
The Great White Buffalo: Dedication Remarks, 1983

by *Joseph W. Snell,*
Thomas F. Averill, and
William G. Winter

ON October 18, 1983, Lumen Martin Winter's sculpture, *The Great White Buffalo*, was dedicated at the Kansas Museum of History during the Society's annual meeting. As part of the ceremonies, Society Executive Director Joseph W. Snell provided information on the Degginger trust which funded the costs of the sculpture and told how the artist was selected. Thomas F. Averill, a member of the Washburn University English department, explained the symbolism of the great white buffalo, and William G. Winter, the son of the sculptor, spoke of his father's artistic vision. Their remarks follow below.

Joseph W. Snell

The statue of the great white buffalo rests here today because of the love one man had for his native state. That man, N. Clyde Degginger of Kansas City, was the son of Louis L. Degginger, who migrated from his native Germany to Kansas in 1868. Though Louis had no money and could speak but little English, he worked hard and soon opened a store at Sparks, in Doniphan County. Later he moved to Highland, where he maintained his business until he retired in 1910 and moved to Kansas City, Missouri. In 1873 Louis married Ella Herring who bore him three children, Bertha, Pearl, and Nathan Clyde.

Clyde Degginger attended Highland Junior College at Highland and entered into the general store and grain businesses operated by his father. When the store was closed and the family moved to Kansas City, Degginger managed the family holdings in Doniphan County. Clyde Degginger died in 1967 at the age of eighty-six.

Degginger's will provided that the principal and income of his estate would accrue for six years from the date of his death. The Kansas State Historical Society was to receive the residue of his estate and use it to acquire a work of art depicting a significant event or character in the history of Kansas. The work was to be placed on public land in Topeka.

At the time the Degginger trust was finally settled it was strongly felt that the state legislature was about to authorize the construction of a new museum building. The Society's executive committee felt that the art to be commissioned would be an outstanding enhancement to the new structure. Things moved rapidly from that time. Planning funds were appropriated in 1977 and 1978 and construction was authorized in 1980.

The next year the Society announced an open competition among artists who were invited to submit designs for a three-dimensional work under the guidelines of the Degginger bequest. Nearly fifty entries were received. From those, the Society's executive committee selected six designs and invited the creators to prepare models and appear in person before the committee and explain their themes. With the counsel of John L. Greer and Sam Frey, the architects who designed the new building, the executive committee ultimately settled on Lumen Martin Winter's concept of a Great Plains legend called "The Great White Buffalo."

Winter, then of New Rochelle, New York, had grown up near Larned and Belpre, Kansas. After studying at the Cleveland School of Art and the National Academy of Design, he became an internationally known artist. His work has been exhibited in such prestigious institutions as the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Art Institute of Chicago and is included in the collections of the Vatican, the Smithsonian Institution, the Library of Congress, and the White House. Winter's work is also represented in the collections of the Kansas State Historical Society. In fact, my office is brightened by a Reno County scene which he painted and which he felt was just right for that bare wall facing my desk.

In 1976, Winter was chosen by the state of Kansas to complete the statehouse murals begun in 1939 by John Steuart Curry. It was then that I first became acquainted with Lumen Winter and became his friend. I learned that he had no sculpture in Kansas. It was



At the dedication ceremony on October 18, 1983, William G. Winter described his father's artistic vision.

his desire, he told me, that he might express his love of Kansas by having a three-dimensional creation of his own placed in the state before he died.

Needless to say, Winter was delighted when his work was chosen to grace this new building. Unfortunately, he did not live to see his sculpture here in this magnificent setting. He died, suddenly, in the spring of 1982. Fortunately, however, Winter had completed all necessary design work and he had a talented son, William, who saw the statue to completion.

Neither Clyde Degginger nor Lumen Winter lived to see how beautifully this exquisite statue enhances our equally outstanding building. I am sure, however, that Degginger would approve of the concept and its execution. And I'm positive my good friend Lumen Winter is here with us in spirit, proud of his son and happy that he has at last fulfilled his life's dream.

Thomas F. Averill

The old die, the new are born, and the race lives on forever. The white buffalo is the chief of the herd, and from the buffalo comes our animal food, and this gives us life and strength. . . .

So it was for the Hunkpapa, the Sioux, and for many of the Plains Indians. The buffalo was the gift, and from it came all that sustained life. And among

the buffalo was the white buffalo. Sometimes pied, sometimes cream-colored, sometimes pure albino, it was sacred among buffalo to many tribes. Its skin was powerful medicine, to be worn or carried only when hunting game during periods of terrible necessity or when fighting an enemy. Its power was the essence of the spiritual power of the buffalo, who was the giver of life and thus the center of Plains Indian life and culture.

Because of its value as symbol and its power to its owner, the white buffalo was hunted, killed, then ritualistically skinned. Among the Cheyenne, the meat was not to be touched. The hide itself was to be handled only by those warriors who by heroic action might be worthy—for example, only a man who had counted coup inside an enemy's lodge might carry the white buffalo hide into its owner's lodge. All the work of dressing the newly acquired hide was done in the presence of old men of great spiritual power.

The white buffalo robe was of great value to its owner, who profited spiritually by its possession. Some tribes cut the hides into strips so that the power of the robe might be shared among other chiefs. Some hides were traded, however, either by tribes who did not greatly value them for their spiritual force, or by men who needed other kinds of power more—guns, ammunition, powder, whatever. A white buffalo robe

An Italian artisan puts the finishing touches on The Great White Buffalo, sculpted from eight tons of white Ravaccone marble.



might be worth sixty ordinary robes, or might be traded for as many as fifteen horses.

No one knows just how many white buffalo ever inhabited the Great Plains. Ironically, they were valued so highly and killed so quickly—usually before sexual maturity and thus genetic replication—that their incredible scarcity was assured. They were so rare that probably only ten or eleven white buffalo, or white buffalo robes, were ever seen by white men. Some early observers said that there were probably as few as one white buffalo among five million on the southern Great Plains. Scarce indeed, and thus of great value for whites—when whites invaded the plains and exterminated the great herds, white buffalo were killed and their skins displayed to a curious mass audience.

The first white buffalo killed in Kansas by whites became known as the Morgan buffalo. Killed by James and John Morgan in 1870, the buffalo was mounted and displayed from town to town until 1875. In 1876, it went to the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia, then returned to a home in a glass case in the Kansas statehouse. The Kansas legislature appropriated fifty dollars towards its purchase, but John Morgan refused, stating that P. T. Barnum had offered fifteen hundred dollars for the stuffed animal. In 1903, the buffalo, then in storage, was taken away by an unidentified woman and never returned.

In 1871, James Caspion killed a white buffalo in Kansas, kept the skin for five years as a good luck charm, then sold it for one hundred dollars at Fort Lyon to help support a spree he was on. Soon after, he was killed by Comanches in New Mexico.

In 1872, “Prairie Dog” Dave Morrow killed a white buffalo and sold it to Robert Wright of Dodge City for one thousand dollars. It was later displayed in the statehouse in Topeka, then found a more permanent home in the Hubbel Museum in New York City, which later burned.

P. T. Barnum, that extraordinary showman of the nineteenth century, figures by proxy in another Kansas white buffalo incident, this one with C. J. “Buffalo” Jones, who got close to four young white buffalo in 1886, but failed to run them down and capture them on his tired horse. He lamented the loss of ten thousand dollars, the price he thought Barnum might be willing to pay for a live white buffalo. Thus Barnum is the arbiter for what whites feel the value of the white buffalo might be. He certainly conjures up the opposite image from those Indian elders who lent their great spiritual power and wisdom to the ritual of dressing a captured white hide. But then Barnum was a different kind of medicine man altogether, which points up just one of the differences between Indians and whites.

It is fitting, then, that this statue of the white

buffalo be *accompanied* by the Indian, who understood the spiritual as well as the material power of the buffalo on the Great Plains. The Indian saw it as a powerful symbol, and it is as a symbol that it now shows itself to us. I think it is an appropriate symbol for this place, in front of the Kansas Museum of History.

To some Indian tribes, the white buffalo was said to have come from the North, from the source of all buffalo. Let it remind us that a good museum searches for the sources of who we are here—our great power, but also our great foibles.

The white buffalo also represents the rare among the common. There were few among millions. Let it remind us that a good museum shows the common, but searches for the rare and valuable among it.

The white buffalo, finally, represents the spiritual force within the material things that sustain life. A good museum does the same thing—it takes material culture and searches for its meaning, for its spirit, for its true life.

This white buffalo should charge us to these pursuits: to find our sources and understand them, to see

what is rare in our common lives, to find the spiritual inside the material. If it does, then *this* white buffalo will truly give us, as it did the Hunkpapa, both life and strength.

William G. Winter

My father had many books in his library. Most of them were books about art, as he was schooled in the great tradition of the Renaissance masters and had enormous admiration for Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Rembrandt, and many others. Among his books was a small volume entitled *What Is Art? and Essays on Art*, by Tolstoy.¹ He inscribed this book to me and dated the inscription January 15, 1974.

The sculpture which we dedicate here today is called *The Great White Buffalo* and depicts the subject of a legend. In this regard I should like to quote a

1. Leo Tolstoy, *What Is Art? and Essays on Art*, trans. Alymer Maude (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, 1950).



The Great White Buffalo was shipped to the United States in mid-August 1983. On September 30 workmen began removing the wooden crate on the museum grounds.



Slowly the sculpture emerged from the container.

portion of chapter two of the aforementioned book, which I feel is particularly appropriate:

Many people, especially children, when reading a story, fairy-tale, legend, or fable, ask first of all: "Is it true?" and if they see that what is described could not have happened, they often say: "Oh, this is mere fancy, it isn't true."

Those who judge so, judge amiss.

Truth will be known not by him who knows only what has been, is, and really happens, but by him who recognizes what should be according to the will of God.

He does not write the truth who describes only what has happened and what this or that man has done, but he who shows what people do that is right—that is, in accord with God's will; and what people do wrong—that is contrary to God's will.

Truth is a path. Christ said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

And so he who looks down at his feet will not know the truth, but he who discerns by the sun which way to go.

Verbal compositions are good and necessary, not when they describe what has happened, but when they show what ought to be; not when they tell what people have done, but when they set a value on what is good and evil—when they show men the narrow path of God's will, which leads to life.

And in order to show that path one must not describe merely what happens in the world. The world

abides in evil and is full of offence. If one is to describe the world as it is, one will describe much evil and the truth will be lacking. In order that there may be truth in what one describes, it is necessary to write not about what is, but about what should be; to write not the truth of what is, but of the kingdom of God which is drawing nigh unto us but is not as yet. That is why there are mountains of books in which we are told what really has happened or might have happened, yet they are all false if those who write them do not themselves know what is good and what is evil, and do not know and do not show the one path which leads to the kingdom of God. And there are fairy-tales, parables, fables, legends, in which marvellous things are described which never happened or ever could happen, and these legends, fairy-tales, and fables, are true, because they show wherein the will of God has always been, and is, and will be: they show the truth of the kingdom of God.

There may be a book, and there are indeed many novels and stories, that describe how a man lives for his passions, suffers, torments others, endures danger and want, schemes, struggles with others, escapes from his poverty, and at last is united with the object of his love and becomes distinguished, rich, and happy. Such a book, even if everything described in it really happened, and though there were in it nothing improbable, would nevertheless be false and untrue, because a man who lives for himself and his passions, however beautiful his wife may be and however distinguished and rich he becomes, cannot be happy.



William G. Winter watched carefully as the sculpture was positioned on a pedestal in the future reflecting pool.



With the sculpture in place, a television cameraman used the crane to gain an overall view.

And there may be a legend of how Christ and his apostles walked on earth and went to a rich man, and the rich man would not receive him, and they went to a poor widow, and she received him. And then he commanded a barrel full of gold to roll to the rich man and sent a wolf to the poor widow to eat up her last calf, and it might prove a blessing for the widow and be bad for the rich man.

Such a story is totally improbable, because nothing of what is described ever happened or could happen; but it may all be true because in it is shown what always should be—what is good and what is evil, and what a man should strive after in order to do the will of God.

No matter what wonders are described, or what animals may talk in human language, what flying carpets may carry people from place to place, the legends, parables, or fairy-tales will be true, if there is in them the truth of the kingdom of God. And if that truth is lacking, then everything described, however well attested, will be false, because it lacks the truth of the kingdom of God. Christ himself spoke in parables, and his parables have remained eternally true. He only added, "Take heed how ye hear."²

I believe that one can readily comprehend the spirit of the legend of the great white buffalo as having universal and lasting value for people now and in the

future, in light of Tolstoy's statements about philosophical and spiritual truth. The buffalo and the Indian are shown as living in harmony by the sculpture. The Indian is not attempting to harm the buffalo but rather merely signals his presence by touching the blunt end of his spear to the buffalo's back.

The harmony of man and nature, and indeed of all life was an important theme in my father's work. Some 150 or so miles east of here is Marceline, Missouri. This town is located on an east-west line between Saint Joseph and Hannibal, approximately midway across the state. There stands a statue of Saint Francis of Assisi surrounded by animals, with a bird perched on his right hand while with his left he strokes a donkey's chin. Legend has it that Saint Francis was so gentle and radiated such universal love that the animals, domestic and wild, came to him freely, and unafraid. My father sculpted this statue.

Saint Francis was a heroic figure to my father, and my father considered him to be a model of personal character. He was born at Assisi in 1181 or 82 and died there in 1226. His father was Pietro Bernardone, a prominent local merchant. Saint Francis cared nothing for worldly goods and gave generously to the poor

2. "On Truth in Art," *ibid.*, 9-11.

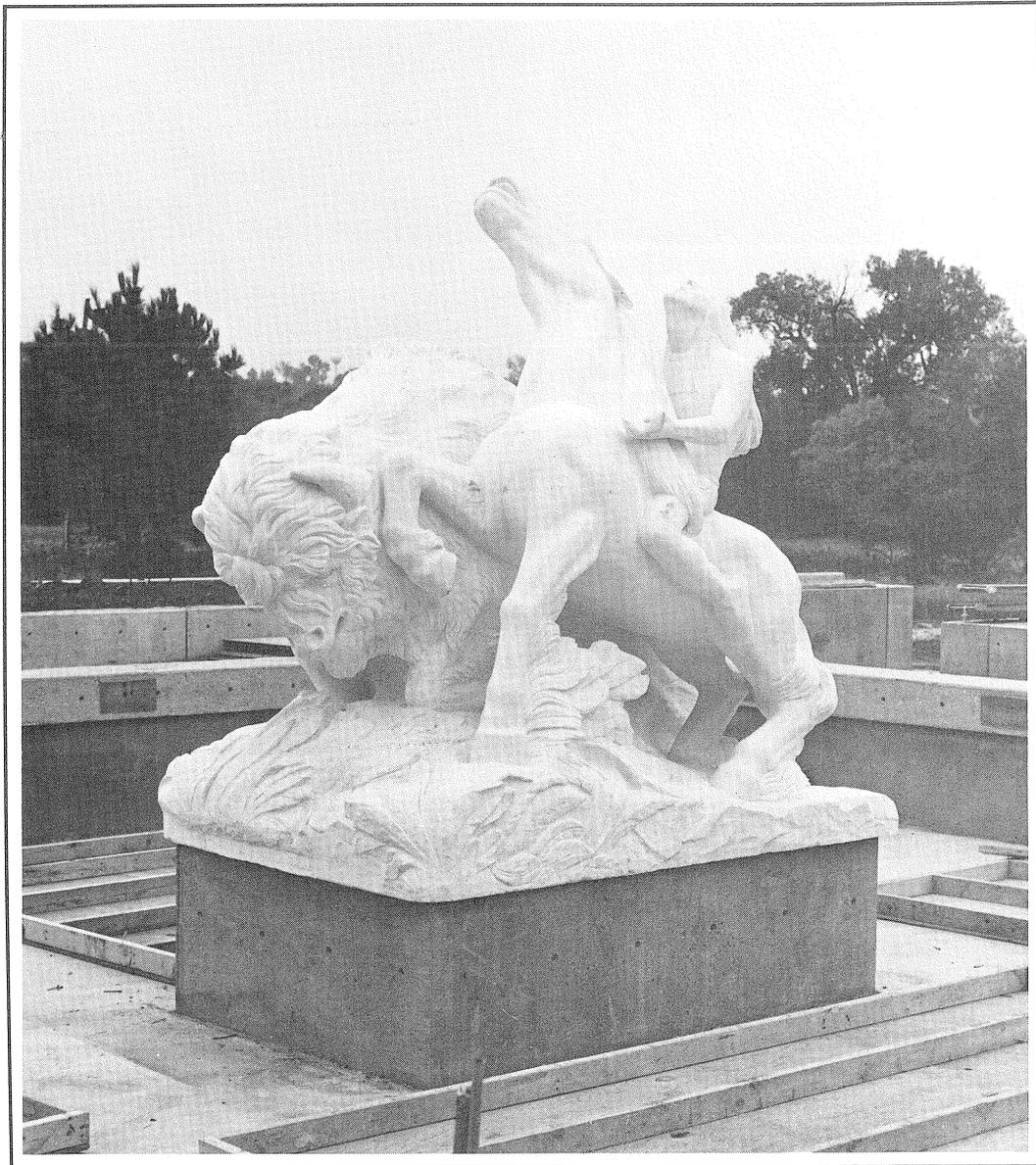
from his youth onward. He believed in the sentiment expressed in the Gospel according to Saint Matthew, 10:9-10: "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat."

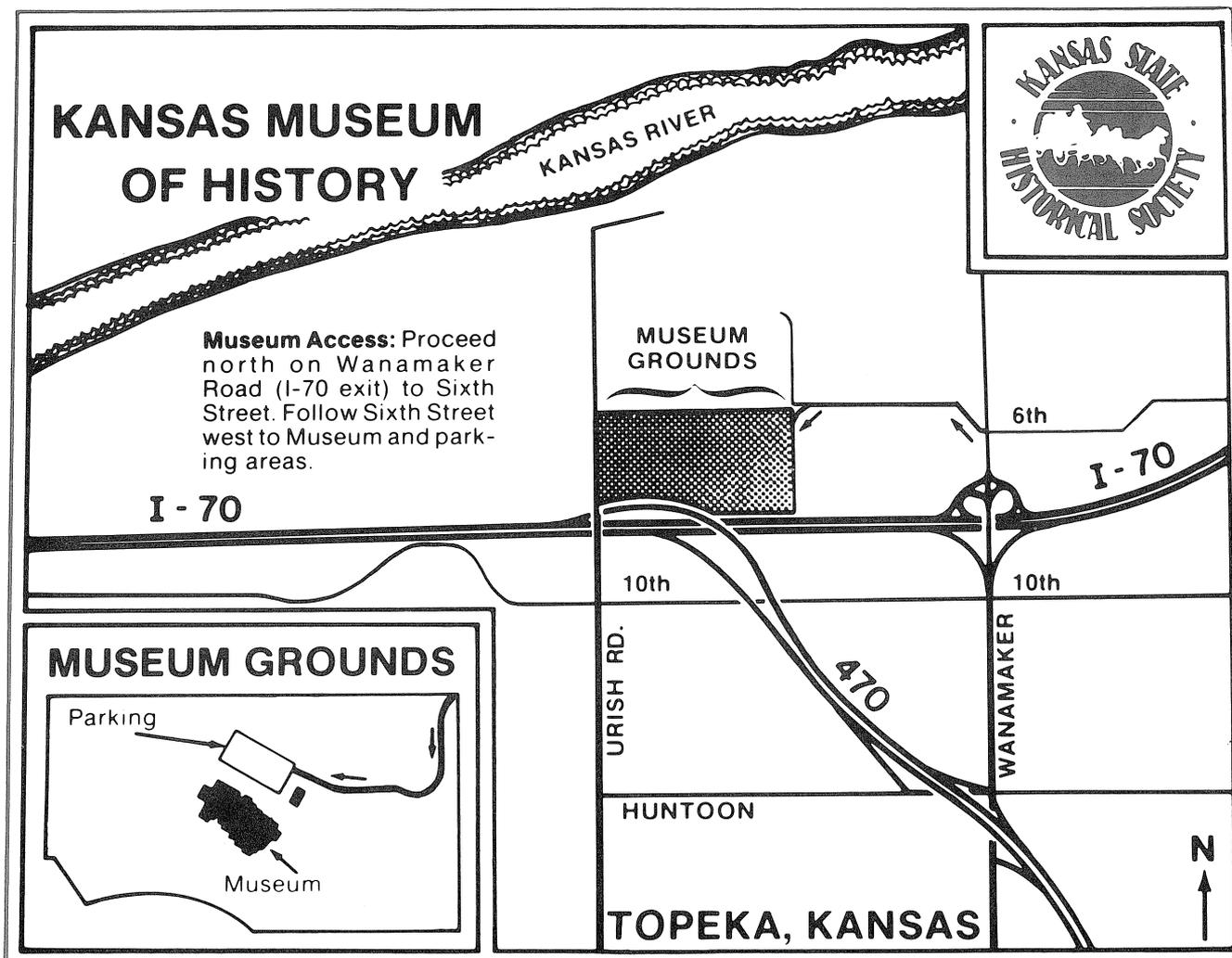
He was a man of mansided richness, tenderness, poetry, and originality, and very lovable and strong. Probably no one so seriously attempted to imitate the life of Christ or to do so literally Christ's work. He had about him a constant joyousness and a love of nature both animate and inanimate. Legend tells of his preaching a sermon to the birds. He called all creatures his "brothers" and "sisters," as he also called the sun,

moon, water, wind, and fire. He was a mystic, irradiated with the love of God and endowed with the spirit of prayer.

My father has, here in this statue, portrayed the same spirit of universal harmony, peace, and love and the oneness of humans and nature, and indeed, of all creation.

My father knew that this sculpture would be here for one hundred years, two hundred years, one thousand years, and that it would give pleasure to people yet unborn, people he would never meet, and whom I will never meet. That is the great satisfaction and joy of being an artist: to communicate with kindred spirits across the ages. KH





Cannons, Spinning Wheels, and a Train: A History of the Museum Collection

by Mary Ellen Hennessey Nottage

THE Kansas State Historical Society is approaching its eleventh decade of collecting. Its holdings, both written and artifactual, give evidence of the way Kansas became Kansas and Kansans became the Kansans of the 1980s. Within the collections are the thoughts, aspirations, and possessions of governors, of rebels, of pastors, of soldiers, of poets, of merchants, of farmers, of dressmakers, of mothers and fathers and children. Early in the state's history the citizens demonstrated a self-consciousness that manifested itself in a desire to document their collective lives. From this desire came the founding of the State Historical Society.

At its inception in 1875, the Society's founders gave to the new organization the purpose of "saving the present and past records of our twenty-one years of eventful history."¹ Four years later the Historical Society was recognized as the official trustee of the state's historical materials, and state law elaborated on the simple statement of purpose, requiring the organization:

To collect books, maps and other papers and materials illustrative of the history of Kansas in particular, and of the West generally; to procure from the early pioneers narratives of events relative to the early settlement of Kansas, and to the early explorations, Indian occupancy, and overland travel in the Territory and the West; to procure facts and statements relative to the history and conduct of our Indian tribes, and to gather all information calculated to exhibit faithfully the antiquities, and the past and present condition, resources and progress of the State; to purchase books to supply deficiencies in the various departments of its collections, and to procure by gift and exchange such scientific and historical reports . . . and such other books, maps, charts and materials as will facilitate the investigation of historical, scientific, social, educational and literary subjects. . . .²

The written word was to carry the history of the state. Little notice was given to collecting artifacts; in fact, the emphasis in the brief mention of "antiquities" in the statutes of 1879 was on the gathering of the verbal information to accompany their exhibition. The perception of the artifact in the early Historical Society was quite different from that of today. The artifacts that found their way into the collection were relegated to sideshow status. In early years, the museum collection in its entirety was placed in exhibit cases and on the walls in a manner now referred to as visible storage. It fit where it could among the library collections in the meager accommodations allowed the Historical Society in the statehouse. Use of the museum collection was a passive function on the part of the institution; the relics were there for those who chose to look them over. The board of directors was firm in its belief that no group of artifacts superseded in importance the library function of any historical society, collections and services included.³ This attitude is well illustrated in the tabulations of acquisitions made periodically for the Historical Society's biennial reports. Between 1876 and 1900, the organization received 23,508 manuscripts, 23,051 books, 23,907 volumes of newspapers and magazines, 67,418 pamphlets, and 5,120 maps, atlases, and charts into its library proper. During this same period the museum of history received 5,326 pictures and 6,952 artifacts grouped and referred to as "relics, scrip, coin, etc."⁴ Throughout its history, the Society maintained this statistical balance between written materials and artifacts, but the nature of the museum collection and the perception of its historical value underwent many changes.

Franklin G. Adams, the secretary of the Historical Society from 1876 to 1899, had dreams of making the institution a microcosm of the world. "Our museum," he wrote in 1878, "will contain objects illustrative of

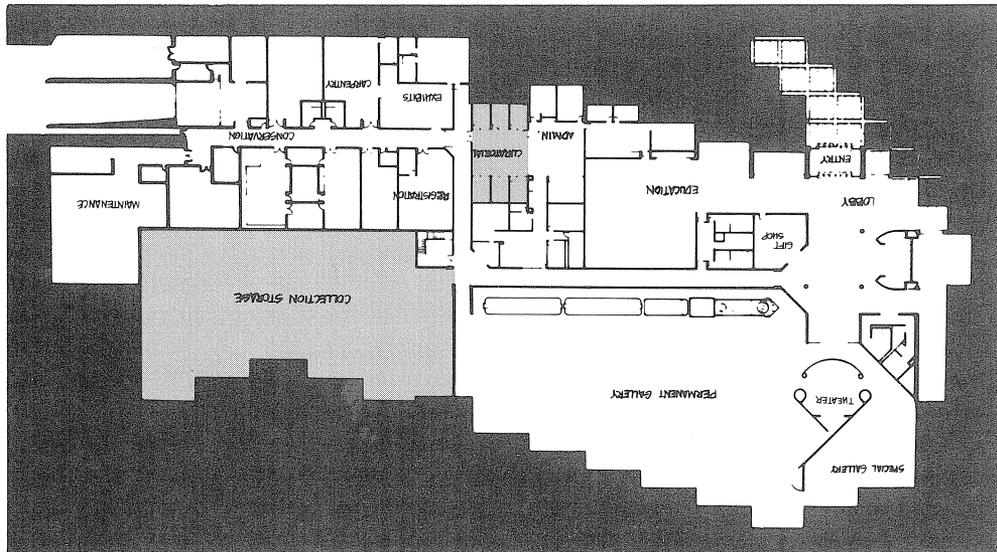
Mary Ellen Hennessey Nottage is curator of decorative arts, Kansas State Historical Society.

1. Edgar Langsdorf, "The First Hundred Years of the Kansas State Historical Society," *KHQ* 41, (Autumn 1975):265, 268.

2. *Kansas Historical Collections, 1875-1881*, 1 and 2:56.

3. *Kansas Historical Collections, 1883-1885*, 3:16.

4. *Fifteenth Biennial Report, 1904-1906*, 11-12.



raiders, and a piece of coarse graham meal bread made by Lawrence residents when their flour supplies were cut off by the activities of "border ruffians." The cannon "Old Kickapoo," one day aimed at free-state voters and a few days later captured by them, became a star attraction at the Historical Society. The Society's acquisition of the office table of the New England Emigrant Aid Company, an organization successful in sending antislavery settlers to Kansas, was seen as an important coup. "It already has a value that gold cannot measure, and as the years roll by its value will increase in a geometrical ratio until it will take its place among the sacred relics of a holy cause."⁸ The emotion that fired the "holy cause" and kept its memory vibrant affected and was affected by the collection of relics that grew in the rooms of the Historical Society.

Much of the same emotion was involved in the Society's amassing of war relics during its first fifty years of operation. F. P. Baker, the organization's president in 1884, spoke on "The Values and Uses of Historical Societies":

More than one father in his proud sorrow has sent the sword of his soldier son to hang forever a memorial of his bravery. And thus we keep alive the spirit and the mute record of patriotism. In time grandsons and great-grandsons will come to look at these relics, and what is deemed silver will be gold then. We value what we have gathered, but it will be worth tenfold more to those who come after us.⁹

the civilization and the manners and customs of all people in all ages."⁵ The board of directors had more limited, and in retrospect much more practical, expectations of the museum. The report of the board submitted at the seventh annual meeting, held in January 1883, gives some insight into what types of objects the members considered suitable for acquisition. Acceptable were artifacts that illustrated "the modes of life of our pioneer settlers, their political struggles, and hardy experiences." Also to be welcomed into the collection were war relics, portraits of citizens prominent in activities within Kansas, and "objects illustrating the history and manners and customs of the Indians or other inhabitants."⁶

During its first fifty years the museum did well collecting within the later categories, but many Kansans shared Secretary Adams' wonder and curiosity about the world beyond the borders of their state. The acquisition of the twenty-seven-hundred-year-old piece of Egyptian linen was heralded with the same enthusiasm as the ballot box from the first election in Rawlins County.

The political struggles of pioneer settlers became a natural focal point for the Society's early collecting activities. With the troubles of 1856 less than thirty years old and still freshly remembered, volumes of printed and written material on the subject of the free-state struggles poured into the Historical Society. There was a corresponding abundance of artifacts, including the keys to the Free State Hotel in Lawrence, which was burned down by a band of proslavery

5. Quoted in Langsdorf, "The First Hundred Years," 283.
 6. *Kansas Historical Collections*, 1883-1885, 3:16.
 7. Langsdorf, "The First Hundred Years," 285-87.
 8. *Daily Capital*, Topeka, March 19, 1881.
 9. *Daily Commonwealth*, Topeka, October 14, 1884.

Artifacts of the Civil War were prominent among acquisitions from the Historical Society's inception until the event was eclipsed by other wars in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For decades soldiers and their families sent in bits and pieces of ruined buildings, ammunition, and abandoned arms—all gleanings from battlefields where the "War of the Rebellion" was fought. Bullets removed from the limbs of Kansas soldiers testified to bravery. Engraved pistols and swords presented to officers by their men testified to honor. Hardtack testified to hardships endured. Captured rebel flags memorialized victory over armies. Countless pieces of Confederate scrip memorialized a vanquished society. The most publicized acquisition, however, was the collection of battle flags and guidons of Kansas regiments. The flags had been housed in the adjutant general's office, but some believed the Historical Society was a more appropriate place for them. After making proposals to preserve and exhibit them in glass cases, the Society received the flags in 1905 through an act of the legislature. By that time the collection had grown to include flags and guidons of Kansas regiments raised for the Spanish-American War. Nine years later, reverence for the flags was at a peak as they were transferred ceremoniously to the new Memorial Building, a Civil War monument itself. The parade of members of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) carrying the relics to the building was viewed as "a sacred service, the last supper of the flags."¹⁰ In the Historical Society's new quarters the flags became the nucleus of the organization's collection of war relics. The GAR established its own museum there, the war-related artifacts to become, much later, part of the Historical Society's collection.

Before 1899 the Society received its first fragment of the battleship USS *Maine*, destroyed in Havana Harbor in 1898. More fragments were donated later as the amassing of relics of the Spanish-American War and the Philippine Insurrection continued. Clothing and accouterments of Rough Riders, buttons from the uniform of a Spanish infantryman, a captured Filipino battle flag, and ammunition from battle sites were received and exhibited. In the years 1899 and 1900, 477 war relics were counted among the acquisitions. A few were from the Civil War, but the majority were collected by the participants in the battles being fought at that very time. An outstanding gift was J. W. Ozias' large collection of Filipino materials and items related to the Twentieth Kansas Infantry. As with Civil War artifacts, the donation of Spanish-American War

objects peaked within twenty years of the event and then dwindled down to a trickle that has never stopped.

Soon after World War I ended the Society began to prepare for the great influx of relics expected in 1919. The west room of the museum was set aside and items came in, but not at the rate expected. Notable was Gov. Henry J. Allen's gift of 173 French war posters. The World War I collection grew gradually over the years.

By the time the Kansas State Historical Society was ten years old, the romantic interpretation of American history was outdated among professional historians. The development of the country was no longer seen as a dramatization of events under the influence of Great Men who represented the best attributes and ideals of a forward-moving people.¹¹ The old attitudes, however, were not easy to dislodge from the public mind, and Great Men were still credited with superhuman influence. A cult-like admiration for two nineteenth-century figures, Abraham Lincoln and John Brown, had its effect on the collections of the Historical Society. Into the museum came the banner presented to Lincoln in 1858 as he debated with Stephen A. Douglas in Galesburg, Illinois; an umbrella used by the Great Emancipator; a pot lid that had belonged to his mother Nancy Hanks Lincoln; a watch chain made from a lightning rod from the old Lincoln home; and most precious of all, a Ford's Theater program onto which had fallen a drop of his blood. Other objects with Lincoln associations continued to be donated one at a time, although in 1917 the collection of Leavenworth dressmaker Carrie Hall was deposited with the Historical Society. For many years Mrs. Hall had been gathering Lincoln material of every description: photographs, campaign pamphlets, books, sheet music, portraits, busts, pottery decorated with Lincoln's likeness, medals, a piece of wood from his place of birth, a lamp with his profile molded into its shade. Mrs. Hall's collection was installed in a separate room at the Historical Society where it remained a place of honor until the 1960s remodeling of the Memorial Building.

Artifacts used by John Brown were prevalent among donations to the Society early in its development. During the 1870s and 1880s the Society received his cap, a bowie knife which he captured in 1856, pistols he carried during the Kansas troubles, pikes and an ax with which he armed his Harpers Ferry raiders, and a piece of wood from a station on the

11. George Bancroft, *The History of the United States of America from the Discovery of the Continent*, abridged and edited by Russel B. Nye (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Phoenix Books, 1966), xiii-xxvi.

10. *Topeka State Journal*, May 27, 1914.

for his destructiveness, and artifacts donated to the Historical Society perpetuated this memory. Smashed and scorched mirrors, melted windowpanes, and burned ceramic cups from his 1863 raid on Lawrence were collected for the museum. The most controversial relics in the history of the Society came in the late 1880s in a donation from W. W. Scott, who claimed to have opened Quantrell's grave to retrieve his bones. The bones were not exhibited, but were stored in the Society's vault. Staff complied with endless requests to view the gruesome relics of the guerrilla, and debate raged over their authenticity. The GAR threatened to have Secretary George W. Martin removed from his position if he continued to harbor the remains of the enemy.¹⁵

The instances of donations of artifacts associated with Lincoln, Brown, and Quantrell became fewer and fewer as the twentieth century progressed. As with objects related to the wars, however, collection of such materials has not ceased.

In viewing photographs of the Historical Society's quarters in the statehouse and the early gallery arrangements in the Memorial Building, one notices immediately the rows of portraits covering the walls and hanging from columns. This forest of faces was the Society's hall of fame. A pet project

underground railroad where he stopped on his last fugitive slave run from the state. When the gallows upon which John Brown was hanged was offered for sale, the Lawrence *Herald-Tribune* editorialized that the State Historical Society should purchase the item to go with its collection of relics related to the man.¹² Although the purchase was not pursued, a fragment of those gallows found its way into the collection in 1915. In 1886 it was suggested that a separate room be set aside at the Historical Society to honor John Brown, but such a place was never arranged.¹³ The high regard that Kansans had for their martyred champion was demonstrated in other ways. Friends presented portraits and a bust. His children chose the "Society as the appropriate custodian of the memorials of their illustrious father" when they donated the gold medal that a group led by Victor Hugo had cast as a testimony to John Brown's sacrifice for human rights.¹⁴

The homage paid to Lincoln and Brown through the collection of relics was counterbalanced by the intensity with which William Clarke Quantrell was condemned as the antithesis of the Great Man. The proslavery guerrilla leader was remembered



A section of the Society's portrait gallery in the State Capitol

15. Langsdorf, "The First Hundred Years," 323-24.

12. *Daily Herald-Tribune*, Lawrence, March 31, 1885.
 13. *Saturday Evening Lance*, Topeka, February 6, 1886.
 14. *Sixth Biennial Report*, 1887-1888, 8-9.

of the organization's secretaries was the acquisition of portraits of every governor of Kansas. They did well, and by 1915 the Society lacked only the portraits of Govs. Walter Stubbs and George Hodges. The pictures of lesser Kansas notables also were gladly received into the collection. In oils, crayons, woodcuts, and steel engravings were early settlers, war heroes, senators and representatives, generals, and a few women who had distinguished themselves through their work. Kansas citizens who had achieved local or statewide prominence were apt to donate portraits of themselves. Most of the pictures, however, were donated by the families or friends of the subject. Serving the same purpose of honoring and memorializing worthy Kansans was the collection of busts. Although far fewer in number than the portraits on the walls, the busts were also representative of a cross section of admired citizens.

The portraits were collected to memorialize their subjects, but many of them were fine works of art executed by such talented Kansas painters as George M. Stone and Henry Worrall. Of non-portrait artworks there were very few. Development of this portion of the Historical Society's collection took place slowly.

The professed interest of the Historical Society in collecting "objects illustrating the history and manners and customs of the Indians or other inhabitants"¹⁶ led to the acquisition of great volumes of material. Farmers brought in prehistoric treasures found while they plowed their fields. Others actively pursued the discovery of Indian relics in all parts of the state and made up their own collections which they then turned over to the Historical Society. Such relics as tools, ornaments, and pottery fragments were popularly thought of as "object lessons for the instruction of the people in respect to the manners and customs of the red men...whose rude ways have given place to the kind of civilization which in our day has been planted here."¹⁷ There was a great consciousness of the disappearance of one culture and its replacement with one considered to be superior. The Historical Society took a more scholarly approach in its own pursuit of archeological materials. In 1901, money from the institution's fee fund was allotted to a special committee "to examine and collect for the museum of the Society archaeological relics from the mounds and deserted village sites of the aborigines of Kansas."¹⁸ From an early

date, much of the material for the museum was obtained in this manner, which involved serious research according to the standards of the time rather than amateur pothunting. Surface finds continued to be donated as the Society sought information on both aborigines and early explorers. An important acquisition came in 1923 when four thousand pieces of the Brower collection of Kansas artifacts were obtained from the Minnesota Historical Society in exchange for duplicate newspaper files.¹⁹ No other part of the Society's museum collection grew as rapidly as the archeology section during the first fifty years. In later decades the archeology section became a distinct department within the Historical Society, and the archeological and ethnographic collections were separated from the collections of the museum.

As objects of popular curiosity, Indian relics ranked with the more exotic elements of the museum's holdings. Foreign cultures were subjects of great fascination. The soldiers of the Twentieth Kansas Infantry came back from the Philippines with hundreds of objects used by Filipinos in their daily lives. Maude Madden, a missionary in the Far East, made a large collection of Japanese items and donated it to the Historical Society in 1903. In 1920 the heirs of Lindley Perkins of Baxter Springs filled a freight car with the results of his worldwide souvenir hunting and sent it to the museum. Other individuals struck by the beauty, antiquity, uniqueness, or primitive qualities of items discovered in their travels dutifully brought them to their state museum.

The phenomena of nature were collected in the same spirit. A freak corn stalk, a sawfish bill, a giant clamshell, and a hair ball from the stomach of a cow took their places in the museum. A more serious detour into natural history was taken when the collection of the Academy of Science was moved to the new Memorial Building. Although Secretary William E. Connelley refused to house the live reptiles, he did gain for the museum one of its most popular exhibits, the Goss bird collection. Among the mounted specimens transferred to the care of the Historical Society were hundreds of skins of birds common to Kansas as well as rare birds of North America. These had been collected and prepared by Nathaniel S. Goss. The birds perched among the historical exhibits from 1915 until 1977 when, in the interests of properly preserving a valuable collection, they were transferred to the University

16. *Kansas Historical Collections, 1883-1885*, 3:16.

17. *Commonwealth*, Topeka, June 4, 1880 (daily edition).

18. *Thirteenth Biennial Report, 1900-1902*, 4.

