo was, for all practical purposes, exterminated from the plains by 1888.

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8 Ibid., p. 230.
10 Ibid., p. 287.
Wildlife in many respects gave the plains people an easy source of food.

Wildlife was often injurious and sometimes hostile. The wolf and the coyote presented a problem to the stockmen. Both of these intelligent creatures annually committed depredations upon livestock amounting to considerable sums. The jackrabbits brought problems to the farmers. The jackrabbit is strong, agile and the possessor of a voracious appetite. In years when the rabbit is plentiful he can do heavy damage to crops of all kinds. Even the amusing prairie dogs caused problems. The prairie dog "towns" often covered many square miles and stockmen could not turn cattle into pastures that prairie dogs had dug up for fear of injury to the cattle. Prairie dogs could and often did ruin areas for pasture and destroy crops so, in some respects, they were a nuisance. There was the rattlesnake, which could take the life of an unwary individual.

Another feature of the Great Plains, although not unique, was the presence of Indians. Before their arrival upon the plains many of the settlers had had previous experiences with Indians, but the fact remains they had to face them. Kansas was somewhat different in that, excepting the Kiowa Indians, there were no tribes actually living in the western part of the state. Many plains tribes came into Kansas during the spring, summer and fall to hunt, but
left when winter seized the prairies. The Indians on the western plains, especially in Kansas, were nomads.

Professor Eugene R. Craine writes of the Plains Nomads of Kansas:

Among the tribes grouped together as the true Plains Indians, the Plains Nomads, are the Southern Commanches of Shoshoean linguistic stock, the Kiowa of the Kiowan linguistic family, and the Arapahoe and Cheyenne of the Algonquian linguistic family of these, only the Kiowa actually lived in Kansas, settling for a time in the western part of the State. 11

The other tribes used Kansas as a hunting area. . . .

The very nature of the nomadic characteristics of the Indians struck terror in the hearts of the pioneers. A hunting party could easily become a war party and isolated families or small settlements could fall prey to the roaming bands of Indians. Although, in many respects, the amount of death and destruction carried out by the Indians has been exaggerated, the possibility of Indian attack did prevent many from moving to the frontier until the danger had been reduced. Nevertheless, many stouthearted individuals paid no heed to the threat and moved to the frontier and took homesteads.

Russell County was, in one way or another, affected by all of the afore mentioned hardships and, at the same time, endowed with the good features that did exist. The

county is located in the north central section of Kansas. It is, in general, level and presents an almost monotonous lack of change in terrain. There is however, along the two rivers some rugged areas due principally to erosion. The Saline River in the north part of the county and the Smoky Hill River in the south part are not large and except in times of heavy precipitation they carry little water. But their presence serves as a sort of relief to the level topography. Several creeks in the county score the topography as they meander their way to empty into one of the two rivers. But, by and large, the county is level in appearance. There is, even today, a conspicuous absence of trees, especially when viewed by someone not familiar with the characteristic lack of trees in this plains area. The land, however, is fertile and due to its level nature easily farmed.

As a result of the rather uniformly flat topography, the county has prospered and suffered from the climatic variations which occur on the plains. Blizzards, hail, torrential rains, droughts and tornadoes all have had an effect upon the area. The scarcity of timber has caused severe problems in securing building material and fuel. Stone was the answer to the need for building material and buffalo chips and coal, some being found in the county, provided the solution to fuel problems. Indian raids were of very minor importance in the county's history. Ellis County, which was
established in 1867, provided a sort of buffer to Russell County from the Indians.12

Russell County was not lacking in wild game. Buffalo, antelope and other kinds of animals abounded. Adolph Roenigk worked on the railroad, and for a time was stationed at Fossil Creek, later named Russell, when it was permanently settled; he recalled the wildlife in the Fossil Creek vicinity, especially buffalo:

The most buffaloes we ever killed at the station at one time was ten. These were killed about three hundred yards west of the railroad tank on the north side of the track. . . .13

Before there was any appreciable settlement at Fossil Creek to frighten the buffalo away the section hands were killing buffalo inside the present city limits of Russell. People moving into Russell County in the early 1870's would not have had to travel far to kill game for food.

The Great Plains remained the domain of the American Indian until the Spanish began to explore the area. Apparently, the first white man into Kansas was Coronado, in 1541, who was searching for treasure.14 Spanish interest in treasure


prompted several expeditions but when they failed to find precious metals to any extent this interest subsided. However, Catholic priests came on the Great Plains to bring the Holy Faith to the Indians. One of these was Fray Juan Padilla. He had traveled with Coronado's expedition and returned later to carry on missionary activities in 1542 and was killed by the Indians.\textsuperscript{15} Except for Spaniards there was little exploration of the Great Plains until the early eighteenth century. This was done mainly by the French fur traders looking for sources of skins or for Indians who were willing to trade pelts for manufactured goods. Many of these French traders and trappers will probably never be known, at least, the extent of their travels. One French explorer, Etienne Veniard de Bourgmont, is known to have come into central Kansas early in the eighteenth century. In 1724, Bourgmont traveled up the Smoky Hill with a party of Kansas Indians to visit the Commanche Indians.\textsuperscript{16} His purpose was to make a peace treaty with the Comanches and conclude trading agreements with them.\textsuperscript{17} Bourgmont, apparently, came

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p. 249

\textsuperscript{16} Floyd Benjamin Streeter, The Kaw; The Heart of the Nation (New York: Farrus and Rinehart Incorporated, 1951), p. 27.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.
up the Smoky Hill to approximately the present site of Ellsworth, Kansas.\textsuperscript{18} Possibly, Bourgmont may have journeyed west from his meeting site with the Commanches and came into the present location of Russell County. This, it must be remembered, is only a speculation.\textsuperscript{19} A great many hunters, trappers and unknown adventurers may have traveled through the county, but one known explorer was John C. Fremont who crossed Kansas in July of 1844 on his trip from the west.\textsuperscript{20} Journeying through Kansas Fremont followed the Smoky Hill River to its juncture with the Republican River; thus he would have traversed Russell County. Fremont is the first explorer who is known to have done so.

Russell County was to wait several years after the Civil War before being occupied. However, Western Kansas, in general received little settlement until after the war. Discovery of gold in the Rocky Mountains in 1858 encouraged


\textsuperscript{19} There are some writers who expressed the opinion that Bourgmont traveled up the Saline River as far as Ellis County. This opinion was prevalent in the early part of the twentieth century but most historians feel that Bourgmont followed the Smoky Hill River, but only as far as Ellsworth County. However, if the reader is interested in the Saline River theory he should consult, Philip E. Chappell, "A History of the Missouri River," \textit{Kansas Historical Collections}, 1906-1907, vol. IX, p. 257.

western migration. The need and desire to travel to the mountain region summoned people to push across Kansas prairies and this travel inspired western settlement. Many of the myths of the frontier were exposed and people began to realize that they could, with difficulty, occupy areas previously considered desert. Another factor influencing westward expansion was the Homestead Act of 1862. By the passage of this act, the land was easily obtained by anyone desiring to pioneer on the frontier. The lure of this practically free land would lead many to migrate to the frontier. Many European people were dissatisfied with the order of things in their native countries and the Homestead Act provided a solution to their problems. A foreigner could, if he had filed papers starting the process to get citizenship, obtain a grant just as easily as an American citizen.\footnote{21 Ibid., p. 53.}

Construction of the railroads westward would also cause rapid expansion of settlement. The railroads, in fact, recruited people to purchase their lands as some of them sent representatives to Europe to recruit immigrants.\footnote{22 Dick, The Sod House Frontier, 1854-1890, p. 186. Instead of using \textit{op. cit} and \textit{loc. cit.} for subsequent citations of sources the author has consistently used short title citations.} Western Kansas was not destined to be occupied until after the Civil War. There were some settlements along the rivers and trails.
before the end of the war, but after the war, colonization began to diffuse and slowly cover the plains. Settlement was rather erratic and "helter-skelter" but eventually, by 1890, the Kansas frontier, for all practical purposes, was occupied.
CHAPTER III

THE COMING OF THE RAILROAD

With the discovery of gold, in 1858, in the Rocky Mountains a rush of white emigrants went west to seek their fortunes.\(^{23}\) Although the principal routes to gold country, at first, followed the Platte, Arkansas and Republican Rivers,\(^{24}\) it was a major problem to secure transportation to this "end of the rainbow." One route was the Immigrant Road or Oregon Trail, which, in 1859 became famous as a trail to the Rockies.\(^{25}\) Each route to the Colorado gold fields was long and dangerous. Indians, starvation, thirst and loss of directions could result in death to the unfortunate traveler.

Although the trails following the Platte and Arkansas Rivers were adequate, some people considered it essential to have a more direct route. Several groups of people had followed the Smoky Hill River west, and most of these bands of people had suffered greatly in reaching their destinations. As early as 1859 emigrants had followed this route going to


the gold fields. Some of the hardships suffered by the travelers are almost unbelievable. Three brothers, Alexander, Charles and Daniel Blue, were traveling with five other men on their way to the Rockies. The group of men lost the pony upon which most of their provisions were being carried and being on foot they were in a desperate plight. For various reasons it was not long before the band became separated, but the Blue brothers stayed together. One of the brothers died, and the other two ate his flesh in an attempt to survive. Finally a second one died and the remaining brother ate the flesh of his brother's corpse. An Indian found the survivor and gave him some food and took him to some white men who saved his life.26 This is but one example of many of the tragedies which occurred on the trails leading to the Rockies. Even though the Smoky Hill route had brought immense suffering upon emigrants, its directness to the gold mining areas continued to appeal to travelers.

Because of the demand for a shorter route, W. Green Russell led a group of men across the plains and surveyed a road along the Smoky Hill River.27 His report was


somewhat favorable. On the strength of Russell's Chronicle it was known that the trail could, with adequate preparations and precautions, serve as a avenue to the Rockies. However, it was not until late in 1864 that the Smoky Hill Trail experienced much traffic. Scarcity of water and Indian raids made this route unappealing to travelers.28

On July 5, 1864, D. A. Butterfield organized the Butterfield Overland Dispatch. This line extended from Atchison by way of Topeka and the Smoky Hill River to Denver. Butterfield was convinced that there was a large enough demand for freight service to warrant the establishment of such a service to Denver.29 The line:

. . . followed the ridges whenever possible, thereby passing around the headwaters of many creeks and avoiding much wet, soft ground. Like other trails of the stage and covered wagon days, the Smoky was sometimes a hundred feet wide. In fact it might be considered several miles wide for grazing purposes. Bits of it can still be seen as parallel grass grown ruts, cut deep by stage wheels and the hooves of horses and oxen.30

28 Ibid., p. 19.

29 D. A. Butterfield had a survey made of the route along the Smoky Hill River. The surveying party traveled along the river during the summer of 1865 and examined the valley. Lieutenant J. R. Fitch, a member of the expedition, wrote a report for Mr. Butterfield. This report can be read in Mrs. Frank Montgomery's, "Fort Wallace And Its Relation To The Frontier," Kansas Historical Collections, 1926-1928, vol. XVII, pp. 190-194.

30 Long, The Smoky Hill Trail, p. 44.
Butterfield's line made the Smoky Hill Trail one of the main thoroughfares to the Colorado territory. His line made regular trips to Denver, and many people had their first opportunity to see Western Kansas.

Several relay stations located in Russell County to serve the Overland Dispatch enjoyed only a short lifetime. Since the railroad was moving west and came through Russell County in the summer of 1867, the eastern terminus of the line moved westward with the construction of the railway. By the end of 1867 the stage line's eastern terminus would have been far west of the county.

