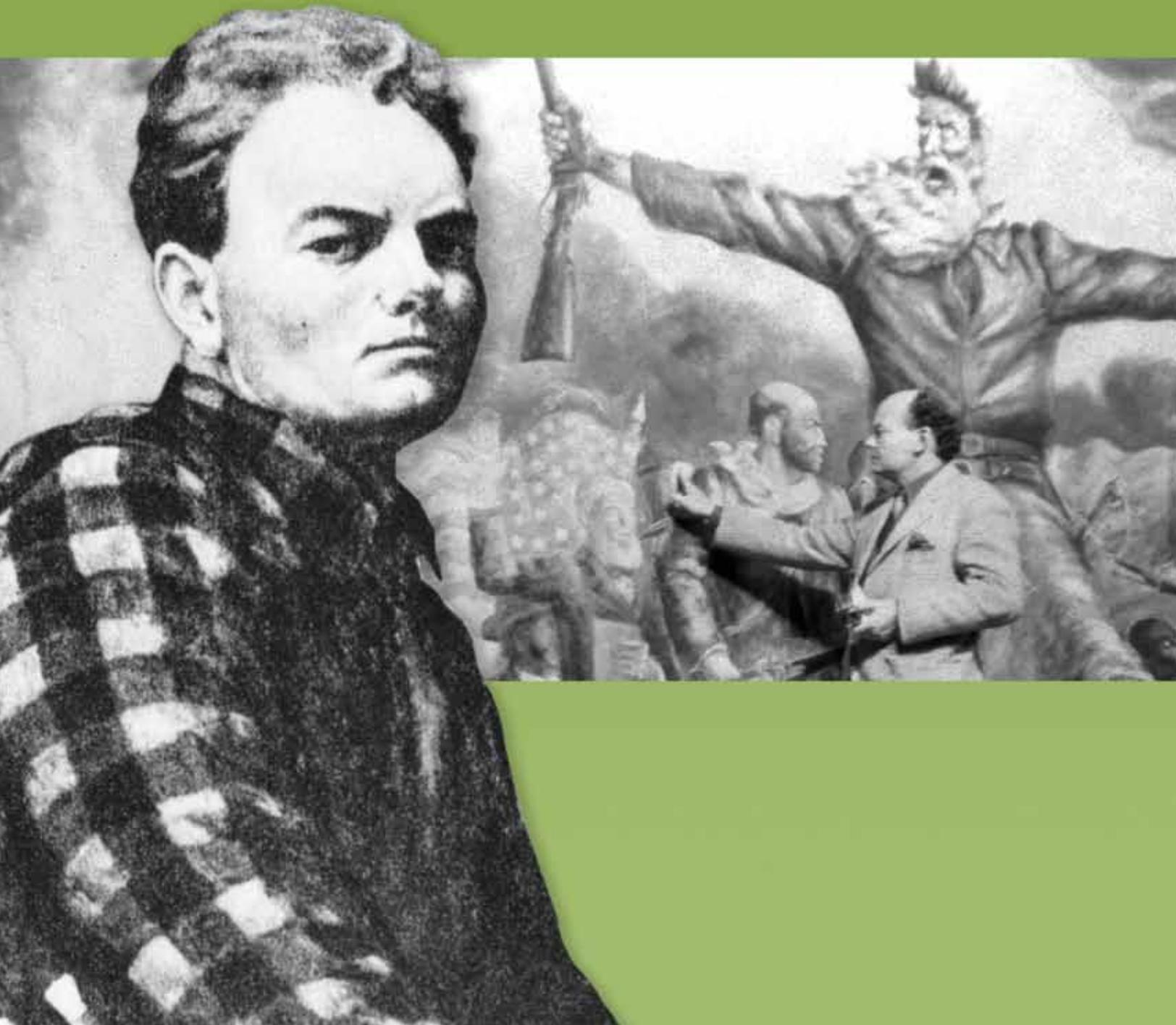


Autumn 2013

Reflections

A publication of the Kansas Historical Society and the Kansas Historical Foundation



REAL PEOPLE. REAL STORIES.