19. Langsdorf, "The First Hundred Years," 346-47.

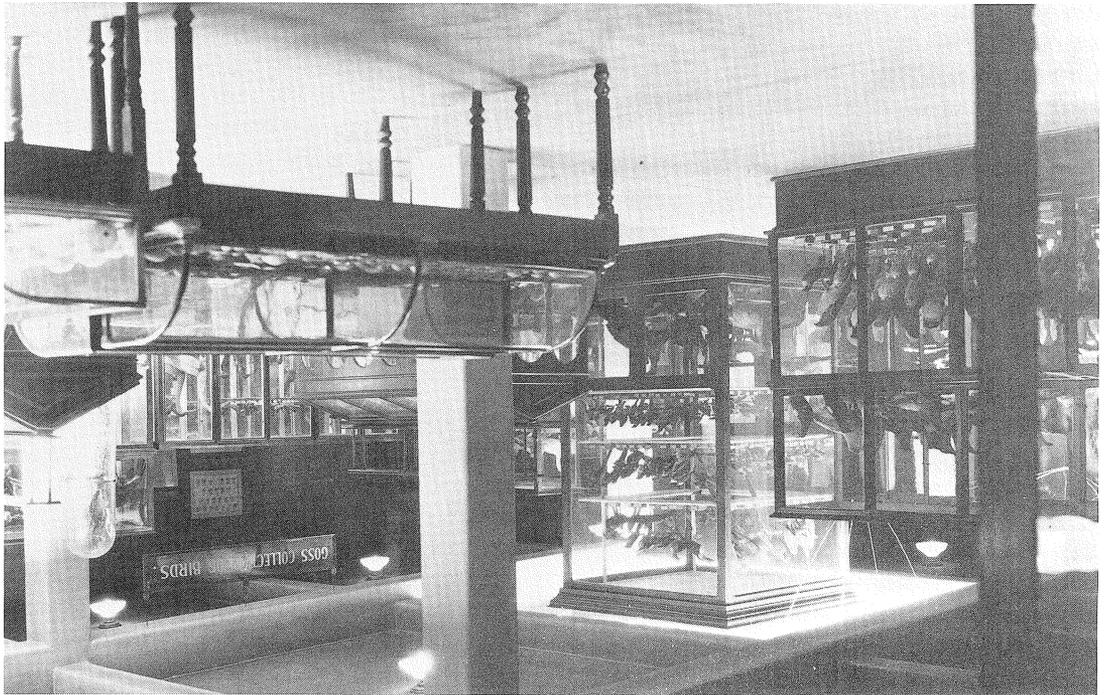
At the same time contemporary materials were being donated to the museum, a significant number of relics from the American colonial, revolutionary, and early federal periods were being gathered. Citizens of the very young state of Kansas sought connections with the earliest settling of their country, with the founding of the republic, and with the political and cultural development of the early national character. Documents, books, paintings, and monuments provided informational links that were more abstract than real. The possession of concrete, three-dimensional evidence of the existence of those temporarily and geographically remote people, in Kansans' conceptualization of the American past. Welcomed into the Historical Society were donations of "pieces of the true cross" (as today's curators term them) including a chunk of Plymouth Rock, a vial of tea from the Boston Tea Party, a piece of a tree into which Daniel Boone had carved a message, a platter from which the Marquis de Lafayette was

sentatives, yielded such items as the sledge used fought for control of the Kansas House of Representatives, in which Populists and Republicans literally soon after the events took place. The 1893 "Legislative Democratic National Convention were donated in signing legislation and materials from the 1900 and tickets from the current county fairs. Pens used businesses were collected as were posters, ribbons, museum. Calendars advertising contemporary membership badges and reunion souvenirs to the and the Grand Army of the Republic brought their groups as the National Education Association woven from buffalo hair in 1892. Members of such American bison led him to donate hostery and mittens "Buffalo Jones'" campaign to perpetuate the Pottery Works were collected as they were produced. Products of manufacturers like the Larned were donated to the museum as they were mined and quarried. Products of manufacturers like the Larned of Kansas' natural resources such as coal and marble character of the early museum collection. Specimens contemporary environment contributed to the broad an interest in preserving aspects of the immediate, Awareness of history as it was being made and Society and its patrons.

of Kansas. Seashells, a buffalo head, and mounted antlers remain in the museum collection as testimony to the wide-ranging interests of the Historical Society and its patrons.

from their trousers arrived at the Historical Society. October 5, 1892. Within days scraps of fabric cut outlaw Dalton gang were killed in Coffeyville on artifacts were in the museum. Four members of the by Speaker George L. Douglass to chop through the door to the House chamber. Months later the

The Goss bird collection



served wild turkey, and numerous other relics of this sort.²⁰ Interest in such items spawned a late-nineteenth-century phenomenon among private collectors that had a nationwide impact on museum collections: the transformation of relic fragments into other forms.²¹ The Historical Society received its share, collecting during the 1880s, for example, a gavel made of wood taken from Constitution Hall in Philadelphia; a mallet made from a rib taken from the ship *Old Ironsides*; and a goblet made from a piece of the joist from Christ Church where George Washington and his family worshipped.

Artifacts valued for their associations with the well-known facts of history continued to be collected over the next few decades, but from the 1890s through the 1920s Kansans also shared in the national interest in collecting objects of personal genealogical importance. Family heirlooms passed down from great-great-grandparents shared the spotlight with relics which had touched Lafayette's and Washington's lives. Watches, pipe tongs, powder horns, musical instruments, and woven coverlets dating from the 1750s to

the 1830s came to Kansas' museum. The interest in family antiques was inextricably bound to the late-nineteenth-century wave of nationalism that gave rise to such patriotic organizations as the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). Museums across the country benefitted from the work of these groups. Upon receiving some of the many artifacts gathered for the Kansas State Historical Society by the DAR, Secretary Connelley expressed his commitment to "preserving and displaying the priceless relics remaining in the Kansas families of the descendants of those who founded the Republic."²²

A romantic view of colonial and early American life prevailed and was justified and reinforced by such artifacts. People were heroic, their surroundings were quaint, and their lives were imagined to be less complex than those of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Americans.²³ The spinning wheel became an icon of the simple and true way of life that was supposed to have been enjoyed by our ancestors.²⁴ In Kansas the productive use of the spinning wheel had seen a rapid decline during the 1850s. In 1889 the

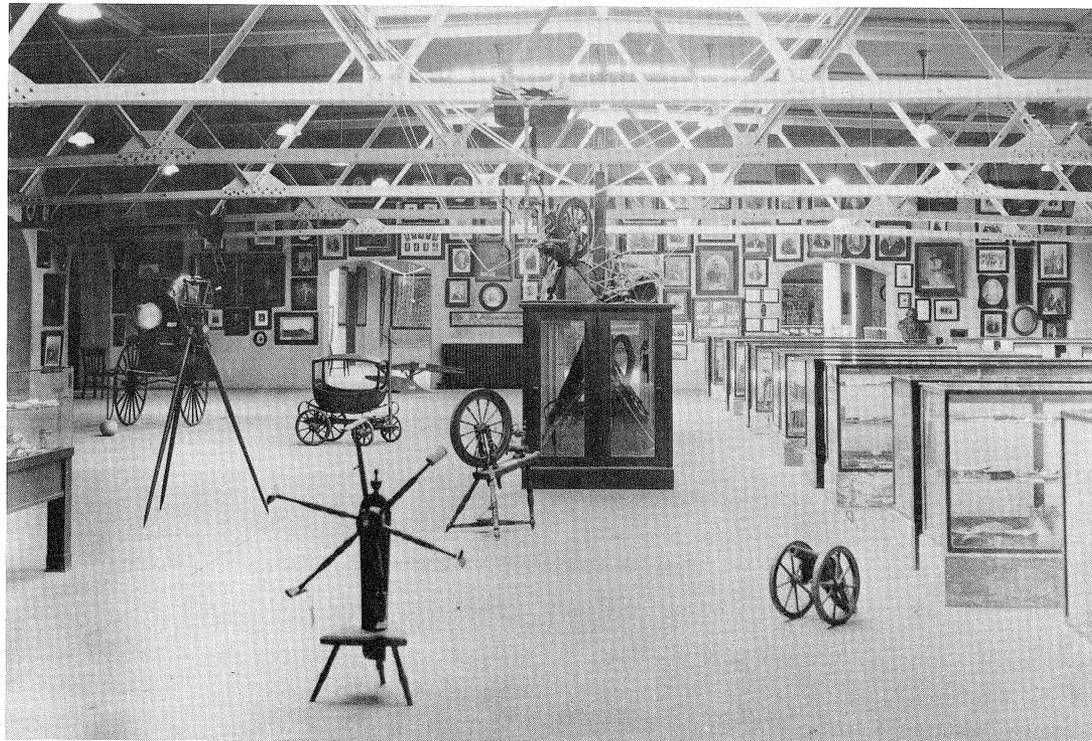
20. Brooke Hindle, "How Much Is a Piece of the True Cross Worth?" in *Material Culture and the Study of American Life*, ed. Ian M. G. Quimby (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1978), 5-20.

21. Elizabeth Stillinger, *The Antiquers* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), 20-21.

22. *Twenty-fourth Biennial Report, 1922-1924*, 19.

23. Stillinger, *The Antiquers*, xii, 5.

24. Christopher Monkhouse, "The Spinning Wheel as Artifact, Symbol and Source of Design," in *Victorian Furniture: Essays from a Victorian Society Autumn Symposium*, ed. Kenneth L. Ames, published as *Nineteenth Century* 8, nos. 3-4 (1982):159.



Spinning wheels were displayed prominently in the Memorial Building galleries.

them and their families to memorialize the Civil War by donating written materials and artifacts to their State Historical Society. The soldiers were eloquently coaxed to give "the relics which they brought home from battlefields, from their camps and from their weary marches." Appealing to pragmatism and pride, the plea went on:

True, these may be treasured up as personal mementoes, and kept to be handed down in the family as heirlooms. But experience teaches that efforts to preserve relics generally fail, through the accidents of time. Placed in a public collection, with just credit given to the donor for the deposit, they there remain, a perpetual testimonial of honor to the donor and thus are made to subserve the two objects—of personal and family pride, and of public advantage.²⁹

Newspapers aided the Society by paraphrasing the solicitation in their columns, as did the *Camp Fire*, the nation's capital the *Washington World and Citizen Soldier* urged all states and all soldiers to follow the example set in Kansas by the Historical Society's active collection of war materials.³⁰ Efforts in Kansas were successful. Included among the items received as a result of the soldiers' handbill was a saber taken from a Confederate soldier serving under Gen. James Johnston Pettigrew.³¹ Before the close of World War I a solicitation campaign of a lesser intensity was launched to gather relics from soldiers and their families.

More direct solicitations were employed by both Historical Society officers and Kansas citizens. In 1900 Secretary Martin asked J. H. Simmons of Lawrence to donate a bust of Sen. James Lane which had occupied a niche on the stairway of the Simmons home for thirty-five years. Although Simmons wrote that it was like parting with a member of the family, he conceded that Martin was right, the Historical Society was indeed a proper place for the bust.³² In a 1915 newspaper article Society President J. N. Harrison called for the residents of Franklin County to clear their

Historical Society collection received its first spinning wheel. Several more were donated over the next two decades as the once-utilitarian artifacts became symbols of patriotism. These were relics that reminded museum visitors of the colonial roots of democracy.²⁵ In a further glorification of ancestral life-styles, turn-of-the-century citizens considered early American furnishings to be morally and aesthetically superior to goods produced within their own lifetimes. Furniture of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and very early nineteenth centuries became models of design and craftsmanship. The Historical Society took this point of view as it collected several fine specimens including a Sheraton chest of drawers and a chair of the hearts-and-crowns style.²⁶

From the time the Historical Society obtained its first museum object, donations were the means by which the great majority of its collections were acquired. Five years after the founding of the Society, a *Topeka* newspaper columnist wrote, "It is true, in Kansas, that our people have a conviction that Kansas has made more and better history than any state or country ever before made in so brief a time; and all take an interest and pride in contributing to the collection of the materials of such history."²⁷ Donations came from *Topeka*, from all parts of the state, and from all over the country, most of them unsolicited. Kansas newspapers, especially those in *Topeka*, often contained articles about curiosities, discoveries, and historic artifacts such as Jotham Meeker's printing press, closing the columns with calls to donate such prized items to the Historical Society.²⁸

Sometimes the institution engaged in a bit of self-promotion. During the 1880s the Society printed and circulated at least two editions of a handbill entitled "Objects of Collection Desired by The Kansas State Historical Society." The handbills listed in exhaustive detail exactly what was wanted and included mention of antiquities, paintings, and curiosities of all kinds as well as a very specific list of Indian artifacts. In a separate handbill entitled "Indian Relics and History" an even more explicit list of desired Indian relics named twenty-three tribes and stated the types of documents and artifacts desired to represent them. Between 1881 and 1882 yet another handbill was distributed, this one addressed "To the Soldiers in Kansas," asking

25. Harvey Green, "The Ironies of Style: Complexities and Contradictions in American Decorative Arts, 1850-1900," in *Victorian Furniture*, 27.

26. Stillinger, *The Antiquers*, xii.

27. *Weekly Capital*, *Topeka*, January 20, 1880.

28. *Daily Commonwealth*, *Topeka*, May 13, 1887.

29. Handbill, "Objects of Collection Desired by The Kansas State Historical Society" [prior to 1888]; Handbill, "Objects of Collection Desired by the Kansas State Historical Society" [ca. 1888]; Handbill, "Indian Relics and History," n.d.; Handbill, "The Kansas State Historical Society: To the Soldiers in Kansas" [1881-1882]. Kansas State Historical Society Library.

30. *Wyandotte Gazette*, *Kansas City*, May 26, 1882; *Camp Fire*, *Cawker City*, August 15, 1882; *Washington World and Citizen Soldier*, *Washington*, D. C., October 14, 1882.

31. *Topeka Daily Capital*, August 13, 1882.

32. *Topeka State Journal* [1900].

“attics, chests and closets” of the relics that were hidden there. He went on to list the names of people he knew to be harboring historical materials and said he wanted those items “right up here” in the Historical Society.³³ A Burlingame resident visiting in Lancaster, New Hampshire, in 1883 saw a banner made by Lancaster women for presentation to the Fremont Club for the 1856 campaign. The banner was emblazoned with a “God Save Kansas” motto, and the good Kansas citizen decided that his State Historical Society should have the artifact. The owner of the banner was convinced by the Kansan’s arguments and sent the relic to the Society.³⁴

A small percentage of the collection was purchased using funds from various sources. The 1878 purchase of the Thomas Webb collection of New England Emigrant Aid Company materials netted for the museum the candlebox in which fraudulent election returns were concealed beneath a woodpile following the Lecompton Constitutional Convention. The famous cannon “Old Kickapoo” was saved from destruction when Historical Society members raised \$112 to buy it from a scrap dealer in 1884. In 1895 the state legislature granted funds to the Society for the purchase of an oil portrait of Sen. Preston B. Plumb, and in 1911 the institution purchased Henry Worrall’s painting of the Kansas-Colorado Building at the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia.

Many of the materials collected by the Historical Society were given by their owners as “conditional deposits” or loans. Secretary Connelley wished to have only the true possessions of the Historical Society on exhibit, and in 1924 he initiated efforts to locate the lenders of artifacts so that loans could be converted to gifts. The generosity of lenders in following Connelley’s suggestions gained for the institution permanent custody of many valuable historic artifacts.

The year 1925 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Kansas State Historical Society. During that time its museum collection had become a notable entity within the institution. Its 12,908 artifacts and dozens of artworks were becoming more than a sideshow to the library.³⁵ Thematic groupings in cases and galleries rather than haphazard visible storage of objects gave evidence of an evolution in the Society’s attitudes toward the artifacts. They could entertain. They could serve as catalysts to interest casual visitors in Kansas history.³⁶ They could be measured against

contemporary lifestyles to show human progress.³⁷ Changes in patterns of donations could also be detected. Donations of artifacts associated with cataclysmic events and Great Men, “pieces of the true cross,” and natural and exotic curiosities came to the museum in a steady flow during the institution’s first five decades. Toward the turn of the century, however, the possessions of the less prominent Kansas citizen began to appear beside them. Objects of common personal experience were by no means abundant in the museum yet, but their gradual appearance gave hints of what was to become a collecting trend in later years.

The number of donations to the museum increased from year to year, showing significant periods of growth at times of change for the Historical Society. The 1901 move to new, more spacious rooms in the statehouse was declared by Secretary Martin to have stimulated “gifts, adding vastly to the importance of our portrait and museum features.”³⁸ Thirteen years later another surge of donations was noted as the Historical Society was settling into the new Memorial Building. The large open spaces of the fourth floor allowed the museum to acquire artifacts previously impossible to house in the cramped, old quarters of the statehouse. A Concord stagecoach and a Victoria carriage appeared in the gallery. Other phenomena were credited with stimulating donations. Early in the 1920s Secretary Connelley attributed unusually large numbers of donations to “the breaking up of the old families in the state and the searching for a suitable place to deposit valuable relics.”³⁹

As the Historical Society moved into its second half century, the nationwide economic crisis of the late 1920s and 1930s had both positive and negative effects on the museum. The number of donations dropped dramatically, but the existing collections benefitted greatly from federal relief programs. Between 1934 and 1943 workers with the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and its state organization, the Kansas Emergency Relief Committee, cleaned thirty thousand relics, restored pictures and frames, and repaired furniture, generally improving the appearance of the artifacts.

Donations to the museum from the late 1930s to the early 1950s established a pattern that was to become familiar in the following decades. The days of collecting natural curiosities and souvenirs of exotic cultures were past. The museum now received more artifacts

33. *Evening Herald*, Ottawa, February 3, 1915.

34. *Daily Commonwealth*, Topeka, August 23, 1883.

35. *Twenty-fifth Biennial Report, 1924-1926*, 23.

36. *Twenty-first Biennial Report, 1917-1919*, 13.

37. *Nineteenth Biennial Report, 1912-1914*, 75.

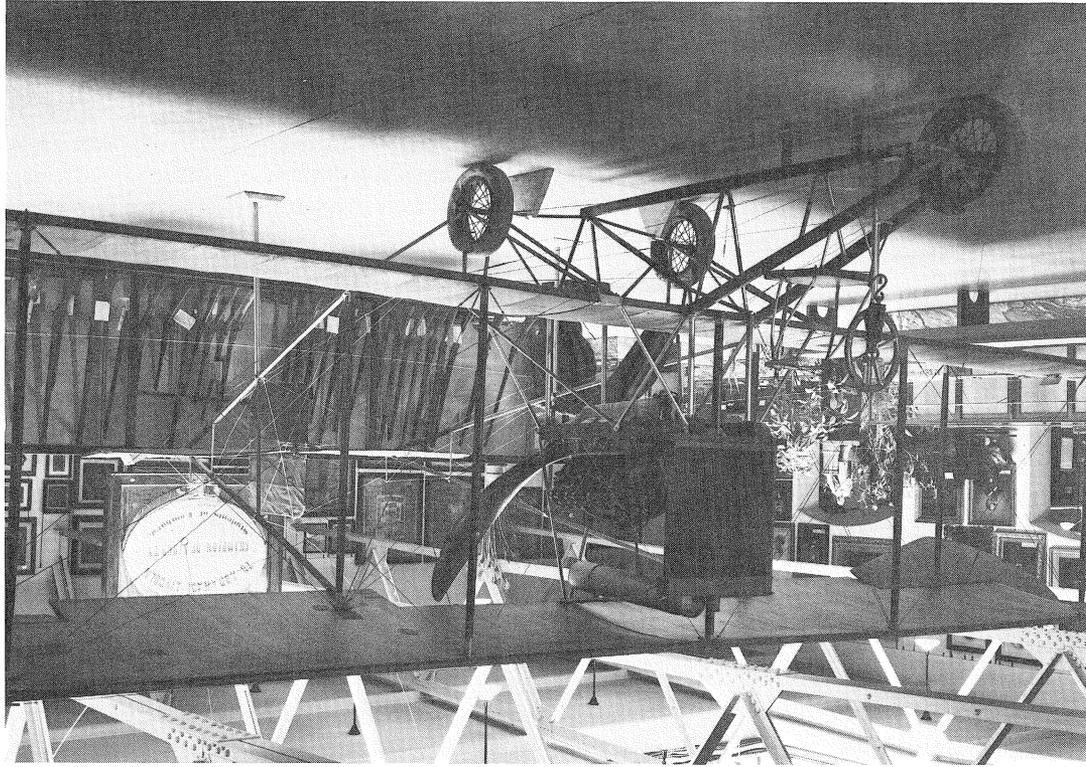
38. *Ibid.*

39. *Twenty-third Biennial Report, 1920-1922*, 10.

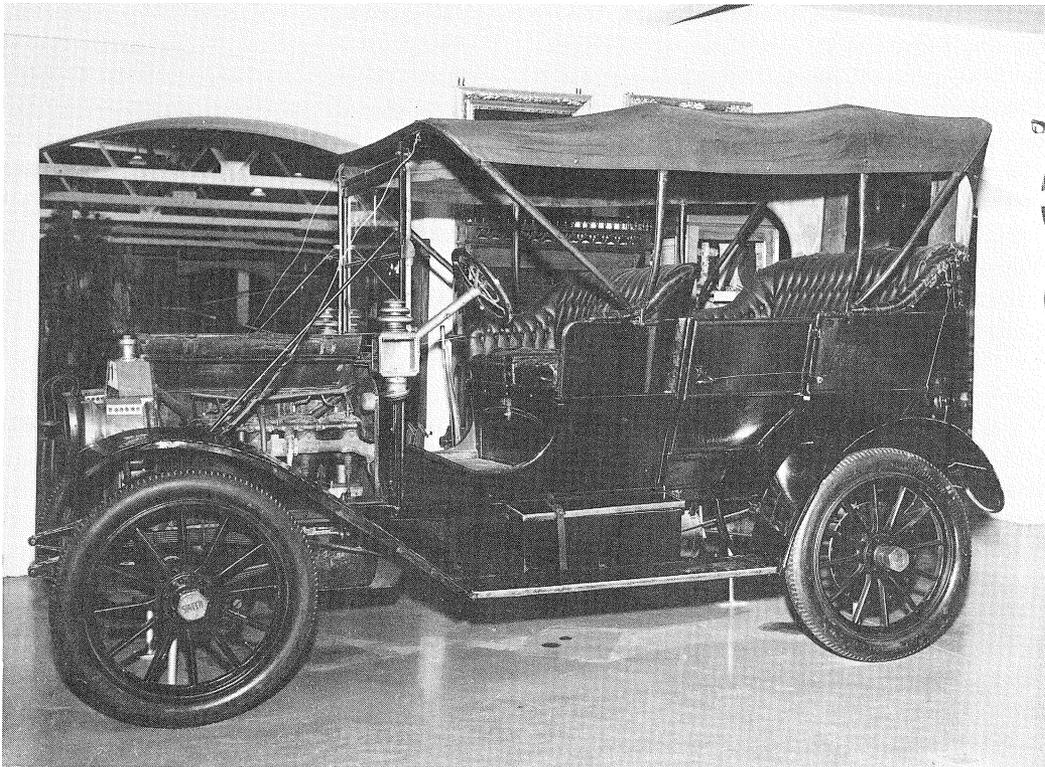
The collection of artworks grew during this period. Acquisitions were as diverse as Birger Sandzen lithographs; paintings of livestock by Guizon Borglum; a huge naive oil painting, *The Spirit of Kansas*, done in 1891 by a seventy-six-year-old Kansas woman, Mary Weston; and Walt Kelly's original cartoon panel of the Kansas Jayhawk visiting Pogo's Okefenokee Swamp. The collection of Kansas portraits also increased steadily.

The most publicized donation of the period was the airplane manufactured in Topeka by the Longren brothers and flown over the city by pioneer aviator Philip Billard in 1912. A day-long celebration with political dignitaries in attendance marked its arrival at the Memorial Building in 1938. Joining the plane in the transportation category was the 1908 Great Smith automobile, also manufactured in Topeka. During the two-decade period spanning the mid-1950s through the mid-1970s, donations continued to come to the museum at a high rate. The pattern established in the previous two decades continued in the variety of artifacts acquired. Children's items, especially toys, became prominent among the objects received as did the ephemera associated with political campaigns. The biggest boom, however, took place

representative of early Kansas manufacturers, businesses, and professions. Objects used in agriculture and medicine were notable among the acquisitions. Gifts ranged from an 1870 self-rake reaper to lanterns made by the Coleman Lamp Company to wooden shoes worn in the 1850s by a brewmaster while he raked hops at one of the first breweries in the state. Artifacts associated with prominent people, places, and events continued to be donated. Personal possessions of William Allen White, Charles Curtis, and Dwight Eisenhower were acquired, as was the sofa upon which Harriet Beecher Stowe reportedly sat as she listened to the story that inspired her to write *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Family heirlooms of the colonial and early American periods were still received, but heirlooms of a different nature also appeared in the collection. Donated were objects that had come to Kansas during the 1870s through the 1890s with immigrant families from the British Isles, continental Europe, and the states of Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Iowa, and Nebraska. Relics of the wars continued to trickle in, the stream swelling as Kansans returned home after World War II and the Historical Society once again launched a solicitation campaign for war relics.



The Longren airplane in the Memorial Building. Framed by one of the wings is the banner presented by Lombard College students to Abraham Lincoln.



The Great Smith automobile in the Memorial Building

in two previously underdeveloped areas of the collection, clothing and middle-class decorative arts and domestic accessories.

Very few items of clothing had been acquired by the museum. Prior to the 1950s this area of the collection was represented by a few foreign costumes, military uniforms, and articles belonging to notables (John Brown's hat and George Armstrong Custer's boots, for example). By the 1970s hundreds of dresses, shirts, hats, shoes, capes, and accessories made up a costume collection representing clothing in Kansas from the 1870s to the 1910s. Like many other museum collections, Kansas' holdings emphasize women's fashions, especially wedding dresses, and contain relatively few examples of men's clothing.

An approach previously used in acquiring war relics was tried and found very successful in developing the collection of decorative arts and domestic accessories. The method involved planning an exhibit and then advertising for the artifacts to fill it. From the mid-1950s through the 1960s period rooms were being constructed in the exhibit galleries. In articles printed in newspapers and the Historical Society's newsletter, the *Mirror*, museum staff noted that "many donors have not considered some of the 'homlier' household

items worth giving to the Society."⁴⁰ For five years the public and the membership of the Historical Society were reminded in print that a sod house, a general store, a Victorian parlor, a 1910 farm kitchen, a doctor's office, a blacksmith shop, and other period rooms were under construction in the museum. With the reminders were lists of items needed to complete the exhibits: wood-burning stoves, a dentist's chair, plain furniture of the type a homesteader would have used, a parlor sofa, common kitchen tools. Dozens of other objects were mentioned. The response was nearly overwhelming. The period rooms were filled rapidly, and many additional artifacts representing the everyday lives of Kansans at work and at home were donated. Later, in the development of thematic case exhibits, the same techniques were used to obtain appropriate artifacts, and they were equally successful.

The museum's acquisitions in the 1970s continued to be characterized by objects representative of the lifestyles of Kansas residents as well as by the same types of objects collected in the previous four decades. A renewed interest in collecting contemporary materials gained for the museum such items as mini-

40. "New Museum Program Is Now Underway," *Mirror* 1 (March 1955):1.

to the galleries. All vestiges of the cabinet of curiosities had disappeared from the Historical Society. Into the 1980s the museum staff has brought the determination to refine and improve the collection of artifacts through a conscientiously applied acquisitions program. The purposes of the Historical Society are foremost in mind when appropriate donations are accepted for the collection. New patterns in collecting are being established, based on assessments of what is needed to make the collection more representative of Kansas and Kansans. Topical and temporal gaps are being filled. There is a new awareness of the need to collect the present for the future. More than ever, projected interpretive programs serve as guidelines for acquiring certain types of artifacts. The impact of the new Kansas Museum of History on the collection is immeasurable. Not only did the building make it possible for the Historical Society to acquire its largest artifact, the *Cyrus K. Holliday* train, but it also allows the institution to remind the people of Kansas that theirs is a fine material heritage worthy of preservation.

[KH]

skirts, Cub Scout uniforms, Sesame Street puppets, Star Wars gift wrapping paper, and groundbreaking shovels used by state officials. A significant purchase was made in 1979 when the Society acquired for its museum the Winchester 1866 presentation rifle, engraved in 1871 as a gift from Gov. Samuel J. Crawford to Gov. Nehemiah Green.

During the mid-twentieth century, attitudes toward the museum collection were changing markedly as the educational value of artifacts was firmly acknowledged. In addition to serving as tools for teachers, the Historical Society's museum artifacts were valued as tourist attractions capable of bringing visitors to the state to spend their vacation money.⁴¹ The period of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s was one of development in the area of material culture studies. Museum objects came to be recognized as documents in themselves, full of information to be "read" and interpreted for visitors

41. Nyle H. Miller, "The Secretary's Desk," *Mirror* 4 (January 1958):2.

Managing and Conserving the Collection

by *Martha Durant Kratsas and
Robert F. McGiffin*

EVEN though the exhibits and educational programs are the most popular aspects of the Kansas Museum of History, they represent only two of the ways through which the Society accomplishes the goals of collecting, preserving, and interpreting the history and material culture of Kansas. Collection acquisition and management, conservation, and study are equally necessary and important activities.

Obviously, before an object can be exhibited, studied, or preserved at the Kansas Museum of History, it must be collected and become the property of all Kansans through the Historical Society. When an object is given to the Society a legal transaction takes place and complete records are made which note the donor's name, the history of the item, the construction materials, the size, and the condition. A number is given to the records, and the same number is affixed to the object itself in such a way that the object is not damaged. Thereafter, the object is part of the collection, and any further information obtained by the staff through research and cataloging is included in the records.

Wildlife management, forests, and unpolluted environments immediately come to mind when most people think of conservation. Many would be surprised to learn that the word "conservation" also encompasses the scientific preservation of historic and artistic works. Frequently, restoration is confused with conservation. However, restoration implies the act of returning an object to its original condition and appearance—an ambitious, yet unscientific and usually impossible challenge.

Artifacts are made from materials which age, just like everything else. As the aging process continues, both the appearance and the physical properties change. "Growing old gracefully" is part of the object's history, and it is a philosophy

taken into account by most museums and serious collectors. Attempts to return an object to a like-new condition seriously damage its integrity and even reduce its historical value considerably.

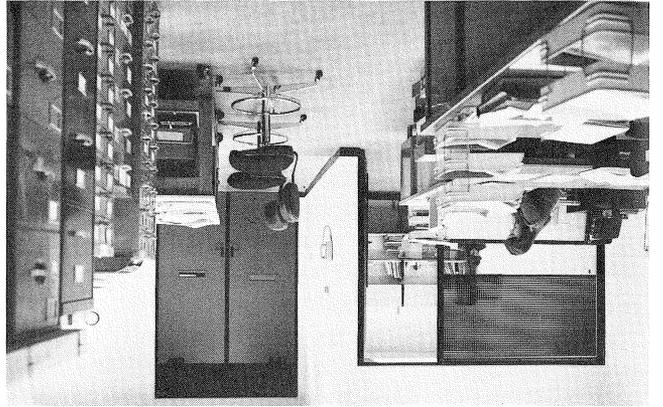
Historic furniture often lends itself to these restoration abuses. For example, one could take an early piece of furniture, sand off the old finish to the wood, apply a "durable" new finish, and buff the brass hardware to look like new. In the process, major links with the object's history would be destroyed. Stains, minor abrasions, and evidences of handling would be scraped away. What would remain would be an invention of the restorer, an object with no history.

Conservators such as those working in the conservation center laboratories in the new Kansas Museum of History would first analyze the object extensively, then prescribe a completely different treatment. Analysis would be conducted to help the conservators find out everything possible about the object's materials and history. It would help them determine what comprises the finish, paint pigment, and type of wood. A thorough examination would include photography and perhaps chemistry and even radiography, plus the completion of a written report and a consultation with the appropriate curator. The object then would be stabilized. Stabilization is perhaps one of the best synonyms for conservation. In this example of furniture, stabilization would involve the following: regluing any loose joints with a reversible adhesive, inpainting disfiguring scratches and other abraded areas with a reversible paint or stain, and treating problems so that the lives of the original materials would be prolonged.¹ Finally, conservators would follow

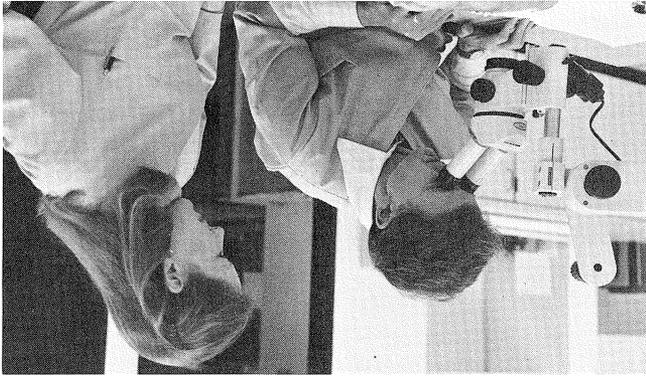
1. Reversibility is important so that any work may be undone easily at a later time. Conservators do not use materials which may in time become inseparable from the artifact. Inpainting is confined only within the boundaries of the damaged area. Overpainting is never used because it would cover some of the original finish.

Martha Durant Kratsas is assistant museum director and Robert F. McGiffin is chief museum conservator/administrator, Kansas State Historical Society.

Records for each object in the collection are maintained in the registrar's office in the Kansas Museum of History.



Robert F. McGiffin uses a binocular microscope to examine a gown worn to President Lincoln's second inauguration as conservation technician Susanne Benda looks on.



the museum in its programs. It may go on exhibit, it is at this point that an object can be used by

be afforded the best care possible.

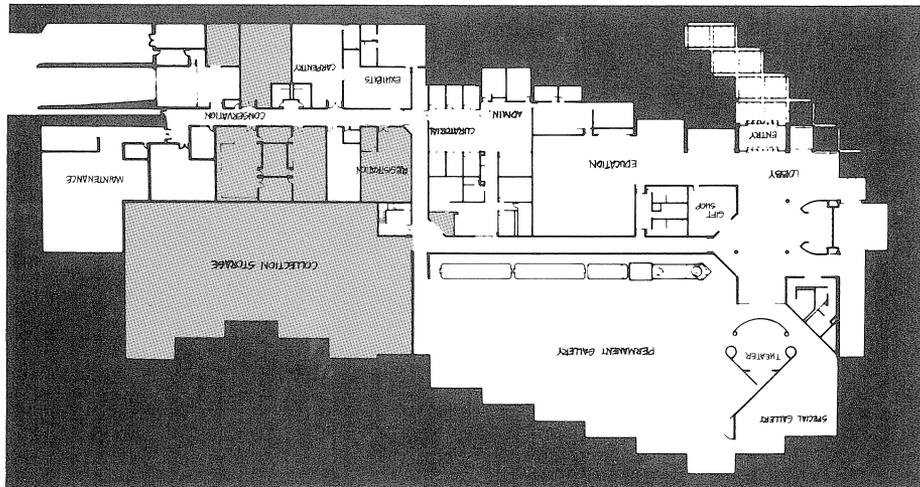
that institution must provide assurance that it will to another institution for exhibition or study purposes, natural disaster strike. Even when an object is lent plan for saving the artifacts should a manmade or four-hour guards; insurance coverage; and a total-invasion and fire detection and control; twenty-levels of lighting, humidity, and temperature; free containers, dust-resistant cabinets; optimum equipment (padded shelving, textile rollers, acid-life of the object. These include the proper storage of collection management which ensure the future end. By "security" a museum means all the aspects within the collection, security is bent to the same the maximum level of usefulness for the object

Just as conservators design treatment to assure in which the object would be stored or exhibited up by monitoring and stabilizing the environment

2. Some objects do not receive the same care; these are not part of the "collection" proper, but are education reproductions or props. Since they are used by groups for hands-on programs, they cannot be protected as are other objects. For this reason, the donor must give permission for objects to be designated for this use.

It should perhaps be emphasized that all objects in the collection are given the same treatment.² Just because an object may not be used for an exhibit in the foreseeable future, it does not follow that it is a "second-class" object. An object reserved for study may never be exhibited, but it can be valuable to scholars delving into the past through the study of material culture. No matter how it is used, an object is an instrument to help the Kansas State Historical Society achieve its goals of collecting, preserving, studying, and interpreting the history of Kansas.

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Education Programs: Past, Present, and Future

by James Powers

ALTHOUGH museums have existed in some form or another for several centuries, educational concerns have not come to the forefront in these institutions until the last few decades. In this short time, educational programming has flourished in museums everywhere in the form of guided tours, living history programs, outreach programs, lectures, film series, and a wide variety of other educational opportunities. The museum's role in the educational system is to enrich the classroom experience by providing instruction which brings the subject matter to life. Learning is facilitated when three-dimensional objects are available, and it is this supposition which forms the foundation for the majority of educational programming within the museum context.

From its inception in 1875, Society leaders have expressed an interest in providing public access to the museum collection, stating in 1892 that they recognized it to be "of intense interest to the youth and masses of our people."¹ By the early twentieth century, about the time the Society was moving from the Capitol to the Memorial Building, this sentiment had been taken one step further. The museum was acknowledged to be "almost as important in an educational way as the library."² A few years later, it was noted in a biennial report that "the educational value of the museum is recognized more and more each year by the schools. Many teachers bring their pupils here to look through the museum, with its historical relics and portraits, and we receive many testimonials to the value of these visits."³

For some years, however, nothing was done to meet the educational needs of visitors beyond the presentation of static displays of historical relics accompanied by labels without specific



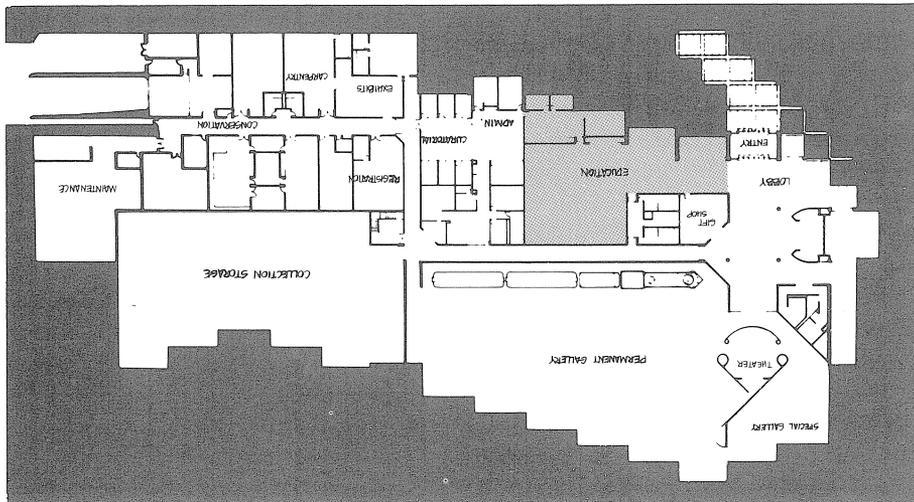
An early craft demonstration in the Memorial Building

educational objectives. The museum's curator and only staff person would (if called upon) take time out of his busy schedule to answer questions.⁴ But this was the standard of the day. The Kansas State Historical Society Museum was, in fact, reported to be one of the best in the nation.⁵

It was not until the Society was almost seventy years old that organized educational programs were first available at the museum. In 1941 almost four thousand schoolchildren visited the museum in organized tours sponsored by the Santa Fe and Missouri Pacific railroads.⁶ With several hundred children each, the large size of these groups must certainly have limited the educational impact of

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1. *Eighth Biennial Report, 1890-1892*, 11.
2. *Nineteenth Biennial Report, 1912-1914*, 75.
3. *Twenty-first Biennial Report, 1917-1919*, 13.
4. *Twenty-fourth Biennial Report, 1922-1924*, 44.
5. *Twenty-fifth Biennial Report, 1924-1926*, 69.
6. "The Annual Meeting," *KHQ* 11 (February 1942):76.



the tours. Nonetheless, this was an admirable undertaking.

The Santa Fe Railway continued to organize tours of the museum intermittently for the next several years. Although continuing to express an interest in increasing the educational value of the exhibits, the museum took few steps to offer its own tours until 1956, when the annual report noted that guided tours were available on request and that some one hundred and fifty groups had taken advantage of this service.⁷

Thereafter, tours of the museum were available on a reservation basis. The stage was set for the blossoming of educational programming at the Society, and the next twenty years saw substantial progress.