The Smoky Hill Trail was a perilous one. Indian attacks combined with other financial problems forced Butterfield to sell out to the Holloday Overland Mail and

31 Hafen, Overland Routes to the Goldfields, 1859, p. 281. In 1866, according to Hafen there would have been three stations in the county; these were Hick's Station, Fossil Creek and Forsythe's Creek. These stations were located in an east to west direction. However, Neyer in his thesis, "The Smoky Hill Trail in Western Kansas, 1859-1869." Appendix E, lists three stations, Bunker Hill, Fossil Creek and Walker's Creek Station. Neyer does not list Hick's Station and apparently his Walker's Creek Station is what Hafen calls Forsythe's Creek. On the other hand, Hafen does not list Bunker Hill Station as does Neyer. To further complicate matters an article appeared in the Russell Record, June 11, 1926, listing Hick's Station, Bunker Hill Station, Fossil Creek Station and Forsythe's Crossing. With the exception of changing Forsythe's Creek to Forsythe's Crossing the article seems to be a compromise. It would seem, however, that Neyer's account may be the more accurate.
Express Company in 1866. Ben Holladay, the new owner, sold the line to Wells, Fargo and Company in November of 1866; they in turn sold the line to the United States Express Company in February 1867. When the railroad reached Sheridan, Kansas, Wells, Fargo and Company operated this circuit until the railroad in 1869 continued on to Denver from Sheridan.

Important as the Smoky Hill Trail was, the stage lines were never too successful. The trail was important as a transportation route, but the Indian raids cost the companies much in the form of lives and cargoes. Construction of the railroad across Western Kansas was the factor that finished the Smoky Hill Trail's commercial value.

When Butterfield made his plans for the express company, there were no immediate plans for a railway across Western Kansas. The next year the line was laid on the prairies almost completely across Kansas and the stage lines death was clearly forecast.

Use of the Smoky Hill Trail opened Western Kansas to travel and first hand observation could be made of the

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33 Ibid., pp. 89-90.

area. This aided in spreading the idea that it would be quite possible to settle these plains, which were previous-
ly thought to be uninhabitable for the farmer. The Smoky Hill Trail was a brief prelude to the coming of the rail-
road. The railroad was to supply a dependable source of transportation and its presence was to encourage settle-
ment of areas much sooner than they would have occurred with-
out the railroads' stimulus.

The Pacific Railway Act of July 1, 1862 was passed by Congress to encourage westward expansion of settlement and to secure a transcontinental railway.35 According to the provisions of this act, the railway in Kansas was to receive a grant of six million acres of land and a loan on the first forty miles of track laid.36 This act called for the Leavenworth, Pawnee and Western Railroad to construct a railway and telegraph line beginning on the south side of the mouth of the Kansas River, via Fort Riley to approxi-
mately the point where the 100th meridian crosses the Platte River.37 The Leavenworth, Pawnee and Western was to form a


trunk line to the Union Pacific Railway to be built westward from Omaha across Nebraska.

With this federal grant the Leavenworth, Pawnee and Western attracted promoters and capitalists. Samuel Hallet and John C. Fremont, in May of 1863, purchased the Leavenworth, Pawnee and Western and renamed it the Union Pacific Railway, Eastern Division. Not much construction had been done when Hallet and Fremont purchased the line.

Congress modified the Railway Act of 1862 on July 2, 1864 and thus changed the future of the Union Pacific, Eastern Division. By the provisions of this new act, if the Union Pacific, Eastern Division could reach the intersection of the 100th meridian and the Platte River before the Union Pacific, it would receive the right to continue west and help form the first transcontinental railway.

This act was a radical departure from the established intention of the Union Pacific Eastern Division. Prior to

38 O. P. Byers, "When Railroading Outdid Wild West Stories," Kansas Historical Collections, 1926-1928, vol. XVII, p. 340. White in his History of the Union Pacific Railway states on page 40 that Hallet and Fremont paid $203,000 for the Leavenworth, Pawnee and Western Railroad. This included their franchise and land that they owned. The lands amounted to over two million acres.

this act the Kansas line was to serve as a branch line. Now it had the possibility of becoming the eastern link of the first transcontinental line. Naturally both lines desired to reach the 100th meridian first and gain the right to continue construction of the line.

By 1864 the Kansas line had exhausted its funds and construction was stopped. Fremont and Hallet began to have trouble between themselves over administration of the line. As a result, Hallet purchased Fremont's holdings in the company and took Thomas C. Durant in as an associate. Hallet was killed by an employee in 1864 and John D. Perry, president of the Exchange National Bank of St. Louis, after a struggle with Durant, gained control of the Union Pacific, Eastern Division.

The first forty miles of the line were completed in June of 1865 and by January 1, 1866, the first section of the railroad from Kansas City to Topeka was opened. In 1866 the Union Pacific, Eastern Division made good progress. The railroad had reached Junction City by November 12, 1866.

42 Ibid.
43 Ibid., p. 341.
44 Ibid.
According to the July 2, 1864 railroad act, Junction City was the point where the Kansas line was to turn northwest and begin the trek to the Platte River.

Congress, however, on July 3, 1866, passed another act which altered their requirement. This later legislation gave the Kansas line the option of building a road westward across Kansas if it so desired. Once again Congress had passed an act that gave the Union Pacific, Eastern Division a new alternative. Upon reaching Junction City on November 12, 1866, the Union Pacific, Eastern Division had completed 140 miles of track as compared to 270 miles completed by the Union Pacific line in Nebraska. It was rather obvious that the Nebraska line would reach the 100th meridian on the Platte long before the Union Pacific, Eastern Division.

There was little choice left to the Kansas line. If construction continued toward the Platte it would become a branch line of the Union Pacific. The alternative, which was not entirely without appeal, was to build the railway across Western Kansas. A route had been surveyed across Kansas and the engineers were confident they could construct


the line without any unusual or insurmountable difficulties.

The change in route was welcomed by the Kansas line as an alternative from which it might profit. But there was one stipulation in the act for which they did not care. In the act it was stated that the Kansas line was to juncture with the Union Pacific line at a point not more than fifty miles east of Denver.\textsuperscript{47} Thus the Kansas line appeared to be fated to be a branch line of the Union Pacific.

During the winter of 1866-1867 Junction City was the center of much activity. It was the marshalling center of equipment and all the necessary paraphernalia for construction which was to be resumed in the spring of 1867. The laying of the route was divided between two major groups. The first was the grading crew. They prepared the roadbed upon which the second party laid the rails. Both of these parties were dependent upon each other. Building the line was a huge task, and cooperation between these groups was of the utmost importance.

By April 29, 1867, trains could travel as far as Salina, Kansas. Beginning at Junction City in the spring the line extended westward to near the present site of Collyer,

\textsuperscript{47} White, \textit{A History of the Union Pacific Railway}, p. 41.
Kansas, by December 15, 1867.\textsuperscript{48}

The tracks were laid through Russell County during the summer of 1867. Apparently, there is no reliable local record when the railroad was built through the county.\textsuperscript{49}

With the completion of the railway through the county a new era was opened.

Sheridan was reached on July 3, 1868, and here work ceased for nearly a year.\textsuperscript{50} Construction was stopped pending the granting of additional subsidies by the government.\textsuperscript{51}

\textsuperscript{48} Cruise, "Early Days on the Union Pacific," p. 540.

\textsuperscript{49} Russell Daily News, May 23, 1951. In an article appearing in this edition it is stated that the railroad reached the present site of Gorham, Kansas, on October 10, 1867. The accuracy of this date is doubtful. The October 10 date would leave only 65 days to finish about 70 miles of track from Gorham to Collyer. Averaging one mile per day would allow the line to be finished to its western terminus. However, roughly estimating the distance from Salina to Collyer as 140 miles and again, roughly estimating the days from April 29, 1867 to December 15, 1867 as 230 days and dividing 140 by 230 the daily average of miles of track laid per day would be .60. If this average can be taken as a fair indication then the October 10, 1867 date would be much too late for the completion of track to Gorham. Considering the .60 average it would take nearly twice as many days for the rails to reach Collyer from Gorham than the 65 remaining days. By using the .60 average it would have taken approximately 110 days to reach the eastern boundary of Russell County from Salina, Kansas. This would have been late in August or early September. However, it must be remembered that many factors such as weather and terrain would greatly influence the rate of miles of track constructed per day.

\textsuperscript{50} Anderson, General William J. Palmer, A Decade of Colorado Railroad Building, 1870-1880, p. 15.

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., p. 18.
Sheridan became a thriving little town. From Sheridan there were regular stage and freight lines running to Denver. Finally in 1869 the Kansas Pacific began to complete the line on to Denver.\textsuperscript{52}

The railroad reached Denver and was formally opened on September 1, 1870.\textsuperscript{53} Total cost of the railway from Kansas City was $34,350,490.66.\textsuperscript{54} The funds to pay for the erection of this line came from

\begin{itemize}
  \item the sale of the following securities: stock $10,000,000; first-mortgage bonds, $16,000 per mile for 395 15/16 miles, amounting to $6,303,000; the United States bonds which represented a second mortgage on the same part of the road, also amounting to $6,303,000; first mortgage bonds on the Denver Extension, $6,500,000; a mortgage upon the Leavenworth branch $600,000; an income mortgage of $4,186,000; and a land grant mortgage of $500,000. The total face value of these securities was thus $34,292,000, or $34,509.34 more than the cost of the road. \ldots \textsuperscript{55}
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{52} White, History of the Union Pacific Railway, p. 41. On March 3, 1869, both houses of Congress passed a joint resolution allowing the Union Pacific to change its name to Kansas Pacific Railway Company. In Anderson's "General William J. Palmer, A Decade of Colorado Railroad Building, 1870-1880," on page 17 he states that the stockholders of the Union Pacific, Eastern Division met on April 5, 1869, and voted to change the company's name to Kansas Pacific Railway Company. When Congress approved their decision, the company was officially renamed.


\textsuperscript{54} White, History of the Union Pacific Railway, p. 43.

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid.
Along with this financial subsidization the Kansas Pacific received a land grant. The Kansas Pacific inherited the Union Pacific, Eastern Division's grant of twenty miles of land for each mile of track constructed.