Autumn 2013

VOLUME 7, NUMBER 4

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On the cover: John Steuart Curry created the mural *Tragic Prelude* at the Kansas State Capitol, among the most well-known public art in the nation. Curry was selected as one of the 25 Notable Kansans in 2011.

Reflections

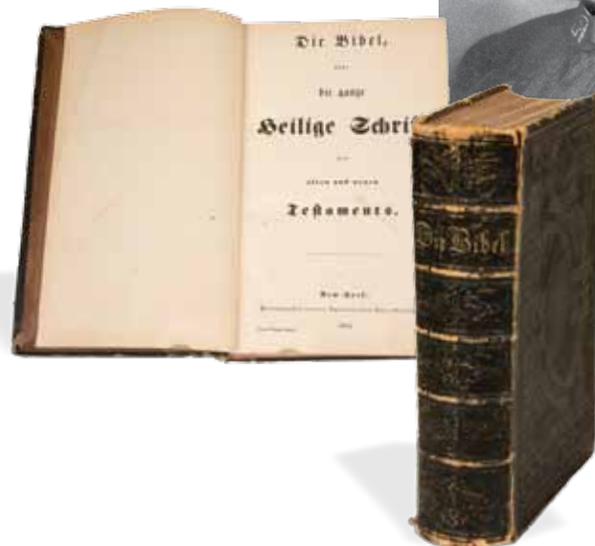
The Kansas Historical Society comprises five divisions and many different programs that serve the people of Kansas. This issue highlights a program in the Kansas Museum of History.

Museum Collecting Efforts

The collection of the Kansas Museum of History contains more than 118,000 objects, and each helps tell the story of Kansas history.

The Museum obtains artifacts by donation or collecting efforts. When an artifact is offered for donation, the item is evaluated to determine if it has a compelling connection to Kansas history and if it fills a void in the collection, either in geographic location or in subject matter. If it meets the criteria, the object is accepted into the collection.

A descendent of John Bromell Marshall recently offered for donation a family Bible printed in German. Marshall was a member of the Queen’s Own Guard Band in his native England. He immigrated to Canada before moving to Kansas. In Topeka in 1884 he organized a band that still performs today as Marshall’s Band. The Bible was accepted because the Historical Society collection has few Bibles printed in German and because of its association with the Topeka band leader.

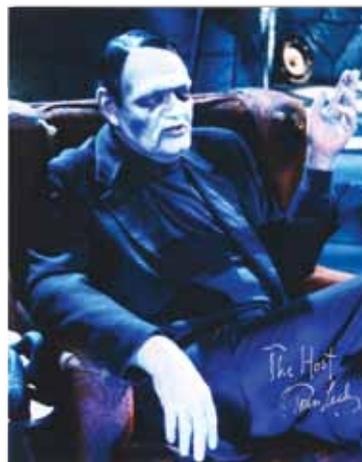




Previous page, although Marshall's family was from England, his family's Bible was printed in German; left, the photograph of a family picnicking circa 1905 was among items received during a collecting effort in Gray County.

The Historical Society conducts collecting efforts in different ways. A staff member might identify communities that are not well represented in the collections. Public collecting events have been held in those circumstances to invite people to bring items for consideration. An event was held in Gray County, which resulted in many donations of photographs and other items.

Staff members also contact communities to fill the collection voids. To broaden the collection of radio and television objects, staff members contacted the estate of broadcast personality Tom Leahy of Wichita. Leahy was Major Astro, the host of a children's program. He also portrayed The Host, who with Rodney introduced horror films on Wichita television. Leahy's family donated memorabilia, including a NASA jumpsuit worn by Major Astro, a suit jacket worn by The Host, and a moon landing painting created by Leahy. For more information about these collecting efforts, contact 785-272-8681.



Right, one of Leahy's space paintings, his Major Astro uniform, and photograph of him as The Host, were recently donated by his family.