As tour requests increased steadily, other forms of programming developed simultaneously. A Sunday afternoon film series began in 1962. The following year museum staff met with area social studies teachers to discuss how the museum could help schools teach history. This meeting resulted in the establishment of the first formal outreach program, with museum representatives giving talks to junior and senior high school students and clubs and other organizations. In 1965 the outreach program was expanded to include portable displays which traveled to area elementary and junior high schools. A conscious effort was made to tie all programs directly to the needs of the audience and to coordinate them with school curricula when possible.

With limited staff and increased demands for programs, however, it was clear that a major administrative

7. "The Annual Meeting," *KHQ* 23 (Spring 1957):61.

Museums across the nation were coming to the same realization. Unable to hire additional staff to meet increasing requests for public programming, the Society, along with hundreds of other institutions, turned to volunteers. During the 1966-67 school year the museum's volunteer force was organized under the auspices of the American Association of University Women. With assistance from senior girl scouts, volunteers took over the majority of the museum's educational programs.⁸ They organized training

8. "Historical Museum Helped by Volunteer Tour Guides," *Mirror* 13 (March 1967).



A volunteer guide explains aspects of sod-house life to schoolchildren in 1978.

sessions, designed uniforms, and circulated volunteer bulletins.

With the formation of the volunteer organization, programming grew rapidly. A steady increase in the numbers served by guided tours was reported each year. Even during the 1973-74 gasoline crisis when the museum's overall attendance decreased, school-tour attendance increased by thirty-nine percent over the preceding year.⁹

With the implementation of traditional craft demonstrations in 1975, volunteers became involved in a new education program. The museum's period rooms became the setting for Sunday afternoon weaving, spinning, butter-churning, and candle-making demonstrations. Volunteers also took these nineteenth-century Kansas crafts into the schools, giving "286 demonstrations to approximately 10,000 elementary school children" in the first year.¹⁰



Volunteers demonstrate crafts in the Memorial Building in 1978.

Thus in roughly twenty years a comprehensive educational program had been developed, although there still was no full-time staff person to oversee these activities. Finally, in 1978 a federal grant from the Institute of Museum Services (IMS) created the position of museum educator. With additional IMS and state support, the Division of Museum Education now consists of three full-time staff members.

The progress during the early years became the foundation for the expansion; after 1978 existing programs were improved and new programs were

9. "The Annual Meeting," *KHQ* 41 (Spring 1975):96.

10. "The Annual Meeting," *KHQ* 42 (Spring 1976):85.

implemented. Based on the frequency of teacher requests, new theme tours were designed with specific instructional objectives. The craft program developed into a monthly activity involving scores of demonstrators, musicians, and performers. The film series became a full-fledged educational program complete with weekly interpretive handouts.

New programs opened the museum learning experience to new audiences. Special activities for handicapped visitors were made possible largely by the creation of an educational collection with reproduction artifacts for use in hands-on programs. The division also branched out to work with various Society departments to develop programs and co-sponsor events with broad appeal, such as the Children's Area at the Kansas Folklife Festival. The Division of Museum Education also planned exhibit opening activities for the wide variety of temporary exhibits at the Society.

The most ambitious program was the traveling trunk program, implemented in 1980. Using a combination of reproduction artifacts, photographs, and teaching materials organized around specific themes, the trunks have become a valuable resource for those unable to visit the museum. Thirty-one units, each packed in its own footlocker, currently travel to every corner of the state, serving thousands of Kansans annually. The current trunk topics include "Farm Family in Kansas," "Volga Germans in Kansas," "La Raza: The Mexican-American Experience in Kansas," "Archeology in Kansas," and "Carpentry in Kansas," with additional topics planned.

With the closing of the galleries on March 31, 1983, in preparation for the move to the new Kansas Museum of History, the Division of Museum Educa-



Elementary-school students enjoy role-playing with materials from the Volga German traveling trunk.

tion faced a unique situation. While other museum divisions curtailed routine activities in favor of packing collections and planning for the new museum, the education division was given the responsibility of continuing to serve the public. Without galleries in which to operate, programming took the form of limited in-house and greatly increased outreach programming.

The film series continued to operate with a sister series at Fort Hays Frontier Historical Park. Several classes and workshop series were offered; "Crafts-Up-Close," the first of these series, provided one-day workshops on rag rug braiding, spinning, Czech egg decorating, Cherokee basket making, and

During this period the outreach programming reached the greatest number of people. The traveling trunks continued to serve large numbers of Kansans, and three new outreach programs were implemented. "Voices of the South Wind," a slide/tape show introducing the history of Kansas through modern times; "Slides, Guides, and Buffalo Hides," a slide/tape program presented with reproduction artifacts by a museum representative; and "Crafts-in-the-Schools," a program featuring nineteenth-century craft demonstrations, were given to school groups and other organizations upon request.

With the move to the new Kansas Museum of



Carolyn Farabaugh of the museum education division shows materials from one of the traveling trunks.



James Powers explains soapmaking to students as part of the Crafts-in-the-Schools program.

History, the potential for innovative programming has increased dramatically, with flexible spaces for many types of programs—pre- and post-tour activities, workshops, classes, lecture series, and scholarly seminars. A nineteenth-century foodways program, currently being developed as a joint project between the Kansas Museum of History and the State Department of Education, will utilize the cooking

area. Another important feature in the education area is a small exhibit gallery for educationally oriented exhibits. Initially this space will be used for temporary exhibits around which tours and other programs will be developed. In time, plans call for this gallery to house the museum's discovery room, stocked with hands-on exhibits and resource materials.

Facilities within the main gallery also will enhance programming. Teaching areas in key locations will provide space out of the main traffic flow to gather groups for programs dealing with surrounding exhibits. Built-in storage cabinets nearby will house reproduction artifacts and other props. For example, one teaching area adjacent to a reproduction emigrant wagon will serve participants in a program entitled "Life in a Wagon." Visitors will have the opportunity to load the wagon, making decisions about what to bring on their "journey" west and what to leave behind.

Even the land on which the museum is built will become an eighty-acre classroom with a tremendous potential for programming. An interpretive trail is planned, taking hikers past natural features which have molded the history of the state. A nineteenth-century schoolhouse will provide a setting for living history programs for twentieth-century schoolchildren. KH

Presenting the Past: Exhibits, 1877-1984

by James H. Nottage,
Floyd R. Thomas, Jr., and
Lucinda Simmons Bray

TO the casual visitor, who usually sees only visual presentations of artifacts through displays and exhibits, a museum does not appear to be a complicated institution. In truth, a museum is an ever-changing place where collections, staff, facilities, exhibits, and patrons are elements which differ over time.

The museum of the Kansas State Historical Society has grown and developed through the past one hundred years. Formerly it was located in two other then-new facilities, each serving the needs of a different era. The museum was begun during the formative years of the Historical Society, which was founded in 1875 and housed in the Kansas statehouse, then under construction. These quarters soon became overcrowded, and in 1914 the museum, along with other Society departments, was relocated in the new Memorial Building, where it developed into a mature collection of Kansas history.¹ Throughout these periods of growth the nature of the museum exhibits changed and evolved as well.

In the Capitol

In the earliest decades only three functions were considered essential in a museum. Items were collected, arranged so they could be seen, and kept clean for public viewing. Visitors to the Kansas State Historical Society Museum in the late nineteenth century followed green painted signs from other state offices to the basement of the Capitol building's west wing, where "the snakes and wax apples are duly admired," said one Topeka newspaper correspondent. Franklin G. Adams, the first secretary of the Historical Society, gave tours of the cramped rooms, where the artifacts were crowded among stacks of books, newspapers,

and manuscripts. Along with portraits of pioneers they competed for valuable space but received due attention from the dedicated secretary. One visitor noted in 1881 that Adams "is the keeper of the shrine of the early Kansas saints, and he never plays any trick on reverent and unsuspecting visitors. When he brings out a rusty pike or time worn horse pistol, it can be relied on as the genuine thing."²

Franklin Adams, himself a pioneer Kansan, was described by one reporter as a "fresh 'fossil'" amidst "a regular curiosity shop for relics." For many the cluttered Historical Society rooms were a place of wonder and discovery, but only those fortunate enough to receive a personal tour were allowed the pleasure, through the artifacts, of seeing Adams "tearing down the veil of years that separates us from the past."³

By 1890, in fact, the rooms were so crowded that one visitor commenting on the displays said it was "hard to tell what they contain. There are flags and arms... and swords dimmed with blood and dented with blows... an old candle box, its bottom covered with a record which cannot be readily made out in the dim light."⁴

Three years later the Historical Society went beyond its immediate walls with what might be termed the first traveling exhibit. Beginning in 1892 plans were laid for a special display at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. It consisted primarily of framed portraits and books, although Topeka artist Henry Worrall had designed

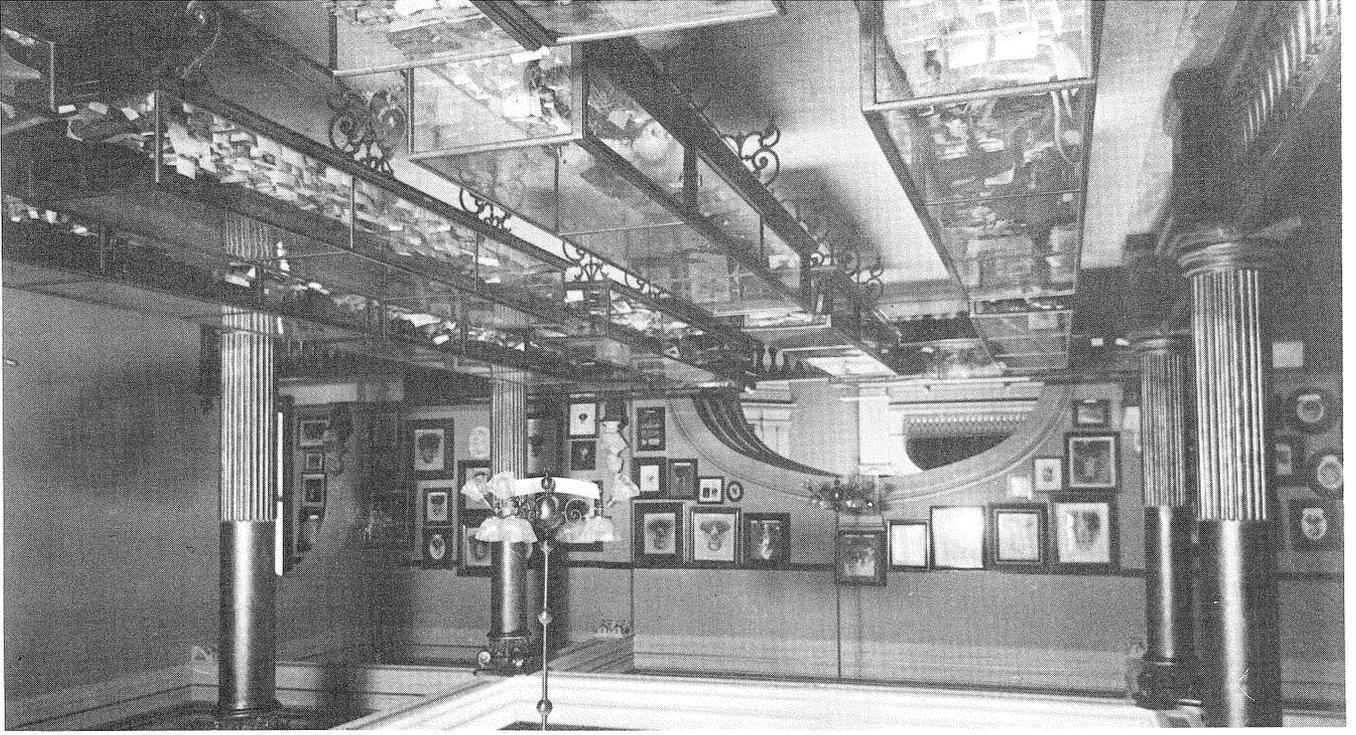
James H. Nottage is supervisory museum historian; Floyd R. Thomas, Jr., is museum historian; and Lucinda Simmons Bray is chief of exhibits, Kansas State Historical Society.

1. Edgar Langsdorf, "The First Hundred Years of the Kansas State Historical Society," *KHQ* 41 (Autumn 1975):265-414.

2. *Topeka Daily Democrat*, December 8, 1881; *Atchison Daily Champion*, December 21, 1881.

3. *Topeka Daily Capital*, October 29, 1884; *Daily Commonwealth*, Topeka, September 3, 1884.

4. *Saturday Evening Lance*, Topeka, February 6, 1886; *Kansas City Star*, January 8, 1890.

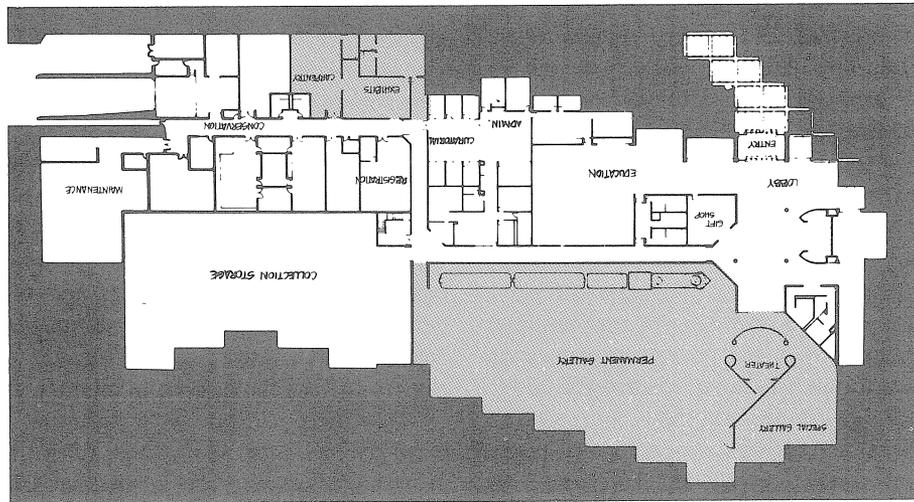


5. *Eighth Biennial Report, 1890-1892, 11, 14, 22; Topeka Daily Capital, September 30, 1892; Ninth Biennial Report, 1892-1894, 22; George A. Root, "Reminiscences of 50 Years on the State Historical Society Staff," George Allen Root Collection, Manuscript Department, Kansas State Historical Society.*
 6. Root, "Reminiscences of 50 Years", *Topeka Daily Capital*, September 25, 1898, January 5, 1898.

Finally, in 1901 the Historical Society was able to occupy the entire fourth floor of the south wing of the statehouse. By August of that year shelving and new cases were being installed, and soon a portrait gallery of famous Kansans and rows of oak cases supported by scrolled cast-iron legs filled the walls and halls of that wing. Virtually all of the collection was shown. The pictures were arranged through the courtesy of Topeka artist George M. Stone, and "the guns, flags and banners properly displayed, and in several handsome new showcases, the relics and curios have become objects of interest

grain decorations to represent the agricultural products of Kansas. When the exposition was over this exhibit was placed in the south wing of the statehouse. There it was enjoyed by visitors, including hordes of rats, which ate so much of the display that it had to be removed within a few years.⁵

Thus it was that at the turn of the century the Kansas State Historical Society Museum was presented as a crowded arrangement of curiosities which required explanation from the staff to give the meaning of each item to visitors. Children and adults were encouraged to be quiet during their visits to the revered objects of Kansas' past. In most respects the museum exhibits were truly "a hopeless, chaotic mass," as a *Topeka Daily Capital* reporter termed them. Indeed, on the evening of January 4, 1898, the overcrowded upper gallery of the museum collapsed, scattering books, pictures, and relics onto the tables and cases of the first level.⁶



to hundreds of daily visitors." The new displays were well accepted, although there was some complaint that not enough women were represented in the portrait gallery.⁷ In 1905 the adjutant general's collection of Civil War flags and banners was turned over to the Historical Society, and appropriations for a special glass-and-steel case enabled the staff to create a new display. This exhibit consisted of rows of flags labeled with the areas where the regiments served and the locations and dates of the battles in which they fought.⁸

For the next ten years the museum was an integral part of the statehouse. Visitors wandered along the rows of comparatively spacious but seemingly crowded cases. Here, as the collection grew, the Capitol seemed to become smaller.

The Memorial Building

Years of hoping and planning finally resulted in the dedication of the Memorial Building in 1914. Society Secretary William E. Connelley had high hopes for the development of the museum in the new building. "It is generally conceded that the museum is one of the most attractive, interesting and instructive institutions of modern civilization,"

7. *Topeka Daily Capital*, March 28, 1901, August 18, 1901; *Kansas City Times*, October 9, 1903; *Thirteenth Biennial Report, 1900-1902*, 11; *Fifteenth Biennial Report, 1904-1906*, 31. KSHS museum exhibits at this time partially reflected museum thought of the nineteenth century; see George Brown Goode, "Museum-History and Museums of History," *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, Report of the U.S. National Museum*, part 2 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), 65-81.

8. *Topeka Daily Capital*, July 19, 1905; *Fifteenth Biennial Report, 1904-1906*, 31.

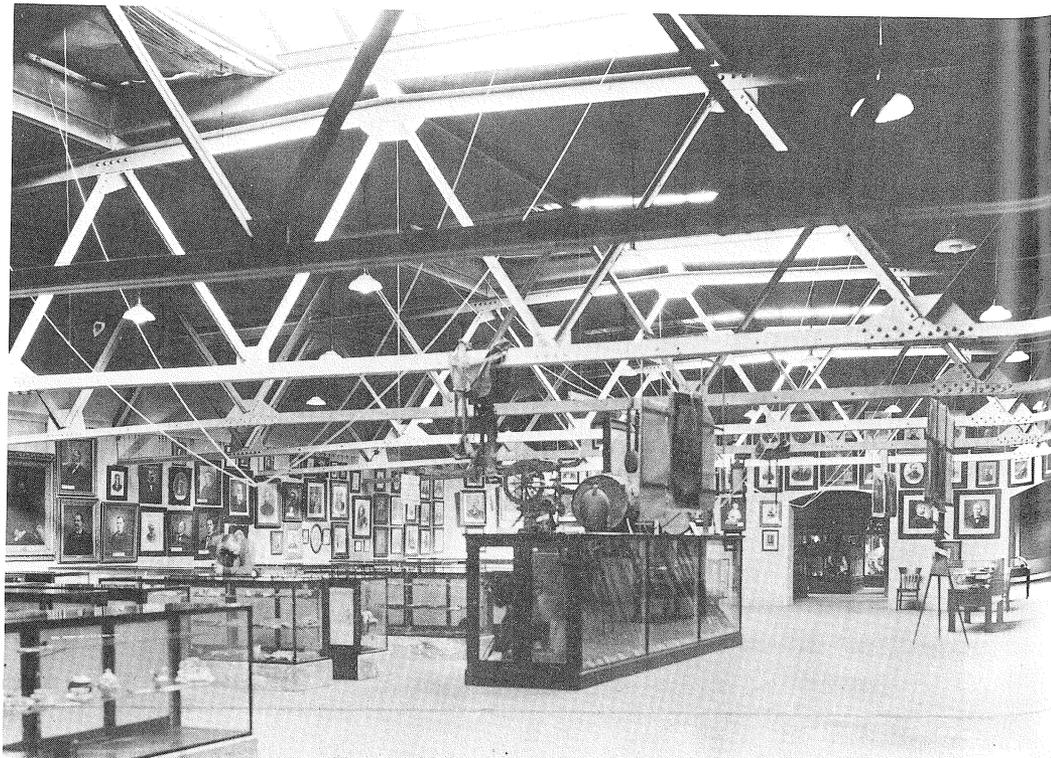
he wrote in the 1912-14 biennial report. "Money, Civil War relics, ancient weapons, old and crude agricultural implements are compared with those of later years and show the progress of the people. . . . Properly exhibited these will make a display full of interest and instructive."⁹

Connelley expected to install exhibits on the fourth floor of the Memorial Building. To be called "Spinning Wheel Hall," the fourth floor was decorated with pictures by August 1914 while most of the relics awaited the purchase of new cases (the old, worn-out display cases had been left in the Capitol). In the meantime, artist George Stone and Charles Glead, a longtime board member who later served as president (1917), worked to install portraits in the first-floor lobby. "They are doing a very artistic job and are in some degree fixing the relative historical value and rank of characters in Kansas history," commented a Topeka reporter. At the same time the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) was occupying rooms on the second floor, where its display of Civil War pictures was set up with the help of Historical Society staff. Also as a joint venture, in 1914 the GAR ceremoniously marched the battle flags from the statehouse to the Memorial Building, where they were installed in five bronze-and-glass cases in the GAR Hall. Constructed by the Steel Fixture Manufacturing Company of Topeka, the cases were delivered in 1916; under a separate contract a patriotic sculpture of a spread eagle by Topeka artist Andrew Boell was attached to the top of each case.¹⁰

Other contracts, signed in 1915, provided twenty-eight badly needed display cases for the fourth

9. *Nineteenth Biennial Report, 1912-1914*, 75-76.

In the Memorial Building, much of the collection was on view in marble-based oak cases.



forward, for much of the collection was now on display.¹³

From the 1920s on, however, other problems had to be faced. The roof of the Memorial Building leaked, and consequently there was a periodic need to repaint the galleries and clean the cases. This usually included replacing the hand-lettered and typed labels used to identify most objects and their donors. Often specimens in the Goss bird collection needed to be repaired. Major cleanings of the museum took place in 1923, 1925, 1931, 1932, 1935 through 1938, 1947, and 1948. On several occasions such cleaning required the closing of the museum for two weeks to two months.¹⁴

If the depression years reduced both donations and visitation, they also brought unexpected help from various federal work projects. Between 1935 and 1943 assistants helped to redo the exhibits. Ultimately, one of the most innovative exhibit techniques also came from the federal projects. In 1938 it was announced that the Works Progress Administration (WPA) would support the construction of six dioramas for the museum. These would be "five feet wide and will exhibit in three dimensions six outstanding scenes in Kansas history. This will be one of the most interesting exhibits in the museum." Only two of these large dioramas were completed, one showing John Brown in a cabin scene and the other presenting Jotham Meeker working at his printing press. Finally, in 1943, a set of fourteen small-scale dioramas, produced by the Kansas WPA Museums Project, was provided for the museum. A variety of miniature scenes were sculpted in plaster and painted, including a buffalo hunt, Indian dances, Coronado's expedition, dinosaurs, and fur trapping. Representing a new exhibit technique, these dioramas remained on view in the east rooms of the museum for many

13. *Twenty-fifth Biennial Report, 1924-1925*; Root, "Reminiscences of 50 Years."

14. *Twenty-fourth Biennial Report, 1922-1924*, 53; *Topeka Daily Capital*, January 24, 1932, February 3, 1948; "The Annual Meeting," *KHQ* 1 (February 1932):170; "The Annual Meeting," *KHQ* 2 (February 1933):75-76; "The Annual Meeting," *KHQ* 5 (February 1936):59-60; "The Annual Meeting," *KHQ* 6 (February 1937):83; "The Annual Meeting," *KHQ* 7 (February 1938):88. The museum's exhibits actually changed very little in the two decades prior to 1950. By the mid-1930s, however, members of the museum profession were becoming more critical of artifacts in glass cases. See, for example, Arthur C. Parker, *A Manual for History Museums* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1935), 55-67 and Lawrence Vail Coleman, *Manual for Small Museums* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1927), 131-35.

floor. That same year the bird collection of Nathaniel Stickney Goss was moved to the east rooms on the fourth floor, and for a short time the Kansas Academy of Science kept mineral displays in the west rooms. J. T. Genn of Wamego donated his collection of intricately detailed scrollwork and also built a display case to hold the collection. The Society could now boast that "more relics have been on display since we received these cases than ever before at any one time. The character of these relics makes them instructive and interesting to the public. Some people spend days studying the contents of these cases. More relics should be displayed, but they can not be placed in public view until we receive additional cases."¹¹

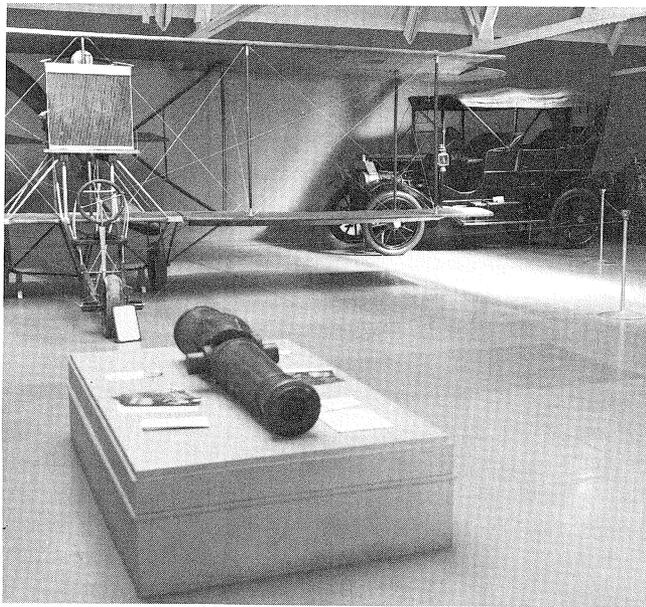
This continual striving for more cases was a hallmark of museum display work for the next several decades. It was the desire of the Society to show, if possible, all the artifacts in the collection. Under the guidance of museum curator Edith Smelser, who served for thirty-seven years until her death in 1952, this goal was kept in mind as the displays were arranged. Relics related to famous people were grouped together. Collections from a single donor were displayed as a unit, although some thematic arrangements were made. Indian materials were generally found in one area, for example, and Civil War items were located together.¹²

As the Kansas State Historical Society approached its fiftieth anniversary in 1925 the call for more new cases was repeated frequently. Objects on loan were being returned to their owners and duplicates were being put in storage to make room for other artifacts. Finally, appropriations were received to purchase more cases. In preparation for the fiftieth anniversary meeting, Edith Smelser and other staff members worked overtime to fill the new, marble-based, oak cases. Several archeology collections were unpacked, inventoried, and installed with display cards for each item. New collections of china, items from the Red Cross, and a variety of other new treasures were set out as the crew worked many evenings for almost a month. The results were hailed as a major step

10. *Topeka Daily Capital*, August 23, 1914, December 7, 1915, December 17, 1915, May 14, 1916; *Topeka State Journal*, May 27, 1914; *Twenty-fifth Biennial Report, 1914-1916*, 59; Root, "Reminiscences of 50 Years."

11. *Twenty-fifth Biennial Report, 1924-1925*, 25; *Twenty-fifth Biennial Report, 1914-1916*, 9-10, 16, 55; *Twenty-first Biennial Report, 1917-1919*, 7. Regarding the Goss bird collection, see Michael J. Brodhead, "Nathaniel Stickney Goss: Kansas' Peripatetic Naturalist," *The Prairie Scout* (Abilene: Kansas Corral of the Westeners, 1974), 2:47-72.

12. *Twenty-fifth Biennial Report, 1914-1916*, 20.



THE TRANSPORTATION AREA IN THE MAIN GALLERY



ABOVE, THE 1860S BEDROOM, BELOW, THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE



years. Two were still on exhibit when the museum was closed in 1983.¹⁵

By the middle of the twentieth century the Kansas State Historical Society Museum was a familiar part of the capital city. New exhibits, which often focused on a single artifact such as the Billard airplane or the stagecoach, attracted numerous visitors. Special displays of war souvenirs drew in thousands of servicemen and their families during the 1940s. Artifacts were suspended from the rafters stretching across the central gallery ceiling, and the cases still housed “relics” of the famous and infamous—Carry Nation’s ax, John Brown’s gun, and a piece of paper stained with Abraham Lincoln’s blood. It was clear, however, that the rapidly growing visiting public would demand change. That change came when Nyle H. Miller became the secretary of the Society in 1951.

In 1952, following Edith Smelser’s death, Charles “Bud” Holman became director of the museum, and Joan Foth was appointed assistant museum director. Within a year the galleries were undergoing rapid change reflecting a different exhibit philosophy. Now exhibits were to be placed in historical sequence, with the artifacts arranged and labeled to represent “a chapter of a book.” Rather than consisting of cases brimming with objects, the new exhibits were to feature a few related artifacts and labeling to tell a story. Visitors would see fewer objects but could learn more about Kansas history and the significance of particular artifacts. “By putting two or three objects in a case,” said Joan Foth, “people suddenly see an object for the first time.”¹⁶

Under Holman, major thematic exhibit sections were created within the galleries. Materials relating to Indians, trappers, and natural history were exhibited in the east wing. In the main gallery, the Longren airplane, high-wheeled bicycles, and two automobiles—a Thomas Flyer and a Great Smith—formed a transportation area backed by a wall painted “Pompeian red, a soft tomato shade.” Cases were arranged by topical themes such as the territorial period and “famous Kansans.” Zula Bennington Greene, a reporter for the *Topeka Daily Capital*, found the overall effect impressive. “The new arrangement is orderly and spacious. It entices

15. “The Annual Meeting,” *KHQ* 8 (February 1939):67; *Kansas Labor Weekly*, Topeka, January 18, 1945; *Topeka Daily Capital*, September 17, 1944; Kansas Museum Project, *Catalog of Visual Aids and Handicrafts* (Topeka: Work Projects Administration, Professional and Service Division, 1940).

16. *Topeka Daily Capital*, January 30, 1954.

the visitor instead of discouraging him with too much," she wrote. "As one walks through the middle arch to the main gallery, he is instantly struck by a feeling of spaciousness and drama. It is not just a room with a lot of stuff in it. It is a room as well planned as a painting."¹⁷

Believing that artifacts not endangered by handling should be placed on open display, Holman made accessible to touch a ball and chain, Indian grinding stones, and the cannon "Old Kickapoo." The cannon was situated in the main gallery "occupying the place of honor under the big skylight." It was exhibited on a pink base, "an echo of the Pompeian wall!"¹⁸

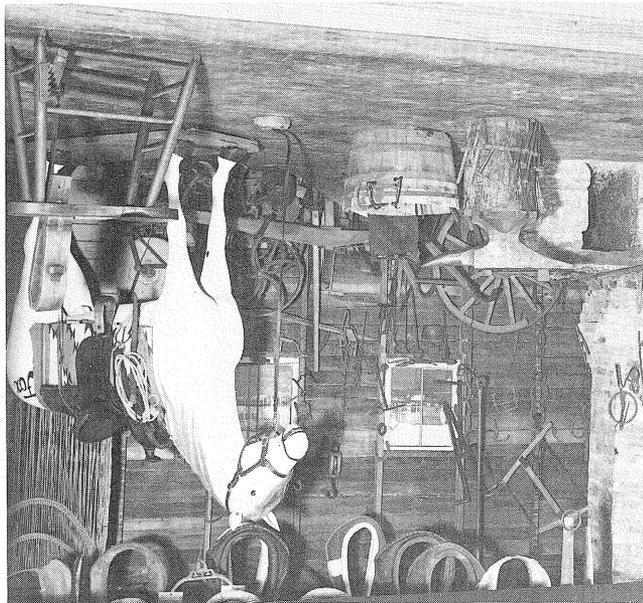
In Holman's brief stint as museum director, plans were formulated for the development of "period rooms" representing Kansas homes from territorial times through the Victorian era. Also planned was a 1900-1910 workroom to show weaving, churning, sewing, and other domestic activities. The first period room opened in 1955 after Holman had left and been succeeded by Stanley Sohl as museum director. The 1860s bedroom was "the first of a series... completed in an effort to show early-day living conditions." Sohl supervised the development of nearly a dozen period rooms from 1955 to 1962. The March 1955 issue of the Society's *Mirror* noted the expectations about this exhibit technique: "These period rooms are likely to become the most exciting and educational features in the museum and the staff would like to start now to gather material which will give an accurate picture of the Kansas of our grandparents."¹⁹

To acquire appropriate artifacts for the period rooms, an active solicitation campaign was begun. In part, because of this campaign, the west wing of the fourth floor ultimately housed, in addition to the 1860s bedroom, a sod-house interior, a Victorian parlor, a 1900 one-room schoolhouse, a kitchen of the early 1900s, and a 1920s parlor. The commercial life of a small town was represented through period rooms constructed in the east wing. A doctor's office, a dentist's office, a blacksmith-harness shop,

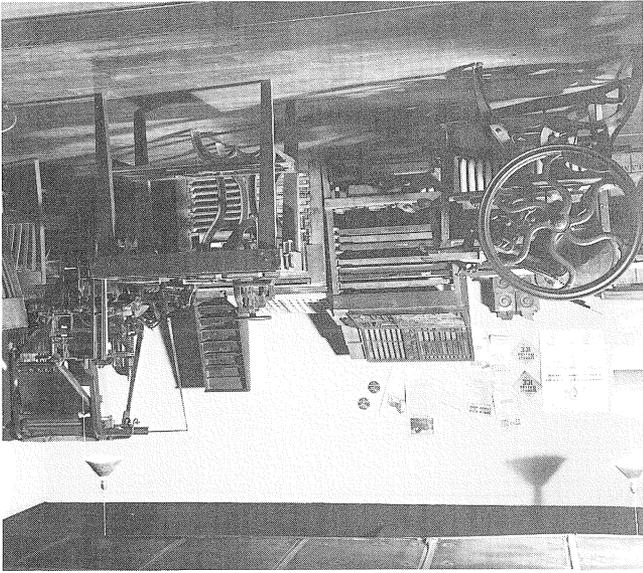
17. *Topoka Daily Capital*, July 18, 1954.

18. *Ibid.*

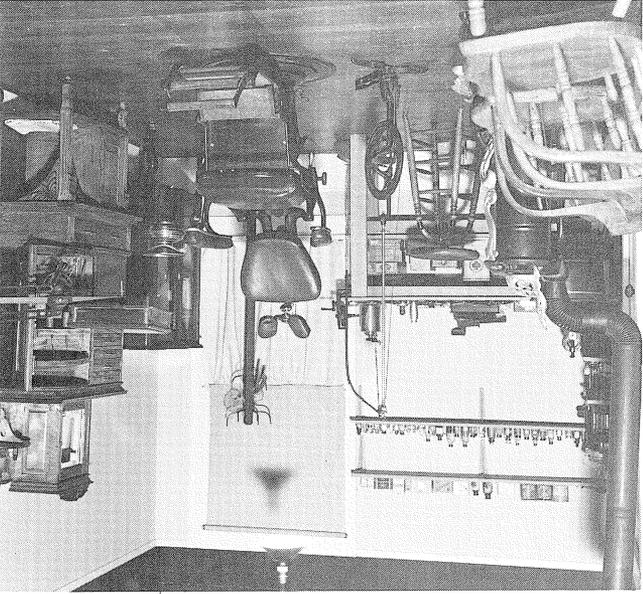
19. *Topoka State Journal*, May 3, 1955; "New Museum Program Is Now Underway," *Mirror* 1 (March 1955). The period-room exhibit technique has been used since the 1850s in Europe, and since 1907 in the United States. Period rooms are generally popular, but they have been criticized in part for requiring much space, and not allowing the observer to inspect the artifacts closely. See Edward P. Alexander, *Museums in Motion* (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1979), 87 and "Artistic and Historical Period Rooms," *Curator* 7 (December 1964):263-81.

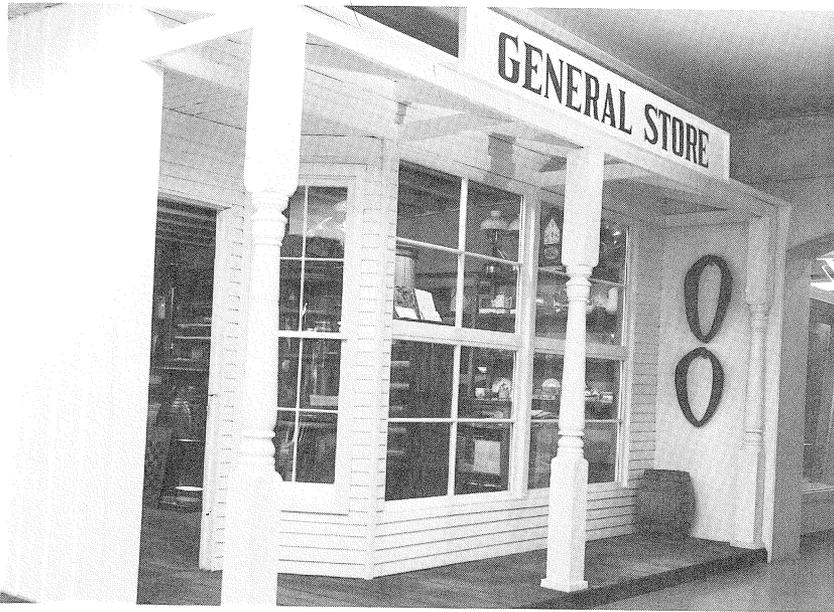


THE BLACKSMITH-HARNESS SHOP

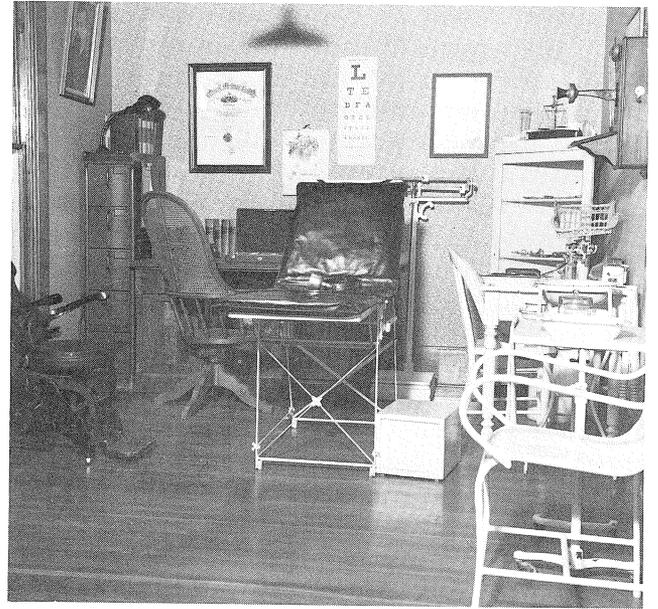


ABOVE, THE PRINT SHOP. BELOW, THE DENTIST'S OFFICE





THE GENERAL STORE



THE COUNTRY DOCTOR'S OFFICE



ABOVE, THE EARLY 1900S FARM KITCHEN, BELOW, THE SOD-HOUSE INTERIOR



a printing shop, and a general store completed the museum's "Main Street."

While period rooms were constructed in the east and west wings, the central gallery also underwent considerable change. Twenty new cases were received in 1956, and the staff began installing exhibits that would "trace Kansas history from prehistoric times to the development of early industries." Unlike the horizontal glass units that preceded them, the new cases were built to stand upright and to accommodate three-dimensional exhibits combining artifacts with labels and graphics. The use of specially designed cases was considered "state-of-the-art" museum exhibit technique.