Although the road was not formally opened until 1870 it was used before this date. The parts that were completed began almost immediately to serve the areas along the line. Practically as soon as the tracks were laid, section crews were installed to keep the railway in repair. Fossil Creek Station was established in 1867 in Russell County. The station acquired its name from a creek which flows near the site chosen for its location. In 1871 the settlers changed its name to Russell. Adolph Roenigk, who was employed by the railroad, says that Fossil Creek Station was located between the small frontier towns of Hays and Ellsworth. It had neither depot or telegraph office, in fact, not even a side track, this being located a mile and a half west having been built for the purpose of loading rock for construction work. A water tank and a small box house the shape of a freight car constituted the company's property. Small dugouts were the quarters of the men and a large one was occupied by the boarding boss and his family.56

This establishment presented a rather insignificant appearance, but it had a very important function to carry out. Aside from the maintenance work of the section hands it was

a watering stop for trains traveling in both east and west directions. John Cook ran the depot and was responsible for the water tanks for the locomotives.57

A rather amusing incident occurred over the necessity of having water ready to supply the trains. One morning Cook was trying to hitch his pony, used to operate the pump, in order to have an adequate supply of water for the train when it arrived. The animal would not cooperate and escaped and Cook could not catch him. Angered by the pony's antics Cook tried to use the Mexican method of creasing a horse's neck with a bullet rendering the animal senseless and allowing it to be captured by the gunman. Cook shot at the beast but aimed too high, however, the second attempt was too low and the horse was killed. When the train arrived Cook told the engineers that the pony had died and that they would have to go to the next station for water. The next day Cook went to El'sworth and secured another horse.58

The section hands and Cook enjoyed good relations and life was quite pleasant at the station. Recreation was taken by the men mainly in the form of hunting. Game

57 Russell Record, May 8, 1941.
58 Roenigk, Pioneer History of Kansas, p. 185.
abounded in the vicinity and most of the section hands hunted for sport and to provide meat for their diet. Life at Fossil Creek, while agreeable, was fairly monotonous; however, there were some times of excitement which helped alleviate the boredom. One such event was James B. "Wild Bill" Hickok's visit to the depot. Wild Bill was the marshal in Hays, Kansas, and came to Fossil Creek to investigate the rumor of some men cutting timber, unlawfully, on government land north of Fossil Creek. He arrested five men on Paradise Creek and took them to Topeka and turned them over to the United States' Court, but the men were dismissed for lack of evidence.59

Another incident occurred that took a tragic turn. The work crew was west of the station working when a man, coming from the west, on foot, approached them and stopped to talk to the men. After conversing to some length he continued on east. Noticing riders coming from the west and fearing that they might be Indians the men returned to their dugouts. However, it proved to be a detachment of Negroes from the Tenth United States Cavalry located at Fort Hays. They were looking for the man to whom the crew had talked just previously. After finding the man, who was hiding in the water tank, they began to torture him thinking that he was a member of a band of organized horse

59 Ibid., p. 182.
thieves. They were unsuccessful in obtaining a confession and the next day they returned to Fort Hays, but the man they held in custody never reached Hays. Apparently, the officers left the suspect to the mercy of the Negro troopers and they had killed him. His body was found riddled with bullets and covered with sod in an abandoned dugout beside the trail leading to Hays. The frontier was rugged and sometimes cruel. Whatever the man's status, the officers decided to administer justice, although primitive, on the assumption that he might be one of the thieves.

Fossil Creek Station had many visitors. Some coming through on the train would get out and inspect the establishment when their train stopped for water and many people passing through on horseback would stop to visit the station. So, in some respects life was not too dull at Fossil Creek but there were periods when there was nothing to alleviate the boredom or events to create interest other than the usual daily routine. On May 28, 1869, the work crew from Fossil Creek, numbering seven men in all, was working one and three quarters miles west of the station. It was mid-morning and the crew was laboring industriously, when one of the workers told the others he thought he saw Indians

60 Ibid., p. 178.
disappear behind the ridge to the north. No one took him seriously and the men continued to work. Suddenly, from a ravine close by, a band of Cheyenne Indians attacked the work crew. The men rushed for their hand powered cart and started for shelter. The Indians incessantly fired upon the little band of men so valiantly trying to save their lives. Alexander McKiefer and John Lynch were killed by the Indians in this raid. Both of the men who were killed had made it to the cart and were with the group when they started for the station, but they were shot and killed and fell from the vehicle. The other men with the exception of one received wounds of one kind or another, but the men who had been killed were mutilated by the Indians and left along the tracks.

The Indians followed the other five men to the depot but stayed respectfully out of rifle range. Part of the band of Indians moved down the tracks about two miles to the east of the buildings and began to tear up the rails. By now, the Indians no longer regarded the locomotive as a "smoking buffalo" but realized that the machine depended upon good track for safety.

John Cook tried to warn the train as it approached

61 Ibid., p. 173.
62 Ibid., p. 175.
from the east by setting a bale of hay on fire, but this failed and it was "ditched." Fortunately, no one was killed in the wreck but the Indians had caused a tremendous amount of damage and had taken the lives of two men. Whether any Indians were killed in this raid is unknown. Roenigk, who participated in this event, felt they might have killed some but he was somewhat doubtful. At any rate, it was a clear victory for the Indians. The other five men who were attacked recovered from their wounds.

Fossil Creek Station proved to be the site of many interesting and unusual events before it fulfilled its most important role, for it was to serve as the area for the location of the founding of a town. But prior to settlement in the county this lonely little depot was civilization's only outpost in Russell County. The station continued to function and two years later, in 1871, colonization of the area changed its status of a lonely frontier post to a center of activity.

Later in the nineteenth century another railway was built through the north section of the county. This route was constructed in 1887, under the name of the Salina, Lincoln and Colorado Railway Company. On July, 1888, it was sold to the Union Pacific, Lincoln and Colorado Company. Then on October 4, 1898, it was purchased by the Union Pacific Railway Company. 64

63 Ibid.
This branch road and the Union Pacific, built in 1867, were both very important to the county's development. Settlement developed along the Union Pacific main line very early in the history of the county. Likewise people took residence along the northern branch road. Four small towns were founded as a result of the railroad branch in the north part of the county. These were Elbon which was renamed Lucas in 1891; Luray, Waldo and Ivamar, renamed Paradise in 1891. The railroads are significant in the respect that every town in the county is located on one of these two routes with the exception of the very small rural towns of Milberger and Fairport.

By the end of 1867 Russell County was bisected by the Union Pacific, Eastern Division and was open for residents. Westward progress of settlement was slow and though the railroad came to Russell County in 1867 it was several years before the pioneers came to the county and took land.

65 Ibid.
CHAPTER IV

SETTLEMENT OF THE COUNTY TO 1900

Until 1869 there were no permanent residents in Russell County with the exception of the men who lived at Fossil Creek Station. For nearly two years these men comprised the entire white population of that area. The county was organized by the state legislature on March 3, 1868. After the boundaries had been defined the legislature named it Russell County in honor of Captain Ava P. Russell, Company K, Second Kansas Cavalry, who died of wounds received at the battle of the Prairie Grove in Arkansas, December 7, 1862.

Settlement began slowly. A. E. Mathews settled on the Smoky Hill River near Coal Creek in 1869 and, apparently, he was the first white man to move into the county with the intention of taking land and staying. Mathews, chronologically, was probably the first man to settle in the county, but, he was not the first to file a claim to gain legal recognition of his land. John B. Dearen, on March 10, 1871, was the first man to register a proper claim. However, four men

66 Charles Richard Tuttle, A New Centennial History of Kansas (Lawrence, Kansas: Interstate Book Company, 1876), p. 646.
67 Russell Record, May 24, 1951.
68 Russell Record, December 19, 1897.
69 Russell Record, December 19, 1903.
made declaratory statements before Dearen established his claim. In early days such a procedure was often followed. These statements were to the effect that a person was planning to settle and to improve a piece of land. This assertion would allow a person to hold land for six months without any actual activity of any kind.70 Four declaratory statements were made, before Dearen's claim, on Russell County land on November 5, 1869 by H. A. Miles, Charles Morris, John E. Heiker and D. H. Brotherton.71 Beginning in 1870 many claims were taken although most of the settlers neglected to actually file their claims until later. Since there was plenty of land and not much chance of someone attempting to "claim-jump" these early settlers were somewhat lax in getting their claims properly recognized.

The decade of 1870-1880 saw the population of Kansas increase by 600,000 people. This increase during this decade was the largest ever seen in Kansas, in a single ten year span, in its entire history.72 Kansas' population increased from 364,000 in 1870 to 996,000 in 1880,73 an

70 Ibid.
71 Ibid.
73 Ibid.
increase of about two and one-half times state wide. Russell County increased from 156 in 1870 to 7,351 in 1880.\textsuperscript{74} The population of 1880 represents approximately one-half of the present day population of the county so that this decade of 1870 to 1880 was of great importance in the growth of Russell County.

During 1870 and early 1871 many persons came to Russell County and took land claims. These were characterized by small groups or individuals and not large groups which were to come later. For instance, in 1870 C. M. Harsberger, James Dorman, James Haight and Samuel Janes took claims on East Wolf Creek.\textsuperscript{75} C. M. Hibbard, A. C. Birdsall, Charles Birdsall, N. R. Cowan and John Deering during the winter of 1870-1871 came to Russell County and took out claims.\textsuperscript{76} These men selected sites along Wolf and East Wolf Creeks and all but Deering returned east after having selected their sites; Deering remained behind and constructed a cabin upon his claim.\textsuperscript{77}

\textsuperscript{74} United States Department of Interior, Bureau of Census, \textit{Tenth Census}, vol. I, p. 61.


\textsuperscript{76} \textit{Ibid.} J. C. Ruppenthal in an address given in Lucas, Kansas on October 5, 1901, stated that C. M. Harsberger and James Haight were probably the first to actually settle in the county with the exception of A. E. Mathews, J. C. Ruppenthal, "Address on the History of Lucas, Russell County Kansas," October 5, 1901.

\textsuperscript{77} \textit{Russell Record}, April 12, 1902.
The Union Pacific Railway was urging settlement along the railroad as early as 1869. The railway began printing information to be distributed among prospective pioneers and offered all kinds of enticements. Settlers were often transported at reduced rates, given free seed and feed was hauled for their cattle by the railroad free of charge.\textsuperscript{78} The railroad paid cash prizes of 300 dollars, 200 dollars and 100 dollars to gardens cultivated by people living in the vicinity of the Kansas Pacific Railroad. This was done because the railroad officials thought such a bonus could be used to advertise the possibilities of the soil.\textsuperscript{79} Many kinds of devices were used to encourage people to settle along their lines. The railroads were very anxious to sell land that had been granted to them by the government before it became a tax liability.\textsuperscript{80} However, in the case of Russell County the railroads did not succeed in selling all their land too rapidly as they advertised as late as 1903 that they still had land for sale in the county.\textsuperscript{81}

Individuals or small groups provided the first

\textsuperscript{78} Dick, \textit{The Sod House Frontier, 1854-1890}, p. 187.
\textsuperscript{79} \textit{Russell Record}, December 26, 1907.
\textsuperscript{80} Dick, \textit{The Sod House Frontier, 1854-1890}, p. 186.
\textsuperscript{81} \textit{Russell Record}, December 19, 1903.
residents in the county, but this changed in the spring of 1871. This shift to group or "colony" settling brought the superstructure upon which the settlement patterns developed. In these first few years of the 1870's the towns that were to become the more important in the area were founded. Beginning in 1871, colonization of the county lost its sporadic complexion and assumed one of orderly progress.

Bunker Hill and Russell were founded in the spring of 1871. Gorham was laid out in 1879, Dorrance in 1880 and Paradise in 1884 and Luray, Lucas and Waldo in 1887. 82 Russell and Bunker Hill were the two most important towns early in the county's beginning, but Russell eventually assumed the dominant position. Bunker Hill was laid out by a colony of people from Pennsylvania and Ohio. 83 V. E. Harbaugh and J. B. Corbett laid out the town site for Bunker Hill in the spring of 1871. 84 The land for the site was purchased from the railroad on April 15, 1871, for $1,284.70. 85 This precedes the settlement of Russell by four days and gives Bunker Hill the distinction of being the first town in the county.

82 Russell Record, June 23, 1927.
83 Russell Record, December 18, 1897.
84 Ibid.
85 Ibid.
On January 17, 1871, a meeting was held in Ripon, Wisconsin for the purpose of deciding on means with which to emigrate to Kansas. The Ripon Colony was established and the fee for membership was set at twenty dollars, ten dollars to be paid when joining and ten dollars within thirty days. A committee of three was appointed by the Ripon Colony to come to Kansas to find a site for the location of the colony. Benjamin Pratt, O. P. Reed and H. S. Hollinbeck were sent to Kansas to choose an adequate site for the colony. They left Ripon February 21, 1871 and came to Kansas and after reaching the state took the Kansas Pacific west looking for land. Upon arriving in Russell County the agents decided that this area was suitable for their colony, so they notified their colleagues to begin their preparations to come to Kansas while they made the necessary arrangements. On April 19, 1871 the Ripon Colony arrived at Fossil Creek Station.