Kansas State Capitol: Glorious Once More

The people who planned the future Kansas State Capitol had a great vision. They wanted to create a grand structure that would symbolize their pride in Kansas' tumultuous path to statehood. Here on the untamed frontier, in an undeveloped city, they took a leap of faith to create a huge structure for all state business. It would take more than 37 years, from 1866 to 1903, to complete their dream.

*The Capitol as it appeared in 2004
with Ad Astra atop the dome.*



The building committee selected architectural plans by Edward Townsend Mix of Wisconsin, but hired John G. Haskell of Lawrence as statehouse architect. Haskell was asked to modify Mix's plans. With great ceremony ground was broken in fall 1866 on the east wing, using a quarry in Shawnee County, where the stone was accessible.

The Stone is yellow limestone, and under the skillful manipulation of the workmen, presents a beautiful appearance. It rests in the northeast corner of the building. . .

—Topeka Weekly Leader, October 18, 1866

The yellow/brown stone foundation failed to harden; after a harsh winter in 1867 the stone had crumbled. They turned instead to limestone from Geary County, light gray and buff in color. Stone from Cottonwood Falls would be used for other portions of the building. The legislature appropriated one section at a time: east wing, west wing, and south and north wings and main building.

By December 1869 the east wing was completed enough for state government offices to move into the space. The state legislature convened for the first time in the statehouse in 1870. When the wing was completed in 1873, it was the largest building in the state.

Work on the west wing was begun in 1879 and was yet underway when the house convened in 1881. Completed by the end of the year, the west wing was connected to the east wing by a protective walkway, often called the "Cave of Winds."

Construction on the south wing began in 1883, along with work on the north wing and main building. While this construction was underway, remodeling began in the east wing to complete the ornate Senate Chamber, which had originally been subdivided for the two legislative bodies.

In 1892 portions of the south wing were occupied. Finish work on the space for statewide elected officials was completed in 1896. The north wing and main building, including the dome, were generally completed in 1903, however, the north portico construction would continue until 1906.

The original building committee wanted to highlight the state's history through murals, statues, fountains, and memorials. Artists were hired as the building space was completed and continued throughout the 20th and into the 21st centuries. Read more about one of these artists, John Steuart Curry, on page 8.

Throughout the building's history, restoration work has been undertaken several times. Originally designed to utilize skylight, the remodeling, subdividing, and drop ceilings had made the building dark. Historic features were altered, obscured, and removed.

By the end of the 20th century portions of the statehouse were in poor condition. The mechanical and electrical systems needed updating, parking and safety

were major concerns. In 1999 a multiyear restoration project was begun to address the needs. Two levels of underground parking and four underground systems vaults were created. The interior spaces were carefully analyzed, documented, and returned to their original appearance between 1903 and 1917. An additional project replaced the copper from the dome and the roof.

That multiyear restoration is nearly complete. Visitors will enter through the new ground level visitor center. They will view intricate stenciling, bronze, gold leaf, and other fine details. They can once again climb to the top of dome, where new shiny copper has been installed. The magnificent statehouse is preserved for future generations to enjoy the original visions.

Clockwise from top left, the east wing of the Capitol in 1898 showing tree lined driveways and paved walkways; this bond, signed by Governor Samuel Crawford, was among those issued in 1867 to fund construction of the Capitol; the restored Senate Chamber as it appears today; an artist completes gold leaf detailing in the Senate Chamber.



Capitol Visitor Center

The final project of the multiyear restoration included the visitor center. The Kansas Historical Society administers the Kansas State Capitol Tour Center, which moves to the ground level at the completion of construction in January 2014.

Visitors will also enjoy new exhibits created by the Historical Society, which has spent the last year in planning and preparation. Highlighting the cultural and geographic diversity of Kansas, the exhibits will provide a history of Kansas' road to statehood, the story of the building, and its role as the center of state government. Tours will once again have the chance to climb to the dome.

In support of the Historical Society's expanded role and opportunity at the Capitol, the Foundation allocated

a one-time investment of more than \$100,000 in unrestricted funds from the reserve to be used primarily for product development but also to assist with the state agency's commitment.