In 1956 a number of exhibits on the early history of Kansas were completed. Among the exhibit topics were the "path of early man's migration to the Great Plains," the Louisiana Purchase and early explorers, first territorial governor Andrew Reeder, and early missions in Kansas. The WPA dioramas were refurbished, and loaned materials relating to Dwight D. Eisenhower were exhibited. Seasonal displays for the first-floor lobby included a Christmas tree with antique toys and an exhibit featuring Easter bonnets. Other changing lobby exhibits included two cases on photography and a display of "Grandma's Gadgets," which "certainly proved that the housewife of today is not the only one to have a wide assortment of gadgets at her disposal."²⁰

Another twenty cases were installed in 1957. These were devoted to "specific events or fields rather than to chronological sequence of general

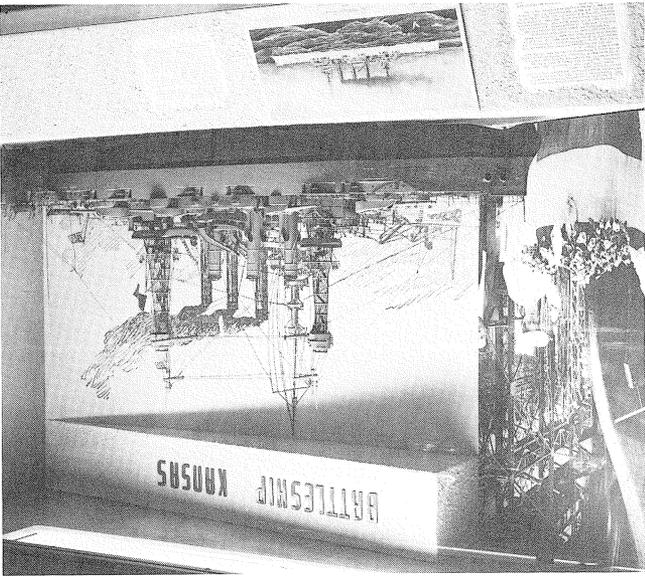
historical areas: "Famous Guns," the "Battleship Kansas," "Tools of Pioneer Women," "Quantill's Raid," and "Victorian Elegance" were among the first such exhibit subjects. Special effort also was directed toward revising the Indian section. Exhibits were designed to interpret the culture of the Indian tribes that settled in Kansas.²¹

Twenty additional cases were acquired in 1958 and were developed as in 1957. By September, exhibit development had progressed to the point that the Society's *Mirror* reported, "For the first time the Society's museum now has an entire section devoted to the American Indian and the displays have already proved popular with both adults and children." Souvenir plates and dishes of Kansas and lighting devices were displayed in the "Collector's Corner." This space in the galleries was used from 1958 until 1983 by exhibits designed to "appeal particularly to antique collectors and hobbyists." Among the types of artifacts exhibited were irons, early wooden instruments, mechanical kitchen gadgets, unusual cups, and postage stamps. When the fourth-floor galleries were closed in 1983, the area displayed collections of razors, horseshoes, nineteenth-century family albums, and tobacco paraphernalia.²²

Exhibits also were placed in the third-floor lobby in 1958. Most were of the type in the "Collector's Corner"; several were rotated from display there. A year later, due to a pressing shortage of space, the museum began to make the old counter-type cases available to local historical societies. Mann-Quins were acquired "to lend greater realism to the period rooms."²³

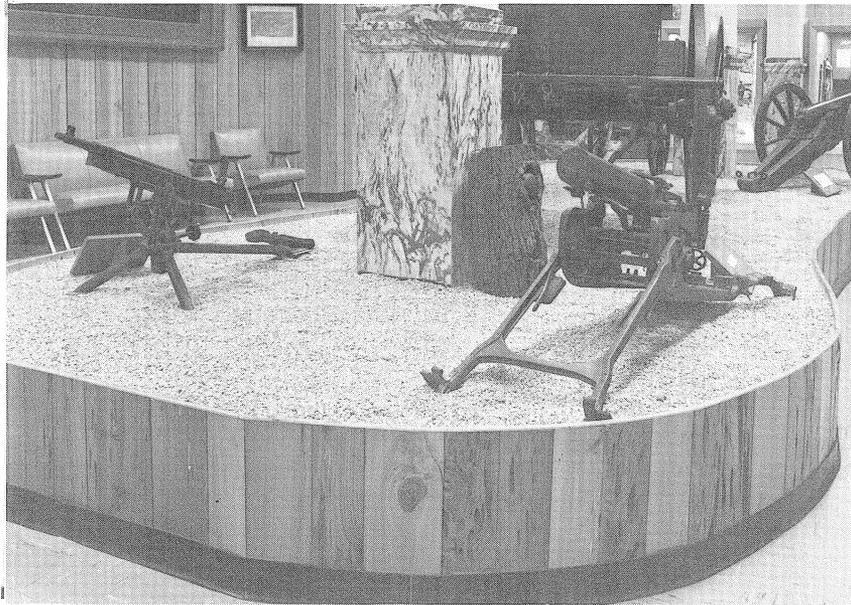
Financed in large part through a donation from the Woman's Kansas Day Club, the Victorian parlor was opened to public view in July 1960. This room demonstrated the wealth of the period and incorporated a fireplace from the razed governor's mansion. Also in 1960, additional space was made available by the remodeling of the Memorial Building, and three new galleries were developed for opening during the state's centennial year. A "military

20. "New Display Cases and Christmas Decorations Featured by Museum," *Mirror* 2 (January 1956); "New Displays in '3-D' Are Museum Highlights," *Mirror* 2 (March 1956). For case exhibit technique see *Armita Neal, Help! for the Small Museum* (Boulder: Pruett Publishing Co., 1969).
21. "More Help Needed by Museum as New Program Moves Ahead," *Mirror* 3 (January 1957).
22. "Museum's Indian Gallery Has Reached Completion," *Mirror* 4 (September 1958); "Newly Installed Exhibits and Recent Gifts Make Museum News," *Mirror* 4 (July 1958).
23. "Recent Accessions and High Attendance Make Museum News," *Mirror* 5 (July 1959).



BELOW, THE VICTORIAN PARLOR





THE MILITARY GALLERY



ABOVE, THE AGRICULTURAL GALLERY. BELOW, INDIAN EXHIBITS ON THE THIRD FLOOR



museum devoted to Kansas' representation in all wars" was created in space previously occupied by offices and displays of the GAR and associated organizations. A central feature of the military gallery was the display of large weapons, and exhibits traced military history from the frontier fort to the atomic age. Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower and other famous Kansas officers also were represented. An agricultural gallery featuring large pieces of farm equipment was built in reclaimed space as well. Case exhibits depicted such subjects as homesteading, the cattle industry, and the development of irrigation.²⁴

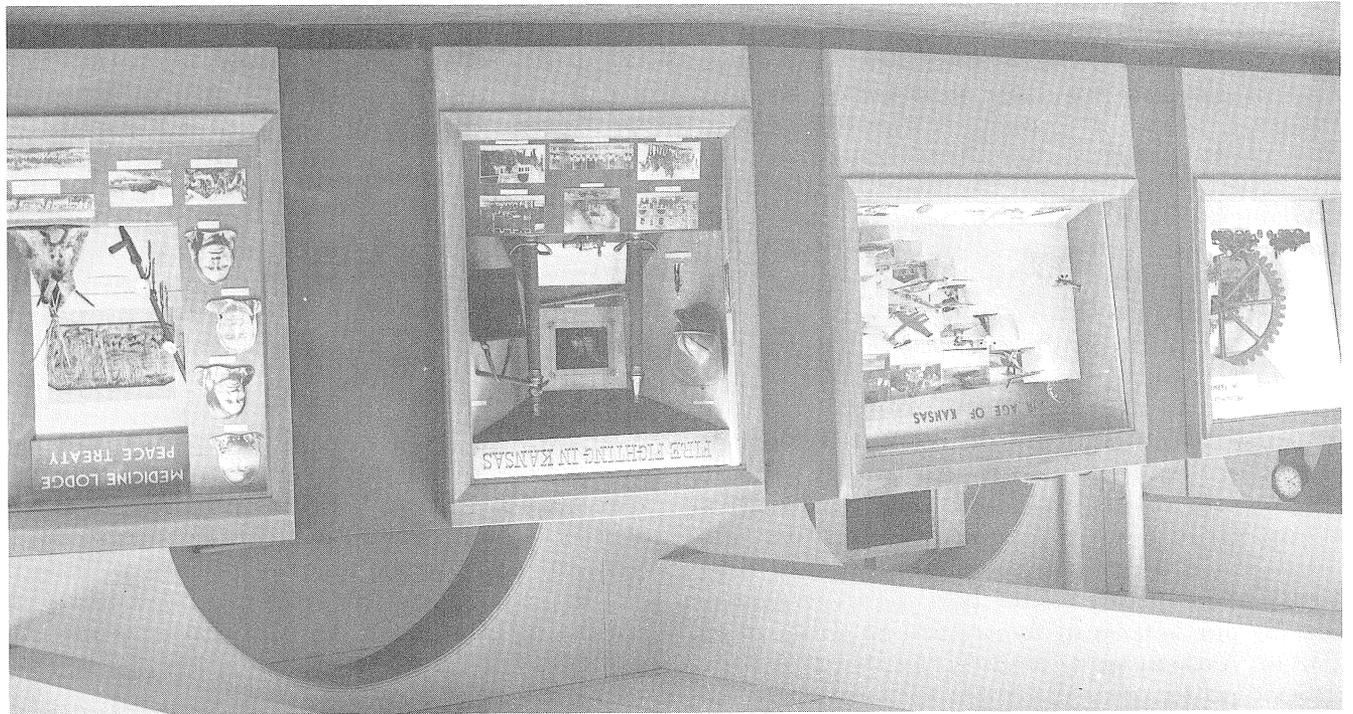
Exhibits focusing on American Indians from prehistoric to modern times were transferred from the fourth floor to a new gallery on the third floor. "With the displays, even the amateur can note the difference in the characteristics in the various tribes," commented a Topeka reporter. Space cleared on the fourth floor was then "devoted to the role of women in Kansas history and to clothing and household items of interest to feminine museum visitors." Ten exhibits were placed in this area during 1961. China, glassware, silver, hats, shoes, hobbies, toys, fans, and accessories were thought to be of particular interest to women; men and boys were expected to be inclined toward the military and agricultural galleries.²⁵

Following the gallery reorganization of 1960 through 1961, considerable time was devoted to developing special and traveling exhibits. A centennial semitrailer truck was fitted with twenty-one display units for viewing across the state. Individual exhibits dealt with such subjects as forts, trails, Indians, government, agriculture, industry, schools, Indian missions, and the Civil War. The centennial exhibit installed in the main lobby of the Memorial Building featured the Wyandotte Constitution, U.S. and Kansas flags, the state seal, a Charles Robinson portrait, and a sketch of Lincoln raising a thirty-four-star flag. Minus the portrait of Robinson and the Lincoln sketch, the exhibit remains today in the first-floor lobby. The Chisholm Trail Centennial in 1967 also was commemorated with a traveling exhibit. Installed on a railroad car provided by the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company, the mobile exhibit was viewed in several states. A

24. "Remodeling of Memorial Building Almost Finished," *Mirror 7* (January 1961).

25. *Topeka Capital-Journal*, July 21, 1963; "Remodeling of Memorial Building Almost Finished," *Mirror 7* (January 1961).

26. "Traveling Exhibits Preparing to Roll," *Mirror 7* (May 1961); "The Annual Meeting," *KHQ 28* (Spring 1962):121-22;



EXHIBITS IN THE MAIN GALLERY ON THE FOURTH FLOOR

"Buy-Centennial" exhibit on the commercialization of the nation's birthday was displayed in 1976.²⁶

For several years exhibits were sent to fairs and

antique shows. One of the first was a general store

period room fabricated for display at the Mid-America

Fair in Topeka. From 1967 to 1981, exhibits were

prepared regularly for the four display cases in

the statehouse rotunda. More than eighty exhibits

were installed in the Capitol during that period,

over one-third of which were later placed in the

Memorial Building museum galleries.²⁷

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, museum

exhibit personnel were actively involved in the

interpretation of the historic sites administered

as branch museums of the Kansas State Historical

Society. At the Memorial Building, exhibits were

"Special Display Placed in Memorial Building," *Mirror* 8 (January

1962); "The Annual Meeting," *KHQ* 34 (Spring 1968):74; "The

Annual Meeting," *KHQ* 43 (Spring 1977):90.

27. "The Annual Meeting," *KHQ* 28 (Spring 1962):121-22;

"Society Places Exhibits in Statehouse Rotunda," *Mirror* 13

(January 1967); "New Exhibits Installed in Memorial Building

and Capitol," *Mirror* 14 (November 1968); "Three New Case

Displays Are in Capitol Rotunda," *Mirror* 16 (July 1970).

28. "Historical Properties to Receive Better Care," *Mirror*

7 (July 1961); *Kansas City Star*, March 9, 1966; "The Annual

Meeting," *KHQ* 31 (Spring 1965):85. See also *Standing Rainbows:*

Railroad Promotion of Art, the West and Its Native People (Topeka:

Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Co., 1981).

As preparations proceeded for moving into the

new facility, exhibit work focused on installations

to be placed in the new permanent galleries and

special exhibit area. At the Memorial Building

exhibit galleries were closed in stages as necessary

for cataloging and packing the museum collections.

At 5:00 p.m. on March 31, 1983, the main gallery

was closed. In less than four hours, exhibits developed

over the last twenty-five years were dismantled, leaving

only memories and the experience gained in their

creation.

exhibit development was severely restricted.

In later years greater emphasis was placed on

temporary exhibits. Several major special exhibits

were installed in the second-floor lobby. "Standing

Rainbows: Railroad Promotion of Art, the West and

Its Native People" was produced through the coopera-

tion of the Archison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway

City artist Marijana Grisnik were exhibited later

that year. Traveling exhibits from other institutions,

such as the Smithsonian's "Blacks in the Westward

Movement," also were shown.²⁸

however, the amount of space available for further

University of Kansas Natural History Museum,

with the transfer of the Goss bird collection to the

were installed as others were dismantled. Even

refurbished as needed, and new exhibits occasionally

Kansas Museum of History

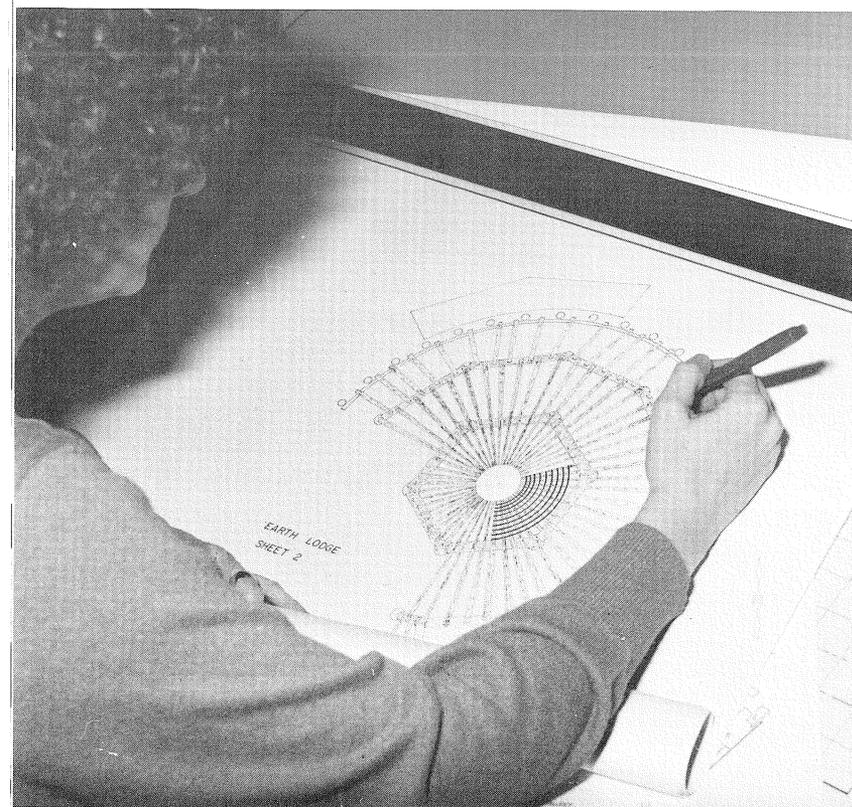
The Kansas Museum of History provides the Historical Society with the opportunity to expand its presentation of Kansas history. The new facility features a spacious exhibit gallery encompassing a three-thousand-square-foot special exhibit gallery, an orientation theater, and a nineteen-thousand-square-foot hall which will house the museum's main exhibit, "Voices from the Heartland: A Kansas Legacy." The special gallery will provide space for shows on loan from other institutions as well as short-term exhibits. Its twelve-foot ceiling clearance, carpeted walls, track lighting, and movable wall-panel system create a sophisticated environment in which to present exhibits complementing the museum's purpose. The main gallery, boasting a thirty-five-foot ceiling height and broad, uninterrupted floor space, will allow the full usage of artifacts of varying sizes and provide the opportunity for innovative exhibit construction.

Interpretive programming, the responsibility of the Exhibits, Education, and Research divisions of the Kansas Museum of History, encompasses

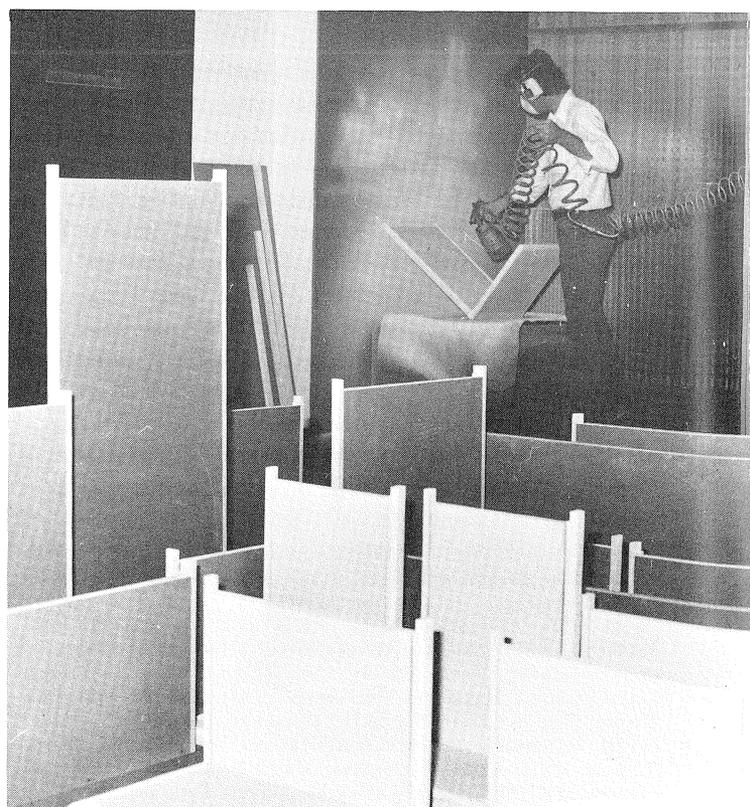
the objectives of the Kansas State Historical Society. Simply stated, the purpose is to interpret or tell the story of Kansas history in a clear and concise manner. Exhibits and programming are intended both to educate and to entertain visitors while providing them with an idea of how events occurring today affect events tomorrow, just as those which occurred yesterday affect our lives today. By understanding change and continuity, along with the interrelationship of humankind and the environment, visitors are able to think and to draw conclusions about the land called Kansas. Perhaps the most appropriate goal of interpretive programming is to cause the visitor to feel a part of history.

Making history live within the museum is no small task. Exhibits are planned so that the interpretation does not compromise the historical integrity of a subject, and consideration is given to protecting the physical well-being of each artifact. Exhibits also are designed to avoid limiting any visitor's access to the physical environment and its interpretive message.

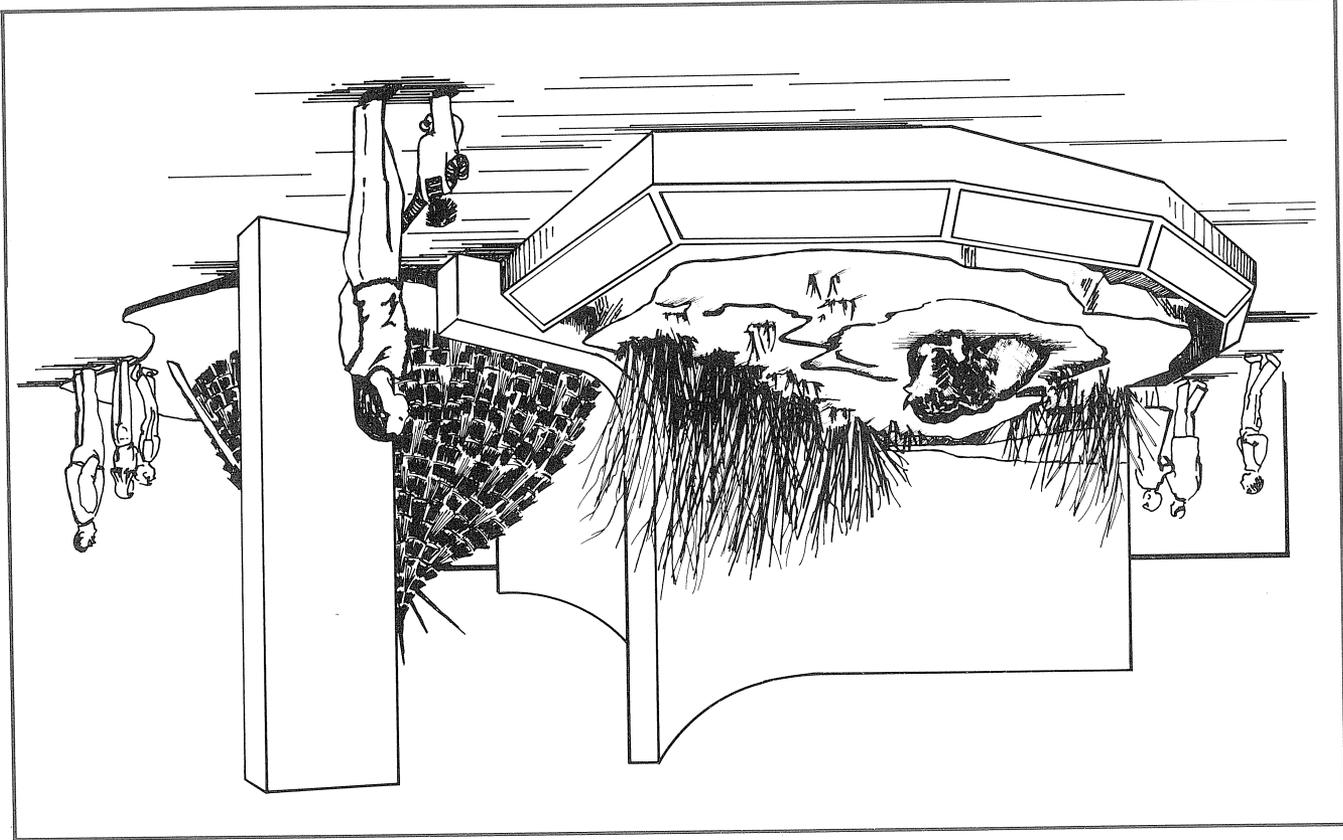
Moreover, exhibits are planned to complement



Lucinda Bray, chief of exhibits, studies plans for the earth lodge that will be constructed.



A museum technician paints exhibit panels in the new spray booth.



Artifacts, illustrations, and innovative exhibit techniques will be combined to tell the story of Kansas people and the land they inhabited in "Voices from the Heartland."

These exhibits will expand upon ideas only briefly touched upon in "Voices," adding new dimensions and depth. Other exhibits will provide the opportunity to see material not available in the museum's collections. These loan exhibits as well as those originating within the Kansas Museum of History will be on display from four to six months each. The series begins in June of 1984 with the exhibit "Samples of Our Heritage" (see catalog elsewhere in this issue). It will be followed in the late fall by an exhibit of classic western art assembled from museum collections across the United States and by "Kansas Images" in the summer of 1985. "Images" will bring together material from the museum's collection and from other sources relating to the ways in which people have viewed or thought of "Kansas" through the years.

Another objective of the Kansas Museum of History is to make interpretive programming available to as many people as possible. For this reason the majority of the exhibits originating in the museum will include "mini-exhibits" intended for circulation

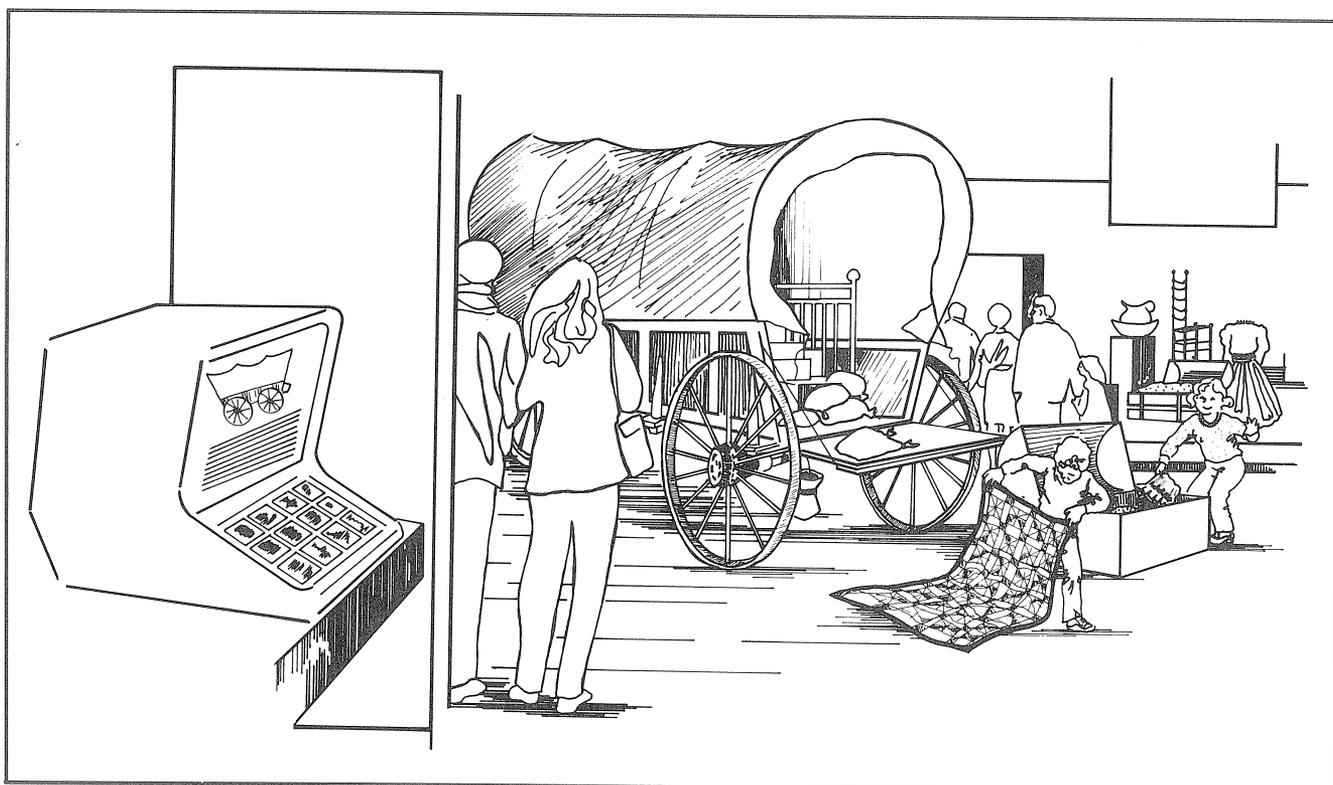
one another. Because the museum's central purpose is to convey information about Kansas and its surrounding region, the long-range exhibit plans include the development over the next three years of "Voices from the Heartland: A Kansas Legacy." Located in the main exhibit on Kansas history. Located in the main gallery, this exhibit will trace the growth of Kansas from the earliest inhabitants through the years to the recent past. Interpretation in this hall centers upon three observable themes in human activity: how we feed and care for ourselves, how we interact with each other, and how we create our homes on the land. Throughout is woven information about the land and how we deal with it. This story will be illustrated by such items as a grass lodge of the Wichita, a prairie habit, an emigrant's wagon, and the *Cyrus K. Holliday* train. Many artifacts will be blended together so that, joined with labels, graphics, and a pleasing environment, the story of Kansas and its people can be told.

Alongside "Voices from the Heartland," a regularly scheduled series of changing exhibits

to schools, historical societies, and museums throughout the state. It is hoped that from this beginning a traveling exhibits program with a regional orientation will develop.

Many questions will be asked as the public becomes accustomed to the new building. Visitors will wonder where their favorite quilt or piece of silver is or be pleased when an "old friend" is encountered in its new setting. Changes are important to continuity, and with this third move for the

Society's museum, change will be evident. Gone will be the period rooms with their assemblages of furniture. In their places will appear vignettes of interiors and buildings. These smaller period settings will be historically accurate and will perhaps tell us more in an intimate way than did the larger rooms. Gone will be microcosms of history in closed cases. In their stead will be a flow of history with artifacts blending and tracing the threads of Kansas' past. KH



Activity centers with participatory exhibits will be located throughout "Voices," enabling visitors to gain a personal understanding of Kansas history.

Samples of Our Heritage

by James R. Kratsas,

Mary Ellen Hennessey Nottage, and

John Zwierzyna

WITH the dedication of the Kansas Museum of History, the opening of "Samples of Our Heritage" inaugurates a continuing exhibits program. Thousands of artifacts are housed in the museum, and "Samples" is an overview or sampling of the Society's holdings representing a number of aspects of the collection.

For more than a century the Historical Society has been charged with gathering objects illustrative of the history of Kansas and the Great Plains. The artifacts are the heart of the museum and the basis of all its activities; exhibits and education programs would be impossible without the collections. The objects are the reason the Kansas Museum of History exists.

Why does the Society continue to collect even though it already possesses thousands of artifacts? The material culture of Kansas history is extremely broad and varied. Try to imagine all the objects used in each year of Kansas history; the concept is almost beyond comprehension. The items used every day range from business cards to artworks, from hammers to combines, from shoes to automobiles, and from kitchen knives to furniture. To preserve the history of a culture, a museum must acquire examples from all areas of life and all episodes of time. The institution must collect not just the elegant furniture of the past, but also the common, middle-class chairs and tables that were used by the greater proportion of families.

Moreover, Kansas history is not static. Each generation leaves the materials and objects it created and used in the course of everyday life. As time passes, the material culture of preceding years is actively sought by the Society before the items deteriorate and are lost forever. The objects are acquired, stored,

James R. Kratsas is curator of fine art, clothing, and entertainment; Mary Ellen Hennessey Nottage is curator of decorative arts; and John Zwierzyna is curator of technology, Kansas State Historical Society.

and preserved for future generations and for historians who use the materials in order to understand the past. Even though all objects will not be exhibited at any one time in the museum's galleries, it is still necessary and desirable to acquire more artifacts for the study collections. These collections aid researchers in tracing the technological and stylistic evolution of objects and in understanding their role in our culture. The variety of artifacts allows visitors to gain a more accurate view of the past—to comprehend that in 1870 not all furniture was fabricated from a particular wood and not all tableware was silver plated. Although a museum may possess several articles of clothing from 1890, there are a number of styles from that year. A sample of each one or of styles of various years will provide a more comprehensive study collection.

In fulfilling the task of interpreting the artifacts collected, the museum will have exhibits in the large main gallery outlining the history of the state. Changing exhibits in the special gallery will explore certain topics pertinent to life in Kansas. The first exhibit, however, is different. "Samples of Our Heritage" focuses on the materials of which later exhibits will be made. Rather than serving to tell a story or explore a specific theme, the artifacts are featured alone.

Each object in the museum collection is significant, and the importance of an artifact is judged by what one can learn from it. The objects in "Samples" contain many messages about Kansas, illustrating why they were collected by the Society.

Visitors to "Samples" will find the artifacts arranged into three separate groups: objects associated with famous people, places, or events; common, everyday objects of a utilitarian nature; and objects that are unique, pleasing, or innovative. Any artifact in the collection could fall into one or more of these groupings; an object has been placed in a certain section because of a particular message it conveys.

The Society collects objects related to famous people, places, and events that are prominent in our collective memory and serve to mark our history. Objects that are associated with these historical milestones are traditional favorites of museum visitors. They are direct links to times or individuals which otherwise are only abstract ideas. The artifacts give credence to times past; they are concrete evidence that people existed and events occurred.



Medal

Many contemporaries of John Brown considered this radical abolitionist a martyr after he was executed for attempting to lead a slave revolt. A group of French leaders, including the novelist Victor Hugo, had this solid gold medal struck in 1877 to honor Brown and his companions for their sacrifices. The medal was sent to Brown's widow, Mary, and their children later donated it to the Kansas State Historical Society.

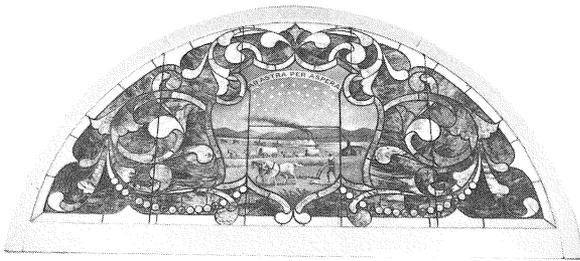


John Brown's Surveyor's Compass

When not fighting to further the free-state cause, John Brown spent some time employed as a surveyor while in Kansas. This surveyor's compass set served as one of the principal tools of his trade. In addition to the brass compass, the set includes two brass protractors, two brass rules, a plumb bob, and the original walnut storage box. The scientific instrument makers Phelps and Gurley of Troy, New York, made the compass.

Exposition Window

World's fairs were events of international import in the past as they are today. Kansas entered grand exhibitions at these fairs, showing with pride agricultural produce, manufactures, products of the mining industry, artworks and handicrafts of individual citizens, and cultural treasures. This stained and painted glass window was created for the Kansas Building at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Centennial Exposition in Saint Louis and was used as a transom over the main entrance. It welcomed visitors with a splash of color and with symbols which Kansans recognized as their own.



Trophy

Radio Digest of Chicago presented this trophy to KFKB, "Kansas First, Kansas Best," of Milford as the world's most popular radio station. KFKB's owner, Dr. John R. Brinkley, used the station for advertising his medical clinic and pharmacies and for campaign-

ing in his unsuccessful attempt to gain the governorship of Kansas in 1930. The Federal Radio Commission (FRC) revoked the radio station's license in 1930. The loss of the license was because of Brinkley's use of the airways for doling out prescriptions, a practice not condoned by the FRC.

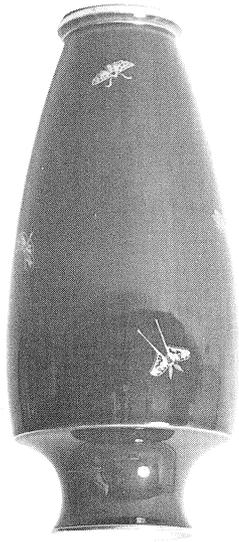
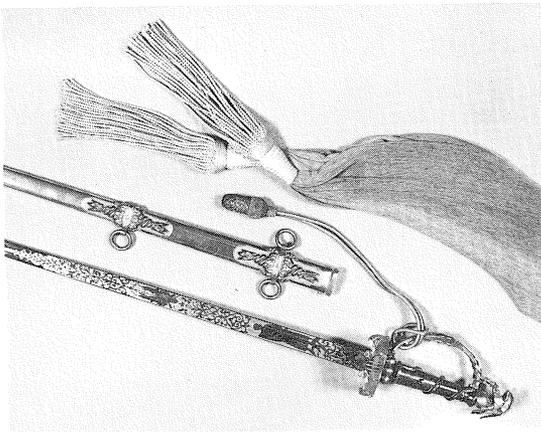
Presentation Sword

James G. Blunt holds the distinction of being the first Kansas to achieve the rank of major general during the Civil War. To honor the general, two of Blunt's close wartime associates presented this exquisite sword set to him. A product of the renowned Tiffany and Company of New York, the sword consists of an ornate silver hilt with a grip in the shape of a cannon barrel and a pommel with a gilt eagle perched on a ball. The blade, manufactured by Collins and Company of Hartford, Connecticut, has been etched with military motifs on a frosted gold background. In addition to the sword, the presentation set includes a gilt silver scabbard, a gilt wire sword knot, and a silk sash.



French Vase
 The winter of 1947 was hard for thousands of Europeans. The devastations of World War II were felt most severely by ordinary citizens. In Wichita a movement was organized to send a Southwest Friendship Train loaded with food and supplies to struggling Europeans. This train with its cargo from Kansas, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas joined similar caravans from other parts of the country. Promoters of the Southwest Friendship Train noted that gifts from Kansas filled over half of the 255 cars. More than 40 of those cars contained Kansas wheat and flour. The citizens of France wished to express their gratitude for the aid and organized a train of their own. Their "Merci" train included a car for each state containing mementos from French families and products of newly rebuilt French industries. Many of the mementos from the car sent to Kansas are in the Kansas State Historical Society collection. Among them is a personal gift from French President Vincent Auriol to the people of Kansas, a fine Sevres porcelain vase.

The Society also collects the stuff of everyday life, for people living ordinary lives are as important to history as are famous people, places, and events. Through these artifacts we learn how people worked and played. We can examine things made in Kansas





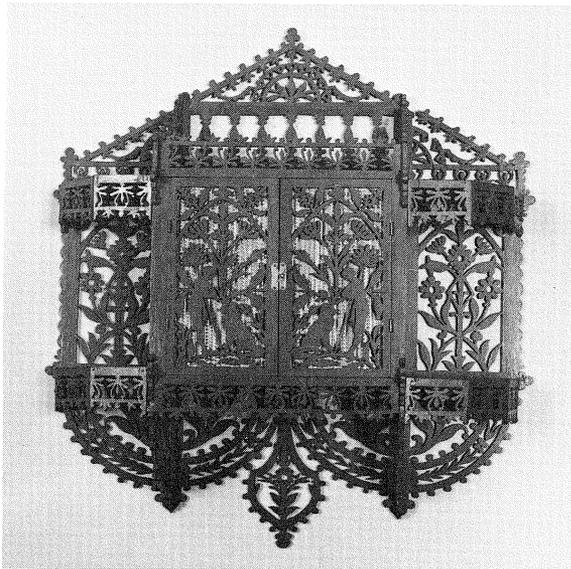
and things brought to Kansas to make a new home familiar. These are the belongings of generations of Kansans who created the Kansas of today.

Post Rock Fence Post

Wood was a scarce commodity on the relatively treeless plains of central Kansas. As a result, farmers and ranchers substituted the locally available limestone for wood as a material for fence posts. This unique type of stone, colloquially referred to as post rock, could be quarried readily from shallow deposits. Because of its stratified nature and its softness when initially extracted from the ground, post rock could be split easily and worked into fence posts. Travelers through central Kansas can still see the durable post rock fence posts dotting the landscape.

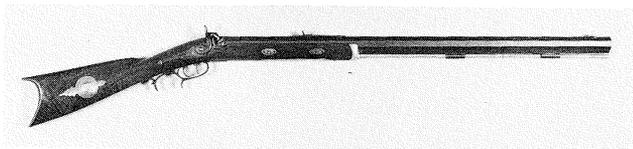
Trade Sign

The cigar store wooden Indian has always been a familiar and easily recognized symbol of the tobacconist. In 1871, Henry Moeser opened a cigar store on Kansas Avenue in Topeka and adorned it with this Indian. It is believed that the Indian was later displayed at the Windsor, one of Topeka's leading hotels.



Cabinet

As leisure time became more available to middle-class Americans in the nineteenth century, hobbies gained popularity. Men as well as women desired to fill parlors with all manner of handworked artistry. Some hobbyists found a creative outlet in fretwork, the creation of wooden articles using a scrollsaw. The result was an abundance of lacy letter racks, comb holders, picture frames, and small furniture. Perhaps one of the most prolific fretworkers in Kansas was J. T. Genn of Wamego. After his discharge from Civil War service, he spent much time at his scrollsaw creating dozens of decorative and utilitarian household items. The small, wall-hung cabinet in the exhibit represents only a fraction of his work now in the museum collection.



Plains Rifle

For hunting and defense, frontiersmen often chose the attractive yet rugged Plains rifle. Leavenworth gunsmith John R. Biringer made this type of rifle for the local market. This gun, an example of Biringer's work, has a .40 caliber, octagonal barrel and a walnut half stock. Note that the lock bears not Biringer's mark, but that of "Goddard." By the

second half of the nineteenth century, gunsmithing, like many other trades, was losing aspects of its craft tradition. Many gunsmiths no longer made the entire firearm from scratch but, because of economies resulting from the specialization of labor, often contracted to have the intricate lock mechanisms made for them. Biringer did just that with this rifle.