The settlers from Wisconsin had not anticipated how Western Kansas would appear. Many of them were somewhat appalled by its bleak and desolate character, but being

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86 Russell County News, May 8, 1941.
87 Ibid.
88 Cutler, Andrea's History of Kansas, p. 1284.
89 Ibid.
90 Russell Record, July 4, 1927.
industrious people they immediately began to make preparations to establish their homes and rejuvenate the raw prairie into a refined outpost of civilization. Shortly after the arrival of the Ripon Colony, often called the Northwestern Colony, the people decided to vote upon a name for the settlement. An election was held on May 2, 1871 and out of fifty votes cast Russell received thirty-four, Fossil received seven and nine votes were cast in favor of other names. Thus Russell, officially, became the name of the little town located at Fossil Creek Station.

The Northwestern Colony organized the Russell Townsite Company on June 13, 1871. This company was to expedite matters in purchase and distribution of land and to officially lay out the city. The company functioned until 1884 when it was dissolved. On February 15, 1884, the company published a notice to the effect that:

The Russell Townsite Company believing that the object for which it was organized has been accomplished and that there is no further necessity for its existence therefore, resolved that we, members of the Russell Townsite Company do hereby, declare the said Russell Townsite Company dissolved.

This townsite company served a good purpose and when its task was finished the settlers wasted no time in ending its

91 *Russell Record*, May 3, 1902.
92 *Russell Record*, May 17, 1902.
93 *Russell Record*, February 15, 1884.
existence.

One inevitable problem arose. Where was the county seat going to be located? This problem began to vex many individuals and groups began to agitate for fulfillment of their respective desires.

Russell County consisted of 576,000 acres or 900 square miles and until 1872 was attached to Ellsworth county for judicial and municipal purposes. In 1872 Governor James M. Harvey appointed J. B. Corbett, John Dodge and E. M. Durkey County Commissioners, J. L. V. Hines County Clerk and Stillman Mann Justice of the Peace and designated Russell as the County seat. The County Commissioners met on August 18, 1872, and set September 9, 1872 as the date to elect a full slate of county officers.

This election was carried out with more votes cast in Bunker Hill than in Russell. Residents of Bunker Hill felt this to be obvious proof that the county seat should be located in their hamlet instead of Russell. With this in mind, the records, few as they were, were moved from Russell to Bunker Hill. Naturally, the citizens of Russell were enraged by this action and steadfastly refused to

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94 Cutler, Andrea's History of Kansas, pp. 1283-1284.
95 Ibid., p. 1284.
96 Ibid.
recognize Bunker Hill's claim as county seat. The situation worsened continually since John Fritts and John Dodge, two of the County Commissioners, met in Bunker Hill and Benjamin Pratt, the other County Commissioner, and E. W. Durkey, the County Clerk, met in Russell and since they would not meet together neither had authority to do anything. 97

David Adams, young attorney, active on Bunker Hill's behalf was silenced by the citizens of Russell by promising him seventy-five lots in Russell if the county seat was returned to Russell. 98 Finally on March 23, 1874, after over a year of bickering, another election was held and Russell was designated as the County Seat. 99

This episode is referred to as the "county seat war." Actually it is a misleading name, since there was only legal dueling and no physical conflict of any importance. Quite possibly there were some fights between active partisans but fortunately firearms were not used. There is, apparently, no record of anyone having been injured, in a fight, over this issue. True, there may have been some bruising fist fights but fortunately the so-called war was not a shooting war. Although the county seat war was never a violent one there were rather large returns at stake. Today Russell occupies

97 Ibid.
98 Ibid.
99 Ibid.
the position of supremacy, economically, politically and socially in the county and had Bunker Hill won the battle conditions would probably be reversed with Bunker Hill being the most important town in the County. The combatants, quite likely, realized that winning the county seat for their town would more or less insure its future prosperity and strove toward those ends. Fortunately, however, for the citizens of Russell their municipality won, and it continued to prosper and grow while Bunker Hill, on the other hand, remained a small settlement dependent upon her erstwhile foe, Russell, to supply many of her needs.

In 1876 a group of German-Russian settlers came to Russell County and took land. Their ancestors had originally lived in Germany but had migrated to Russia about 1760. Catherine the Great, Empress of Russia, invited many German farmers to settle in Russia, promising them exemption from the military service and promising them government aid in attaining land and establishing homes. They settled in the great wheat area north of the Black Sea in the valley of the Dneiper River, on land ceded to Russia

100 Russell Record, June 29, 1914.
101 Russell Record, December 3, 1904.
102 Ibid.
from Turkey as a result of a recent war. However, their status changed;

   In 1874 Alexander II, Czar of Russia, narrowed the manifest that Catherine II had given to the German settlers so that the German boys must serve as soldiers for five years. Although the document of Catherine’s promised freedom from military service for ever and ever.

This action taken by Alexander II caused a storm of protest among these Germans living in Russia. Almost immediately they began to seek a new land to which they might migrate. The United States presented a possible refuge for these Germans so they began to investigate the feasibility of moving to America.

   One such migration arrived in Russell County December 1876 from a village named Kratzka, in the Volga River region, in Russia. They settled south of Russell across the Smoky Hill River and established their homes and farms in much the same pattern as they had followed in Russia. These German-Russians that settled south of Russell developed an

105 Russell Record, December 3, 1904.
interesting pattern of life. They took land and built a small hut on it, then they laid out a main street and built homes, thus developing a small village. The men lived in the small hut during the week and worked their claims and then came to the village on weekends, but when the homestead laws required them to live on the land the year round, they were forced to move on to their land and build permanent homes and the little village disappeared. 107

Local residents, at first, were somewhat concerned by the influx of these German-Russians and were quite uneasy about them. But understanding soon prevailed and the Russell Record ran a short notice stating that the Germans who:

... have settled in Russell County are members of the Lutheran Church. They are not clanish and are anxious to learn our language and customs. Some have learned enough English to make themselves understood in broken English. 108

The German-Russians were accepted and they continued to prosper.

Population continued to grow in 1876 and 1877. In fact, the local residents were so enthusiastic that the following account appeared in the local newspaper. It read:

107 Russell Record, December 3, 1904.
108 Russell Record, September 27, 1877.
The town is full of land seekers and every day brings in more. The indications now are that the immigration to Russell County during the next year, at least, will equal the rush to California during the height of the gold excitement. This report is overdrawn but reflects the enthusiasm of the residents of the county toward immigrants and their eagerness to build a future in this rapidly growing area.

Another group of German-Russians came to Russell County in February of 1878. They had lived in the village of Eckheim, about fifty miles from the village of Kratzka, in Russia, and encouraged by the success of the Kratzkanites, came to the county and settled near the Kratzka colonists.

There were many more groups and individual German-Russian settlers who came to the county. One band of German-Russians who had gone to Mexico to settle found life disagreeable. They, with the help of relatives, came to Russell County in 1898. Most of the German-Russians came from the province of Saratov, although some came from Samara and Bessarabia. These German-Russians were predominately Lutheran with some Catholics included among them.

109 Russell Record, September 27, 1877.
110 Russell Record, January 29, 1914.
111 Russell Record, December 3, 1904.
112 Ibid.
114 Ibid.
During the 1870's and 1880's the German-Russian immigrants were numerous and Russell County received a goodly portion of them. The county was, indeed, fortunate to get them as settlers. They were a hearty, industrious and thriving people who certainly contributed much to the growth of the area.

As early as 1870 coal was being mined in Russell County. Frank W. Blackmar states, "In 1870 there were 156 coal miners in the county and this was the total population." This is somewhat doubtful. Perhaps many of the 156 residents of the area were miners but it seems unlikely that everyone pursued the occupation. However, mining was an important facet of life in the first decade of the country's existence. In 1879 an article appeared in the Russell Record heralding the discovery of a new source of coal. It read:

D. E. Winfield has discovered a vein of coal in the north bank of the Smoky on his claim. Although the vein is small, it appears to be of superior quality and the indications are that it grows thicker as you penetrate the bank. We believe an inexhaustable supply of coal exists in this valley, and energy and necessity will sooner or later, develop the fact.


116 Russell Record, March 29, 1877.
This estimation proved to be false, especially, in regard to the quality of the coal. This proved to be its major deficiency. Although fairly ample in supply it was of inferior quality and never enjoyed great success. Coal mined in the county usually cost about two to three dollars a ton.\textsuperscript{117} In 1878 there were only 500 tons extracted.\textsuperscript{118} But in 1882, 6,175 tons were removed from the local mines.\textsuperscript{119} Most of it was consumed by local residents and a little of it was sold to the railroad for fuel but the mines met only very limited success. J. C. Ruppenthal describes the mines:

The several coal mines where lignite was mined in early days of the county and was used even on the railroad for a short time, may still be seen, much fallen in. The principal ones are on the bluff overlooking the Smoky River on the east side of Coal Creek partly in Ellsworth and partly in Russell counties; also in the ravine northeast of Bunker Hill about four miles from the tributary to Spring Creek; also on the north side of the Saline due north of Dorrance in Northern Plymouth and Southern Fairview townships; also two or three miles southwest of Bunker Hill.\textsuperscript{120} Although coal mining was of only temporary importance in the county it provided a rather interesting incident in the county's history.

The \textit{Russell Record}, in 1876, ran two more premature

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{117} Russell \textit{Record}, June 20, 1927.
\item \textsuperscript{118} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{119} Cutler, \textit{Andrea's History of Kansas}, p. 1283.
\item \textsuperscript{120} Russell \textit{Record}, June 17, 1926.
\end{enumerate}
boasts, one concerning salt and the other iron ore. Writing about the former the Record stated:

Salt springs of good strength are found in several parts of the county and the indications are that the manufacture of salt will, in the not distant future, be one of our prominent and profitable industries.¹²¹

Salt never became a "prominent and profitable" industry of the county. There was some production by individuals for personal consumption but there were not any large corporations or companies producing salt. So this boast was, generally speaking, an empty one. In respect to the boast claiming deposits of iron ore the Record reported that:

iron ore and selnite ore found in considerable quantity, but whether they are sufficiently plentiful or rich to pay for working is a question which has never been tested, but will probably be decided in the affirmative when capital takes hold of the subject with the hands of skilled labor.¹²²

Iron ore, as salt, never became an important phase of the county's economy. In fact, iron ore, except for pioneer attempts to develop it, was forgotten since it was not sufficiently valuable to develop. It must be remembered that much of the material published in frontier newspapers was for the edification of potential settlers. It was fashion to make a certain area to appear as a paradise of convenience and luxury. Quite likely, this was part of the motive

¹²¹ Russell Record, April 13, 1876.
¹²² Ibid.
behind publication of unfounded boasts such as these.

One resource which was elaborated upon, and became important, was the abundant supply of limestone suitable for building purposes and stone fence posts. It has been estimated that there are between thirty and forty thousand miles of fencing with stone fence posts in Kansas.\textsuperscript{123}

Charles C. Howes writes that, "German-Russian settlers in Ellis, Rush, and Russell and nearby counties are said to have been the first to use stone fence posts."\textsuperscript{124} C. F. Sawyer, who lived on the Saline River north of Bunker Hill, supposedly built the first fence using stone posts, in 1878.\textsuperscript{125}

The stone was cut by two crude but effective methods in the early days.