"We greatly appreciate the Foundation's generosity in investing in the visitor experience at the Capitol," said Jennie Chinn, executive director, Kansas Historical Society. "The new space and role offers an invaluable opportunity for us and without the Foundation's support we would have been unable to take full advantage of this project."

Open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, historic tours and dome tours will both be offered.



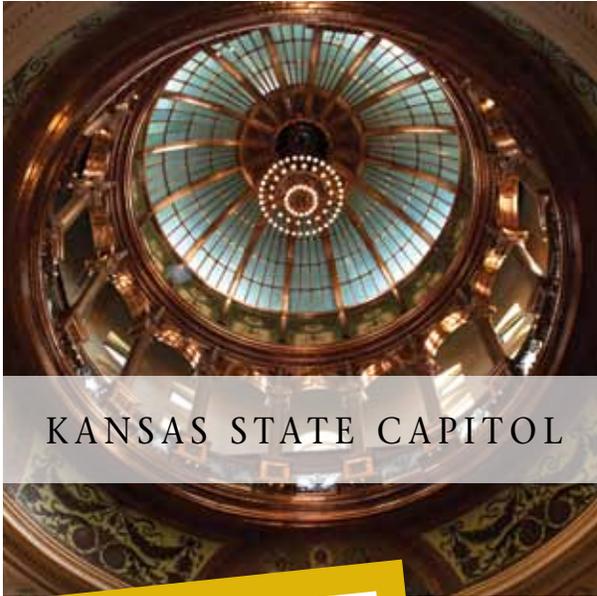
An architect's rendering shows the visitor center on ground floor, the information desk, door to an adjoining classroom, and archways to exhibit space. Illustrations courtesy Treanor Architects.



Capitol Store

The Capitol Store is moving to new larger space on ground level in January 2014. Once a satellite of the Museum Store, this beautiful new facility, operated by the Foundation, is positioned near the entrance where all will enter the building. The store will greatly expand its products with a focus on Kansas made and Kansas

inspired, highlighting Kansas artists from around the state. In addition, the Foundation is producing its own books and gifts, including copper jewelry and collectibles made with copper from the Capitol. Please visit our new Capitol Store and discover what Kansas has to offer!



KANSAS STATE CAPITOL



New products for the Capitol Store include our own commissioned jewelry, one of a kind jewelry, and other gifts made from copper removed from the Capitol; the Kansas State Capitol photographic history, and Kansas A to Z for young readers. An architect's rendering provides a view of the concept for the new ground floor space. Illustration courtesy Treanor Architects.

“Purity and Peace”: Kansas Woman’s Christian Temperance Union

Mary Evelyn Dobbs grew up in Marion, Kansas, amid a family supportive of prohibition. After obtaining her teaching degree, Dobbs taught school for 11 years. Soon she was one of thousands of women involved in the Kansas Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU).

Dedicated to ending the availability and ills associated with liquor, the Kansas WCTU followed the national logo and motto: a white ribbon for purity, peace, and protection of the home. The national organization was founded in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1874, with Frances Willard as the first president.

In Kansas women helped to organize a national camp meeting at Bismarck Grove near Lawrence in 1878 and founded the state organization. The following year Bismarck Grove hosted a national convention. State members actively promoted a constitutional amendment on prohibition. It passed in 1880 making Kansas the first state to ban the sale of alcohol.