Coverlet

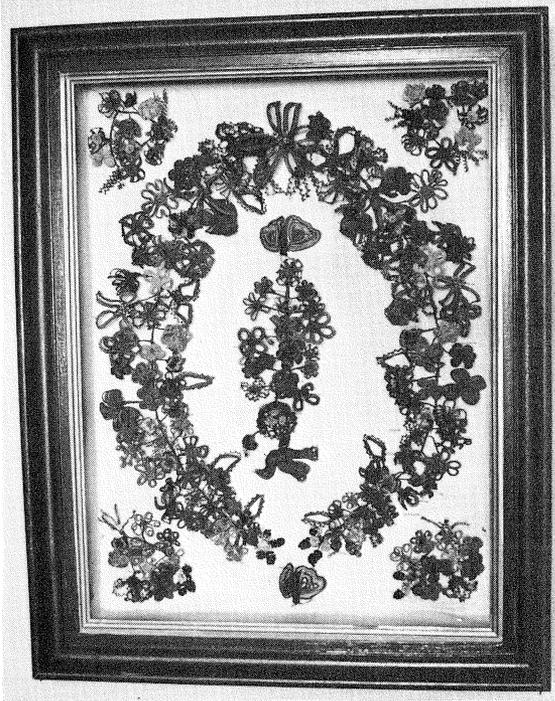
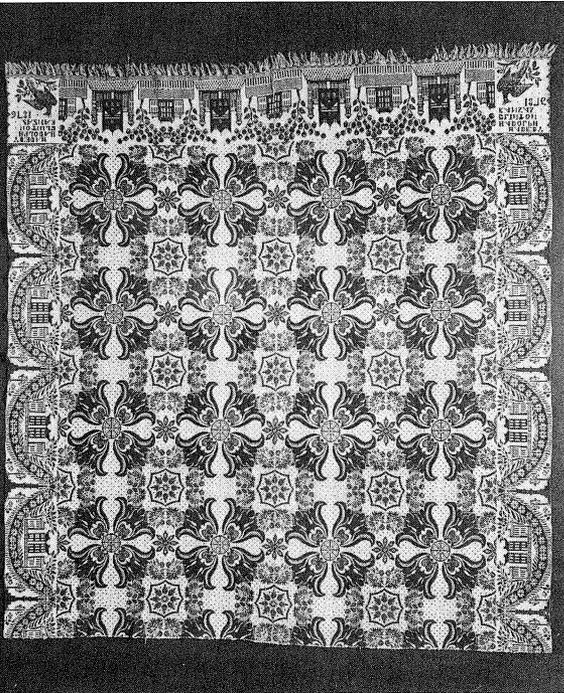
Henry Adolph was born in 1815 in Alsace, France. He migrated to America sometime before 1855 and began to practice his craft of weaving in Ohio. By 1857 he was working in Indiana, later moving his trade to Iowa. He next went to Douglas County, Kansas, where he was known to be working in the mid-1860s. His fine skills are evident in the colorful coverlet in the exhibit. It is a jacquard woven double lily pattern in double cloth. Weavers like Adolph signed their work with pride. The corner signature block of the coverlet bears the woven inscription, "Made by H. Adolph, Clinton, KS 1876." Coverlets such as these were cherished household possessions in Kansas.

Hair Wreath

Handicrafts have always been popular for young and old. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, many natural materials such as shells and hair were used to create decorative items for the home. Hair wreaths were such creations. They varied in size and quality, with this wreath being rather large and complex.

Among the artifacts collected by the Historical Society are unique, beautiful, and innovative objects that have intrinsic value. For example, one-of-a-kind works of art are valued by our culture. Artists depict unique visions of the world that not only add beauty to our lives but also present new ways to see and understand the past.

The task of bringing aesthetics to our lives is not carried solely by artworks, however. The furnishings with which we surround ourselves and the tools we use are products of standards of design. Objects of taste and pleasure are everywhere. They help us understand the cultural traditions of the man-made world. In addition, objects that show technological innovation are abundant in the museum's collection. Americans have continually searched for better, faster, and easier ways to accomplish their work. Artifacts reflecting this trait help us understand attitudes

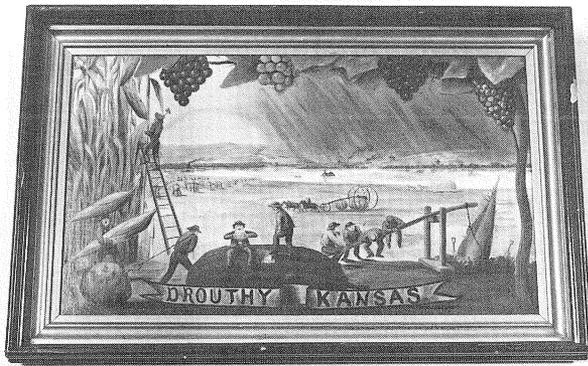




toward work; we can learn what types of work were considered most important. We can begin to comprehend the significant role of technology in our culture.

Pastel

The World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago was a showcase for many items including new inventions, crafts, and artworks. The exposition was enriched by a piece of art copyrighted by Henrietta Briggs-Wall and executed by W. A. Ford, both of Hutchinson. The pastel *American Woman and Her Political Peers* was a popular attraction at Chicago. It demonstrates the belief that a woman in the United States had as little political power as the disenfranchised Indian, madman, convict, and idiot. Creating quite a stir across the country, the pastel was reproduced on cards and distributed nationwide. Several newspapers and journals commented on it including the *Alger County Republican* in Michigan, which stated that *American Woman* would be to woman suffrage what *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was to abolition.

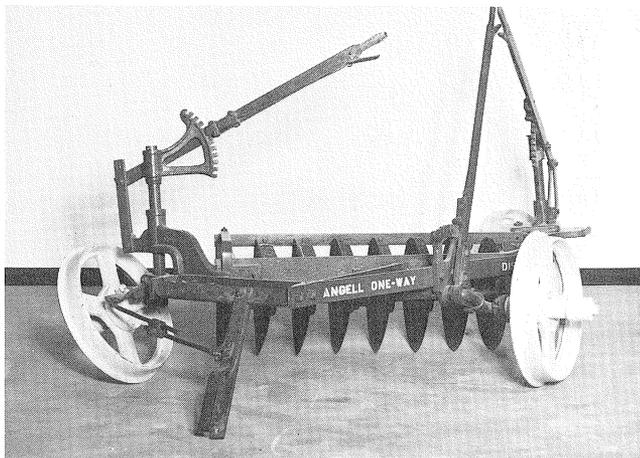


Oil Painting

Henry Worrall emigrated from Cincinnati to Topeka in 1868 and quickly discovered that Kansas was not the dry wasteland he had heard. When his eastern friends made derogatory statements about the land's aridity, Worrall sketched his version of *Drouthy Kansas* in 1869. Originally done in charcoal, then in this oil in 1878, *Drouthy Kansas* proclaimed huge harvests of wheat, watermelons, and corn and heavy rainfalls. The work drew much attention, appearing on the cover of *Kansas Farmer* and on circulars to promote immigration to Kansas.

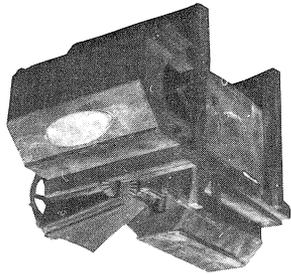
Angell Disc Plow

In the 1920s, farmer/mechanic Charlie Angell of Plains developed a new type of disc plow especially adapted for wheat farming on the dry and windy High Plains. Angell's plow, unlike the traditional moldboard plow, did not turn over the soil and completely bury the surface trash. Instead, it merely tilled the soil while incorporating the trash or stubble into the top layer of the soil. This stubble then served as a mulch which conserved precious moisture, reduced wind erosion, and increased the humus content of the soil. After producing close to five hundred of the plows on his farm, Angell sold his rights to the plow to the Ohio Cultivator Company which marketed it as the "Angell One Way Disc Plow." Angell made this small, four-foot model (the most common size of the field models was ten feet) in 1926 for use in his family's vegetable garden.



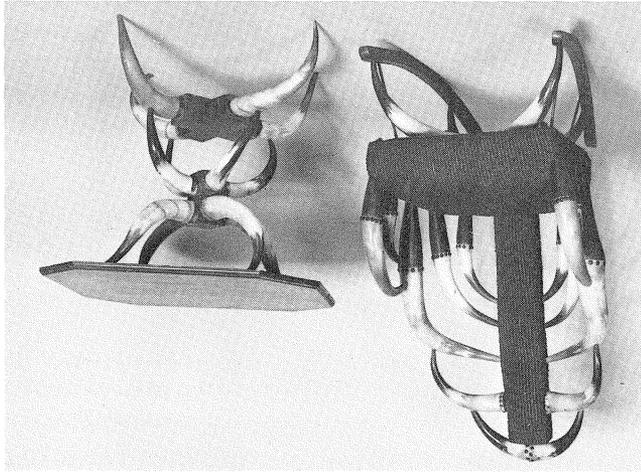
Patent Model of Grain Separator

On January 15, 1878, Thaddeus Histed of Salina received a patent for an "improvement in grain-separators." Histed's grain separator or fanning mill separated grain from chaff and other debris and sorted it into several different grades. This is the model of Histed's separator which he submitted to the United States Patent Office to illustrate his invention. He proudly christened his new machine the "Belle of the Plains" as engraved on a silver plaque on the model.



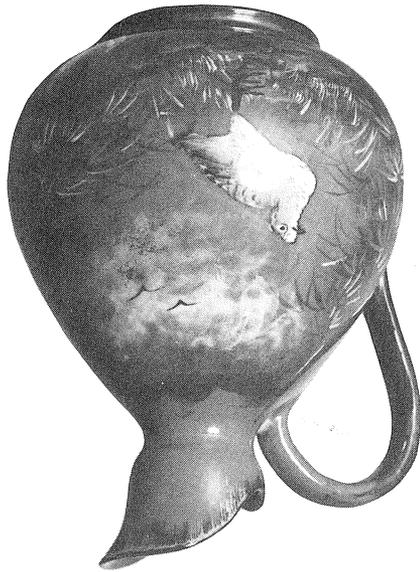
Horn Furniture

Fascination with organic furnishings and the romance of the West popularized horn furniture in America. Scattered from the rustic lodges of Wyoming dude ranches to the well-appointed parlors of New England families, these pieces were made of cattle or buffalo horns. The fashion spread in Kansas as well. Charles A. Calwell first glimpsed a horn chair in a wagon in 1895. His interest led him to gather cattle horns in his hometown of Wetmore, where many cattle were being dehorned. His first attempt to construct furniture resulted in the table in the exhibit, built in 1896. After his marriage in 1898, both he and his wife built more furniture including the chair exhibited with the table.



Pitcher

Nineteenth-century American potteries looked to long-established European potteries for design sources. Late in the century, however, some potteries began to break away from European tradition and to create works that showed the individual artistry of American potters. Potteries were established from coast to coast in response to the new trend away from mass production and toward artist-produced pieces. Their products were widely available and found their way into many Kansas homes. The Rookwood Pottery in Cincinnati, Ohio, was a pioneer in the American art pottery movement. New shapes, new pictorial designs, and new glazes were produced. Designers turned to the Orient for inspiration. The Rookwood pitcher in the exhibit was decorated in 1882 by Albert R. Valentin, a noted ceramic artist. Japanese prints served as sources for many of his designs.



Artifacts in the Exhibition

Teapot

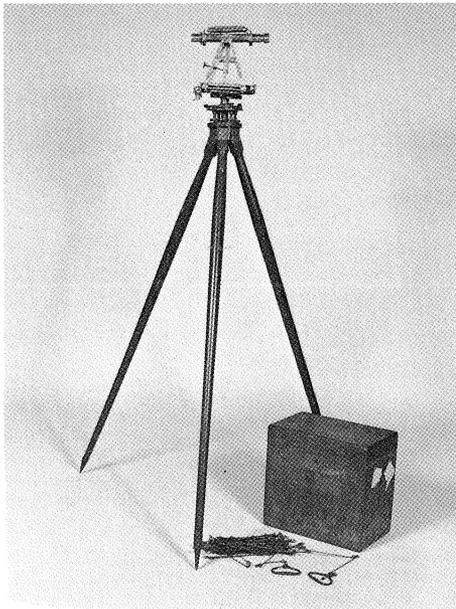
Ca. 1810; porcelain; h. 4½ in., diam. 4½ in.

This Chinese export teapot was used by Rev. and Mrs. Robert Simerwell when they worked at the Pottawatomie Baptist Mission during the 1840s and 1850s. Donated by Susie M. Arnold and the estate of Mary Esther Manley.

Riveting Hammer

1840-1860; steel; l. 6½ in.

The Reverend Robert Simerwell made this small riveting hammer in the blacksmith shop of the Pottawatomie Baptist Mission. Donated by Susie M. Arnold and the estate of Mary Esther Manley.



Surveying Outfit

1845-1855; brass, steel, wood; transit on tripod, h. 65 in.

Albert D. Searl used this surveying outfit to lay out the towns of Lawrence, Topeka, and Manhattan for settlement in the mid-1850s after Kansas was organized as a territory. The outfit includes a transit, tripod, chain, and box. Donated by Mrs. S. J. Searl.

In the artifact descriptions, dates have been assigned as follows: a single date indicates that without question an item was made in that particular year. A range of dates (1872-1878) means that the artifact was made sometime within that period. The designation "ca." is used to specify a probable date within a span of five years before or five years afterward. Thus a date of "ca. 1875" means that the artifact probably was made about 1875, but could have been made anytime between 1870 and 1880.

Comforter Fragment

1855; wool, linen, linsey-woolsey; l. 21¾ in., w. 12¾ in.

A comforter was made of Revolutionary War soldiers' cloaks and was sent from the Boston headquarters of the New England Emigrant Aid Company to the residents of Lawrence. There they auctioned it to raise money to aid their free-state settlement. Only fragments of the comforter remain. Donated by Louisa B. Prentiss Simpson.

Seal

1854-1860; brass; diam. 1¾ in.

The territorial auditor's office of Kansas embossed many official documents with this seal. Donated by William H. Morris.

Gavel

Ca. 1859; wood; l. 10½ in.

Alfred Larzelere used this gavel to bring the territorial House of Representatives to order. Donated by the heirs of Alfred Larzelere.

Candlesnuffer

Ca. 1830; cast iron; l. 6¼ in., w. 2¼ in.

Residents of the Presbyterian Mission to the Iowa, Sac and Fox used this candlesnuffer. Donated by W. F. Horn.

Surveyor's Compass

1845-1855; brass, walnut; l. 15½ in., w. 7 in.

Abolitionist John Brown used this compass while he was employed as a surveyor in territorial Kansas in the 1850s. In addition to the brass compass, the set includes two brass protractors, two brass rules, a plumb bob, and the original walnut case.

Pike

1858-1859; l. 80½ in.

This is one of about one thousand pikes which John Brown had ordered specially made. Brown intended to arm southern slaves with the pikes and lead them in an insurrection. This particular pike was captured at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, after Brown's unsuccessful, yet fateful, raid on the federal arsenal there in 1859. Kansas State Historical Society purchase.

Medal

1877; gold; diam. 2¼ in.

This commemorative medal was struck in honor of abolitionist John Brown by French republicans. It was presented to Brown's widow. Donated by the children of John and Mary Brown.

Gown
1865; silk; bodice, l. 17 in., skirt, l. 49 in.
Margaret Usher wore this gown at Abraham Lincoln's second inauguration. Her husband, John Usher, was secretary of the interior under Lincoln and later promoted railroads and practiced law in Kansas. Donated by Mrs. Linton Joseph Usher.



Compote
Ca. 1860; pressed glass; h. 5 in., w. 7 in.
This compote survived the destruction of Lawrence in 1863 by William Clarke Quantrill and his men. Donated by Mrs. Claude Edmiston.

Presentation Sword
1860-1863; steel, silver; l. 37 in.

This exquisite Tiffany-made, silver-hilted presentation sword belonged to James G. Blunt, the first Kansan to achieve the rank of major general during the Civil War. In addition to the sword, the set includes a gilt silver scabbard, a silk sash, and a gilt wire sword knot. Donated by Mrs. J. H. Gilpatrick and Rufus G. Blunt.

Medal

1864; bronze, silk; l. 4 in.

Corporal Samuel Grimshaw earned this congressional Medal of Honor during the Civil War at the siege of Atlanta. Grimshaw moved to Kansas after the war. Donated by Samuel Grimshaw.



Banner

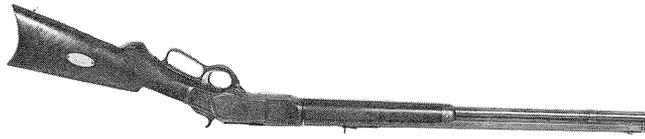
1858; silk; l. 58 in., h. 49 in.

Students of Lombard College in Illinois presented this banner to Abraham Lincoln before one of the Lincoln-Douglas debates. The banner was later used in the 1860 presidential campaign in Kansas by Lincoln supporters. Donated by Mrs. Mark Delahay.

Winchester Rifle

1879-1882; iron, walnut; l. 43 in.

In 1883, the townspeople of Caldwell, Kansas, presented this custom-made Model 1873 Winchester rifle to Henry N. Brown in gratitude for his services as their marshal. Just a year later, Brown staged an unsuccessful bank robbery in Medicine Lodge. An infuriated mob fatally shot Brown and lynched his three accomplices for murdering the bank's president and cashier during the holdup. Donated by the James H. Woods Foundation.



Hatchet

1825-1865; iron, steel, wood; l. 15 in.

This saddle hatchet reportedly belonged to Kit Carson, legendary scout and frontiersman. Donated by W. F. Thompson.

Boots

Ca. 1870; leather; h. 22 in. (each).

These boots were owned by George Armstrong Custer. Donated by Elizabeth B. Custer.



Presentation Revolvers

1860-1863; iron, ivory; l. 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (each).

In 1863, the men of Company A, Sixth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry, presented this pair of revolvers to their major, J. Arrell Johnson, "as a token of his soldierly qualities." The silver-plated Model 1863 Remington revolvers have gold-plated cylinders and ivory grips. The presentation inscription is engraved on silver plaques on the grips. Donated by J. Arrell Johnson.

**Saddle**

1900-1920; leather, wood; l. 29 in., h. 48 in.

Topekan P. H. Adams acquired this fine western saddle from cowboy John Hicks when Adams insisted that Hicks throw it in as part of a cattle deal. According to one popular legend, author Owen Wister based his hero "the Virginian" on the character of his friend Hicks. Smith Brothers of Raton, New Mexico, made the saddle. Donated by Lakin Meade.

Sledge

1880-1893; steel, hickory; l. 26 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.

George L. Douglass, Republican speaker of the house, used this sledge to smash the doors and gain entry to the Populist-controlled house chamber during the Kansas Legislative War in 1893. Donated by George L. Douglass.

Doors

1880-1881; oak, walnut; h. 113 in., w. 29 in. (each).

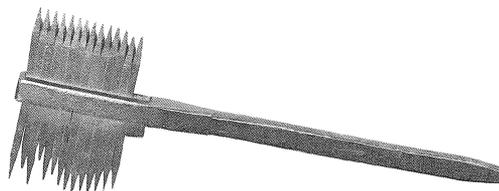
These doors to the Kansas House of Representatives were smashed during the 1893 Legislative War. Donated by John Seaton and B. S. Warner.

Photographic Print

Ca. 1893-ca. 1940; walnut, paper; l. 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ in., w. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.

The frame of this photograph was fabricated from a piece of the wooden doors smashed during the

Legislative War. The wood was salvaged by Republican McGowan Hunt. Donated by Mrs. William Warren Powell.

**Crandall Hammer**

1880-1900; steel; l. 25 in.

A temperance advocate presented this vicious-looking tool to Carry A. Nation. Although originally intended for dressing building stone, Mrs. Nation put it to use in her anti-saloon crusade. Donated by Carry A. Nation.

Pin

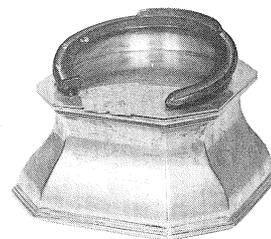
1901-1911; mother-of-pearl; l. 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Pins such as this one were sold at temperance meetings to raise funds. Donated by Mrs. Charles Ray Fuller.

Roster

1898-ca. 1910; paper; l. 21 $\frac{1}{4}$ in., w. 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.

This roster was printed to commemorate a company of Kansas volunteers that served in the Philippine Insurrection. Donated by the United Spanish War Veterans.

**Inkwell**

1930; silver plate; h. 4 in.

Charles Curtis, a Kansan who served as vice-president of the United States from 1929 to 1933, was given this silver-plated inkwell. Donated by Margaret L. Seusy.

Shaving Mug

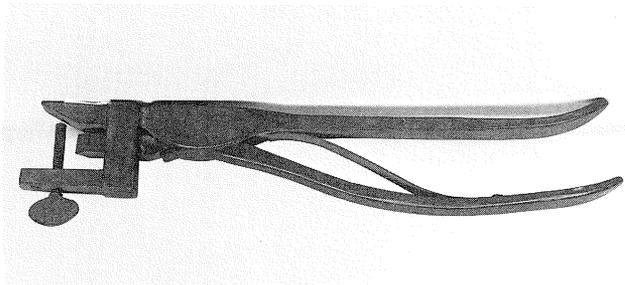
Ca. 1920-ca. 1940; porcelain; h. 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ in., diam. 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Like many men of his time, Charles Curtis owned a personalized shaving mug. His name is emblazoned across this mug in bold, gilded letters. Donated by Margaret L. Seusy.

Trophy

1930; sheet metal; h. 10¹/₁₆ in.

Radio Digest awarded this trophy to radio station KFKB of Milford as the world's most popular radio station. KFKB was owned by Dr. John R. Brinkley who ran for governor in the 1930s. Donated by Angela Brinkley.



Saw Set

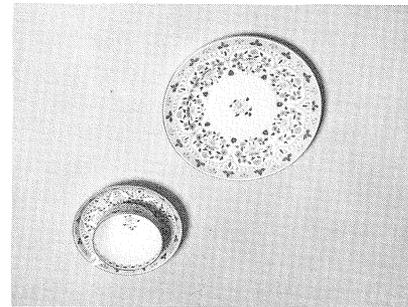
1893-1910; steel; l. 17¹/₁₆ in.

Walter Chrysler, the automobile manufacturer, first developed his mechanical skills while employed as an apprentice in the shops of the Union Pacific Railroad in Ellis. Lacking money, he learned to make many of his own tools. This saw set, a tool used to set the teeth of saws at alternate angles, was fabricated by Chrysler.

Barong

1900-1920; steel, silver, ivory; l. 24³/₁₆ in.

Osa Leighty Johnson, wife of Martin Johnson, acquired this barong, a Moro jungle knife, on the world-famous couple's first exploring trip to Borneo in 1917. The knife has a silver-banded grip and a carved ivory pommel. Donated by the Woman's Kansas Day Club through Belle Leighty.



Tableware Set

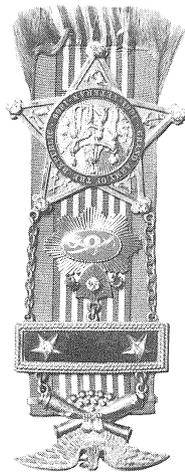
1873-1891; porcelain; plate, diam. 7¹/₁₆ in., cup, diam. 3¹/₁₆ in., saucer, diam. 5¹/₁₆ in.

This plate, cup, and saucer were used in the home of Cyrus K. Holliday, a founder of Topeka and of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad. Donated by Mrs. George W. Burpee and Mrs. Frank Smithies.

Medal

1898; gold, silk; l. 4¹/₁₆ in., w. 1¹/₁₆ in.

Adorned with gems, this medal was presented to Grand Army of the Republic State Commander Theodosius Botkin.



Chair

Ca. 1900; oak; h. 39 in., w. 29 in.

This chair was part of the furniture in the old governor's mansion before Cedar Crest became the official residence of Kansas governors. Donated by the Office of Secretary of State Paul R. Shanahan.

Window

1903; stained glass, painted glass; h. 42 in., w. 78 in.

This window was placed over the door of the beautiful Kansas Building at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Centennial Exposition in Saint Louis. Donated by the Kansas World's Fair Commission.

Vase

1947; porcelain; h. 9¹/₁₆ in., diam. 4¹/₁₆ in.

This fine Sevres vase was a gift of appreciation to the people of Kansas from French President Vincent Auriol. Kansans had participated in sending a Southwest Friendship Train loaded with food and supplies to Europe after World War II. Donated by the Office of Governor Frank Carlson.

Ballot Box

1870-1890; wood; l. 22¹/₁₆ in., w. 5 in.

Members of North Topeka GAR Blue Post 250 used this ballot box for voting at their meetings. The painted wooden box is shaped like a ship. Donated by the Grand Army of the Republic, Department of Kansas.

Pipe Bowl

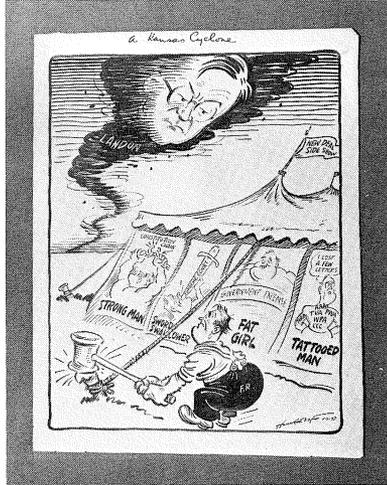
1936; corncob; h. 2 in.

This pipe bowl was used as a promotional novelty by Kansan Alfred M. Landon in his bid for the presidency in 1936. Donated by Philip E. Zimmerman.

Necktie

1932-1944; rayon; l. 47½ in.

This tie is an example of the novelties used in Franklin D. Roosevelt's several presidential campaigns. Donated by Anita Reid Tannuzzo.

**Drawing**

1936; ink on paper; h. 17¼ in., w. 13⅙ in.

Cy Hungerford created this pen-and-ink cartoon which illustrated a few of the issues of the 1936 presidential race.

Poster

1900; lithographic print; w. 24 in., h. 16¼ in.

This colorful lithograph was one of several used in the presidential campaign between William McKinley and William Jennings Bryan.

Ribbon

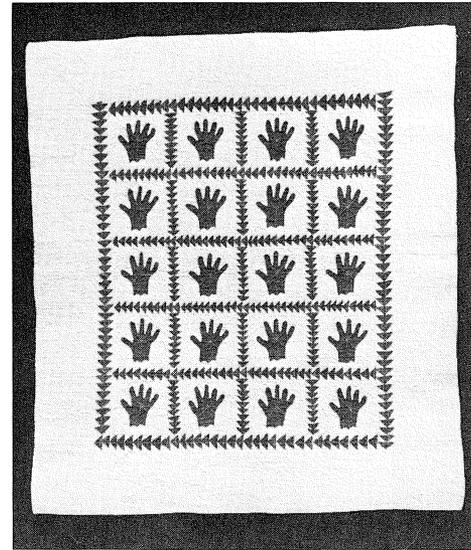
1904; silk; l. 16½ in.

Hugh S. Cooper was awarded this ribbon for the outstanding corn he entered in the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Centennial Exposition in Saint Louis. Donated by H. S. Cooper.

Medal

1870; silver; l. 5 in., w. 3 in.

Flour milling has always been an important industry in Kansas. The Skelton Mills of Leavenworth was presented this silver medal for its fine wheat flour. Donated by Dora Skelton.

**Quilt**

Ca. 1890; cotton; l. 37 in., w. 32½ in.

Amanda Elizabeth Gorman of Osborne made this quilt by tracing her little daughter's hand for the handprint appliques. Donated by Agnes Hibbs, Lala Hibbs Morris, and Katherine Taylor Rowland.

Clock

1903-1907; oak; h. 71 in., w. 17¼ in.

Frank Kaho was a student of woodworking and drafting at the Kansas State Manual Training Normal School, Pittsburg, when he made this clock. Donated by Mrs. Dean Depler.

Rolling Pin

1899; Osage orange; l. 16⅞ in., diam. 2⅞ in.

John McCreary carved this rolling pin for his daughter. He used the wood of the Osage orange, a tree found in Kansas hedgerows. Donated by Paul M. Reid.

Wastebasket

Ca. 1900; pine; h. 18 in., w. 10¼ in.

Pyrography was a popular home handicraft at the turn of the century. All types of household items were decorated by burning designs into the wood. Donated by the estate of Hattie Mack.

Pillow Shams

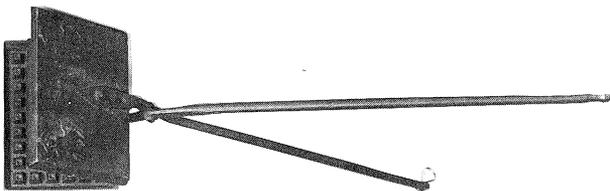
Ca. 1880-ca. 1895; cotton; l. 25¼ in., w. 27½ in.

The art of embroidery was promoted by late-nineteenth-century women's magazines which often featured designs for embroidered pillow shams in their pages. Donated by Mrs. Dale E. Logan and Mrs. Gordon A. Summers.

Wreath
 Ca. 1860-ca. 1890; hair; h. 36% in., w. 28% in.
 The weaving of hair was a popular handicraft of the nineteenth century. The hair was worked into various forms including framed wreaths.



Waffle Iron
 Ca. 1750-ca. 1800; cast iron, forged iron; l. 24% in., w. 6% in.



This waffle iron traveled with the Hart family as they moved from Maryland to Grenola in 1884. Donated by Lester W. Servis.

Table
 Ca. 1825; cherry or maple; h. 29 in., l. 42 in.
 A covered wagon carried this table to Kansas. It was used in a sod house from 1879 to 1893. Donated by May Rose.

Mug
 1907; porcelain; h. 7% in., diam. 4% in.
 Many Kansas women applied their artistic talents to decorating china. May Cropper of Pittsburg painted a landscape on this mug. Donated by the Topeka Club.

Cabinet
 Ca. 1870-ca. 1900; walnut, pine, paper; h. 23% in., w. 21% in.

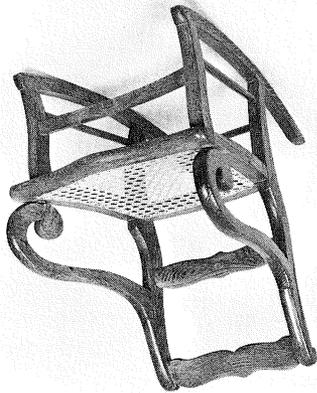
J. T. Genn of Wamego was one of many men who enjoyed the hobby of fretwork. Using his scrollsaw he made dozens of intricately designed household items such as this cabinet. Donated by J. T. Genn.

Broom
 1870; wood, straw; l. 58% in., w. 11% in.
 M. M. Maxwell made this broom in Indiana and brought it with him when he moved to Valley Falls in 1870. Donated by Minnie Campbell.

Cream Pitcher
 Ca. 1825; earthenware; h. 3% in., diam. 3% in.
 The Page family used this copper luster pitcher in their home in Scotland and brought it with them when they moved to Kansas in the 1890s. Donated by Euphemia B. Page.

Cream Pitcher
 Ca. 1870; earthenware; h. 6% in., diam. 3% in.
 When Mr. and Mrs. James Wallace moved from Nebraska to Kansas in 1882, Mrs. Wallace carried her cherished majolica pitcher in her lap. Donated by Evangeline L. Hudelson.

Child's Rocking Chair
 Ca. 1850; oak, cane; h. 19% in., w. 14% in.
 The Delahay family disposed of most of their household goods before they moved from Alabama to Leavenworth in 1856. Three-year-old Julia would not part with her rocking chair, so the family brought it with them. Donated by Mary E. Delahay.



Tea Caddy
 Ca. 1810-ca. 1840; mahogany, brass; h. 5% in., w. 5% in.

Mary Crocele brought this English tea caddy with her when she moved to Kansas in 1857. Donated by the estate of Frances L. B. Rowland.

Smooth Plane

1853-1870; beech; l. 8 in.

Molding Plane

1833-1844; beech; l. 9½ in.

Molding Plane

1833-1844; beech; l. 9½ in.

Level

1850-1870; wood, brass; l. 12¼ in.

Marking Gauge

1840-1870; beech; l. 9¼ in.

Calipers

1840-1870; steel; l. 6¼ in.

Brace

1840-1870; beech, brass; l. 13¼ in.

Bit

1840-1870; steel; l. 5 in.

Gouge

1860-1870; steel, wood; l. 8¼ in.

Backsaw

1833-1870; steel, brass, wood; l. 15 in.

These tools, many of which were made in Scotland, belonged to carpenter William Bainbridge. Bainbridge was among a small group of Scottish tradesmen and their families who homesteaded an area of Republic County in north-central Kansas in the early 1870s. The area became known as the Scotch Plains. Donated by Wilma V. Berry.

**Chair**

Ca. 1861; oak, woven bark; h. 32½ in., w. 17¼ in.

Small shops as well as large factories produced necessities for Kansas homes. John W. Worley made this chair in his cabinet shop near Cherryvale. Donated by the Woman's Kansas Day Club.

Lamp

1910-ca. 1929; nickel-plated metal, glass; h. 22 in. diam. 10¼ in.

One of the many products of the Coleman Lamp Company of Wichita was the gasoline lamp. This model was patented in 1910 and was popular through the 1920s. Donated by Claude Brey.

Silk Fiber Sample

Ca. 1890; silk; l. 15½ in.

Experiments in raising silkworms took place in Kansas from 1869 through the 1890s. The state government established a silk station in Peabody where this dyed sample was produced. Donated by I. V. Horner.

Coverlet

1876; wool; l. 85 in., w. 76 in.

Henry Adolph was a skilled weaver who worked in Ohio, Indiana, and Iowa before moving to Kansas. He made this jacquard coverlet in Clinton. Kansas State Historical Society purchase.

Canning Jar

1901-ca. 1910; mold-blown glass; h. 9¼ in., diam. 4¼ in. Coffeyville had natural resources which led to the growth of its brick and glass industries. This canning jar was produced at one of Coffeyville's glass factories. Donated by Joseph Bidwell.

Shirt

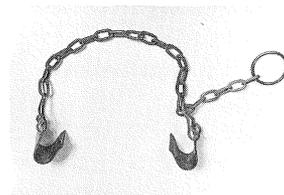
Ca. 1913; silk; l. 34 in.

The Capital Shirt Factory of Topeka manufactured this silk shirt. Donated by the estate of Robert Billard.

Plains Rifle

1860-1890; iron, walnut; l. 49¼ in.

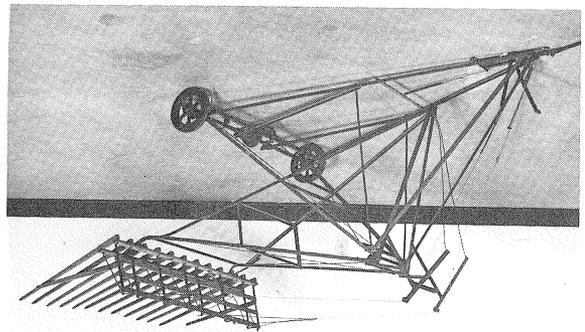
Gunsmith John R. Biringer of Leavenworth made this Plains-style rifle. The specimen has a .40 caliber, octagonal barrel and a walnut half stock. Kansas State Historical Society purchase.

**Anti-cowkick**

1907-1915; steel; l. 31 in.

In 1907, Topekan Alfred B. Smith patented this "anti-cowkick" or "kickers," a device used to restrain

cows from kicking while being hand milked. The shackles were secured firmly around the hamstrings of the cow's rear legs, and the chain was tightened to restrict leg movement. Donated by Mrs. Ted North.



Sales Model of Hay Stacker

1910-1950; steel, wood; l. 90 in., h. 37 1/4 in.
 In 1903, Frank Wyatt of Hoxie received a patent for a portable hay stacker. That same year he founded the F. Wyatt Manufacturing Company in Salina and began to produce and market his "Jayhawk Hay Stacker." This one-fourth scale "Jayhawk" served as the company's sales model. Donated by the F. Wyatt Manufacturing Company.

Cornhusker
 1875-1925; antler; l. 5 1/2 in.

Cornhusker
 1875-1925; iron; l. 5 in.

Cornhusker
 1900-1940; brass, leather; l. 3 1/2 in.

Cornhusker
 1900-1950; steel, leather; l. 5 in.

Cornhusker
 1900-1950; steel, leather; l. 5 1/2 in.

Cornhusker
 1900-1950; steel, leather; l. 5 in.

Prior to the invention of mechanical corn harvesters, corn had to be laboriously picked and husked by hand. To assist them in their task, farmers used cornhuskers or shucking pegs which enabled them to strip the husk from the ear as they pulled the ear from the stalk. These cornhuskers range from homemade examples of antler and iron to factory-produced types of brass and blued steel. Donated by Mr. and Mrs. Carl Hunter, Mrs. S. A. McLain, the estate of Johnson Alcott Holmes, Charles Darnell, and an anonymous donor.

Post Rock Fence Post
 1880-1885; limestone; h. 55 in.
 In central Kansas where wood was scarce, early settlers substituted the readily available, easily worked local limestone, known as post rock, as a material for fence posts. This post was quarried in the 1880s and used in Lincoln County. Donated by the Lincoln Rock and Mineral Club through Harry Raush.

Barbwire (Stubbe Plate, Large Design)
 1883-1900; steel; l. 30 in.

Barbwire (Frye's Parallel Design)
 1878-1895; steel; l. 21 in.

Barbwire (Kelly's Thorny Fence Design)
 1868-1885; steel; l. 23 1/2 in.

Barbwire (Hodge's Spur Wheel Design)
 1887-1900; steel; l. 18 1/2 in.

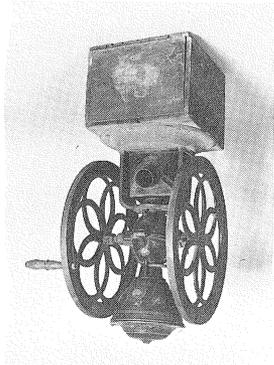
Barbwire (Allis' Buckthorn Design)
 1881-1900; steel; l. 18 1/2 in.

Barbwire (Allis' Ribbon Design)
 1881-1900; steel; l. 18 1/2 in.

Barbwire (Brink's Lance Design)
 1879-1900; steel; l. 18 1/2 in.

Barbwire (Havenbill's Arrow Point Design)
 1879-1900; steel; l. 19 1/2 in.

Beginning in the 1870s barbwire became a popular, inexpensive fencing material. These are just a few of the hundreds of different and unusual designs patented in the nineteenth century. Donated by Mrs. W. M. Richards, Thomas Patrick Barr, and Thomas Patrick Barr, Jr.



Drug Mill
 1890-1920; iron, steel; h. 45 in.
 Petro's Drug Store in Topeka used this large coffee-type mill to grind ingredients for medicines to treat

ailments of livestock. The mill, made by the Enterprise Manufacturing Company of Philadelphia, bears decals of patriotic motifs and floral designs. Donated by Mr. and Mrs. K. H. Petro.

Jigsaw

1877-1890; iron, wood; h. 40% in.

Jigsaws or scrollsaws were used during the Victorian period to produce the elaborate scroll and perforated designs associated with furniture styles then in vogue. Hobbyist J. T. Genn of Wamego used this jigsaw to make ornate fretwork furniture. Donated by the estate of J. T. Genn.

Anvil

1875-1925; steel; l. 31 in., h. 11¼ in.

Tire Measuring Wheel (Traveler)

1880-1930; iron; l. 12 in.

Hoop Tongs

1880-1940; iron; l. 21½ in.

Hollow Bit Tongs

1880-1940; iron; l. 18¼ in.

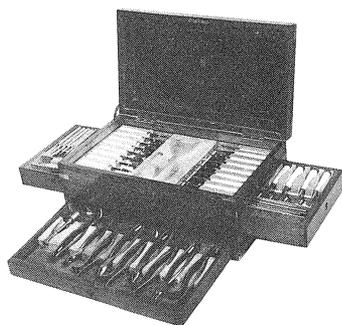
Punch

1880-1940; steel; l. 17¼ in.

Apron

1900-1940; leather; l. 33½ in.

This group of blacksmithing tools was used in the Turnbull blacksmith shop which operated continuously as a family business in Maple Hill from 1888 through the 1950s. Donated by the estate of John Turnbull, Jr.



Dental Instrument Kit

1840-1875; steel, ivory, rosewood; case, l. 17 in., w. 10 in.

This set of ivory-handled dental instruments with rosewood case was used by Eben Palmer. He practiced

his profession in Jackson County from 1881 until his retirement in 1907. Donated by F. R. Palmer.

Lithographer's Stone

Ca. 1905; stone; l. 10 in., w. 9 in.

This lithographer's stone was used by the Hall Lithographing Company of Topeka to print checks and receipts. Donated by Clarence M. Locke.

Line Gauge

Ca. 1900-ca. 1930; brass; l. 13⅞ in.

Used much like a ruler, this line gauge was used by a printer to measure type. Donated by John A. Ogle.