\ldots one method, which is employed throughout the year, consists of pinching off the stone in wedges of a specified size, depending on whether the stone is to be used for posts or for construction. When the overburden is removed, holes are made in the rock every two or three feet with hand drills. The wedges are driven into these holes, and the posts are pinched off. By the second method, the posts could be quarried during the winter months when farm work was slack. After the overburden was removed, a line of holes was drilled in the rock all along the outcrop. These holes were filled with water, and the first hard freeze finished the work for the farmer. All he had to do was drill a hole according to the

\textsuperscript{123} Charles C. Howes, \textit{This Place Called Kansas} (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1952), p. 92.
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{125} Russell Record, May 8, 1941.
length of the post he desired and fill it with water. Or he could cut the ledge of rock into whatever length he needed by drilling holes at the proper distances and allowing the freezing process to cut his posts into the desired length.\(^{126}\)

The cost of the posts ranged from twenty-five cents for two posts to thirty-five cents for one.\(^{127}\) The posts were fairly cheap but their most attractive feature was the life time of stone. When properly placed, about eighteen inches to two feet in the ground they would present a fence line that would last many years requiring only a minimum of maintenance.

Stone was used to build houses, barns, sheds, corrals, fences and other buildings. It provided the necessary construction material in view of the absence of timber. The cost of importing lumber was very high and it is small wonder that the pioneers made such heavy use of stone to replace wood. There was an ample supply and, if the settler had the equipment and the time he could gain access to a source of building stone with little difficulty and manufacture his own supply of stone. Of course, this furnished the industrious and thrifty pioneers with an inexpensive source of building material.

Stone, by far, was the most important natural resource

\(^{126}\) Howes, *This Place Called Kansas*, p. 93.

\(^{127}\) Russell Record, May 8, 1941.
exploited in the county in the nineteenth century. Coal played a minor role but stone easily outstripped it in value and use. Not until the third decade of the twentieth century, when petroleum was discovered, was a natural resource developed in the county to exceed the value of stone production. Its main significance was not in its monetary value, it was too common for that, but in its widespread use and in the facility with which it could be obtained.
CHAPTER V

AGRICULTURE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Most of the early settlers of Russell County, expecting to make a living from the land, thought Western Kansas with its prairie was better suited to grazing cattle than for cultivating such crops as wheat and corn. This concept began to fade, and crop farming slowly replaced livestock. James C. Malin has described this shift.

Even before the completion of the Kansas Pacific railroad to Denver in September, 1870, the pendulum started to swing from livestock to the small farmer. The railroad undertook aggressive immigration campaign as a means to disposing of its land grant. The tide of settlers began to flow in increasing numbers and by 1869 assumed proportions of a boom.128

There were some ranchers in Russell County but apparently none of them were very large.129 Farming in newly opened frontier areas was accompanied by many unescapable situations. Breaking the sod was a rather laborious process. The prairie land had had centuries of growth and it had never been disturbed. The soil was matted with the roots of the native grasses. Getting it worked into a condition suitable for cultivation presented a task of rather sizable


129 Russell Record, January 27, 1876.
proportions. According to William B. Bracke

... breaking the sod was a huge job. One person recalls 'her father hitched his oxen to a deep plow and worked prodigiously to turn the stubborn sod, deeply matted with roots of the wild grasses. The turned up earth was so tough that a whole year was required for it to rot and soften'. ... 130

Until the original sod had been sufficiently plowed fires were constant hazards. A natural result of dry weather, such fires could wipe out an entire farmstead. 131

Prairie fires were known and feared in Russell County. In fact, the Russell Record advised local residents to take necessary precautions to provide protection from them.

The short notice in the paper read:

We would urge again, as we have done before, the necessity of providing against the burning of the prairie this fall, by construction of ample guards. There has been an abundant growth of vegetation this summer, furnishing material for destructive fires, and unless some means are adopted to prevent the spreading of fires, thousands of dollars damage will be done as soon as the grass is dry enough to burn readily. Now is a very good time to burn out guards; the grass is not dry enough to burn rapidly, and yet with a little urging, and setting of fire, sufficient guards could be burned to prevent destruction of property later in the season. 132

These spectacular fires, in the space of a few hours, could

131 Ibid., p. 105.
132 Russell Record, August 19, 1875.
destroy the homesteads of settlers and leave a charred remnant of months of labor.

Another hazard to farmers was the periodic lack of water, for one season of drought could bring ruin. At first the farmers took land along the creeks and rivers, obviously, to have access to a water supply. But as the land along these natural waterways was taken the new occupants were faced with the problem of sources of water. "In many cases the ownership or lack of a windmill often decided the fate of many farmers in drought." 133 The windmill could not save crops, but it could furnish water for livestock. Thus the farmer was not forced to sell his stock at a tremendous loss.

Kansas in some respects was well suited for agriculture since:

From 70 to 77 per cent of the annual rain falls during the six crop growing months, April to September, when it is most needed. The average for these months in the middle third of the state is 19.49 inches, this compares with the 24.64 and 14.70 inches for the eastern and western thirds of the state respectively. 134

The elevation of Russell County varies from 1500 feet above sea level in the eastern part to nearly 2000 feet.

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feet along the western boundary. The average rainfall in the county is twenty-two to twenty-four inches, except the southwestern one quarter which averages twenty-four to twenty-six inches per year. The soil of Russell County is Chernozem group, Hays type. Chernozem soil is a rich black topsoil with a lower layer of limestone.

The rich topsoil in combination with the climatic conditions of central Kansas is favorable to wheat production. However, in the early history of Russell County, corn was the chief crop that was grown. Malin has explained its predominance thus:

The settler on the Kansas frontier had come primarily from the corn regions of the middle east, and tended to follow the natural course—that of planting the accustomed staples until local conditions of climate, soil and marketing directed otherwise.

In the 1873 Agricultural Report the statistics show that 567 acres were cultivated in corn and nineteen in wheat in the county. This clearly shows a preponderance of corn over wheat. However, wheat rapidly began to take over

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136 Ibid., p. 11.

137 Ibid., p. 19.

138 Malin, Winter Wheat in the Golden Belt of Kansas, p. 4.

139 Kansas State Board of Agriculture, Agricultural Report, 1873, (Topeka: Kansas Publishing House, 1875), p. 16.
corn. By 1875 there were 1,576.50 acres cultivated in wheat and 1,833 in corn, showing a huge gain in two years.\textsuperscript{140} The 1877 figures show that acres cultivated in wheat had reached 5,370 and corn 4,693.\textsuperscript{141} From that date wheat assumed the position of the principal crop in Russell County and has not surrendered that title. Corn, on the other hand, has suffered a steady decline. Considering the percentage of cultivated acres of corn to that of wheat the decline was extremely rapid. In 1873 about 94 per cent of the cultivated land was corn and by the turn of the century only 11 or 12 per cent was in corn. Wheat represented only .03 per cent of land cultivated in 1873; however, by 1900 it represented over 50 per cent of the acres tilled.\textsuperscript{142}

The rapid increase of wheat production over corn can be attributed to two major reasons. One was that climate and rainfall were more agreeable to wheat and the other was the influence of the German-Russian emigrants. Many of these

\textsuperscript{140} Agricultural Report, 1873, p. 88.


\textsuperscript{142} These percentages were calculated by the author. The number of acres in cultivation and the number of acres in wheat and corn were taken from the Reports of the State Board of Agriculture, 1873-1874 through 1899-1900, and the percentages divided out. See Appendix A for the percentages, taken on five year periods, for Russell County from 1873 to 1956.
settlers came from wheat growing areas in Russia and it was quite natural for them to continue to produce wheat. This wave of settlers coming from Russia in the 1870's is given credit for bringing improved types of winter wheat to America. Their successful use of this wheat popularized it and aided in its expansion through the wheat belt.

Although wheat and corn were the principal grains grown in Russell County they were not the only ones. Rye, oats, sorghum and barley were grown as secondary crops. Most of these were grown as feed for livestock and never became particularly important in the nineteenth century. The diversity and number of different crops rather than specialization was the keynote. Wheat was beginning to dominate the agrarian complexion of the county. For instance, according to the 1888 agricultural reports Russell County had seven acres of tobacco sown with a production of 4200 pounds.\textsuperscript{143} There were 8.7 acres cultivated in Irish potatoes in 1888, 15 acres in broomcorn, 33 acres in buckwheat and 13 acres in sweet potatoes.\textsuperscript{144} This gives an idea of the wide range of crops raised by the nineteenth century farmers. There also was much planting of feeds and hay. Milo, kafir corn, Jerusalem corn and millet or Hungarian

\textsuperscript{143} Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1877-1878, p. 430.

\textsuperscript{144} Ibid.
were grown for feed. As late as 1898 prairie grass was important for pasture. During this year the reports show 59,159 acres of grass fenced.\textsuperscript{145}

Between 1888 and 1893 the acres farmed made their largest increase of the nineteenth century. In 1888 the acres in cultivation were only 63,306.\textsuperscript{146} However, by 1893, a period of five years, the total number of acres tilled was 220,849, an increase of 157,543 acres.\textsuperscript{147} This is significant since the average acres planted in the county would be about 225,000.\textsuperscript{148} Thus during this five year period, 1888-1893, the county came near its average in acres cultivated and maintained a steady growth.

Livestock formed an essential part of the nineteenth century farmer's assets. Many of the twentieth century agriculturalists prefer not to have stock since they require so much care, but that was not the case in the nineteenth century.

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{145} Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1897-1898, p. 708.
\item\textsuperscript{146} Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1887-1888, p. 430.
\item\textsuperscript{147} Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1893-1894, p. 181.
\item\textsuperscript{148} This average was calculated by the author. Using five year periods beginning in 1873 the author took the number of acres in cultivation and divided them by the total number of periods of five years each, from 1873-1956, eighteen in all and arrived at an average of 225,000 acres. It must be remembered that this is only a rough calculation.
\end{itemize}
century. Since animals were the source of the farmers' power, they had to have and take care of horses, mules, asses and other beasts of burden. Horses were the main draught animals used in Russell County. By 1900 there were about 7,000 horses in the county as compared to approximately 500 mules and asses. Milk cows were also important in agriculture. Dairying was done mainly for local consumption since this was the era before refrigeration was perfected.

Early in the county's history, numerically speaking, sheep were important. In 1883 there were 30,371 sheep in the county, but by 1900 there were less than a thousand.\textsuperscript{149} Although on the decline, the sheep industry witnessed periodic rises but by the turn of the nineteenth century it was of little importance. Although never as numerous, swine were raised in an attempt to fill the hiatus left by sheep.

The agricultural history of Russell County in the nineteenth century established definite trends that remain even today.

As wheat production began to grow corn fell to the second position and sorghum, the third leading crop, was making great gains in production. There was a trend toward specialization of agriculture. By 1898 wheat, corn,

\textsuperscript{149} Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1899-1900, p. 709.
oats, rye, barley, millet, sorghum and kafir corn constituted 157,299 acres of the 238,529 acres tilled. Many of the crops such as flax, broomcorn, sweet and Irish potatoes, tobacco, castor beans, buckwheat and rice corn were of little importance or had disappeared from cultivation.

The livestock trends were much the same as the crop trends in the respect that the early leader, sheep, declined. Numerically, cattle achieved dominance over sheep by 1888. To supply some basis for comparison of the value of cattle to sheep the following may suffice. According to reports for 1888, 15,179 cattle were valued at $303,580 and 11,683 sheep were valued at only $23,366. In 1883 when there were 30,731 sheep in the county, they had an evaluation of $59,908.

So even though numerically sheep were important early in the county's beginning they were actually of little monetary value compared to cattle.