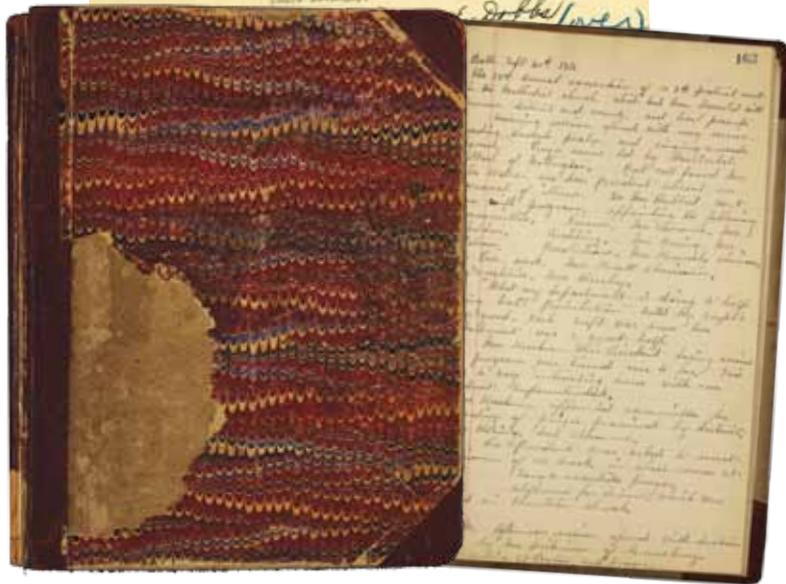
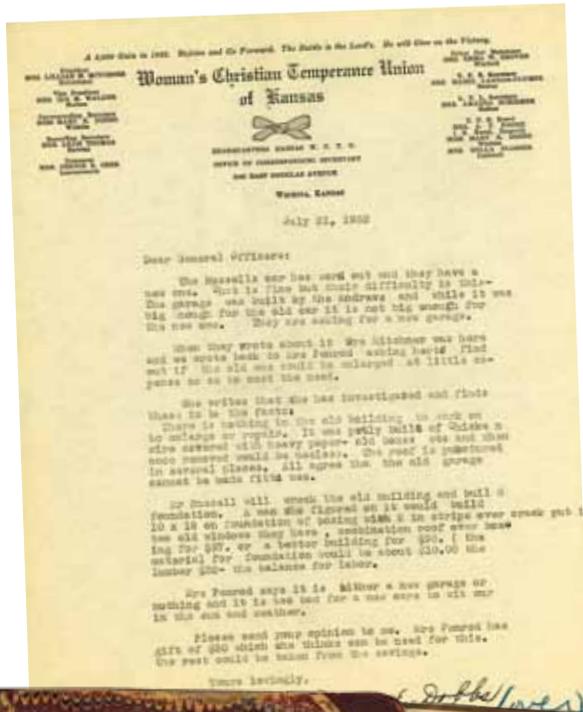
Dobbs was elected president of the Kansas WCTU’s third district in 1897. Ten years later she was elected state corresponding secretary, a position she held for 32 years. During much of this time Dobbs oversaw the state headquarters in Wichita, served as a lobbyist for the Kansas WCTU at the state legislature, and was frequently a delegate to the national WCTU meetings. She was also a trustee of the Kansas WCTU Carry A. Nation Home for elderly women in Kansas City, Kansas.



Top to bottom, Mary Evelyn Dobbs; first national temperance camp meeting held at Bismarck Grove near Lawrence, Kansas, 1878.

The Kansas WCTU donated many of its materials to the Kansas Historical Society, including records during Dobb's tenure as corresponding secretary from 1907 to 1939. These materials also include five volumes of memorial books, which range in date from 1941 to 1992 and contain members' biographical information and

photographs. Pamphlets, songbooks, and handbooks, including "Friendly Talks" brochures in English, German, Swedish, and Norwegian-Danish, also provide more details about the organization's activities. Issues of the Kansas WCTU's newsletter, *Our Messenger*, span from 1886 through the current day.



Clockwise from top left, letter from Mary Evelyn Dobbs, 1932; Lillian Mitchner, right, president of the Kansas WCTU with Lilla Day Monroe; Henry Worrall created this watercolor for the WCTU, 1884; these bound volumes contain district records of the Kansas WCTU.

John Stuart Curry

John Stuart Curry created one of the most recognized works of public art, *Tragic Prelude*. The mural at the Kansas State Capitol, featuring John Brown at the center of the struggle of Bleeding Kansas, stands as a prime example of Curry's regional style.