Leg-iron

1867-1890; iron, leather; l. 14 in., h. 8% in.

Patented in Oregon in 1876, this variation of a ball and chain was used at the Kansas State Penitentiary in Lansing. Known as the "Oregon Boot," it featured an ankle weight supported on top of an iron frame attached to a shoe. Donated by the Kansas Department of Corrections.

Outside Calipers

1900-1930; steel, brass; l. 12¼ in.

Rule Calipers

1900-1930; brass; l. 9⅞ in.

Rule Calipers

1900-1930; brass; l. 27% in.

The Bertillon system is a method of criminal identification which uses calipers to take precise body measurements. In the early 1900s, fingerprinting began gradually to supersede this system as a means of identification. This set of three Bertillon calipers was used at the Kansas State Penitentiary in Lansing. Donated by the Kansas Department of Corrections.

Paperweight

Ca. 1910-ca. 1920; glass; l. 4¼ in., w. 2¼ in.

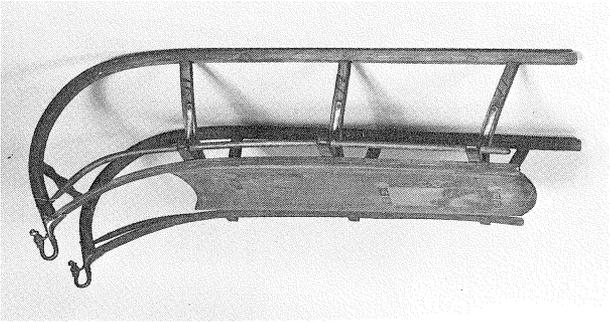
This paperweight was probably distributed as an advertising novelty by the I. M. Yost Milling Company of Hays. Donated by Leota Motz.

Hairbrush
 Ca. 1895-ca. 1910; rubber, bristle; l. 5 1/2 in., w. 2 1/2 in.
 At the turn of the century many people believed static electricity could cure various ailments. Dr. Scott's Electric Hairbrush was supposed to relieve headaches. Donated by the estate of G. C. Wegele.

Serving Dish
 Ca. 1895; ironstone; h. 5 in., l. 9 1/2 in.
 Ironstone china tableware made in Britain flooded the late-nineteenth-century American market. The tea leaf pattern of this dish was popular throughout the country and was featured in the Sears, Roebuck and Company catalogs. Donated by Maj. and Mrs. M. V. Liepman.

Trinket Box
 Ca. 1885; silver plate; h. 5 1/2 in., w. 4 1/8 in.
 The East Coast silver plate industry allowed people to buy cheap goods that looked expensive. Items like trinkets were readily available to Kansans. Donated by Dr. Charles L. Overlander.

Scrap
 Ca. 1880-ca. 1900; chromolithographed paper; Santa sheet, w. 4 1/4 in., doves, w. 3 1/2 in., animals, w. 2 1/2 in.
 Collecting scrap was a fashionable late-nineteenth-century pastime. The colorful paper figures were imported from England and Germany. Scrap was pasted in scrapbooks and was used to adorn calling cards and to make Christmas decorations. Donated by Gertie Maurer and an anonymous donor.



Sled
 Ca. 1880; pine; l. 38 in.
 Sleds have been used for many years, offering children a recreational device for winter fun. This sled was bought by the Jetmore family of Kansas around 1880. Donated by Henry C. and Margaret Jetmore Mulroy.

Relief Block
 Ca. 1910-ca. 1940; wood; l. 18 1/2 in., w. 8 1/8 in.
 This relief block was used to print advertisements for the Smith Truss Company of Topeka.

Trade Sign
 Ca. 1865; painted wood; h. 59 in.
 The wooden Indian has always been the familiar trademark of tobacco shops. This figure was brought to Topeka in 1871 and was located at Henry Moeser's Cigar Store on Kansas Avenue. Donated by Hedwig Wulke.

Display Horse
 Ca. 1890-ca. 1905; papier-mâché; l. 94 in., h. 87 in.
 This life-size papier-mâché horse was used to fit and display saddles and harnesses in the shop of Fox and Son in Anthony. Donated by Clarence E. Fox.

Sales Model of Saddle
 1875-1890; leather, wood; l. 14 1/2 in., h. 17 1/2 in.
 The Robert E. Rice Saddlery located on Dodge City's notorious Front Street displayed this small-scale western saddle as a sales model. Donated by Clifford H. Rice.



Medicine Box
 Ca. 1880-ca. 1930; cardboard, paper; h. 7 1/4 in., w. 6 1/2 in.
 Kansans could ease their pains with their own "Kansas Headache Cure." This medicine was the product of Dr. Chester L. Stocks, a Bushong druggist. Donated by George Baldomino.

Medicine Bottle
 Ca. 1925; molded glass; h. 8 1/4 in., w. 3 in.
 The A. B. Seelye Medical Company of Abilene was one of the few large patent medicine producers in the central prairie states. Its "Was-a-Tusa" promised to cure the ills of man or beast. Donated by Mrs. F. E. Frisby.

Billiard Balls

Ca. 1860-ca. 1870; ivory; diam. 1½ in. (each).
An Ozawkie poolroom possessed these solid ivory billiard balls around the Civil War era. Donated by Frank M. Skelton.

Bowling Ball

Ca. 1880-ca. 1900; burlwood?; diam. 8¼ in.
This wooden bowling ball was used in Burlingame at a recreational hall. It features two sets of two fingerholes of different sizes so that it can fit several people. Donated by Charles Goebel.

Roller Skates

Ca. 1860-ca. 1880; pine; l. 10¼ in. (each).
A bed brought to Kansas in 1855 provided the material for these handmade roller skates. Donated by George J. Remsburg.

Golf Bag

Ca. 1910-ca. 1930; canvas; l. 32 in.

Golf Club

Ca. 1910-ca. 1930; hickory, wood; l. 44½ in.

Golf Club

Ca. 1910-ca. 1930; hickory, forged steel; l. 39 in.

Golf Club

Ca. 1910-ca. 1930; hickory, forged steel; l. 37 in.

Golf Club

Ca. 1910-ca. 1930; hickory, forged steel; l. 35 in.
Hickory-shafted clubs such as these were used on many golf courses early in this century. Hickory was gradually replaced by steel and various other materials. Donated by Lyal Dudley.

Trophy

1926; silver; h. 16½ in.
The Goldsmith trophy was presented to the Milford Goats for their championship season. This baseball team was owned by Dr. John R. Brinkley, who gained nationwide fame for his implantation of goat glands in humans. Donated by Angela Brinkley.

Football Game

Ca. 1927; sheet steel; l. 13⅞ in.
Many children played games such as this one advertised in the 1927 Sears catalog. Donated by Robert W. Richmond.

Card Game

1903-ca. 1910; paper; w. 5¼ in.
Gavitt's Stock Exchange card game was manufactured

in Topeka. Its appeal was based on the thrill of the stock market, with cards indicating shares in various railroad companies. Donated by Earl G. Radenz.

**Semimechanical Bank**

1875-1895; cast iron; h. 5¼ in.
The figure of this bank was based on William Marcy "Boss" Tweed, the corrupt New York City politician. When a coin is placed in Tweed's hand, the hand "pockets" the coin just as the real-life figure "pocketed" many dollars. Donated by Opal C. Teeter Robbins.

Still Bank

1907-ca. 1925; cast iron; h. 5¼ in.
Comic-strip characters provided subjects for manufacturers of banks. This Mut and Jeff bank was probably produced soon after that comic strip made its debut in 1907. Donated by Nyle H. Miller.

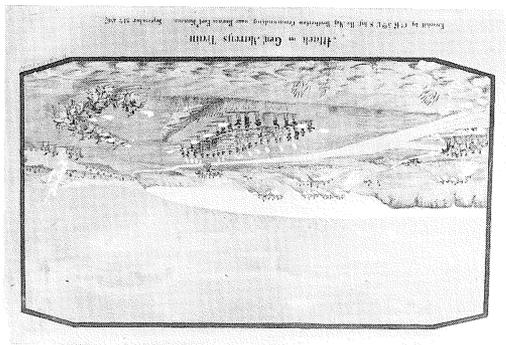
Mah-jongg

Ca. 1925-ca. 1940; bone, bamboo; l. 9¼ in., h. 6¼ in.
During the 1920s mah-jongg became the most popular parlor game, and sets of bone or ivory could be found in many homes. Donated by the estate of George McGill.

Mechanical Toy

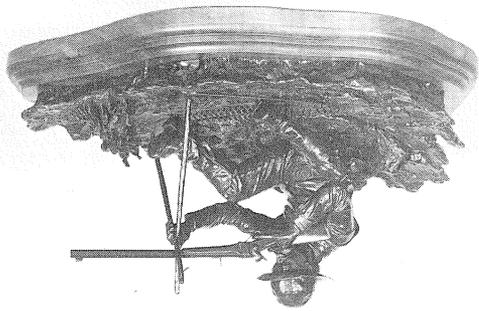
1906-ca. 1909; tin; l. 7¼ in.
German manufacturers of tin toys enjoyed enormous success throughout the United States before World War I. The war forced this industry to produce war materials instead of entertainment items. Donated by the estate of Dr. Lamoile Rush and Ella Callen King.

Painting
1838; watercolor on ivory; h. 5 $\frac{5}{16}$ in., w. 4 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.
Painted on a thin sheet of ivory, this portrait of Mark W. Delahay is finely detailed. Delahay became a prominent Kansas politician. Donated by Mary E. Delahay.



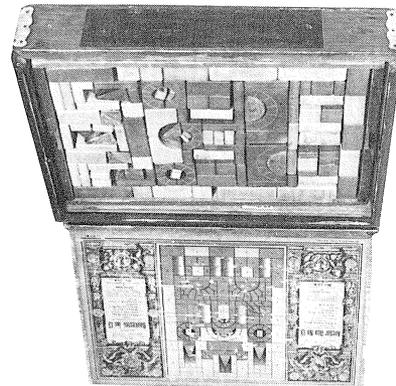
Painting
1867; watercolor on paper; w. 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ in., h. 14 in.
Attack on Gen. Marcy's Train was painted by Pvt. Hermann Stiefel, a private in the U.S. Infantry which took part in this engagement with Cheyenne forces. Donated by Mrs. Berth Kitchell Whyte.

Drawing
1892-1893; pastel; h. 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ in., w. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
Henrietta Briggs-Wall of Hutchinson copyrighted American Woman and Her Political Peers and commissioned another Hutchinson native to draw the work. This pastel created quite a stir at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Donated by Henrietta Briggs-Wall.



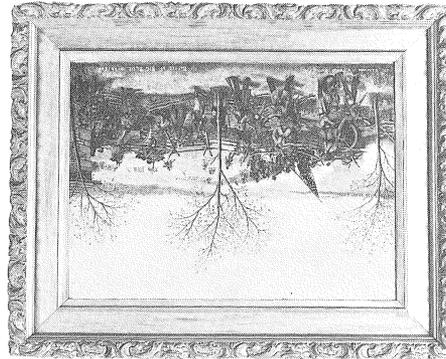
Statue
1978; bronze; w. 29 $\frac{1}{2}$ in., h. 17 in.
The bronze has long been a popular western art form. The Hide Hunter, created by Charlie Norton of Leoti, is an example of this art. Kansas State Historical Society purchase.

Building Blocks
1880-ca. 1905; stone; l. 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.
This stone construction set of 260 pieces challenged children's imaginations. Similar sets were popular among the nobility in Europe to teach their children architecture.



Brist
1903-ca. 1920; wood; racket, l. 23 in., boomerang, l. 15 in., w. 15 in.
Manufactured in Topeka, Brist enjoyed success as a lawn game when croquet and tennis were very popular. Kansas State Historical Society purchase.

Painting
1878; oil on canvas; w. 28 in., h. 18 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.
Topekan Henry Worrall created his vision of Drouthy Kansas, a land he considered blessed with excellent rainfall and harvests.



Painting
1897; oil on canvas; w. 44 in., h. 35 in.
Samuel J. Reader of Topeka created Battle of Big Blue depicting a Civil War engagement in which he took part. Reader, a member of the Second Kansas State Militia, was captured by Confederates at Big Blue.

Carving

Ca. 1920-1927; painted wood; h. 7¼ in.

Fred Douglas showed a great talent for carving figures, then assembling them in bottles. Donated by Rhetta Hood.

Sideboard

1870-1880; walnut; h. 88½ in., w. 47½ in.

The elaborate Renaissance Revival styling of the sideboard was fashionable before popular taste dictated a return to less complicated furniture.

**Sideboard**

Ca. 1900-ca. 1910; oak; h. 63½ in., w. 50½ in.

The clean lines and simple ornamentation of Arts-and-Crafts-style furniture had nationwide appeal. Donated by Barbara Mertz.

Table

1896; cattle horns, pine; h. 28 in., w. 27 in.

Chair

1898-ca. 1900; cattle horns, walnut, fabric; h. 38 in., w. 24½ in.

Furniture made of cattle horns was popular in the late nineteenth century. Charles and Nancy Ellen Calwell of Wetmore made several pieces including this table and chair. Donated by Charles A. Calwell.

High Chair/Stroller

Ca. 1910; oak; h. 41 in., w. 17½ in.

With the flip of a latch the seat can be lowered and the legs spread out to convert this high chair into a stroller. Donated by Opal C. Teeter.

Child's Lounge

Ca. 1902; walnut, fabric; h. 22 in., l. 42 in.

This scaled-down version of an adult lounge or fainting couch furnished the backyard playhouse of Saraleen Curtis of Topeka. Donated by Saraleen Curtis.

Fish Knife

Ca. 1870-ca. 1895; silver plate, shell; l. 12 in., w. 3¼ in.

As the elaborate marine motif on the blade indicates, this utensil was designed solely for serving fish. Donated by Mary E. Delahay.

Compote

Ca. 1880-ca. 1890; pressed glass; h. 14½ in., diam. 8½ in.

The log cabin, buffalo, and Indian pictured on this pressed glass compote commemorate the nineteenth-century American fascination with the West. Donated by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph T. Grogger.

**Bride's Bowl**

Ca. 1885; silver plate, glass; h. 17 in., diam. 11½ in.

Lavishly decorated bride's bowls were popular wedding gifts during the 1880s. Donated by Mrs. Vernon E. McArthur.

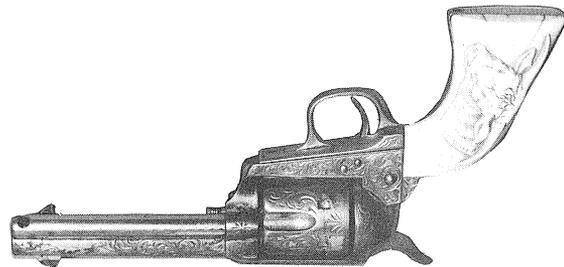
Tray

Ca. 1870-ca. 1885; papier-mâché; l. 30 in., w. 24 in.

Papier-mâché was a material that was well suited to the eclectic embellishments of Victorian design. A picture of a dog, a gilded border, and inlaid abalone shell adorn this example. Donated by Zulu Adams.

Pitcher

1882; earthenware; h. 8 1/2 in., diam. 6 1/2 in. This pitcher is a product of the Rookwood Pottery. It was decorated by Albert R. Valentien, a pioneering artist of the American art pottery movement. Donated by Mrs. Richard J. Tratt.



Colt Revolver

1884; iron, ivory; l. 10 1/2 in. The Colt Single Action Army Revolver, colloquially known as the "Peacemaker" and "Frontier Six-shooter," has become a classic symbol of the Wild West. This extensively engraved, nickel-plated .45 caliber Colt features carved ivory grips in the shape of a steerhead. Donated by Andrew Sughrue.

Powder Horn

1775; cattle horn; l. 12 in. This crudely engraved Revolutionary War powder horn depicts the Continental Army's unique siege of British-occupied Boston during the winter of 1775-1776. The horn belonged to Nathan Washburn, a soldier in Washington's army. Also engraved on the horn are Washburn's name and the date on which it was made, October 2, 1775. Washburn's grandson presented the family heirloom to the Historical Society in 1887. Donated by Avery Washburn.

Bandolier and Pouch

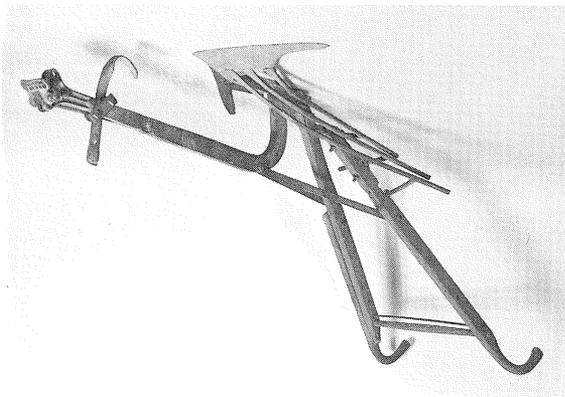
Ca. 1880-ca. 1925; loom beading, cotton, velvet; l. 43 in., w. 13 in. Once a functional shoulder bag, the bandolier and pouch evolved into a non-functional item of ceremonial dress. The colorful floral beadwork patterns of this example are typical Woodland Indian motifs. Donated by Mrs. Fred Garwood.

Electrotherapy Machine

1860-1900; mahogany, steel; l. 10 in., w. 4 1/2 in. In the nineteenth century, static electricity was a commonly accepted cure for almost every sort of malady. "Davis & Kiddler's Patent Magneto-Electric Machine" for nervous diseases was a popular remedy during this period. Donated by Roy Faulkner.

Sod Plow

1875-1880; iron, steel, wood; l. 80 in., h. 35 in. Early settlers on the prairies used sod plows to turn over the thick, virgin sod. The unusual rod moldboard helped to reduce soil friction, but its peculiar appearance earned for the tool the name "grasshopper plow." Donated by John L. Agnew.

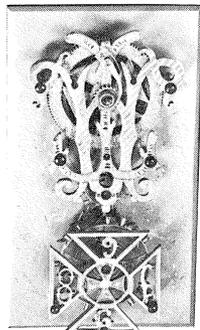


Patent Model of Grain Separator

1877; wood, steel; l. 11 1/4 in., w. 7 1/8 in. In 1878, Thaddeus Histed of Salina received a patent for a grain separator, a device used to clean chaff and other debris from grain. He submitted this model to the United States Patent Office to illustrate his invention. Kansas State Historical Society purchase.

Instructional Model of Locomotive Engine

1900-1940; iron; l. 29 1/2 in., h. 9 1/4 in. Instructors at the Santa Fe Railway's apprentice school at Dodge City used this model to demonstrate how a steam locomotive engine works. The hand crank at the left powers the model. Donated by Charles Goebel.



Escapement

1896; brass; l. 4 1/8 in., w. 2 1/2 in. Topekan Alonzo Thomas made this escapement at watchmaking school in order to prove his skills before graduating. Donated by the estate of Alonzo Thomas.

Disc Plow

1926; iron, steel; l. 108 in., w. 78 in., h. 60 in.

In the 1920s, Charles Angell of Plains developed a disc plow especially adapted for wheat farming in the dry and windy High Plains. Marketed as the "Angell One Way Disc Plow," it changed dryland farming methods. Angell used this small, four-foot model in his family's vegetable garden. Donated by C. Francis Angell.

Boring Machine

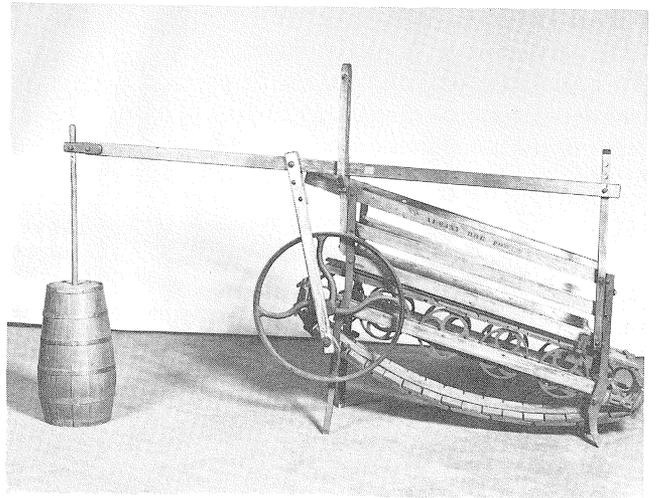
1875-1900; steel, wood; l. 28 $\frac{3}{4}$ in., h. 24 in.

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, boring machines began to be substituted for, but did not entirely replace, augers as a means of drilling holes in wood. Donated by Carl Puderbaugh.

Fruit Parer

Ca. 1885-ca. 1920; cast iron; h. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ in., w. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Not only was the fruit parer a great labor-saving device, but its gears and wheels could be decorated to produce a functional tool of pleasing design. Donated by Henry C. Vangampolard.

**Butter Churn**

Ca. 1880; oak, various woods, cast iron; l. 108 in., h. 63 in.

The McFaddens of Peabody put their dog to work on the treadmill of this butter churn. Donated by the estate of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel McFadden.

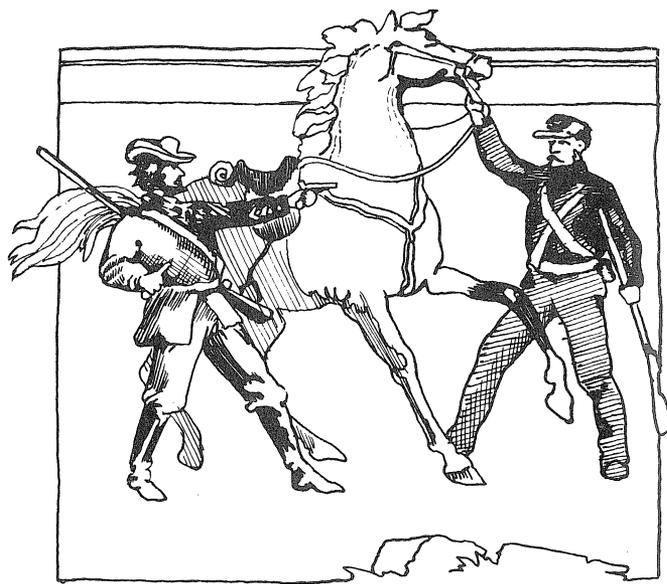
The Marais des Cygnes Massacre and the Execution of William Griffith

by Harvey R. Hougen

MY CURIOSITY concerning the Marais des Cygnes Massacre led me on a fruitless search for a complete and accurate account of the tragedy. This paper is an attempt to provide such an account. Readers who are familiar with the event may question the spelling of the name "Hamilton." In most Kansas sources it is spelled with an "e" (Hamelton). Be assured that the more conventional spelling is the correct one. Sources concerning the Hamilton family, primary and secondary, are available in the Georgia Department of Archives and History (GDAH), Atlanta, and were consulted (see note 9).

This account of events on the day of the massacre is based for the most part on primary sources—the statements of survivors who were interviewed or who wrote their recollections soon after the tragedy. The narrative of Rev. B. L. Read in his long letter to Rev. Nathan Brown (*La Cygne Weekly Journal*) and the statements of Read and William Hairgrove (*New York Times*) added a new dimension to the story. Newspaper accounts based on interviews with the survivors were also valuable. These sources became the basis for the evaluation of secondary materials. Ely Snyder's *Personal Experiences* was written by Snyder during his elderly years and so was used with caution.

Concerning secondary sources, the brief account of the massacre in Alfred T. Andreas' *History of the State of Kansas* appears to have been based on information obtained from Rev. Read and is probably accurate as far as it goes. The single most valuable secondary source is William A. Mitchell, *Linn County, Kansas: A History*. Mitchell's book was used with caution, how-



ever, for it is poorly organized and contains some information which is clearly untrue (for example, his remarks concerning Rev. Read's experiences after he left the massacre site). On the other hand, his accounts of other events were based on interviews with Austin Hall, the massacre survivor who lived out his years in Linn County, and fit well with the information obtained from primary sources. Secondary sources appearing in the *Kansas State Historical Collections* (especially the articles written by Joel Moody and Edmund Smith) were used to flesh out the narrative, but these works are of uneven quality and were also used carefully.

Edmund Smith's eyewitness account of the Griffith execution (from the *Mound City Clarion*, reprinted in Mitchell, *Linn County*) and news reports from the *Kansas City Daily Journal of Commerce* were the principal sources for the treatment of the trial and execution of William Griffith.

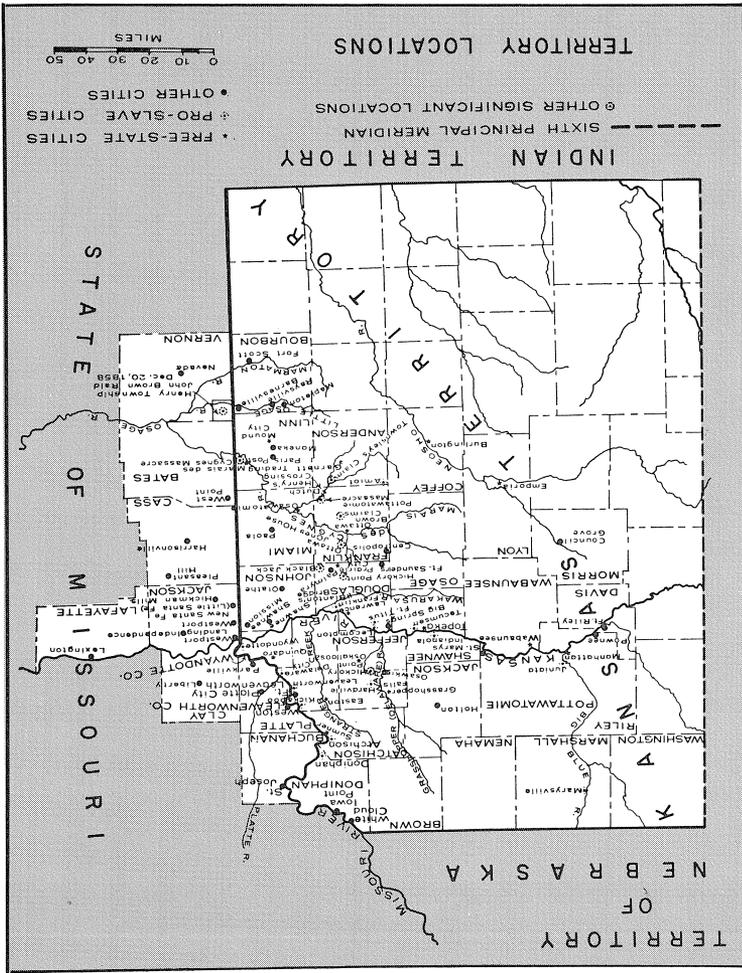
Harvey R. Hougen, a retired U.S. Army officer, is a resident of Galesburg, Illinois. He received a B.A. degree in history from Park College, Kansas City, Missouri, and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in American history from Kansas State University. His articles have appeared in the *Kansas Historical Quarterly* and the *Journal of the West*, and he is presently working on two book-length manuscripts, both of which concern the history of Kansas.

themselves would decide whether the new territories would be open to slavery.

Proslavery men had no designs on Nebraska, but slave-holding Missourians were determined to prevent the admission of adjacent Kansas Territory as a free state (a state which forbade slavery). Extremists on both sides of the slavery issue recruited settlers for Kansas. Proslavery leaders toured the South, recruiting men like the Hamilton brothers for the Kansas proslavery cause. Proslavery settlements quickly developed at Atchison, Leavenworth, and other locations near the Missouri border. On the antislavery side, the New England Emigrant Aid Company helped to establish free-state enclaves around Lawrence, Topeka, and Manhattan.

The early advantage in the struggle went to the proslavery faction, for President Franklin Pierce believed that the future of the Democratic party depended on the peaceful resolution of the Kansas question in favor of slavery. The proslavery men controlled all appointive territorial offices, including the courts, but they resorted to extralegal measures as well. "Blue lodges" and "social bands" formed in Missouri to inter-

Territorial locations in Kansas Territory and Missouri, reprinted with permission from the Historical Atlas of Kansas, by Homer E. Socolofsky and Huber Self, copyright 1972 by the University of Oklahoma Press.



FOUND CITY, KANSAS, had no courthouse in 1863, so Judge Solon O. Thacher held the October term of Linn County district court in City Hall. The murder trial of William Griffith was the feature attraction of the session, ending in a guilty verdict on the fifth of October. Thacher delayed sentencing until the next day!

First-degree murder carried a mandatory death penalty, but it was up to the judge to set the execution date. When Griffith returned to the courtroom on October 6, Judge Thacher asked him if he had anything to say before hearing the sentence. The prisoner nodded and asked to be hanged immediately. The judge explained in kindly tones that he had intended to allow him at least two months to prepare himself, but Griffith was insistent, grumbling that he had no clean clothes and that he wanted to get the thing over with. Thacher considered the request and decided to schedule the execution for October 30. After formally pronouncing the sentence, he ordered the sheriff to supply the condemned man with clean clothes as often as necessary. Griffith had less than four weeks to live, but he complained that the time was too long.

The Griffith case was a tardy postscript to the period 1854-58, when "Border Ruffians" and "Jayhawkers" turned the boundary between Missouri and Kansas Territory into a bloody skirmish line. Griffith's crime? He rode with the Hamilton band on May 19, 1858, when it murdered five free-state men in the infamous Marais des Cygnes Massacre. Charles Hamilton, his two brothers, and thirty others had participated in the fatal activities that day, but William Griffith was the only man to answer for the crime. The atrocity occurred in Linn County and was the last great violent event of the "Bleeding Kansas" era.

Border Ruffians and Jayhawkers

The border warfare that led to the Marais des Cygnes Massacre had been set in motion by the very law that organized Kansas Territory. The northern limit of slavery for unorganized Louisiana Purchase lands was established in 1820 by the Missouri Compromise. No slave states were to be carved from territories situated above thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes north latitude, a line extending westward from Missouri's southern boundary. The Kansas-Nebraska Act repealed that provision, substituting the principle of "popular sovereignty" under which the settlers

1. *Kansas City Daily Journal of Commerce*, October 8, 1863.
2. *Ibid.*, and L. D. Bailey, *Border Ruffian Troubles in Kansas: Some Newspaper Articles Written for the Garden City Sentinel and Kansas Cultivator in 1887* (Lyndon: N.p., 1899), 42.

vene in territorial elections and to terrorize free-staters (settlers who opposed the extension of slavery into Kansas Territory). The proslavery legislature, elected in March 1855, enacted a harsh slave code that provided severe penalties for persons who interfered with the "peculiar institution."

The situation rendered Kansas Territory virtually lawless. Disgusted by the proslavery voting frauds, free-staters boycotted the elections, refusing to recognize the proslavery legislature or its laws. During 1855, they formed the "Free-State" party, established a separate government in Topeka, adopted a constitution which forbade slavery, and organized a militia force. The proslavery faction responded by forming the "Law and Order" party and a militia which consisted largely of proslavery Missourians. The free-staters contemptuously referred to the Missourians as "Border Ruffians." As early as December 1855, the two military forces faced one another at Lawrence. A pitched battle was narrowly avoided through negotiations between Wilson Shannon, the official territorial governor, and Charles Robinson, head of the unofficial free-state government in Topeka.³ In any event, the ensuing border warfare claimed at least fifty lives (estimates range as high as two hundred), and its impact on the United States was dynamic.

As the results of popular sovereignty unfolded, incidents like the sack of Lawrence (by a proslavery posse) and the Pottawatomie Massacre (an atrocity committed by abolitionist John Brown and a band of free-state men) emblazoned themselves on the nation's consciousness, fueling the sectional controversy that preceded the Civil War. Lawrence was a center of free-state activity and the home of free-state governor Robinson. Moreover, Lawrence's two newspapers were a constant irritant to proslavery leaders. In May 1856 a proslavery grand jury declared the newspapers and the city's Free State Hotel to be "nuisances" that could be "removed." Sheriff Samuel Jones responded by forming a large posse that entered Lawrence and destroyed the offending enterprises as well as other businesses and the home of Governor Robinson; two Lawrence citizens were killed. John Brown was en route to Lawrence with a free-state militia company when he received word of the "sacking." Three days later, on May 24, 1856, Brown retaliated by butchering five Franklin County proslavery men near "Dutch Henry's Crossing" on Pottawatomie Creek.⁴

Such events were widely publicized, but the situa-

tion in the southern border counties of Linn and Bourbon received less attention. There, the presence of proslavery and free-state settlers in near equal numbers and the proximity of proslavery bases in Missouri created an explosive situation.

The soil in the southern border counties was as fertile as any in the region, and rich stands of timber grew along the streams that divided the rolling green hills. The main watercourse in Linn County is the Marais des Cygnes River, which flows across the county in a southeasterly direction before entering Bates County, Missouri, where it joins the Little Osage to form the Osage River. The county immediately south of Linn is Bourbon; the Little Osage flows across Bourbon in an easterly direction, just below the county line. Frenchmen who explored the upper branch of the Osage were impressed by the number of swans in the marshes along the river; hence, the name Marais des Cygnes. Located on the river's north bank, about four miles west of the Missouri boundary, was a cluster of buildings known to the early settlers as Chouteau's Trading Post (later organized as the town of Trading Post). The "Post," as it was sometimes called, had been established by fur traders in 1834 and was one of the earliest white settlements in the Kansas region.⁵

The early arrivals in the southern counties were proslavery, but as settlement progressed an increasing percentage of the newcomers were free-staters. Fearing loss of political control, proslavery leaders formed night-riding "posses" to intimidate the unwelcome newcomers—to warn them out of the territory. Few actual settlers rode with the posses. In the main, the night riders were Border Ruffians—men whose policy it was to "vote and shoot in Kansas" but who slept in Missouri for safety. There were a few proslavery ideologues among the Border Ruffians, but most of them appear to have been frontier roughnecks of the traditional variety. The posses sometimes used the torch to underscore their warnings to free-staters. During the summer of 1856, a large force of Border Ruffians under command of a proslavery leader named George W. Clarke swept through Linn County laying waste to several farmsteads. One of the first to watch his cabin burn was a small, black-bearded Ohioan named James Montgomery. Rather than leave Kansas Territory at the behest of Border Ruffians, the forty-one-year-old Montgomery built a defensible cabin and formed an association of free-staters—a group committed to mutual protection.⁶

3. Robert W. Richmond, *Kansas: A Land of Contrasts*, 2d ed. (St. Louis: Forum Press, 1980), 72.

4. *Ibid.*, 72–74.

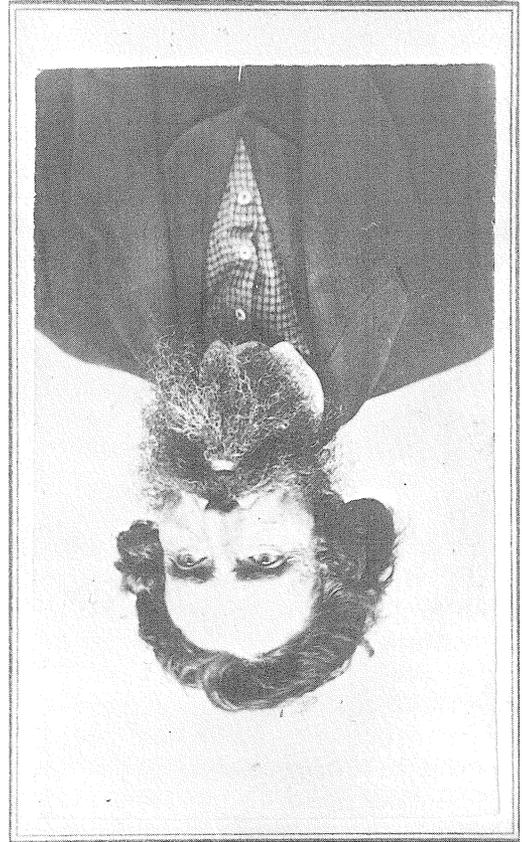
5. *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago: A. T. Andreas, 1883), 1101–2.

the feisty Ohioan. Devlin, according to legend, made a one-man foray into Bates County, Missouri, where he visited a Border Ruffian camp. While in the camp, he saw a great stack of kitchenware and other items which he believed had been stolen from Linn County free-state families. Devlin waited for the right moment, then made off with the booty, returning to Linn County leading a horse loaded down with a variety of pots, pans, skillers, and jars of molasses. When he distributed the loot, a free-state man asked how he had managed such a feat. Devlin replied that in Ireland there was a bird called the jayhawk that "just took things," and that he believed his horse might have acquired a similar habit. Soon, free-staters in Kansas Territory were retelling the story and laughing uproariously, but the proslavery faction applied the term "jayhawker" in a pejorative sense to Montgomery's men, who accepted the name as a "badge of honor."⁸

In November 1857, the Kansas free-staters abandoned their voting boycott and won the legislature. They voted again in January 1858, defeating a referendum on the proslavery Lecompton constitution. The controversial document was far from dead, however, having been forwarded to Congress by President James Buchanan as a result of a previous referendum—one that the free-staters had boycotted. Buchanan was as concerned about the future of the Democratic party as his predecessor, Franklin Pierce, so he chose to ignore the January plebiscite. The party was strong in the South, and admission of Kansas as a slave state, under the Lecompton constitution, would assure the loyalty of southern Democrats. The proslavery faction in Kansas had boycotted the January referendum, but the number of free-staters voting demonstrated that they were now a clear majority. The Lecompton constitution was the last hope for proslavery Kansans, and many of them were furious at the results.

One of those angry men was Capt. Charles A. Hamilton,⁹ an aristocratic Georgian who had been recruited for the proslavery cause by E. M. "Milt" McGee, a founder of Kansas City, Missouri. McGee toured the South several times during the period 1854–57 to solicit money for the proslavery struggle and to encourage Southern emigration to Kansas. In late 1855 or early 1856 he delivered a fiery address to a gathering at Cassville, in northwestern Georgia. One of the speakers on the program was Dr. Thomas A.

8. Ibid., 22–23, 22n; and William A. Lyman, "Origin of the Name 'Jayhawker,' and How It Came to Be Applied to the People of Kansas," *Kansas State Historical Collections*, 1915–1918, 14:203–7.



Free-stater James Montgomery, whose cabin was burned by Border Ruffians, led a band known as "jayhawkers."

Montgomery's group had grown into a formidable band of fifty men by 1857. All of them were armed with Sharps breech-loading rifles, shipped from the East by abolitionist sympathizers. Rev. B. L. Read, a minister of the Missionary Baptist Church, reportedly picked up the weapons at Westport Landing, Missouri, delivering them to Montgomery in Linn County. It was probably because of that daring exploit that Read later suffered brutal treatment at the hands of Border Ruffians.⁷

The Montgomery band became known as "jayhawkers." The origin of the name has been argued, but many attribute it to an amusing remark by one Pat Devlin, a lanky, red-haired Irishman who rode with

6. Ibid.; James C. Mallin, "The Proslavery Background of the Kansas Struggle," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 10 (December 1923): 285–305; Jay Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border, 1854–1865* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1955), 81; and William Ansel Mitchell, *Linn County, Kansas: A History* (La Cygne: J. W. Mitchell, 1928), 15–19.