At the close of the nineteenth century the earlier ideas concerning agriculture had almost disappeared. The

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150 Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1897-1898, p. 709.
151 Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1887-1888, p. 43.
152 Ibid.
county had seen many changes since its beginning. Special-
ization in wheat was the trend and the twentieth century
farmer expanded this type of production. The subsistence
farming of the early resident had reached an end. The trend
from corn to wheat, and from sheep to cattle were the prin-
cipal changes in the county's agriculture. These alterations
were made because of the manner in which the area was better
suited to wheat and cattle.
CHAPTER VI
AGRICULTURE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The twentieth century agriculture of Russell County continued the pattern developed during the late nineteenth century. Wheat acreage continued to increase and corn continued to decline. However, sorghum began to increase during the first quarter of the twentieth century. The expansion of sorghum has occurred resulting from two reasons. Corn is not well suited to the climate of Western Kansas, and new-improved types of sorghum have made it a more dependable and profitable crop.154

A pattern has developed in respect to sorghum production in relation to cattle. In years when cattle production flourished there was an accompanying rise in the number of acres planted in sorghum. For example in 1923 there were 16,915 acres of sorghum and 28,819 head of cattle in the county.155 In 1943 there were 41,800 acres of land planted in sorghum and a total of 32,250 head of cattle.156

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Included with the 32,250 head of cattle were 7,240 milk cows, 7,580 sheep and 12,790 swine. This illustrates the relationship that developed in the county's agriculture between cattle and sorghum. Sorghum invariably increased during years when cattle were numerous and declined in years when cattle production was sparse. In addition to its use as a fodder, a great per cent of the sorghum was grown for grain. This is a profitable crop and supplies an excellent secondary crop to go with wheat. Production of grain sorghum is met with a good market and this enticement has greatly increased the volume of its cultivation.

Corn never regained the lead it held in the county's early history. However, it retained its position of second most significant crop until the 1930's. As late as 1933 there were 34,545 acres of land planted in corn. The drought of the 1930's brought corn's importance to an end as corn requires much moisture for growth. During this dry period it was difficult to raise any kind of crop but corn suffered the heaviest. By the end of the drought period in 1938 the acres planted in corn had dropped to 1,800.

157 Ibid.
In a space of five years corn cultivation had decreased by 32,745 acres. Only 444 acres of the total 189,750 acres cultivated in 1956 were planted in corn. Although corn was never well suited to the climate of Russell County, it took the prolonged drought of the 1930's to virtually end its cultivation. Since its temporary rise during World War II corn has never exceeded much more than one per cent of the acres planted and usually was less than one per cent.

Wheat production took the lead in the County's agriculture. Because of world shortage and higher prices resulting from World War I wheat began an immediate and steady increase in acreage. After the war wheat continued to increase as corn production exhibited a marked decline. By approximately 1920 wheat acreage exceeded more than fifty per cent of the acres sown. From this time wheat planted has not fallen below fifty per cent of the total acres farmed and sometimes has reached the eighty per cent mark.

During the nineteenth century spring wheat was somewhat important along with winter wheat. However, in the early part of the twentieth century spring wheat, for all

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practical purposes, was not used in the county. Winter wheat has been much more suitable to the growing seasons of Western Kansas and more reliable and easier to grow. Thus winter wheat displaced spring wheat.

During the late 1930's Russell County experienced its first Federal Government regulation of wheat production. This control was discontinued during World War II and then resumed in the late 1940's. It was again relaxed during the Korean War and in 1952 the acreage allotment was reintroduced. The advent of acreage allotment has had far reaching implications. A definite trend toward cattle production has been a direct result. Because of the reduction of acres a farmer can plant in wheat, he has been forced to other means to supplement his income. This recent trend can best be illustrated by showing the comparative values of crops as compared to livestock. In 1948 the gross crop production was valued at

161 Spring wheat never represented much of the acreage put into wheat. In the Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1927-1928, p. 415 the statistics show only 160 acres of spring wheat in Russell County. This compares to 204,839 acres of winter wheat. Spring wheat is erratic. Some years there was an appreciable amount planted. Two thousand acres was about the most land put in spring wheat in a single year, but by the 1950's spring wheat was omitted.

162 Kirk Baker, Russell County Agricultural Agent, personal interview, March 20, 1959. Mr. Baker stated that the Federal Government set 500,000,000 acres as the amount of land to be cultivated in wheat in the United States. This figure of 500,000,000 acres is divided among the commercial wheat producing states where it is divided among the counties of those states.
$6,751,100 and the livestock was valued at $4,106,260.\textsuperscript{163}

However, by 1953 the value of crops produced fell to $3,161,310 and the value of livestock rose to $5,104,570.\textsuperscript{164}

During the first three decades of the twentieth century the value of crops produced, except during the drought of the 1930's and during World War I, was greater than that of livestock. If the value of livestock did exceed the value of crops, it was only by a scant margin until the mid 1950's. By 1956 the value of livestock was nearly $2,000,000 more than that of crops. Under the present trend caused by acreage allotments it appears that this difference will increase. Wheat will remain the principal crop, but cattle raising will amplify as a method to supplement farm incomes.

Even though the drought of the 1930's was severe the number of acres put into wheat gradually increased. By 1938 there were 224,130 acres in winter wheat and five in spring wheat making a total of 224,135 acres.\textsuperscript{165} World War II brought better prices and huge demands for food stuffs. One would naturally expect a large increase in the county's

\textsuperscript{165} Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1937-1938, p. 365.
wheat production. Oddly enough, however, it declined during the war. By 1943 only 151,000 acres were producing wheat. Cattle production had more than doubled the 1938 figure and sheep and swine had tripled. Sorghum production doubled to meet the demands of the increase of stock raising in the county. However, even though stock had made fantastic strides forward its value did not exceed that of wheat. The worth of wheat alone in 1943 was $3,918,000 and all livestock was assessed at $3,354,940. Although the number of acres planted in wheat declined, the rising price of wheat made it the most valuable agricultural commodity of the county.

Mechanization of agriculture through the use of tractors for power has greatly influenced crop production. Machinery provided a more efficient and profitable method of farming. Improved types of seed coupled with machinery have increased the yields of wheat crops. Production of wheat in relation to the number of acres planted illustrates this point. In 1908, when machinery was still powered by horses,

166 Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1943-1944, p. 343. The smallest amount of acres cultivated in wheat was reached by 1940. However, the increase during the war failed to reach the mark of acres put into wheat during the late 1930's, thus showing an overall decline.

167 Ibid.
150,128 acres of wheat produced 2,102,590 bushels. In 1943, 151,000 acres of wheat produced 2,839,000 bushels. Less than 1,000 acres more planted in wheat yielded nearly 700,000 more bushels of grain. Both 1908 and 1943 were years of normal climatic conditions. Neither was in a period of drought nor was either year adjacent to the beginning or the end of a drought.

The introduction of the combine, for instance, greatly influenced harvesting of wheat. Harvesting can be done more rapidly with greater economy. Although machinery allows the farmer to put more land to use with greater ease the number of acres farmed decreased during the twentieth century. This occurred before the advent of acreage allotments. In 1908 there were 429,289 acres under cultivation in the county. By 1949 after conservation and limitations of the 1930’s and 1940’s, the acres tilled numbered 229,570.
This represented a decrease of over 200,000 acres.\textsuperscript{172} This drop was due mainly to the cessation of cutting grass from prairie land. However, the cultivation of land did not increase as rapidly as a result of the introduction of machinery as one might suspect.

In recent years the farmers of Russell County have turned to seeding land in grass. Due to the reduction in land that can be put into wheat many of the agriculturists of the county have been seeding land to supply pasture for cattle.\textsuperscript{173} At the present time, there is a trend toward more intensive cattle production in the county than in previous years. According to Kirk Baker, Russell County Agricultural Agent, most of the farmers of the county have not accepted the soil bank program but have put their land into grass and have begun to raise cattle. Mr. Baker stated that between 500 and 2,500 acres of land have been placed in the

\textsuperscript{172} This figure can be somewhat misleading. Actually not all the 429,289 acres in 1908 were cultivated in the normal sense of the word. In 1908, 10,418 tons of prairie grass were cut from 209,997 acres of prairie land. However, these figures on prairie hay are consistently included in the reports. Apparently since the grass was cut from these acres it was included in the number of acres farmed. When calculating percentages for ratios of acres planted the prairie grass acreage is always included so there is no inconsistency shown.

\textsuperscript{173} Kirk Baker, Russell County Agricultural Agent, personal interview, March 20, 1959.
soil bank each year since it was instituted. 174

Soil conservation has become another important facet of the agricultural picture of Russell County in recent years. Protection of soil prior to the twentieth century in the west seemed rather superfluous to the farmer. But in the last twenty-five years soil conservation has been recognized as a necessary project to preserve the land and its vitality. Such things as the use of contour farming, terrace farming, strip farming and summer fallowing have been employed to combat erosion in Western Kansas. 175 All these methods have been utilized in Russell County. However, summer fallowing is by far the most common method of conservation used by the county farmers.

Lack of sufficient water supplies has kept irrigation from becoming important in Russell County. Attempts to irrigate have been made by farmers living close to the rivers, but only on a limited scale. Actually the attempts have been so small one could say that irrigation hardly exists in the county.

Thus it appears that the recent trends in agriculture

174 Ibid.

are threefold. The first is a definite turn to extensive cattle production. Planting land in grass is the second, and the third trend is increasing planting of sorghum.

With the present problems of surplus crops agriculture is strictly controlled, especially wheat. Yet Russell County, even with the crop regulations, is producing about as many agricultural products as in earlier years. The amount has slightly declined, but the value of goods has soared, due to inflation. Generally speaking, Russell County produces less today than in past years but receives much more for the commodities in terms of monetary value.

It would seem that if the present conditions continue Russell County's agriculture will undergo a major metamorphosis. Cattle will, in all probability, continue to amplify in numbers and value. In all possibilities the county will grow wheat, cattle and subsidiary crops to supply cattle. Production of wheat, sorghum and cattle have replaced the earlier trend toward diversity of crops. If this change continues, it would seem likely that the farmers will come to depend upon only a few crops and cattle for an economic livelihood.
CHAPTER VII

PETROLEUM INDUSTRY

Until 1923 Russell County was primarily dependent upon agriculture for a livelihood. However, in 1923, oil was discovered in the county and drastic changes followed. The discovery of oil brought in many new people, much wealth and stimulated nearly all forms of business.

Kansas had developed an oil industry long before exploration began in Russell County. Long before commercial oil production began in Kansas one man discovered oil by accident. The first major fields of production were found in the southeast part of Kansas. Kansas was thought to:

... have reached its peak in oil production in 1918, during the heyday of Augusta and Eldorado. But the same movement of wildcatting, new field discoveries, and intensive development during the nineteen thirties that swept other parts of the Southwest gave the state new prosperity.

This idea of Kansas having reached the peak of oil production was shattered in the early 1920's by the discovery of oil in

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176 Carl Coke Rister, Oil Titan of the Southwest (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1949), "Early in Johnson County history a squatter dug a well and found both water and oil. This being near the Santa Fe trail. He skimmed the oil from the water and sold it to lubricate the wheels of the big freighters on the trail." p. 25.

177 Ibid., p. 334.
Russell County.

Many geologists and oil men had long debated the possibility of finding oil in Western Kansas. Some of these groups were so convinced that they leased land in the hope that they would have land in areas where the prospects seemed favorable that oil might be discovered. The Russell Record carried a comment on this early leasing of land.

... Russell County, like many other Western Kansas regions, experienced considerable activity in leasing for oil and gas prospecting as early as 1917. . . .

Leasing is a strange activity. If one company begins to lease land other companies will lease adjoining land in an effort to protect themselves and to be ready in case a major discovery was made.

The first well in Russell County was drilled in 1923 by the M. M. Valerius Oil and Gas Company of Tulsa, Oklahoma. The drilling of this well greatly aroused the curiosity and hopes of the local residents. Regular accounts of the progress made on the well were published in the Russell Record. Shortly before completion of the well one article stated:

178 Russell Record, July 17, 1942.

For several days past there has been strong indications that our oil well was nearing production and on Tuesday the drill dropped into an oil bearing sand that was thoroughly saturated with oil, showing plainly on the tools, and the bailers brought up quantities of oil.\(^{180}\)

The article went on to say that:

The oil well is being handled by a corps of long experienced, efficient drillers who are doing the work at this critical period with great care, and who will spare no efforts to bring in what we believe to be one of the most successful fields since the great ElDorado strike.\(^{181}\)

The author of this article proved to be prophetic.