Curry was born November 14, 1897, near Dunavant, Kansas, to Smith and Margaret (Steuart) Curry. He grew up with an appreciation for art, sketching the horses and cattle on his family farm. After high school he attended art institutes to further develop his skills.

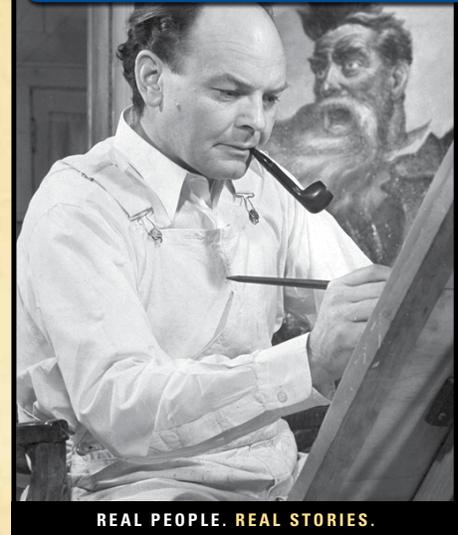
Magazines like *Boys Life*, *St. Nicholas*, and *The Saturday Evening Post* hired the young Curry as an illustrator. He married Clara Derrick in 1923. Inspired by the realists, he went to Paris in 1926 to study the masters like Honoré Daumier, Titian, and Peter Paul Rubens.

Curry's fame grew after his 1928 mural *Baptism in Kansas* was purchased by the Whitney Museum of American Art. After his wife's death in 1932, Curry traveled with the Ringling Brothers Circus, documenting circus life in his work. In 1934 Curry married Kathleen Gould.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison invited Curry to become artist in residence. He was hired to create murals for the Department of Justice building and the Main Interior Building in Washington, D.C. His reputation as a regional artist grew and in 1937 a group of Kansas newspaper editors promoted him to create murals at the Kansas State Capitol.

Curry planned three murals for the second floor of the Capitol: *Tragic Prelude* in the east wing, *Kansas Pastoral*, depicting the contributions of farm families, in the west wing; and eight panels in the rotunda on the life of the homesteader. While the public watched Curry work, controversy arose over his subjects and

John Stuart Curry – 1897-1946



how they were portrayed; his request to remove some Italian marble from the rotunda was refused. With great disappointment, Curry refused to sign the murals and ceased work in summer 1942.

He returned to Wisconsin where he continued his work and teaching. Curry died August 29, 1946, in Madison, Wisconsin. He is buried in Winchester, Kansas.



Top, preliminary sketch of panels planned for the rotunda; above, preliminary sketch of *Tragic Prelude*.