7. Mitchell, *Linn County*, 20–21, 21n, and 387n (in index under Henry Ward Beecher).

Hamilton, a wealthy and prominent physician whose outspoken support for the proliferation of slavery belied his Quaker background. Dr. Hamilton endorsed McGee's mission, publicly contributing one thousand dollars, and his three adult sons decided to emigrate to Kansas Territory. Charles Hamilton and his younger brothers, George and Al, gathered a large group of Georgians to move with them, arriving in mid-1856. Charles took up a claim east of Trading Post on the Missouri boundary, where he lived ostentatiously with his slaves and fine horses. George P. Hamilton, who had followed his father into the medical profession, went to Fort Scott, in east-central Bourbon County. Algernon S. Hamilton (known as Alvin or Al in Kansas) settled in Paris, a now-extinct Linn County town, where he studied law under Judge James Barlow, a prominent proslavery man.¹⁰

Charles Hamilton, handsome in his mid-thirties with a burly five-foot ten-inch frame, was accustomed to authority. As captain of the "Cassville Dragoons" during the Mexican War he had proven himself an able commander. In accordance with custom, he retained his military title after mustering out. Hamilton built a fortified log cabin on his claim near Trading Post. He and his brother George became the principal leaders of the "Bloody Reds," a group of Border Ruffians that ranged over Linn and Bourbon counties making trouble for free-staters. Members of the group could usually be found swilling whiskey at Sam

Brown's saloon in Trading Post or Jerry Jackson's store on the Missouri side of the boundary.¹¹

During 1857, several new sets of neighbors moved into the Marais des Cygnes Valley and settled near the Hamilton plantation—much to the owner's distaste. William Colpetzer, Ely Snyder, Michael Robertson, Rev. B. L. Read, and the brothers Austin and Amos Hall were among the new arrivals; all of them were sympathetic to the free-state cause. The forty-three-year-old Ely Snyder, a blacksmith, became a special irritant. Soon after his arrival, Snyder became embroiled in an argument with a Bloody Red in Sam Brown's saloon. When the man reached for a knife, Snyder floored him with a hard punch to the head. Several months later, the blacksmith had a confrontation with Hamilton himself, during which the Georgian threatened to kill him. Snyder kept a loaded shotgun at his side from then on.¹²

Hamilton also disliked William Hairgrove, a fellow Southerner who was nominally proslavery. Hairgrove's leathery complexion and snowy, white hair caused him to appear much older than his fifty-eight years. His neighbors referred to him as "Old Man" Hairgrove, but they admired his intelligence. He and his adult son Asa established a claim near Hamilton's in 1857. Soon afterward, the elder Hairgrove, who had become acquainted with the Hamilton family while living in the South, called on the Georgian to pay his respects and was rudely turned away. The Lecompton constitution appears to have been at the bottom of Hamilton's contempt for Old Man Hairgrove, because despite his proslavery sympathy, Hairgrove opposed the Lecompton document.¹³

In the fall of 1857, Hamilton withdrew temporarily to Missouri. Using Bates County as a base, he and the Bloody Reds joined in an effort to drive free-staters from the valley of the Little Osage. One group, led by a notorious roughneck called "Fort Scott" Brock-

9. The name "Hamilton" is incorrectly spelled "Hamelton" in important Kansas secondary sources; for example, in Mitchell, *Linn County*, and Joel Moody, "The Marais des Cygnes Massacre," *Kansas State Historical Collections, 1915–1918*, 14:208–23. The incorrect spelling has been carried forward into more widely read works, such as William F. Zornow, *Kansas: A History of the Jayhawk State* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), 78. The root of the problem can be found in an editor's footnote to John H. Rice, "Capt. Charles A. Hamelton [sic]," *Kansas State Historical Collections, 1901–1902*, 7:467. Rice was a Kansas newspaper publisher who knew the Hamilton family while living in Cassville, Georgia, during the antebellum years. When queried about the spelling of the Hamilton name, Rice assured the editor that it was spelled "with an e (el, not il)." Unfortunately, Rice was as wrong about the spelling of the name as he was about certain biographical data concerning the Hamiltons. The conventional spelling is used in all references to the Hamiltons in official military and legislative records as well as in secondary sources held by the Georgia Department of Archives and History, Atlanta (GDAH).

10. Mitchell, *Linn County*, 200; *History of the State of Kansas*, 1106; John H. Rice to Hon. Joel Moody, Fort Scott, Kansas, July 7, 1892, in Moody, "Marais des Cygnes Massacre," 209–10; Elmer LeRoy Craik, "Southern Interest in Territorial Kansas, 1854–1858," *Kansas State Historical Collections, 1919–1922*, 15:394–406; Pearl Wilcox, *Jackson County Pioneers* (Independence, Mo.: By the author, 1975), 270–71; and George M. Battey, Jr., *A History of Rome and Floyd County, State of Georgia, U.S.A., Including Numerous Incidents of More than Local Interest, 1540–1922* (Atlanta: Webb and Vary Co., 1922), 1:630.

11. W. P. Tomlinson, *Kansas in Eighteen Fifty-Eight, Being Chiefly a History of the Recent Troubles in the Territory* (New York: H. Dayton, 1859), 63; E. R. Smith, "Marais des Cygnes Tragedy," *Kansas State Historical Collections, 1897–1900*, 6:366, 368; Military Records, 1846–1848, file 1, GDAH; Capt. Charles A. Hamilton to Gov. George Crawford, September 25, 1847, GDAH; and Ely Snyder, *The Personal Experience of Capt. Ely Snyder in the Early Settlement of Kansas* (Osawatomie: N.p., 1897), 3, hereafter cited as *Personal Experiences*, the first-page title. According to William A. Mitchell in *Linn County*, the owner of the saloon in Trading Post appears to have been a man named Daniels, but Ely Snyder recalls in his *Personal Experiences* that the saloon keeper was Sam Brown. Brown, of course, could have been an employee of Daniels.

12. Mitchell, *Linn County*, 207; Snyder, *Personal Experiences*, 2–4; and Tomlinson, *Kansas in Eighteen Fifty-Eight*, 64.

13. Mitchell, *Linn County*, 200, 207; *Leavenworth Times*, June 5, 1858; *History of the State of Kansas*, 1102.

ings housed a general store; another, the saloon. When the jayhawkers rode into Trading Post, they found a crowd of Border Rufians loafing in front of the dog-gery. After disarming them, Montgomery went inside to roll out several barrels of corn whiskey. The thirsty Rufians watched while the jayhawkers smashed the sad barrels with axes. Montgomery then headed the spectators toward the Missouri boundary, minus their weapons, with a stern warning not to return. As a former Campbellite preacher, Montgomery may have been a teetotaler, but the sight of liquor spilling in the street was probably as distressing to the jayhawkers as it was to the Bloody Reds. Hamilton apparently feared an attack by the jayhawkers, for he left his plantation soon after the destruction at the saloon.¹⁶

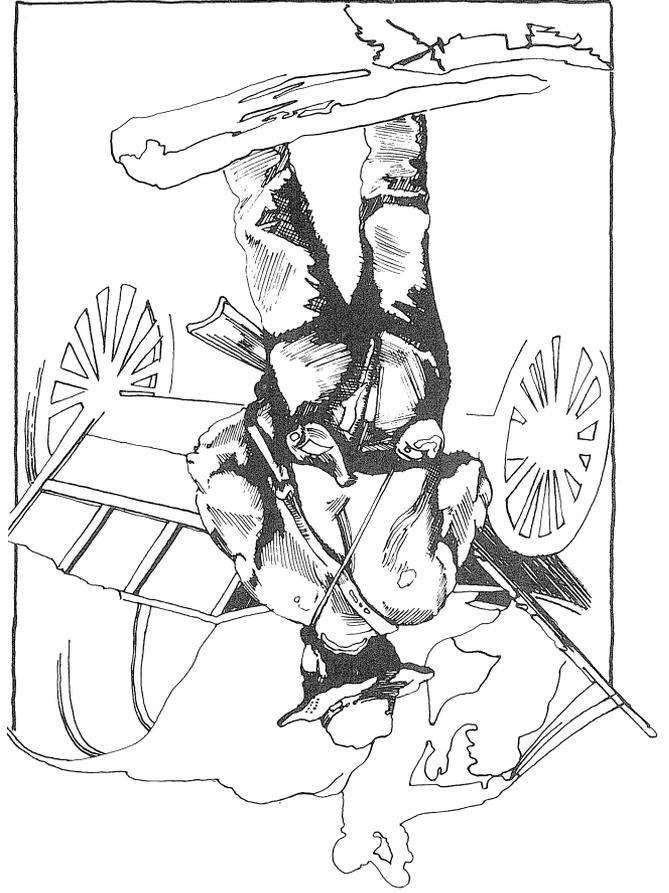
Most of the free-staters who lived near Trading Post approved of Montgomery's activities, but many of them feared retaliation. Accordingly, they formed a volunteer defense company which stayed on the alert until mid-May. The local situation remained quiet and, in any case, it was planting time. On May 17, the defense force disbanded and the members returned to their fields. Hamilton learned of the company's dissolution within hours. He immediately sent a message to Judge Barlow, his brother's legal mentor: "Come out of the territory at once, as we are coming up there to kill snakes, and will treat all we find there as snakes."¹⁷

Hamilton Raids Linn County

Hamilton had withdrawn to Missouri when he left his claim. On May 18, he attended a meeting at a pro-slavery refugee camp at Papinville, a now-extinct town in southern Bates County, Missouri. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss alternatives in handling the situation that Montgomery had created. Several hundred refugees and Border Rufians were present, and the whiskey flowed freely.¹⁸ Hamilton delivered a passionate speech, demanding an all-out invasion of the southern border counties. Judge Barlow, who had come from Paris after receiv-

14. Smith, "Marais des Cygnes Tragedy," 366; Mitchell, *Linn County*, 64.
15. Article from *Cass County Democrat*, Missouri, n.d., reprinted in *Herald of Freedom*, Lawrence, May 29, 1858; and Malin, "Pro-slavery Background," 285-305.
16. Smith, "Marais des Cygnes Tragedy," 366; W. A. Mitchell, "Historic Linn: Sketch of Notable Events in Its First Settlement," *Kansas State Historical Collections*, 1923-1925, 16:641-42; Mitchell, *Linn County*, 23, 199; and Tomlinson, *Kansas in Eighty-Fifty-Fight*, 62-63.
17. Smith, "Marais des Cygnes Tragedy," 367; Mitchell, *Linn County*, 201-2.
18. Smith, "Marais des Cygnes Tragedy," 367; and A. H. Tannar, "Early Days in Kansas: The Marais des Cygnes Massacre and the Rescue of Ben Rice," *Kansas State Historical Collections*, 1915-1918, 14:229.

ett, was blamed for shooting a prominent free-state man named Isaac Denton. The murder may have been intended to scare the free-staters, but it had an opposite effect: James Montgomery and the jayhawkers took the offensive.¹⁴ Using techniques similar to those of the Border Rufians, Montgomery began an effective "warning out" campaign. The proslavery newspapers heaped invective on the jayhawkers. The *Cass County* (Missouri) *Democrat* labeled Montgomery a "thief and a jackal," blaming him for the "hundreds" of proslavery refugees who had been forced to leave Kansas Territory. Indeed, if the jayhawkers, as individuals, were superior in virtue to the Border Rufians, this factor has never been conclusively demonstrated.¹⁵ In late April 1858, Montgomery decided to clean out Sam Brown's saloon in Trading Post. The establishment was doing a thriving business with Hamilton's Bloody Reds, for the Georgian had returned earlier that month to prepare his fields for planting. The tiny settlement on the north bank of the Marais des Cygnes consisted of about a dozen buildings, four of them dating back to the fur-trading days. One of the old build-



ing Hamilton's warning, attempted to dissuade the crowd, pointing out that proslavery men still had control of the courts and that their problems could be resolved legally. But Hamilton had whipped his listeners into a frenzy. A mob of about two hundred rode out of the camp with him.¹⁹

Judge Barlow got the motley army's attention again when it halted near the border to organize. By that time, the effects of the whiskey had begun to wear off; many of the would-be invaders were cold, hungry, and sick. They listened as Barlow explained that their squirrel rifles and shotguns would be of dubious value against the Sharps rifles of the Jayhawkers. Hamilton angrily broke up the meeting, calling out his brothers; "Fort Scott" Brockett and the Bloody Reds joined them. A party of thirty-three crossed the territorial boundary, following the south bank of the Marais des Cygnes westward.²⁰

The dawn of May 19, 1858, promised a beautiful day. The sun was already burning brightly when a young Bourbon County farmer named Patrick Ross passed through Trading Post at about 8:00 A.M. He might have noticed a group of laborers beginning their day's work on the new sawmill which was under construction in the village. Ross was heading southward, toward his farm on the Little Osage—land that Border Ruffians had forced him to vacate a few weeks previously. About one mile south of the village, he encountered a band of armed horsemen led by Capt. Charles A. Hamilton, who immediately took him prisoner. Ross undoubtedly recognized some of his captors as the men who had evicted him.²¹

After seizing Ross, Hamilton forded the river and approached Trading Post on the north bank. The marauders emerged from the timber at the sawmill construction site, capturing the surprised workers. John Campbell, a young Pennsylvanian who operated the general store for its absentee owner, was talking with a customer when he heard the commotion; he walked outside and greeted the approaching horsemen cheerfully. Hamilton arrested Campbell and his customer, then allowed his men to plunder the store. After searching the village, he released all prisoners except Ross and Campbell. Marching on foot, the two men hurried to keep up with their mounted captors as they rode northward, out of the village.²²

The Reverend B. L. Read, who had delivered the Sharps rifles to Montgomery, lived on a farm north of Trading Post. Read and his wife Sarah had come to Kansas from Waukegan, Illinois, in July 1857. At about 9:00 A.M., the minister saddled his pony and rode to the nearby farm of Sam Nichols to borrow a draft horse. He was about to turn in at the Nichols farm, one mile north of the village, when two friends hailed him. The three were talking when the Border Ruffians surrounded them. Hamilton ordered Read to get in line with Ross and Campbell, but the minister refused. "You won't, eh? God damn you," growled Hamilton, drawing his revolver. Read and his friends quickly complied.²³

William Stillwell departed Mound City with his team and wagon early on the morning of May 19, bound for Kansas City to pick up a load of machinery for a client. Rumors concerning Border Ruffian activity caused Mrs. Stillwell to fear for her husband's safety, but William had laughed and kissed away her tears before taking his leave. She watched him drive away into the coming sunrise, whistling a gay tune, but the tune suddenly faded as he crossed the hilltop. The whistling, she thought, must have been for her. Mrs. Stillwell returned to the one-room cabin and busied herself; the children would soon be up. Stillwell's trip was uneventful until he passed through Trading Post. Now, he saw horsemen blocking the road at the Nichols farm; the situation made him uneasy. He was carrying over two hundred dollars in cash, so he stopped momentarily to hide the money under some hay in the wagonbed. When Stillwell approached, the Ruffians ordered him to dismount; then, after searching and questioning him, they ordered him to get in line with the other prisoners.²⁴

Hamilton clearly wanted Sam Nichols, a prominent free-state man, but Nichols had gone away on business. After ransacking the farmstead and terrorizing Mrs. Nichols and her children, the Border Ruffians stole three of Nichols' horses, as well as Read's pony and Stillwell's team, but they left Stillwell's wagon standing on the road, the money still hidden under the hay. Before leaving the Nichols farm, Hamilton released Rev. Read's two friends but held Read and Stillwell, along with Ross and Campbell.²⁵

Hamilton now turned eastward, heading back

19. Smith, "Marais des Cygnes Tragedy," 367-68; and Smith, article from *Mound City Clarion*, n.d., reprinted in Mitchell, *Linn County*, 211-15.

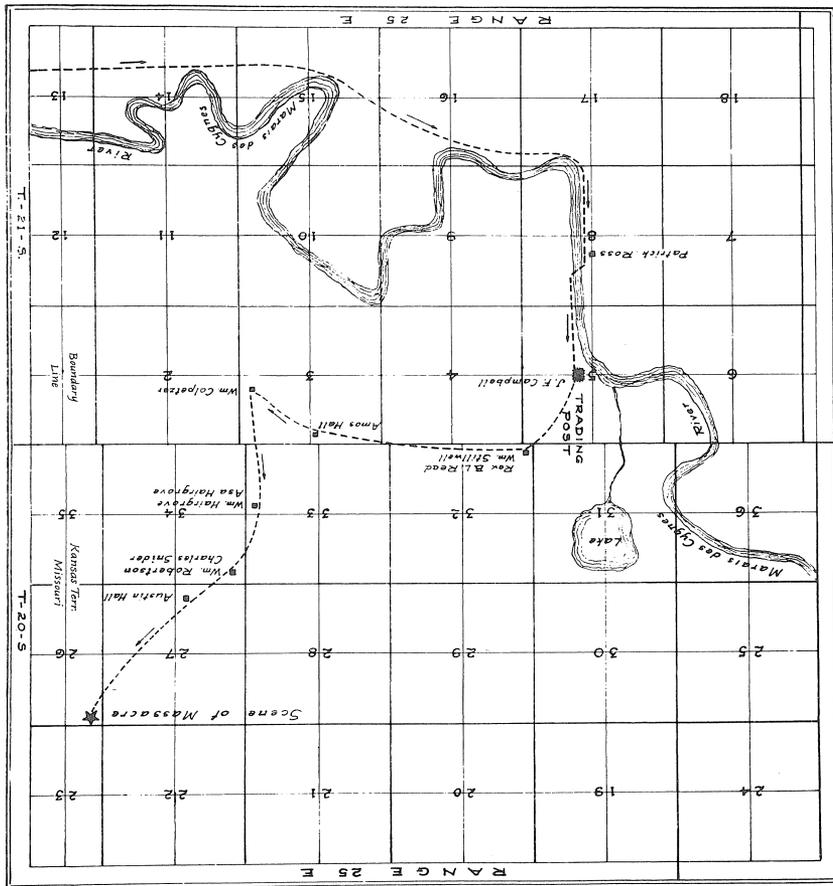
20. Mitchell, *Linn County*, 212.

21. *History of the State of Kansas*, 1104; Mitchell, *Linn County*, 207.

22. Mitchell, *Linn County*, 203.

23. Rev. B. L. Read to Rev. Nathan Brown, Osawatomie, January 18, 1859, *Paola Citizen*, n.d., reprinted in the *La Cygne Weekly Journal*, July 5, 1879. The name "Read" is also spelled "Reed" in some sources.

24. *Ibid.*; interview with Mrs. William Stillwell, *Linn County Republican*, Mound City, May 28, 1897; and *History of the State of Kansas*, 1104-5.



Prepared by William E. Connelley and August W. Ross about 1918, this map shows the route used by the Hamilton band in 1858. The locations where the free-state men were captured have been changed to reflect the sequence described by Rev. B. L. Read.

toward the Missouri boundary. With the four captives marching on foot he had to move slowly, but he sent detachments ahead to seize the Hall brothers and William Colpetzer. Both Halls were ailing. Amos had stayed in bed that morning, suffering with fever and chills, but Austin, whose eyes were badly inflamed, had yoked his oxen and taken a plow to Snyder's blacksmith shop for sharpening. The Rufians entered the cabin, ordering Amos from his bed. He refused, but his visitors convinced him that they were willing to shoot him where he lay. Amos pulled on his boots and followed them outside.²⁶

In the meantime, Sarah Read busied herself in her cabin. The Reads had just returned to Trading Post after a short stay in the nearby town of Moneka (now extinct) and were still getting settled. Had Sarah gone outside after her husband's departure, she might have witnessed the events occurring on the road in front of the Nichols place, for it was located less than a mile away and in full view. Now, a lone horseman rode up to the cabin, calling for her. The visitor was one of the Trading Post sawmill workers who had been taken by the Hamilton gang and released. He told her that the Reverend Mr. Read was Hamilton's prisoner but as-

25. Read to Brown, *La Cygne Weekly Journal*, July 5, 1879; and *History of the State of Kansas*, 1104-5.

26. *Ibid.*; and "Map by William Elsey Connelley Showing the Route Taken by Hamelton [sic] . . .," *Kansas State Historical Collections*, 1915-1918, 14; between 212 and 213.

sured the startled woman that she had “no occasion for alarm.” Sarah Read thought differently, fearing that her husband would be taken into Missouri and that she would never see him again.²⁷

She decided to follow the gang if she could, so she took her spyglass and hurried to the Nichols farm, where she found Mrs. Nichols and her children crying and the house in great disarray. In any event, Mrs. Nichols pointed out the eastward course of the Border Ruffians. With the spyglass, Sarah saw the entourage about two miles distant, in the vicinity of the William Colpetzer farm. She hurried after them.²⁸

When she arrived at Colpetzer’s she found Mrs. Colpetzer with Mrs. Michael Robertson and Mrs. Charles Snider. She quickly learned that all their husbands had been taken. Mrs. Colpetzer had urged William to hide when Hamilton’s henchmen approached, but he insisted that he had nothing to fear. They seized Colpetzer but assured his terrified wife that no harm would come to him. Another detachment of Ruffians had visited the Robertson place. Mrs. Snider and her husband Charles (not related to Ely Snyder, the blacksmith), had come from Effingham, Illinois, to visit the Robertsons. The Ruffians seized Snider and Robertson, telling the women that they only intended to talk to the men. Apparently, the three women had accepted the Hamilton gang at their word, for Mrs. Colpetzer cordially invited the minister’s wife to spend the afternoon with them. Sarah Read didn’t share their optimism, however; she continued on her way.²⁹

The marauders left the trail at Michael Robertson’s place, heading in a northeasterly direction, toward Ely Snyder’s claim. Hamilton now had ten captives. In addition to Amos Hall, Colpetzer, Robertson, Snider, and the four men captured in the vicinity of Trading Post, the invaders had taken William and Asa Hairgrove. Old Man Hairgrove had been planting corn when he looked up to see Al Hamilton on horseback, glaring down at him. “Come with me to the Hall place,” ordered Hamilton. “By whose authority,” retorted Old Man Hairgrove. Al Hamilton pulled a Sharps rifle from its boot and pointed it at him; Hairgrove cooperated. When they arrived at the Hall place, about thirteen mounted Ruffians were standing outside the cabin with Amos Hall, who was on foot, appearing ill and shaken. The group marched to Hairgrove’s farmstead, where they seized Old Man Hairgrove’s son Asa and stole a span of mules. Old

Man Hairgrove’s wife, daughter-in-law, and grandson watched them march away. Continuing on the cross-country trek, Hamilton soon observed an ox cart approaching on the line of march; it was Austin Hall, Amos’s brother, returning from Snyder’s blacksmith shop. A detachment rode forward to intercept him. Hall’s infected eyes rendered him virtually blind in the hard, bright sunlight. By the time he realized what was happening, the Border Ruffians were upon him.³⁰

Hamilton now stepped up the pace, causing the eleven captives to move at a trot. When they faltered, the Ruffians bumped them with horses. A man asked to drink from a stream as he waded across but was told to “wait and get it in hell.” The captives recognized former neighbors among their tormentors: the Yealocks, Mike Hubbard, Tom Jackson, and of course Charles Hamilton. There were other familiar faces; included were George and Al Hamilton, Brockett, Charles Matlock, and William Griffith. Old Man Hairgrove would remember Griffith, for he was leading two mules that he had stolen from the Hairgrove farm.³¹

When the raiding party halted on a hilltop called Priestly Mound, Hamilton announced that he intended to call on “his friend” Ely Snyder and departed with a detachment. The blacksmith shop was close by, at a lower elevation, clearly visible from the hilltop. In the shop with Snyder were his brother and a neighbor; his sixteen-year-old son was in the nearby cabin. The captives watched while the four men successfully fought off their assailants, severely wounding one Ruffian. Hamilton himself absorbed seven pieces of buckshot from Ely Snyder’s shotgun, and his horse, undoubtedly a favorite mount, had been shot through the neck. He returned to the main body of his band riding a horse belonging to a subordinate, while the man led the injured animal. The Georgian was in a nasty mood. A captive had the effrontery to ask him what had happened at Snyder’s. “He gave me a little of what I intend to give you a good deal of,” came the ominous reply.³²

The Marais des Cygnes Massacre

Hamilton had no inkling of Montgomery’s whereabouts. The Jayhawkers could already be in pursuit; if so, the firing at Snyder’s place would have revealed his location. In any event, there was no time to waste. The marauders descended from the hilltop, then moved up a ravine located a few hundred yards from Snyder’s

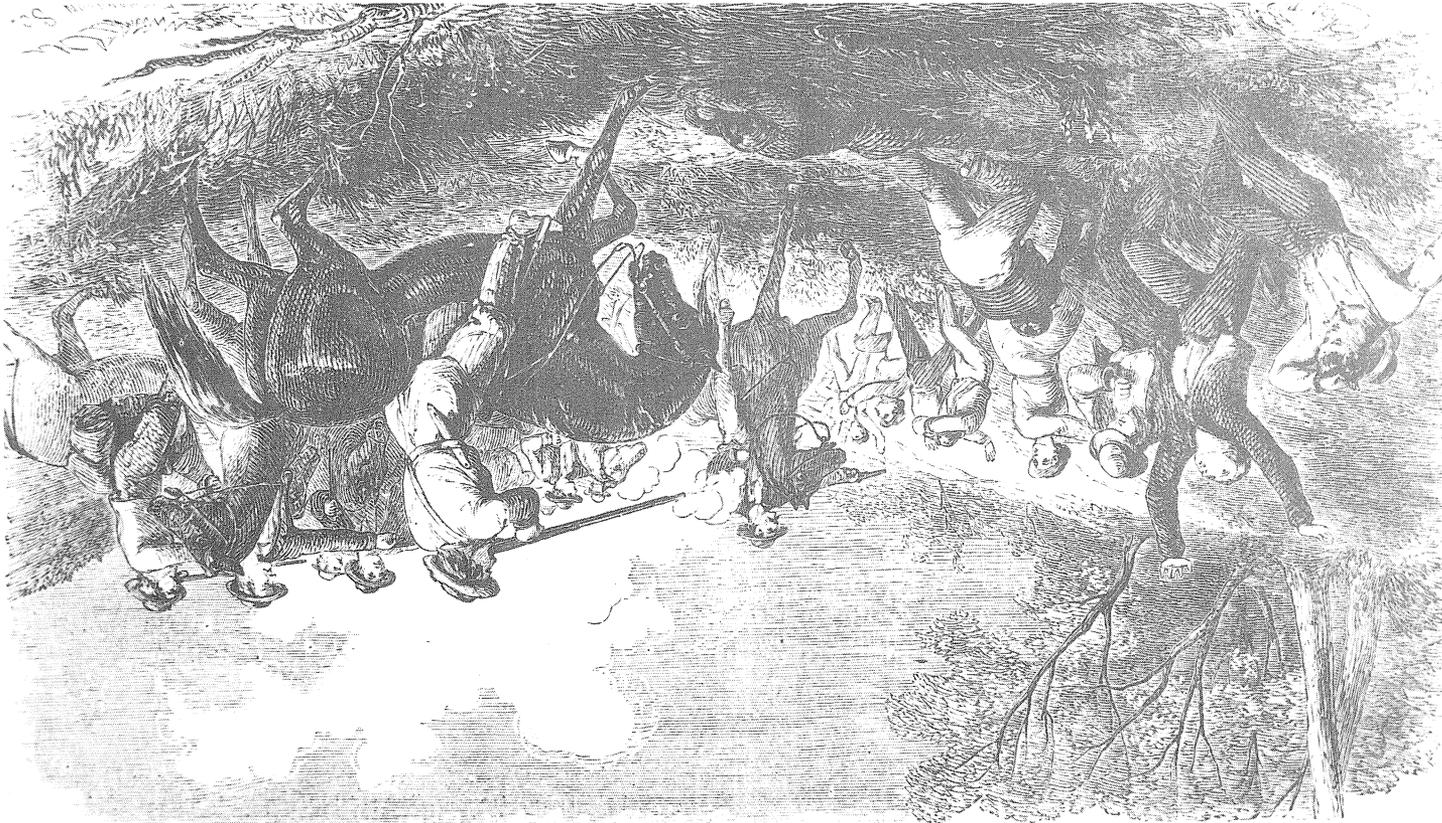
27. Statement of Mrs. B. L. Read, January 18, 1859, *Paola Citizen*, n.d., reprinted in *Ly Cygne Weekly Journal*, July 12, 1879.

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Ibid.*; and *History of the State of Kansas*, 1104–5.

30. Mitchell, *Linn County*, 203–4; and statement of William Hairgrove, *New York Times*, June 9, 1858, 2.

31. Mitchell, *Linn County*, 204–5; and *Kansas City Daily Journal of Commerce*, October 8, 1863.



The Marais des Cygnes Massacre, as portrayed in A. D. Richardson's Beyond the Mississippi (1867).

time, to no effect. William Stillwell now raised his arms in the Masonic sign of distress. Fort Scott Brockert may have recognized the sign, for he suddenly pulled his horse out of line. The disturbance enraged the frustrated leader. "Brockert, God damn you! Why don't you wheel into line?" The Fort Scott man stared at Hamilton coldly. "I'll be damned if I'll have anything to do with such a God damned piece of business as this," he responded. "If it was in a fight, I'd fire." Brockert turned the tail of his horse toward Hamilton and departed.³⁴ Hamilton quickly issued the command to fire, squeezing off the first shot himself. All captives fell during the uneven fusillade that followed. Al Hamilton's revolver misfired, but he recocked it and pulled the trigger a second time, dropping Rev. B. L. Read. The minister had turned half around, so the ball ripped through his ribcage below and behind his left shoulder, missing the vital organs. William Stillwell's Masonic distress sign earned him a load of pistol balls,

34. *History of the State of Kansas*, 1105; Read to Brown, *La Cygne Weekly Journal*, July 5, 1879; statement of William Hairgrove, *New York Times*, June 9, 1858, 2.

shop but separated from it by a hill mass. As the ravine narrowed, the captives marched at the bottom in single file, finally halting beneath a wide rock shelf. The Ruffians remained on horseback, occupying both slopes of the ravine, while the eleven prisoners stood in line, facing eastward. William Hairgrove, the white-haired patriarch, insolently stared upward at his antagonists. "Gentlemen," he growled, "if you are going to shoot us, take good aim."³⁵ "Make ready!" Hamilton commanded. "Take aim!" Then a moment's hesitation. "The men don't obey the order, Captain," shouted Dr. George Hamilton. The irrepressible Old Man Hairgrove appeared to be more angry than fearful. "They are a good deal like as we are—we don't want to kill innocent persons," he sneered from the bottom of the ravine. Ignoring the remark, Hamilton issued the commands a second

32. Mitchell, *Linn County*, 204; *History of the State of Kansas*, 1105; Snyder, *Personal Experiences*, 7; Read to Brown, *La Cygne Weekly Journal*, July 5, 1879; statements of B. L. Read and William Hairgrove, *New York Times*, June 9, 1858, 2; and *Herald of Freedom*, Lawrence, May 29, 1858.
33. Read to Brown, *La Cygne Weekly Journal*, July 5, 1879; *History of the State of Kansas*, 1104–5; and Mitchell, *Linn County*, 204–5.

fired from a shotgun by Dr. George P. Hamilton, a fellow Mason; Stillwell fell dead. A load of buckshot put Old Man Hairgrove down. As he fell, a rifle ball tore into his back, passing through one lung before lodging in his chest. Austin Hall stood between Old Man Hairgrove and William Colpetzer. He turned to see Colpetzer fall, going to the ground with him, uninjured.³⁵

The executioners held their positions in silence for a few moments before Hamilton ordered two men to dismount and finish off any victims who showed signs of life. As they descended into the ravine, William Colpetzer struggled to rise, begging to be spared. A Ruffian shot him through the head. While the bodies were kicked and prodded, Al Hamilton sat on his horse taking potshots at the fallen men.³⁶

Men on horseback shouted advice to their com-

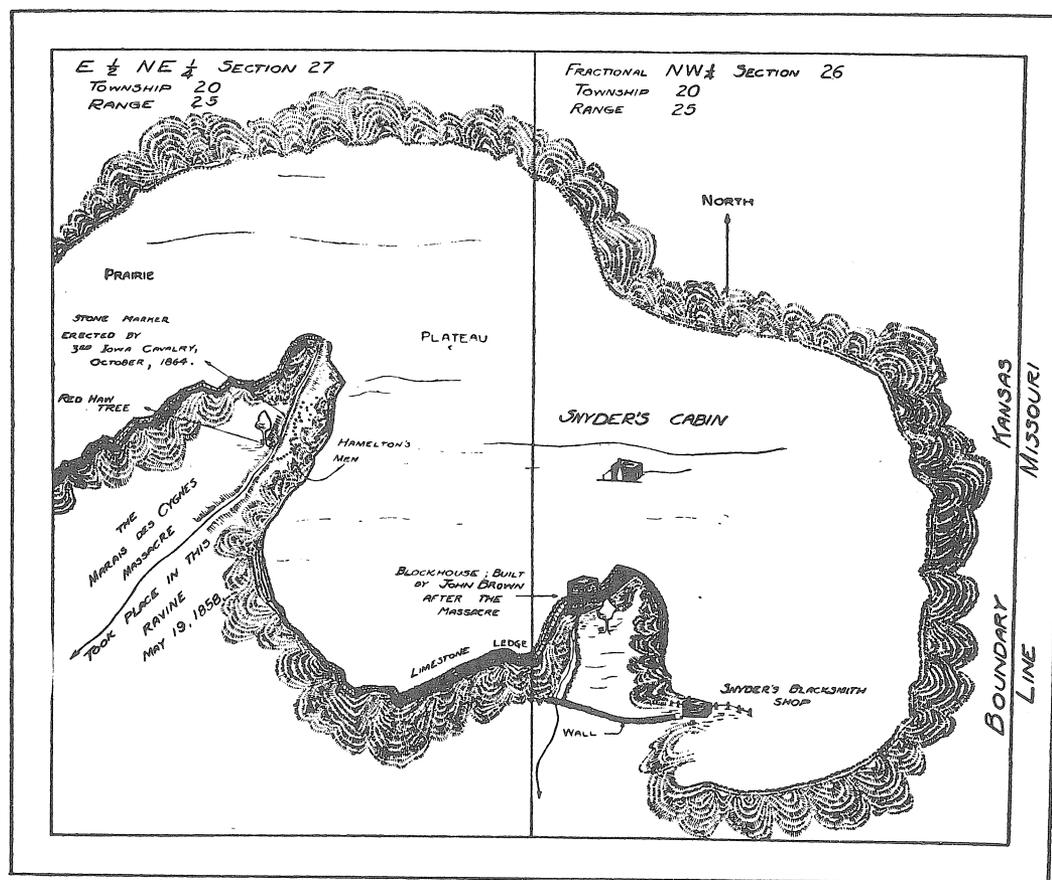
rades in the ravine. Mike Hubbard noticed that Amos Hall was breathing. "Put a pistol to his ear," he advised. A mop-up man carelessly placed the muzzle of his weapon against Amos's cheek and fired. The ball nearly severed his tongue, but he lived on. "Old Read ain't dead," observed Hamilton. "Which is him?" came the query. "Why there the old Devil is, looking at you," responded another. The victim indicated was actually Patrick Ross; a bullet in the head finished him. "See that man humped up, he ain't dead," called a kibitzer, indicating Austin Hall. One of the mop-up men kicked Hall and rolled him over, finding him covered with blood. "He's dead as the Devil," came the response. But the blood that drenched Austin Hall had flown from the wounds of Old Man Hairgrove, who was lying next to him. Satisfied, Hamilton ordered his men to infiltrate to safer territory in-groups, then to assemble at Jerry Jackson's store on the Missouri side.³⁷

Sarah Read had turned northward after leaving

35. Ibid.; *Leavenworth Times*, June 5, 1858; *Kansas Tribune*, Topeka, May 29, 1858; and Mitchell, *Linn County*, 205.

36. Mitchell, *Linn County*, 205; *History of the State of Kansas*, 1105; and Smith, "Marais des Cygnes Tragedy," 369.

37. *History of the State of Kansas*, 1105; Read to Brown, *La Cygne Weekly Journal*, July 5, 1879; Mitchell, *Linn County*, 205.



This sketch of the Marais des Cygnes Massacre site was included in W. A. Mitchell's *Linn County, Kansas: A History* (1928).

them in the timber ahead. Sarah continued on her brisk pace, much of it over rough country, and she was encumbered by a long skirt and petticoats; nevertheless, in her anxiety she was unmindful of fatigue.⁴⁰

The massacre victims lay where they had fallen as the sound of the Hamilton gang's hoofbeats faded in the distance. Austin Hall, who had survived unscathed, called out to the others. Several answered, begging him to keep silent until certain that the Rufians were no longer in the vicinity. Hall stayed where he was for a few minutes, then crawled out of the ravine to the hilltop. From that vantage point, he saw the raiders crossing another hilltop, about one mile distant. Returning to the others, he discovered that John Campbell, B. L. Read, Charles Snyder, the two Hairgroves, and his own brother, Amos Hall, were still living. Campbell, the Trading Post storekeeper, appeared to be in the worst condition, bleeding badly from abdominal wounds. Hall made the storekeeper as comfortable as he could, taking note of his final messages, then hurried down the ravine in search of help.⁴¹

Sarah Read now crossed the hilltop above Ely Snyder's place and stared down into the ravine. She saw figures stretched out on the ground at the bottom. Taking them to be members of the Hamilton gang in repose, she called to them as she approached. After calling several times, she heard her husband's voice answering and rushed forward to him, thanking God for guiding her steps. The Reverend Mr. Read assured her that he and the other survivors were bound to die, but that they wanted to tell their story before doing so. Sarah began to feel faint but quickly got herself under control. Her husband urged her to go quickly—to bring witnesses to the site while survivors could still testify. She replied, "I have got the pony; can't you ride?" Again he told her that he believed he would die. She wanted to help him and the other wounded first, but Read insisted that she go immediately. Before leaving, she thought of the Rufians' assurances to Mrs. Colpetzer and learned from her husband that William Colpetzer was among the dead. Sarah was disoriented but again chose her direction fortuitously for, as she later learned, she reached the Hairgrove farm by the shortest possible route.⁴²

At the time of the fight at the blacksmith shop, Ely Snyder had no idea that Hamilton was escorting cap-

the Colpetzer place, hurrying along the route that the Hamilton gang had taken. She walked about two miles before sighting them from a hilltop; they were still marching in a northeasterly direction, toward the fatal ravine. Perhaps she could head them off at or near the Missouri boundary. With that plan in mind, Sarah descended the steep hillside, losing sight of the horsemen as she crossed a thickly timbered valley. While passing through the timber she heard firing. It occurred to her that the Rufians might be shooting the captives, but she pushed the thought from her mind.⁴³

Leaving the timber, she climbed another hill. Now she sighted about eight horsemen, moving away from her; she had crossed their line of march. Certain that the men were members of the Hamilton gang, she took off her bonnet and waved it, running after the riders as fast as her tired legs would carry her. The men stopped momentarily—once, then a second time, glancing back at her before starting downhill. Sarah drew close enough to recognize her husband's pony; one of the riders was leading the animal. Glancing over her shoulder, she saw another group of horsemen riding toward her and begged them to stop. She asked where the prisoners had been taken, but the man leading the contingent mumbled an evasive answer. She turned and pointed toward the group ahead. "You are the men, for there is a man leading my pony." The spokesman called to the rider indicated, motioning for him to come back to the hilltop. The two conversed in undertones, then the man led the pony to her. "If it is yours, take it!" he said. She accepted the animal but pressed her case. "Where are the prisoners?" she asked. "My husband is among them." The leader shrugged and replied that he couldn't recognize him among so many. Mrs. Read insisted that she wanted to know where they all were. The man responded evasively before riding down the hill.⁴⁴

Moving westward now, in the direction from which the riders had come, Sarah Read encountered a third group of horsemen. "Whose pony are you leading?" one of them asked. She was still leading the animal, for the saddle was missing and she would have had difficulty mounting the pony, let alone riding it bareback. Sarah returned the man's stare haughtily. "It is my own, sir." "Very well," he responded, and rode on. Several of the men stopped when she asked them to. They conversed with her politely but were unwilling to say much about the captives. Before leaving, one of the Rufians advised her that she might find some of

38. Statement of Mrs. B. L. Read, *La Cygne Weekly Journal*, July

12, 1879. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. Mitchell, *Linn County*, 205.