The location of the first well in the northwest part of Russell County was in the southwest corner of the southeast one quarter of section eight, township twelve south, range fifteen west.\(^{182}\) The well, by late November was drilled to a depth of 2,998 feet, however the well was drilled out to a depth of 3,037 feet but oil was produced from the 2,998 feet level.\(^{183}\) This well was named the Carrie Oswald, number one, in honor of the owner of the land upon which the discovery was made.

Discovery of oil in a new area, as might be suspected, unleashed a furor of activity. Russell County was no

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\(^{180}\) *Russell Record*, November 15, 1923.

\(^{181}\) Ibid. This prophesy proved to be an accurate one. This well opened a great new field.

\(^{182}\) Verwiebe, "Exploration for Oil in Western Kansas During 1942," p. 13.

\(^{183}\) Ibid.
exception. The Carrie Oswald, number one, was averaging around 200 barrels of oil per day. 184 With this good production many skeptical oil men were now convinced of Russell County's potential and operations began.

By July 10, 1924, less than a year after the first discovery of oil, there were four producing wells in the county and fifteen drilling rigs. 185 Oil production in the county by the end of 1924 totaled 233,266 barrels. 186 This was the last year in which production of oil in Russell County was less than a million barrels. The sum of oil extracted did not exceed four million barrels of oil per year until 1936. In 1936 production of oil amounted to 7,074,000 barrels and in 1937 it leaped to 11,379,000 barrels. 187 This increase can be explained by the increase in the number of wells. The year of 1937 was the biggest year in the history of the drilling of wells in Russell County. At the end of 1937 there were 536 oil wells in the county and of the 536 wells 419 of them were completed in 1937. 188

184 Ibid.
185 Russell Record, July 10, 1924.
188 Russell Record, May 10, 1951.
Map of Russell County and adjacent counties showing the oil pools.
In 1929 oil was discovered in the south part of the county. Previous to that year the drilling was done principally in the northwest part of the county. In 1936 the Trapp pool was discovered south of Russell. This find changed the industry. The Trapp pool for many years was one of the largest producers of oil in Kansas.\textsuperscript{189} With the increased drilling in the late 1930's Russell County became one of the most important oil producing counties in the state of Kansas. By 1940 there were 1,535 producing wells in the county, this represents an increase of 999 wells from the 536 wells that had been completed by the end of 1937. The total production for 1940 was 13,589,000 barrels.\textsuperscript{190}

World War II had a tremendous impact on the production of oil in the county. In 1940, production was 13,589,000 barrels of oil. However, it rose to 20,016,000 in 1941, 20,553,000 in 1942, 21,362,000 in 1943, 23,145,000 in 1944

\textsuperscript{189} Walter A. Verwiebe, "Exploration for Oil and Gas in Western Kansas During 1941," State Geological Survey of Kansas, Bulletin 42, 1941, p. 97. By 1941 the Trapp pool was the second largest in the state of Kansas. It covered 29,000 acres and had 785 wells in it. Since its discovery in 1936 it had yielded 25,000,000 barrels of oil by 1941 or 5,000,000 barrels per year on the average. As early as 1929 Russell County ranked fourth in production but the Trapp pool's increased production soon placed Russell County nearly in first place.

and 22,923,000 in 1945. The all time high for Russell County in 1944, during the height of World War II, will probably stand as the apex of the oil industry in the county. Since then it has been on a gradual decline.

By the end of 1957 Russell County had produced a total of 288,526,000 barrels of oil since 1923 and had 2,926 producing wells. Russell County started as a non oil producing area, reached its peak, and entered its decline in a space of only thirty-four years. Russell County had a yearly average of about 12,210,000 barrels from 1923 to 1957.

The discovery of oil in Russell County was important for two reasons other than the oil resources. The first was that the Russell County fields were over one hundred miles northwest of any producing areas at the time of the completion of the Carrie Oswald, number one. The second

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192 E. D. Goebel (et. al.), "Oil and Gas Developments in Kansas During 1957," State Geological Survey of Kansas, Bulletin 133, 1958, p. 211i-216. For a table with complete statistics of oil production of Russell County see Appendix B. In 1951 the Russell Record on May 10 ran an article stating that there were 3,084 producing wells in the county. This number of wells would probably be the largest number of producers in the county's oil history.
was that acidization of wells was pioneered in Russell County.

Acidization is the placing of acid down into the well and allowing it to attack the oil producing formation. The object of this action is to increase the porosity of the formation and allow better extraction of the oil from the formation. The use of acid was pioneered at the Carrie Oswald, number one on January 23, 1923. After acidization proved to be successful in Russell County the use of acid to treat wells became a wide-spread practice. Present day oil companies use acid freely and have developed its use to a fine art.

To supply some idea of the amounts of money spent by the oil industry in the county the Russell Record ran an article showing the statistics to January 1, 1948. The cost of drilling 2,593 wells was $51,860,000. This would represent an average of about $20,000 per well. By 1948 there had been 659 dry holes drilled at the cost of $9,226,000. The cost of drilling both producing wells and dry wells would amount to approximately $61,000,000. Lease rentals paid to land owners for the rights to develop oil on their property amounted to $4,200,000. Oil royalties paid to the land owners amounted to $24,471,000. Just the expenditures

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193 Russell Record, May 8, 1941.
entailed in leasing, drilling and paying the royalties amounted to over $100,000,000 by January 1, 1948. 194 This does not include the money spent by the oil companies for wages to their laborers employed in maintenance, the taxes they paid and the money brought in by the various service companies. 195

Although there was some production of natural gas in Russell County, it was only of minor importance. The Hugoten gas field of Southwestern Kansas has overshadowed other gas fields in Western Kansas.

Since 1948 the oil industry of Russell County has begun to decline. Production has remained around ten million barrels per year but drilling has slacked off considerably. In fact, plugging of wells has been increasing each year. Proration of production per well is one answer for the decline. "Wells in these pools are allowed to produce twenty-five barrels per day." 196 However, most of the pools that

194 Russell Record, May 10, 1951.
195 The service companies are organizations that supply the necessary men and equipment to aid the oil companies to maintain production. Haliburton, Schlumberger, Acid Engineers and the supply stores all follow the industry to supply its needs.
are prorated cannot produce an average of twenty-five barrels per day. In some areas of the county where oil is produced a well that can make fifteen barrels a day is considered a good well. At the present rate of production it will be some years before Russell County's oil industry is depleted. However, the decline is inevitable and the oil produced will slowly decrease and eventually end.

Although oil will be of diminishing importance in the future it has made its impression upon the county. The sudden and ample influx of wealth from oil has changed the county. Oil had for the city of Russell:

"... served as a magic wand to transform Russell from an agriculture community into a petroleum-minded town that has tripled in population. Oil has provided an electrifying stimulus for hundreds of new homes, public buildings, new streets, schools, churches, theatres, parks, new business firms and an enduring industrial overtone." 197

Russell benefited from the oil industry more than any other community in the county. The city is centrally located and the county seat. It is located on the railroad which is convenient for the supply stores to obtain equipment needed in the fields. Russell received most of the influx of laborers and as a result the business establishments grew and prospered.

The petroleum industry, in a large part, is responsible

197 Russell Record, May 10, 1951.
for the prosperity of Russell County. Many of the so-called "successful farmers" have oil royalties to thank for their success. Evidence of this can be seen by observing the farmsteads in different parts of the county. In the south part, where oil was discovered in huge quantities, the farms are modern. They have new houses and barns, relatively new machinery and automobiles. However, in the northeast part of the county, where there is little oil, the farms are old, rundown and present a rather drab comparison to the farms of their more fortunate brethren.

Schools show the effect of the taxes paid by the oil companies in the rural areas. The schools in oil rich areas have new, modern buildings and the areas without oil have inferior buildings. The oil industry has been assessed for more than one half of the tax assessments of Russell County for many years. For instance, in 1958, the total valuation on tangible property in Russell County was $58,567,627 and of this sum the oil industry was assessed at $28,667,585. However, prior to this late date, the oil industry's assessment before the decline of oil production usually stood well over fifty per cent of assessment.

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198 Abstract 1958 Tax Rolls, Russell County, Kansas.
199 Fred J. Hartman, County Clerk for Russell County, personal interview, April 18, 1959.
Actually, there is little doubt of how important oil has been to Russell County. The added wealth brought by the industry has allowed the county to grow and to progress. Russell County will suffer a decline in trade and commerce when the oil industry depletes the resources and leaves the area, but it has made important and lasting contributions to the county's economy.
CHAPTER VIII

POPULATION CHANGES IN RUSSELL COUNTY

Russell County has exhibited a gradual population growth since its establishment. In 1870 there were only 156 residents in the county. However, the decade between 1870 and 1880 had the largest upsurge for a ten year period in the county's history. From 1870 to 1880 the population of the area grew from 156 to 7,351 people. This represents an increase of 7,195 residents.

This rapid increase can be explained in several ways, Russell County was not organized until 1872 and prior to that date few people had located in the area. In 1872 the county experienced the first serious attempts at occupation. The Ripon Colony settled at Russell. Bunker Hill was laid out and settled and, in general, rapid development was underway. In 1876 the first German-Russian pioneers came into the area.

200 Department of Interior, Bureau of Census, Ninth Census, p. 145. For population figures see Appendix C.
201 Department of Interior, Bureau of Census, Tenth Census, p. 182.
202 The 1955 population figures from the Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1953-1956, p. 100, gave Russell County credit for 13,268 inhabitants. Dividing 13,268 by 85 years would give an average increase of 156 persons per year. In the decade from 1870 to 1880 the average increase was 720 per year. If averages are significant, it can be seen that Russell County from 1870 to 1880 grew at about five times its normal rate as exhibited over a period from 1870 to 1955.
county and took land. Russell County was not in any sense peculiar in the respect to the sudden growth it experienced in the 1870's. Kansas, in general, was experiencing rapid growth during this decade.

During the late 1880's Russell County lost some of its population, although the loss was minor. The population of 1880 of 7,551 declined to 7,333 in 1890. Thus the second decade of the county's existence saw a decline of eighteen residents. Although the total population diminished, the town of Russell increased from 861 in 1880 to 961 in 1890.

After the decline in population in the late 1880's the county began to regain some of the losses, and by 1900 the total of people living in the county reached 8,489. From 1900-1910 the population increased to 10,800 from 8,489, representing a gain of 2,311. The agricultural prosperity of this decade was responsible for this new growth of population.

By 1920 the population had declined to 10,748 and by

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204 Ibid. By late 1891 the Russell Record, December 10, 1891, boasted that the city of Russell had a population of 1,150.

205 Department of Interior, Bureau of Census, Twelfth Census, part I, p. 20.

1930 it had increased to 11,045. The population increase from 1910 to 1930 was only 245. Except for the fantastic growth of the county in the 1870's and the first decade of the twentieth century Russell County population grew slowly. During the latter part of the nineteenth century most of the farm land was occupied and the county had about reached its limit of growth by the 1920's unless something, such as an industry, was developed to attract people into the county.