Representative Hall Doors

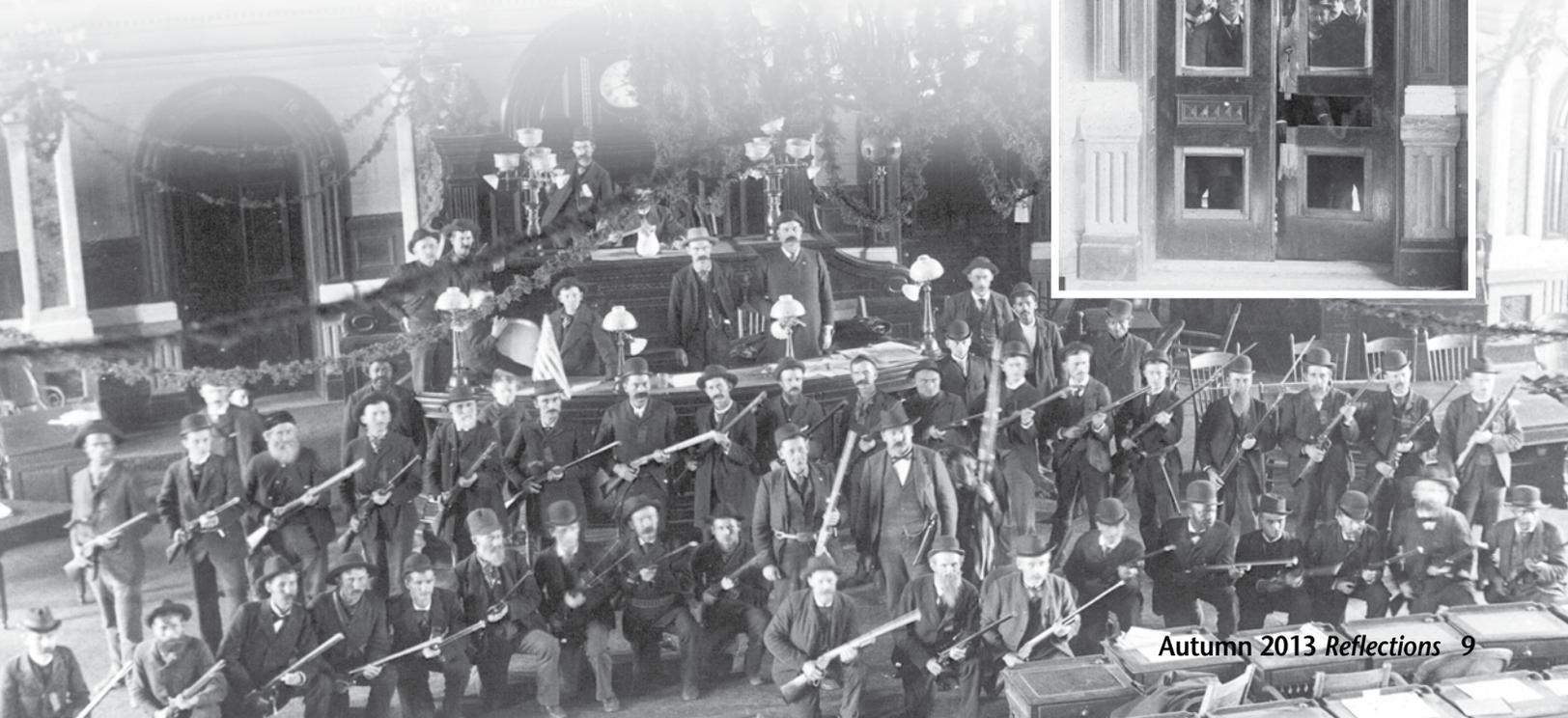
These doors to Representative Hall in the Kansas State Capitol once stood between the Populists and the Republicans, during the legislative war of 1893.

In the election of 1892 the People's or Populist Party fought against corrupt politicians and big business. The party succeeded with winning the governor's office, four congressional seats, and controlling the state senate. Control of the house was less clear, with both Populists and Republicans claiming majority and convening their own sessions. Populist Governor Lorenzo Lewelling and the Populist-controlled senate recognized only the Populist house.

After tensions escalated, the Republicans smashed through the locked doors. The Populists were sent to another room to convene. Militia was called from around the state to keep the peace at the Capitol. The Kansas Supreme Court settled the dispute, finding for a Republican majority in the house.

Two of those Republican legislators, John Seaton and Alexander Warner, helped pay for the door replacement and each kept a half door. In 1908 Seaton donated his half to the Historical Society. Warner's son Benjamin carried the half door from Baxter Springs, Kansas, to Maryland, New Jersey, and Connecticut, and eventually donated it in 1924. The doors are on display in the Kansas Museum of History along with the club and picture frame made of door scraps.

From top: Damaged by bats and sledge hammers during the legislative war, the doors are on display in the Museum; legislators peer through the doors following the violence; the armed sergeants-at-arms guard the Republican house after the Populists were removed.



“Far from the jumping off place”: Letters from Ellen Goodnow

In 1855 abolitionists Ellen Goodnow and her husband Isaac moved to Kansas Territory. Ellen exchanged letters with her sister-in-law in Maine, telling about conditions in the territory. She encouraged her sister-in-law Harriet, who was married to Isaac’s brother, William Goodnow, to join her family on the Kansas frontier.