42. Statement of Mrs. B. L. Read, *La Cygne Weekly Journal*, July 5, 1879.

tive free-state men toward the Missouri boundary. The Snyder group had fared well against the intruders, but Ely had taken a ball in the fleshy part of a thigh, in addition to several superficial wounds, and he knew that the Hamilton gang was strong enough to take him if it wanted him badly enough. Accordingly, Ely ordered his wife and younger children to seek refuge with one of the neighbors, while the four men took to the brush. A short time later they heard firing—an intense fusillade followed by sporadic shooting that lasted about five minutes. The four stayed in their hiding place, a defensible location at the edge of a dense growth of underbrush. Snyder soon saw a lone man approaching and brought his gun to bear on him, waiting to see whether he was friend or foe. As the man drew closer he recognized him as Austin Hall, who had been at the blacksmith shop with his plow that very morning. Knowing nothing of the ordeal which Hall had survived, Snyder hailed him. “What are you doing here without a gun?” Hall told his story to Snyder and his men, assuring them that the Border Ruffians had withdrawn to Missouri. On their way to the massacre site the five men passed Snyder’s shop, finding a team and wagon waiting for the blacksmith. Upon learning of the emergency, the wagoner volunteered his services.⁴³

Sarah Read was exhausted and emotionally drained as she climbed out of the ravine to do her husband’s bidding. After gaining higher ground, she made her way in a southeasterly direction, along the side of a long ridge, hurrying as best she could. In the valley at the end of the ridge was a house. Her call for assistance was rudely declined by a proslavery man who called himself a “friend to good law in society.” Continuing on her way, she encountered Old Man Hairgrove’s young grandson. After assuring the youth that his father and grandfather had survived the shooting, she asked him to take her pony and ride to Sam Nichols’ house for assistance. He leaped astride the animal and galloped away. Next, she met Mrs. Ely Snyder and her children, who were returning to their cabin near the blacksmith shop. Mrs. Snyder had sought sanctuary with neighbors, but the people were proslavery and had turned her away. She feared that her husband and son might be among the slain. Alone again, she pushed onward, disconnected thoughts rushing through her mind: a slave child torn from its mother’s arms; a slave husband sold away from his wife and children; brave men lying on the ground, life’s blood oozing from their wounds. Slavery, she thought, was nothing but a source of heartache.⁴⁴

She found Mrs. Colpetzer as well as the two Hair-

grove women at Old Man Hairgrove’s farmstead. Mrs. Colpetzer was shattered to learn of her husband’s fate but recovered quickly, offering her wagon and oxen to help the wounded. The four women put containers of water, bedclothes, and other necessities on the wagon and started for the ravine. Initially, they had difficulties with the oxen, but Mrs. Colpetzer’s twelve-year-old son soon caught up with them and took control of the animals.⁴⁵

Arriving at the grisly scene, they found the five dead men (Ross, Stillwell, Colpetzer, Robertson, and Campbell, who died shortly after Hall’s departure) and Charles Snider, who was severely wounded. The remaining four had gone into the timber in search of water. Sarah Read gave Snider a drink and covered him with a sheet to protect him from the burning sun, then stood for a moment with Mrs. Colpetzer next to the lifeless form of her husband William. Before accompanying the younger Mrs. Hairgrove into the timber, Sarah brushed the flies away from the dead and covered the faces with hats. The younger Mrs. Hairgrove quickly found her husband Asa, and Sarah came upon Old Man Hairgrove and Amos Hall. The elder Hairgrove was faint from loss of blood, but he told her that Rev. Read had discovered that he could walk and guessed that he had made his way to one of the nearby farmsteads.⁴⁶

In the meantime, Ely Snyder’s group arrived at the massacre site and helped load the wounded on the Colpetzer wagon. When the women had started on their way to Trading Post with the wounded, Snyder and the others loaded the dead on the other wagon. Free-state men were already gathering at the Nichols farm when the Hairgrove boy arrived on Sarah Read’s pony with news of the massacre. Several of the men rode out to escort the women and the wounded. Others rode on toward the massacre site. The injured men were taken to a cabin near the Nichols farm, where they were treated by physicians, while the dead were laid out in a vacant house, also located in the vicinity of the Nichols place.⁴⁷

Sarah Read searched the timber fruitlessly, then made her way back toward Hairgrove’s. She was near exhaustion when the wagon carrying the dead picked her up. The driver prepared a seat for her in the

43. Snyder, *Personal Experiences*, 7–8.

44. Statement of Mrs. B. L. Read, *La Cygne Weekly Journal*, July 12, 1879.

45. *Ibid.*

46. *Ibid.*; and Read to Brown, *La Cygne Weekly Journal*, July 5, 1879.

47. Snyder, *Personal Experiences*, 8–9; and Mitchell, *Linn County*, 206.

lition and about twenty others, all of whom had been driven from Kansas Territory by Montgomery, had returned to Linn County to "look after and protect their property." Arriving at Trading Post, Hamilton seized a number of Montgomery's men, who informed him that a company of thieves (presumably the main body of Jayhawkers) were holed up at Ely Snyder's place. Hamilton disarmed and released the prisoners when they agreed to return to their homes. But the Jayhawkers failed to keep their word; instead, they went to a nearby house and partially rearm, then took a shortcut to the Snyder place and took positions from which they could ambush the Hamilton band if it attempted to attack the blacksmith shop. Unaware of the Jayhawker skulduggery, Hamilton proceeded to a point in the vicinity of Snyder's where he split his force and approached the shop from two directions. When one of the converging elements received fire from the ambushing Jayhawkers, Hamilton maneuvered his entire force into the attack and defeated the bushwhackers handily, killing about ten of them. In the meantime, the "thieves" stationed at Snyder's place made good their escape.⁵²

Opposed to the foregoing were reports that appear to have been reasonably accurate. Three weeks after the massacre, the *New York Times* published lengthy witness statements by Rev. and Mrs. B. L. Read and Old Man Hairgrove that thoroughly discredited the pro-slavery version. Many Northerners were outraged, especially the abolitionists.⁵³

The abolitionists elevated the massacre victims to the status of martyrs. John Greenleaf Whittier, a charter member of the American Antislavery Society who had been associated with William Lloyd Garrison since the 1820s, paid tribute to them in his poignant poem "Le Marais du Cygne," which was published in the *Atlantic Monthly* in September 1858. There is no evidence to indicate that any of the victims were abolitionists, however. To the man, they appear to have been moderates—free-staters who simply sought to pattern their society on the agricultural states of the Old Northwest rather than the slave-based plantation economy of the South. Nonetheless, they preceded John Brown to abolitionist martyrdom.⁵⁴

John Brown had long been the friend and ally of Montgomery. He may indeed have welcomed the massacre in the sense that it gave the abolitionists a current issue. When he learned of the bloody incident he came to Linn County and, using the name Shubel Morgan,

wagon box, situated in a manner that allowed her to face away from the bodies, then took her to the Nichols farm. Later, she received confirmation that Rev. Read was indeed alive—that he had taken refuge with persons who were hiding in the timber. Sarah rode on horseback to find him; it took her until 11:00 P.M. After resting for a few hours, she rode for help, returning in the morning with two physicians. The doctors treated Rev. Read's wounds and drove him to his farmstead.⁴⁸

William Stillwell's body was taken to Mound City for burial, but Ross, Campbell, Colpeizer, and Robertson were buried side by side in a mass grave located on Timbered Mound, a hill just north of Trading Post. The wounded recovered quickly. Old Man Hairgrove's injuries were still tender when he shocked newspaper reporters some three weeks later by arguing in favor of slavery as a "moral institution."⁴⁹

Montgomery was out of the county at the time of the massacre but returned that evening. When he learned of the atrocity, he assembled the Jayhawkers and joined with other Linn County groups. A combined force of more than two hundred crossed the border in a fruitless pursuit. Montgomery later mounted a punitive expedition, harassing proslavery men living in the vicinity of Leecompton.⁵⁰

In May 1858 the Leecompton constitution was still alive—a last-ditch effort to compromise on the slavery issue in Kansas Territory—but little hope remained for the proslavery cause. The Marais des Cygnes Massacre undermined what was left of that hope, for it was repudiated by many proslavery persons on both sides of the border. The proslavery *Leavenworth Herald* spoke for them when it called the atrocity "one of the most diabolical and fiendish outrages which has ever been chronicled . . . in Kansas." Taking Montgomery's operations into account, the editor observed that "no principle of retaliation can justify [the Hamilton band] in such cowardly acts of murder."⁵¹

On the national scene, the Marais des Cygnes Massacre raised the pitch of the sectional controversy, arousing great indignation in the North. The early reports were garbled and contradictory. The version of the incident that was circulated in proslavery circles apparently caused elation in the South. Captain Ham-

48. Statement of Mrs. B. L. Read, *La Cygne Weekly Journal*, July 12, 1879.
49. Mitchell, *Linn County*, 206, 208; *Leavenworth Times*, June 5, 1858.
50. *History of the State of Kansas*, 1105; and Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border*, 104.
51. *Leavenworth Herald*, n.d., reprinted in *Herald of Freedom*, Lawrence, June 5, 1858.

52. *New York Times*, May 28, 1858, 5.
53. *Ibid.*, June 9, 1858, 2.
54. *Atlantic Monthly* 2 (September 1858): 429–30.

LE MARAIS DU CYGNE.*

A BLUSH as of roses
 Where rose never grew!
 Great drops on the bunch-grass,
 But not of the dew!
 A taint in the sweet air
 For wild bees to shun!
 A stain that shall never
 Bleach out in the sun!

Back, steed of the prairies!
 Sweet song-bird, fly back!
 Wheel hither, bald vulture!
 Gray wolf, call thy pack!
 The foul human vultures
 Have feasted and fled;
 The wolves of the Border
 Have crept from the dead.

From the hearths of their cabins,
 The fields of their corn,
 Unarmed and unweaponed,
 The victims were torn,—
 By the whirlwind of murder
 Swooped up and swept on
 To the low, reedy fen-lands,
 The Marsh of the Swan.

With a vain plea for mercy
 No stout knee was crooked;
 In the mouths of the rifles
 Right manly they looked.
 How paled the May sunshine,
 Green Marais du Cygne,
 When the death-smoke blew over
 Thy lonely ravine!

In the homes of their rearing,
 Yet warm with their lives,
 Ye wait the dead only,
 Poor children and wives!
 Put out the red forge-fire,
 The smith shall not come;
 Unyoke the brown oxen,
 The ploughman lies dumb.

Wind slow from the Swan's Marsh,
 O dreary death-train,
 With pressed lips as bloodless
 As lips of the slain!
 Kiss down the young eyelids,
 Smooth down the gray hairs;
 Let tears quench the curses
 That burn through your prayers.

Strong man of the prairies,
 Mourn bitter and wild!
 Wail, desolate woman!
 Weep, fatherless child!
 But the grain of God springs up
 From ashes beneath,
 And the crown of His harvest
 Is life out of death.

Not in vain on the dial
 The shade moves along
 To point the great contrasts
 Of right and of wrong:
 Free homes and free altars
 And fields of ripe food;
 The reeds of the Swan's Marsh,
 Whose bloom is of blood.

On the lintels of Kansas
 That blood shall not dry;
 Henceforth the Bad Angel
 Shall harmless go by:
 Henceforth to the sunset,
 Unchecked on her way,
 Shall Liberty follow
 The march of the day.

* The massacre of unarmed and unoffending men in Southern Kansas took place near the Marais du Cygne of the French *voyageurs*.

John Greenleaf Whittier paid tribute to the massacre victims in "Le Marais du Cygne," published in the September 1858 Atlantic Monthly.

recruited a defense company and built a "fort" next to Ely Snyder's shop. Old Man Hairgrove joined the company, spending many days with the famous abolitionist during the summer of 1858; the two men apparently got along well. If Hairgrove was proslavery, he was definitely anti-Border Ruffian. In any case, the situation remained quiet, for the Marais des Cygnes Massacre had engendered a distaste for violence on both sides. Montgomery sensed the change; in July, the newspapers reported that he had returned to his fields.⁵⁵

Men like John Brown were no longer relevant to the free-state cause but, as a militant abolitionist who behaved in the manner of a monomaniac, Brown was insensitive to the altered Kansas mood. When the defense company disbanded he departed Linn County temporarily, returning during the autumn with several of his abolitionist cohorts. In December 1858, using Linn County as a base, he launched a two-pronged raid into Missouri, freeing eleven slaves. Brown led one raiding party himself, spiriting ten slaves into Kansas without spilling blood, but his subordinate

Aaron Stevens, who led the second party, killed a slaveholder in the process of liberating one person. Brown, of course, received credit for the "dreadful outrage"; both President Buchanan and the Missouri governor saw to it that rewards were offered for his apprehension.⁵⁶

Brown responded by writing his famous "parallels." He wrote the message at the home of his friend Augustus Wattles in Moneka, Linn County, but dated it at Trading Post to divert suspicion from Wattles and the Franklin County persons who were providing sanctuary for members of his abolitionist group and the liberated slaves. In the document, he compared his Missouri raid to the Marais des Cygnes Massacre, expressing astonishment that the same authorities had made no determined efforts to "ferret out and punish" the Hamilton band. Brown could have pointed to another parallel, that of his own exploit on Pottawatomie Creek in 1856 and the Marais des Cygnes Massacre, for both incidents involved the brutal murder of five

55. Moody, "Marais des Cygnes Massacre," 220-21; and *Leavenworth Journal*, July 8, 1856.

56. *History of the State of Kansas*, 1104; and Stephen B. Oates, *To Purge This Land with Blood: A Biography of John Brown* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), 261-62.

tory a final time in August 1858. The English Bill promised substantial federal land grants to the new state in return for voter approval, but the electorate turned down the bribe overwhelmingly at the polls. The rejection of Lecompton delayed statehood for Kansas, but it ended the slavery controversy. The situation remained quiet during 1859, providing an appropriate climate for the formulation of the free-state Wyandotte constitution, under which Kansas was finally ushered into the Union in January 1861.

Years After, 1800-1859 (1910; reprinted Garden City: Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1929), 679-80.

unmarried men. In any event, he mailed copies of his parallels to the *Lawrence Republican* and the *New York Tribune*. Eleven months later John Brown hanged at Charlestown, Virginia (now Charleston, West Virginia), following his conviction for treason in connection with the abortive raid on the Harper's Ferry arsenal; his friend and lieutenant Aaron Stevens met a similar fate in March 1860.⁵⁷

The Lecompton constitution, sweetened by the English Bill, was submitted to voters in Kansas Terri-

⁵⁷ *History of the State of Kansas*, 1104; Oates, *To Purge This Land*, 263, 356-58; and Oswald G. Villard, *John Brown: A Biography* (Fifty

John Brown's Parallels

Trading Post, Kansas, Jan., 1859

GENTS:—You will greatly oblige a humble friend, by allowing the use of your columns, while I briefly state two parallels, in my poor way.

on the plantation as a tenant, and who was supposed to have no interest in the estate. We promptly returned to him *all we had taken*. We then went to another plantation, where we freed five more slaves, took some property, and two white men. We moved all slowly away into the Territory for some distance, and then sent the white men back, telling them to follow us as soon as they chose to do so. The other company freed one female slave, took some property, and, as I am informed, killed one white man (the master) who fought against the liberation.

Now for a comparison. Eleven persons are forcibly restored to their *natural and inalienable rights*, with but one man killed, and all "hell is stirred, from beneath." It is currently reported that the Governor of Missouri has made a requisition upon the Governor of Kansas for the delivery of all such as were concerned in the last named "*dreadful outrage*." The Marshal of Kansas is said to be collecting a posse of Missouri (not Kansas) men, at West Point, in Missouri, a little town about ten miles distant, to "enforce the laws." All pro-slavery, conservative Free-State and doughface men, and Administration tools, are filled with holy horror.

Consider the two cases, and the action of the Administration party.

Respectfully Yours,
JOHN BROWN

Lawrence Republican, January 13, 1859

Not one year ago, eleven quiet citizens of this neighborhood, viz.: Wm. Robertson, Wm. Colpetzer, Amos Hall, Austin Hall, John Campbell, Asa Snyder, Thos. Stillwell, Wm. Hairgrove, Asa Hairgrove, Patrick Ross, and B. L. Reed, were gathered up from their work and their homes, by an armed force [*sic*] under one *Hamilton*, and without trial or opportunity to speak in their own defence, were formed into a line, and all but one shot—five killed and five wounded. One fell unharmed, pretending to be dead. All were *left for dead*. The only crime charged against them was that of being Free-State men. Now, I inquire, what action has ever, since the occurrence in May last, been taken by either the President of the United States, the Governor of Missouri, the Governor of Kansas, or any of their tools, or by any pro-slavery or Administration man, to ferret out and punish the perpetrators of this crime?

Now for the other parallel. On Sunday, the 19th of December, a negro man called Jim, came over to the Osage settlement, from Missouri, and stated that he, together with his wife, two children, and another negro man were to be sold within a day or two, and begged for help to get away. On Monday (the following) night, two small companies were made up to go to Missouri and forcibly liberate the five slaves, *together with other slaves*. One of these companies I assumed to direct. We proceeded to the place, surrounded the buildings, liberated the slaves, and also took certain property supposed to belong to the estate.

We however learned, before leaving, that a portion of the articles we had taken belonged to a man living

The Execution of William Griffith

In the aftermath of the Marais des Cygnes Massacre the free-state newspapers demanded that the murderers be punished with death, "especially the leaders," but the Hamilton band faded into the landscape. According to rumor, the three Hamiltons had returned to Georgia. Linn County authorities soon learned that one of the marauders, Charles Matlock, was in Bates County, Missouri, boasting about killing Kansas abolitionists. A Linn County posse quickly rode into Bates County and arrested him. Amos Hall's wounds were still healing, but he joined the posse. Linn County had no jail, so Matlock was held at Ely Snyder's place for a time, then taken to the county seat at Paris to face a grand jury. In Paris, an inattentive guard allowed Matlock to escape, and he was never recaptured. In any event, the grand jury brought a first-degree murder indictment against the entire Hamilton band.⁵⁸

William Hairgrove was sixty-one when Fort Sumter fell, too old to enlist in a volunteer regiment, but the Linn County militia welcomed him. In the spring of 1863, a series of disorders in the city of Leavenworth caused the commander of Fort Leavenworth to declare an emergency. Hairgrove's militia unit was called into service at the fort to help enforce martial law in Leavenworth County.⁵⁹

One day Hairgrove traveled to Parkville, a town located twenty miles south of Leavenworth on the Missouri side of the river. In Parkville, he recognized William Griffith, the man who had stolen his mules on the day of the massacre, five years before. Hairgrove returned to Fort Leavenworth and reported the matter to his commander, who was also from Linn County. The officer ordered a sergeant and a squad of soldiers to accompany Hairgrove back to Parkville to arrest the Missourian. The detachment seized Griffith without difficulty and promptly turned him over to Linn County civil authorities.⁶⁰

At the time of the Marais des Cygnes Massacre, William Griffith lived in Bates County, but he was frequently seen at Fort Scott in the company of Brockett and other Border Ruffians. A former Jayhawker who knew him recalled that people on both sides of the border considered him "a stupid, ignorant, and harmless kind of a man." Griffith attended the Papinsville meeting and had consumed his share of the whiskey

before being swept up in the excitement generated by Hamilton's speech.⁶¹

When arrested by the militiamen at Parkville, Griffith had made it known that he wanted to hang. At the arraignment in Linn County, he entered a guilty plea and asked to be executed immediately, but Judge Thatcher refused to accept the plea. Instead, he appointed two able lawyers to defend the accused man and ordered that the case be tried. The attorneys based their defense on the Amnesty Act of 1859, which had been passed by the legislature to end recrimination relating to border warfare. The law forbade prosecution of all crimes stemming from "political difference of opinion" during the preceding four years. The massacre appears to have been exactly such a crime, but the prosecution maintained that it was a vendetta. In any case, the Amnesty Act meant little under the circumstances, for the Civil War had revived the border skirmishes on a grand scale.⁶²

Griffith admitted being with the Hamilton band, helping with the arrests, and stealing Hairgrove's mules, but he attempted to mitigate his guilt by claiming that he had been posted elsewhere at the time of the shooting. His story was plausible, for it is unlikely that the stolen horses and mules were led into the ravine, and Hamilton probably posted sentinels before he entered it. Several massacre survivors were called as witnesses, but it appears that none, save Old Man Hairgrove, could definitely place Griffith at the massacre site. The jurors deliberated for three hours before bringing in the guilty verdict.⁶³

The sheriff held Griffith in a vacant building to await his October 30 execution date, heavily guarded by Linn County militiamen. The prisoner smoked and drank coffee with his guards, maintaining an attitude of careless good humor. There were undoubtedly some who would have relished lynching Griffith, but Mound City residents lavished kindness upon him during his brief period of waiting. Three clergymen administered to him spiritually. The Reverend Mr. Goodright, pastor of the Christian church, may have had a slight upper hand in the soul-saving, for on October 21, Griffith made a profession of faith and Rev. Goodright baptized him by immersion. The ceremony reportedly brought tears to the eyes of many witnesses and left Griffith "weeping like a child."⁶⁴

61. *Ibid.*; and Charles E. Cory, "The Soldiers of Kansas: The Sixth Kansas Cavalry and Its Commander," *Kansas State Historical Collections*, 1909-1910, 11:229.

62. Bailey, *Border Ruffian Troubles*, 42; *Kansas City Daily Journal of Commerce*, October 8, 1863; and Kansas Territory, *General Laws*, 1859, ch. 104.

63. *Kansas City Daily Journal of Commerce*, October 8, 1863.

58. *Leavenworth Times*, May 29, 1858; and Mitchell, *Linn County*, 108-9.

59. Smith, article from *Mound City Clarion*, n.d., reprinted in Mitchell, *Linn County*, 211-13.

60. *Ibid.*

nal and Old Man Hairgrove drove the hatchet deep into the post, severing the rope. As the box of anvils crashed to the ground, Griffith was yanked sharply into the air, falling back suspended. One of the mill-tiamen fainted.⁶⁸

Griffith's guards and other Linn County citizens collected money to pay for the coffin and for transporting it to Parkville. They oversubscribed the goal, enabling them to present Mrs. Griffith a cash gift of more than thirty dollars. On the day following the hanging, a wagon driven by the Reverend Mr. Terrill left Mound City, bound for Parkville, with Mrs. Griffith, her baby, and the walnut coffin aboard.⁶⁹

Reflections

There are questions concerning the Marais des Cygnes Massacre that may never be satisfactorily answered but should nevertheless be considered. First and probably most important, was vengeance the motive behind the Hamilton raid, or was it intended to further the proslavery cause? Hindsight tells us that the proslavery cause was indeed a lost one by May 1858—that the free-state majority in the territory was clearly destined to have its way. Charles Hamilton, at the time, would probably have disagreed. Proslavery federal appointees still held critical positions in the territorial government, and statehood under the Le-compton constitution was a possibility until its final defeat at the polls in August 1858. Moreover, pro-slavery majorities in Linn and Bourbon counties might have petitioned for annexation to Missouri when Le-compton failed to carry the territorial vote. Hamilton and others of his persuasion probably considered the struggle for political control of the southern border counties well worth the effort.

A second question, intertwined with the first, concerns Hamilton's intentions when he entered Kansas Territory on May 19, 1858. Virtually all who have contributed to the literature on the massacre have assumed that homicide was his original purpose—that he intended to round up free-state men and murder them. There is no doubt that he planned to seize captives, but it is unlikely that he intended summarily to execute them. When Border Rufians under George Clarke raided Linn County in 1856, captive free-state men were taken into Missouri, tried before a kangaroo court for infractions of the proslavery version of "law and order," then ordered not to return to Kansas Territory under pain of death. Hamilton probably held similar intentions. Apparently, members of the raiding

During the final week, Mrs. Griffith came to Mound City. She left four small daughters with friends in Parkville but brought her three-month-old baby. A prominent local family took the frail woman in, caring for her and the infant hospitably. Sheriff C. S. Wheaton allowed Mrs. Griffith free access to her husband; she spent virtually all of her waking hours with him.⁶⁵

October 30, 1863, was a beautiful autumn day. When Griffith walked from the building into the sunlight with his guards, he found a team and wagon waiting in the street and three companies of uniformed militia in parade formation. He climbed into the wagon and seated himself on a walnut coffin. Two of his spiritual advisors, Rev. Josiah Terrill, United Brethren, and Rev. William Hobbs, Baptist, joined him in the wagon; the Reverend Mr. Goodright, it appears, remained behind to console Mrs. Griffith. The soldiers marched to the rhythm of a beating drum as the procession moved up Main Street to the edge of town, then across Big Sugar Creek and into a grove of trees; the grove was crowded with hundreds of spectators. When the procession halted at the scaffold, Griffith climbed down from the wagon, calmly removed his coat, and ascended the steps to the platform.⁶⁶

He reportedly showed no emotion when he saw the scaffold, but the gruesome device must have caused him anxiety. Two upright posts with a crossbeam rose ten feet above the platform. A box of anvils, weighing about four hundred pounds, was suspended by a rope from one of the posts. The hangman's noose hung from a pulley at the center of the crossbeam, with the other end of the rope tied directly to the box of anvils. Sheriff Wheaton nervously read the death warrant, then offered Griffith an opportunity to speak. The condemned man humbly thanked the sheriff, the mill-tiamen, and the citizens for their many kindnesses.⁶⁷

A few minutes later, Griffith stood in a shroud with his arms and legs bound; a black cap had been pulled over his face and the noose adjusted snugly about his neck. Standing next to the box of anvils was a man in military uniform with head uncovered, his long white hair flowing down over the collar of his coat. In his hand he held a sharp hatchet, poised to cut the rope that held the weight; he watched Sheriff Wheaton intently. At 1:07 P.M., Wheaton gave the sig-

64. Ibid., November 3, 1863; and Smith, article from *Mound City Clarion*, in Mitchell, *Linn County*, 213.
65. *Kansas City Daily Journal of Commerce*, October 8, 1863; and Smith, article from *Mound City Clarion*, in Mitchell, *Linn County*, 213.
66. Smith, article from *Mound City Clarion*, in Mitchell, *Linn County*, 213.
67. Ibid., County, 214.
68. Ibid.

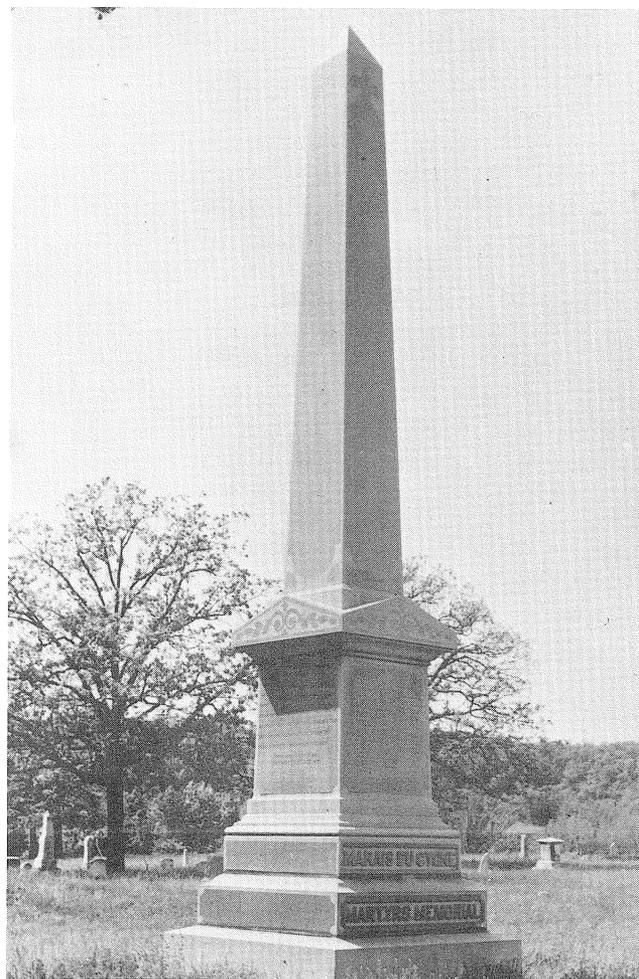
69. *Kansas City Daily Journal of Commerce*, November 3, 1863.

party were unaware of plans to shoot captives, for they were reluctant to fire on them. Recall that Hamilton issued the command to begin firing several times, then squeezed off the first shot himself to get his men started. One might conclude that they were incredulous—that they were unwilling to believe what they were hearing. Moreover, if he had planned to massacre his captives he would certainly have taken Fort Scott Brockett into his confidence, for Brockett was a trusted lieutenant who was no stranger to violence. But Brockett's remarks at the time of his desertion indicate that he might have thought better of joining the foray if he had known that helpless men were to be gunned down.

The summary execution of the captives can be explained. Ely Snyder's repulse of the attack on the blacksmith shop did more than superficially wound Hamilton with buckshot; it injured the arrogant Georgian's pride—angered him. Perhaps the prisoners paid the price for Snyder's successful defense. Moreover, pursuit by Montgomery's band must have been a major concern, for Hamilton had spent several hours in the vicinity of Trading Post. The firing at Snyder's blacksmith shop could have revealed his location; time was running out. The captives, marching on foot, had become an encumbrance impeding a timely withdrawal from the territory. To release them without a trial would have been an admission of defeat; shooting them was the alternative. Anger and expedience, then, appear to have been the immediate reasons for Hamilton's decision to murder his victims.

But why was the marksmanship of the Hamilton band so poor? The Border Ruffians fired at their victims point-blank, at a range of not more than twenty-five feet, and six of the eleven victims survived. The explanation may be twofold: first, the Ruffians fired from horseback; second, some of the shooters were probably reluctant. A horse can be an unstable firing platform and the opening shots could have spooked some of the animals, causing subsequent shots to go awry. Evidence concerning the reluctance of the shooters has been discussed previously. Brockett's desertion at the crucial moment probably increased that reluctance. Some of the Ruffians might have followed Brockett when he left the edge of the ravine, but Hamilton's leadership was a force to be reckoned with. Still, if the situation soured Brockett, it must have been equally revolting to at least a few of the others; their shooting could have been deliberately inaccurate.

The fact that authorities failed to seek out the Hamiltons and return them to Kansas for prosecution is troublesome. But it would have been virtually impossible to obtain the cooperation of slave-state govern-



Four of the massacre victims were reburied at the Trading Post cemetery under this monument.

ments during the period immediately following the massacre, because of the sectional conflict between North and South, and out of the question after passage of the 1859 Amnesty Act by the territorial legislature. The Amnesty Act was ignored during the war, as demonstrated by the trial and execution of William Griffith, but it remained on Kansas statute books and would have rendered post-Civil War attempts to extradite the Hamiltons ludicrous. In any event, it appears that Kansas authorities made no such attempts.

William Griffith emerged as a scapegoat during the Civil War, at a time when the fires of border warfare had been rekindled and were burning hotly; his execution probably did much to sate the public appetite for vengeance. Griffith's trial and conviction were within the legal tradition of the period, but the hanging flagrantly violated the Kansas statute governing procedures for such events. According to the law, executions were to be conducted "in a private enclosure,"

Asa was living in Del Norte, Colorado, when he died. Amos Hall moved to Virginia City, Montana, where he became a banker and a prominent citizen. His brother, Austin, remained in the vicinity of Trading Post during his lifetime, prospering as a merchant and miller. Rev. B. L. and Sarah Read became respected citizens of Osawatimie, Kansas. Ely Snyder and his family also settled in Osawatimie.⁷¹

The four who were buried on Timbered Mound rested in their common grave for some thirty years before their coffins were disinterred and reburied in the cemetery at Trading Post under a suitable monument. William Stillwell's body remains at Mound City in accordance with the wishes of his wife, Mrs. Stillwell moved to Indiana but returned to Mound City occa-

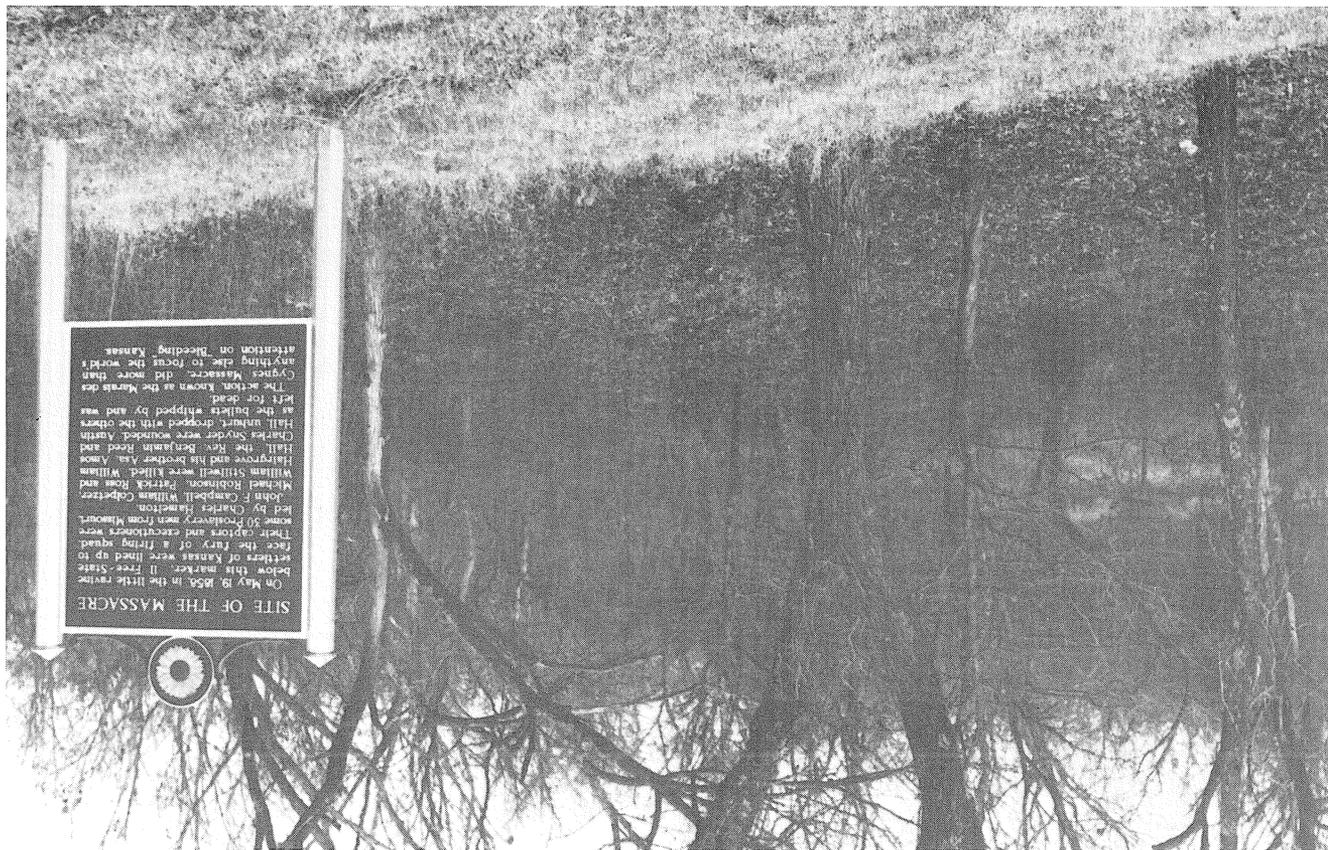
70. *General Laws of the State of Kansas, 1862*, ch. 32, secs. 241-54; *Leavenworth Daily Conservative*, May 6, 1863; and *Leavenworth Evening Bulletin*, May 6, 1863.

71. Snyder, *Personal Experiences*, 9; *Missouri County Republican*, June 7, 1889; Mitchell, *Linn County, Kansas State Historical Collections, 1907-1908*, 10:269; and *Register of Deeds*, Book A, 320-21, Linn County, Kansas. An account of the case *Hairgrove v. Hamilton*, et. al. can be found in Jackson v. Latta, 15 Kansas 217-21 (1875).

and persons in attendance were limited to a prescribed number of officials and witnesses; in other words, public executions were strictly forbidden. William Griffith's execution, conducted in public, was a vainglorious attempt to ape a pompously ceremonial hanging performed some five months earlier at Fort Leavenworth. The latter affair, however, was conducted under military jurisdiction, so the laws of the state did not apply.⁷⁰

Epilogue

The six massacre survivors recovered their health. Charles Snider returned to his home in Illinois when his injuries were sufficiently healed. Old Man Hairgrove and his son Asa moved to Wilson County after the Civil War. Asa Hairgrove was already participating in county politics at the time of the massacre, and he went on to serve a successful term as auditor of the state of Kansas, an elective office. The Hairgroves sued the Hamilton brothers and twelve other members of the band for damages in district court and obtained judgments of several thousand dollars, thus acquiring Charles Hamilton's Linn County property. The elder Hairgrove lived out his years in Kansas, but his son



Today a historic marker at the site recounts the events of the Marais des Cygnes Massacre.

sionally to visit her husband's grave. A newspaper reporter who interviewed her during one such visit recalled many years later that she was a "slight, delicate and very pretty woman . . . with the gentle dignity of one who has suffered and endured."⁷²

The Hamilton brothers had indeed returned to Georgia after the massacre. Dr. George P. Hamilton joined his aging father at Rome, in Floyd County. According to reports, he soon traveled to Mississippi, where he contracted yellow fever. Whatever the cause, he died in June 1859, less than thirteen months after that bloody day in the valley of the Marais des Cygnes. Algernon S. Hamilton established a law practice in Jones County, his father's birthplace, located south of Atlanta. When the Civil War came he received a captaincy and by 1863 had risen to the rank of lieutenant colonel, commanding the Sixty-sixth Georgia Infantry in the Army of Tennessee. He was badly wounded at the Battle of Franklin in 1864. Franklin was a disaster for the Confederacy, but Al Hamilton received a laudatory comment in his commanding general's after-action report. He returned to his law practice when the Confederacy fell and became one of Jones County's most respected citizens. In 1877, he was elected to the Georgia constitutional convention, following which he served a term in the Georgia Senate. He died of natural causes in 1886.⁷³

In his hasty departure from Kansas Territory, Capt. Charles A. Hamilton abandoned nearly all of his material assets. After an unsuccessful attempt at establishing a plantation in Cass County, Georgia, he failed at a similar venture in neighboring Floyd County. Almost totally insolvent, he applied for bankruptcy. On the day following the court's judgment he departed for Texas, probably with financial assistance from his father. Settling near Waco, he soon established a prosperous plantation and acquired a stable of fine racehorses. During the Civil War, the Texas governor appointed Charles Hamilton to a three-man commission charged with cementing relations between the Confederacy and the Five Civilized Tribes in neighboring Indian Territory (present Oklahoma). Following the war, he joined brother Al in Jones County,

Georgia, where he became a planter and politician. During Reconstruction days, Hamilton and his brother collaborated with other Jones County stalwarts in resisting the "carpetbag" government. Because of his leadership in local affairs, he was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives in 1873, serving one term. Hamilton, who was admired as a sportsman and breeder of fine horses and dogs, presided as master of ceremonies at Jones County fox hunts. Many Georgia gentlemen traveled long distances to participate in those convivial three-day affairs. Always the gracious and genial host, Hamilton loved to tell stories about the cunning fox outwitting the huntsmen and dogs. He was never happier than when racing horses or riding to the hounds. In 1880, he suffered a seizure while on horseback, falling to the ground dead.⁷⁴

Today Kansas sightseers and out-of-state tourists eat their picnic lunches under the whispering boughs of pine trees in the state park located on the formerly bald hilltop that overlooks the site of the Marais des Cygnes Massacre. Following lunch, they walk to the rock shelf from which Hamilton's men gunned down their captives; there, they read the inscriptions on the monument that commemorates the tragedy. Before leaving the park, most will visit the museum in the restored cabin near the sites of John Brown's fort and Ely Snyder's blacksmith shop. KH

74. Williams, *History of Jones County, Georgia*, 60–63, 170, 538–41; Rice, "Capt. Charles A. Hamelton," 466–67; Rice to Moody, in "Marais des Cygnes Massacre," 209–10; *History of the State of Kansas*, 1106; *War of the Rebellion*, ser. 4, vol. 1, 322–25; Military Records, 1846–1848, file 1, GDAH; Hamilton to Crawford, September 25, 1847, GDAH; and *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Georgia, 1873*, 5.

According to some reports, Charles Hamilton received a colonelcy during the Civil War and commanded a Texas volunteer regiment in Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. Those reports are erroneous, for Hamilton's name does not appear in the Army of Northern Virginia's order of battle; nor does it appear in any Confederate army's order of battle. Reports of Charles Hamilton's activities in Jones County, Georgia, during the postbellum years usually use the honorific title "Captain," the rank he held during the Mexican War.

72. *Linn County Republic*, May 28, 1897.

73. Carolyn White Williams, *History of Jones County, Georgia, for One Hundred Years, Specifically 1807–1907* (Macon: J. W. Burke Co., 1957), 24, 45, 185, 194, 358, 441, 538–40, 544, 549; Battey, *History of Rome and Floyd County*, 1:631; Civil War Service Record, LTC Algernon S. Hamilton, Sixty-sixth Georgia Infantry, microfilm, GDAH; *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1890–1901), ser. 1, vol. 28, 2:328; vol. 31, 3:885; vol. 32, 2:588; vol. 45, 1:686–87; Rice, "Capt. Charles A. Hamelton," 466–67; and *Journal of the Senate of the State of Georgia, 1878*, 331.