This attraction was found in the mid 1920's. Petroleum was discovered in Russell County in 1923 and new people began to come to the area to find work. It was not until the 1930's that the oil industry began to really expand and develop the county's resources. This can be illustrated by the fact that from 1920 to 1930 the population increased by only 297 persons. However, the population in 1930 was 11,045 and by 1940 it had increased to 13,464. This represents an increase of 2,419 people during the 1930's. This decade was an important one for the county. Even though the depression and the drought caused many of the counties of Western Kansas to suffer reductions in

207 Department of Interior, Bureau of Census, Fourteenth Census, vol. III, p. 352 and Fifteenth Census, vol. III, part I, p. 836. In this chapter when the term Russell is used it applies to the city and not to the county.

208 Department of Interior, Bureau of Census, Sixteenth Census, vol. I, p. 403. See also the Russell Record, May 12, 1930.
population, Russell County enjoyed one of its better periods of population growth. Had it not been for the "boom" of oil activity Russell County would probably have suffered a decline in population. During the decade between 1930 and 1940 there was a sharp reduction in the number of farms. In 1930 there were 1,347 farms in the county, and by 1940 the total number of farms had declined to 1,270. In ten years seventy-seven farms had been abandoned. Many of these farms were absorbed into other farms. If the oil industry had not been in motion the county would have suffered a loss in population. But by the increased activity in the 1930's the contrary situation developed.

By 1950 the census report listed Russell County population at 13,344 people, a reduction of 120 from 1940. Yet 1954 was the year when the population hit an all time high. In that year the population of the county reached 13,620. Since 1954 the population has been diminishing, in 1958 the population of the county was 12,740, this decline

210 Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1939-1940, p. 582.
has been caused mainly by the depletion of the oil. Most of the companies have reduced their labor forces and many of the auxiliary service companies of the oil industry have either moved their offices out of the county or sharply reduced the number of men they employ. Due to this retrenchment of activity on the part of the oil industry Russell County population has and will probably continue to decrease. Unless some type of industry is secured the county will continue to lose population and eventually will return to an area dependent upon agriculture for its livelihood. This possibility presents some rather serious problems to the county. The value of property will fall and tax income will be decreased and, in general, the economy of the county will suffer.

The town of Russell, for all practical purposes, is the center of activity in the county. All the remaining towns in the county, by comparison, have never been too important. Population in these towns has never been large. By 1958 their populations were: Bunker Hill 261, Lucas 605, Luray 326, Paradise 156, Dorrance 352, Waldo 175 and Gorham 450. The total population of these seven small towns in 1958 was 2,325 out of the entire 12,740 people of the county.

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215 Ibid., p. 95.
Russell became the undisputed leader of the county in the 1870's when the county seat was located there.

By 1900 the city of Russell had a population of 1,102 people.\textsuperscript{216} Russell gradually increased and by 1930 the population reached 2,045 and by 1940 it had attained a total of 4,819 inhabitants.\textsuperscript{217} From 1930 to 1940 the county population gained 2,419 persons but the town of Russell grew by 2,764 residents. This can be explained by the fact that many of the rural residents during this decade abandoned their farm homes and moved into town. The population of the townships, except those in which oil was found, tended to diminish in population, some of them declined severely. The population of Russell hit an all time high in 1954. In that year the population was 6,860.\textsuperscript{218} However, since 1954 the population of Russell has been decreasing. By 1958 the number of persons living in Russell was 6,565 showing a loss of 295 people.\textsuperscript{219}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{216} Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1899-1900, p. 825.
\item \textsuperscript{217} Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1929-1930, p. 488. And for the population figures of 1940 see Department of Interior, Bureau of Census, Sixteenth Census, vol. I, p. 403.
\item \textsuperscript{218} Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1953-1956, p. 100.
\item \textsuperscript{219} Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1957-1958, p. 98.
\end{itemize}
In order to illustrate the change in population in the rural districts perhaps a comparison of two townships will demonstrate the trend. Fairfield township is in the south central part of the county, and in this township oil was discovered in great quantities. Fairview township is in the north east part of the county where only a little oil was discovered. However, early in the county's history, Fairview township, due mainly to the good land and water supply, by 1900 had 1,830 inhabitants and Fairfield township had only 222 residents. In 1920 Fairfield township had increased to 280 residents and Fairview had diminished to 542 residents. With the discovery of oil in 1923 and then the detection of oil in the south part of the county in 1929 the population of Fairfield township began to increase and the population of Fairview township declined. By 1950 Fairview township, where no oil was discovered, had declined from 542 residents in 1920 to 307 and Fairfield, where oil was found, increased from 280 in 1920 to 624. The growth in population in the township where oil was found can be readily explained. Many of the oil companies have their employee, who cares for the equipment on the lease,

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live in a company built house or one the employee secures. There are many of these today and this is the primary cause of the increase of population.

Overall the number of farms in the county has declined. This explains why the rural population of townships where oil was not found has declined. In 1936 there were a total of 1,357 farms in Russell County,\(^{223}\) and by 1940 the number of farms in the county had dropped to 1,270.\(^{224}\) There are several reasons why the number of farms in the county has decreased. For reasons of more convenient living conditions, better schools for their children and social advantages found in the towns many farmers now live in town and drive out to their farms to tend their duties. Since the introduction of powered machinery, the tractor in particular, the number of acres a farmer can care for has increased and as a result expansion of large farms has decreased the total of farms. The lure of employment elsewhere with a more dependable annual salary has drawn many people from farming. During the drought of the 1930's many people abandoned their farms and never returned and the land was purchased by other agriculturalists and incorporated into other farms. The


\(^{224}\) Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1939–1940, p. 582.
acreage allotments and the recent trend to cattle production, which required more acres and less labor, has caused many of the "small farmers" to be forced from the realm of farming. This decrease in the number of farms has steadily progressed, and in 1957 there were only 941 farms in the county. 225

Although the population of the county is diminishing the total of the residents of the towns is increasing. The percentage of county residents living in town instead of in the rural area has been steadily rising. The town of Russell in 1958 had a population of 6,565. This figure represents over one half of the total population of the county.

The population of Russell County made a good deal of progress without the aid of the oil industry. But in view of the recent trends in abandoning farms it seems likely that had not the discovery of oil supplied a fresh source of population the county population would be less than it is at present. When considering the situation of Russell County the part played by the oil industry must be given much credit for giving the county a boost in the number of residents.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

In the eighty-seven years from 1872 to 1959 Russell County has progressed from a raw frontier to a modern area. Actually eighty-seven years represents, when viewed with an historical eye, only a short time. However, these years have been put to good use and the progress made has been real and lasting.

As a rule, the population of Russell County grew slowly but steadily. Some of the decades saw a minor decrease in population. The decades of 1870-1880, 1900-1910 and 1930-1940 saw an increase due to the settlement which was underway in these periods. The years between 1900 and 1910 was a period of great agricultural prosperity and in the decade of 1930-1940 the population increased because of the rapid expansion of the oil industry.

The physical nature of the terrain of Russell County was hospitable to settlement. With the construction of the railroad into the county the scene for occupation was set, but it was several years after the railway was built through the county before colonization began. The settlement of Russell County was not unique. One feature that differed from many western and southwestern counties was the use of stone fence posts. Stone fence posts are somewhat unique
and peculiar to the areas of Western Kansas settled by German-Russian emigrants.

Agriculturally speaking, the county experienced a major transition. In the early years of the county corn was the most important crop. However, wheat replaced corn and was assured superiority over all other crops in both acreage and yield. In recent years Russell County has experienced a development of grain sorghum as a secondary crop and an increased cattle production.

One of the most important developments in the county was the discovery of oil in 1923. Prior to the discovery of oil the county residents were prosperous but oil proved to be the "magic wand." Oil has brought much prosperity to the area and it has greatly developed the county. It had a great influence on the county population during the 1930’s. During this period many of the counties of Western Kansas suffered declines in population. Russell County, on the contrary, enjoyed an era of increase in population.

Aside from the oil industry Russell County’s history was rather commonplace. There were no great historic events to lay claim to. The settlement and the development of the county was, for the most part, an orderly event and was not distinguished by any memorable occasions. The pioneers did not have the hardships except for droughts encountered by the settlers in other areas. There were no "wild west" days
to expound upon or build into legend.

There are several aspects related to the history of Russell County which would merit further study. The political history of the area would provide an excellent topic. The social and intellectual history of the county are topics which should be investigated thoroughly.

One field in which a great deal of work is needed to be done is a history of the Union Pacific Railroad and its land policies. In doing the research for the material to write the chapter on the coming of the railroad the author found that an adequate work on this event is lacking. This would be a long and arduous task but it would be a real contribution to the field of history if someone would undertake to remedy this situation.
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________________, January 27, 1876.

________________, April 13, 1876.

________________, December 7, 1876.

________________, March 29, 1877.

________________, September 27, 1877.

________________, December 10, 1891.

________________, December 18, 1897.

________________, December 19, 1897.

________________, April 12, 1902.

________________, May 3, 1902.

________________, May 17, 1902.

________________, June 7, 1902.
104

December 19, 1903.
December 3, 1904.
December 26, 1907.
November 24, 1910.
January 29, 1914.
June 29, 1914.
November 15, 1923.
July 10, 1924.
June 11, 1926.
June 17, 1926.
June 20, 1927.
June 23, 1927.
July 4, 1927.
May 12, 1930.
May 8, 1941.
July 17, 1942.
May 10, 1951.
May 24, 1951.

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Abstract 1958 Tax Rolls, Russell County, Kansas. County Clerk's Office.


Ruppenthal, J. C. "Address on the History of Lucas, Russell County, Kansas," State Historical Library. Speech delivered on October 5, 1901.

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Baker, Kirk, Russell County Agricultural Agent, March 20, 1959.

Hartman, Fred J. County Clerk Russell County, Kansas, April 18, 1959.
This appendix is a percentage study of wheat cultivation in relation to corn. The percentages are five year periods starting with the first agricultural reports made on Russell County. All the figures except the last are five year periods. This set of graphs has been included to present the reader with graphic illustrations of the early importance of corn and its decline and to show the rise of the importance of wheat.

PERCENTAGE OF LAND CULTIVATED IN WHEAT AND CORN, 1873-1913

Corn
Wheat
PERCENTAGE OF LAND CULTIVATED IN WHEAT AND CORN, 1918-1956

Corn
Wheat
APPENDIX B

PRODUCTION OF OIL PER YEAR IN RUSSELL COUNTY

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Barrels</th>
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<tr>
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<td>233,266</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>20,016,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>1,366,148</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>20,553,000</td>
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<td>1926</td>
<td>1,858,159</td>
<td>1943</td>
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<td>1927</td>
<td>4,469,622</td>
<td>1944</td>
<td>23,145,046</td>
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<td>1928</td>
<td>1,304,000</td>
<td>1945</td>
<td>22,923,235</td>
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<td>1940</td>
<td>13,589,000</td>
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Sources: The statistics for production of oil for the years 1924-1927 can be found in L. W. Kessler, "Oil and Gas Resources in Kansas During 1927," State Geological Survey of Kansas, Bulletin 29, pp. 42-43. Statistics on production from 1928 to 1943 can be found in the Minerals Yearbook for the years 1928 through 1943. The statistics for 1944 to 1957 can be found in the State Geological Survey of Kansas Bulletins 56, 62, 68, 75, 78, 87, 92, 97, 103, 107, 112, 122, 128, 133.
APPENDIX C

POPULATION OF RUSSELL COUNTY

1870-1958

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<td>156</td>
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<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>7,351</td>
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<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>7,333</td>
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<td>1900</td>
<td>8,489</td>
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<td>1910</td>
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<tr>
<td>1920</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
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<tr>
<td>1940</td>
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<td>13,344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>12,740</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources

For the population figures from 1870 to 1950 see, Department of Interior, Bureau of Census, Ninth Census through Seventeenth Census. And for the statistics concerning the population in 1958 refer to Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1957-1958, pp. 95-98.