After the Goodnows moved from their native Massachusetts to Rhode Island in 1848, Isaac became involved with the New England Emigrant Aid Society. This organization of abolitionists wanted to ensure that Kansas entered the Union as a free state. Isaac, his brother William, and Ellen’s brother, Joseph Denison, led a colony to Kansas Territory in March 1855; Ellen joined her husband in July.

Written within weeks of arriving at her home on Wild Cat Creek, Ellen’s letter to Harriet described the new land and its opportunities as a free state. “. . . one hundred and thirty miles of the most beautiful road..it is equal to any macadamized in the world,” Ellen wrote. The wagon trains passed by her house heading farther west “to show that we are far from the jumping off place, or from a land deserted by all but Indians. . . two [sic] good for bondage, or for the oppressors rod ever to be raised over it. . . if Satan influences the Missourians to do their best, God will eventually bring their counsels to naught by giving this land to the free.”

By May 1856 Ellen’s letter to Harriet recounted “many vexations that we never had before . . . I find my washing and some of my work a full match for me,” she wrote. “I can say truly that I enjoy life as well here as I ever did any where.” She said the violence along the Kansas-Missouri border

shouldn’t concern Harriet, “. . . for we are to [sic] far from Missouri and to near Ft Riley [sic] to suit their taste. . . I think it will be settled without much bloodshed.”

Ellen also wrote to Isaac when he returned to New England to raise funds for the new settlement. Dated between 1857 and 1859, she provided news and updates on the health status of friends and family members and requests for flannel fabric, woolen socks, a microscope, clock, a bonnet for fall and spring, “one pound of calico pieces at the factory. . . and good shoes gingham or calicos.” Heavy rains in July 1858 produced “2 inches in the rain gauge...six nights in succession...No mails arrived here for more than a week, all the bridges carried off between here and Leavenworth.”

While Isaac was traveling, Ellen oversaw much of the construction work on a new house in Manhattan (now Goodnow House State Historic Site), along with the new



Cased daguerreotype portrait of Ellen Denison Goodnow between 1840s and 1860s.

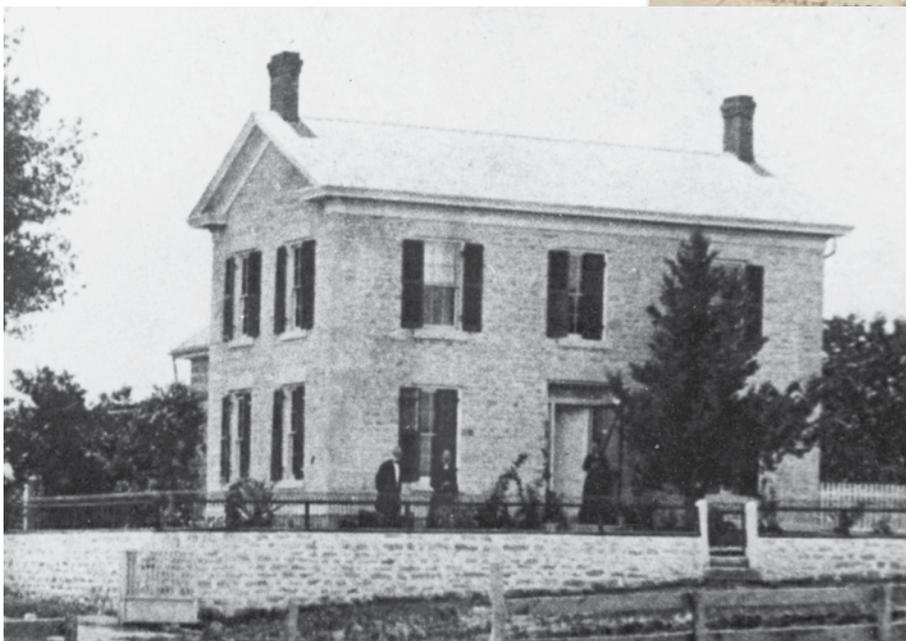
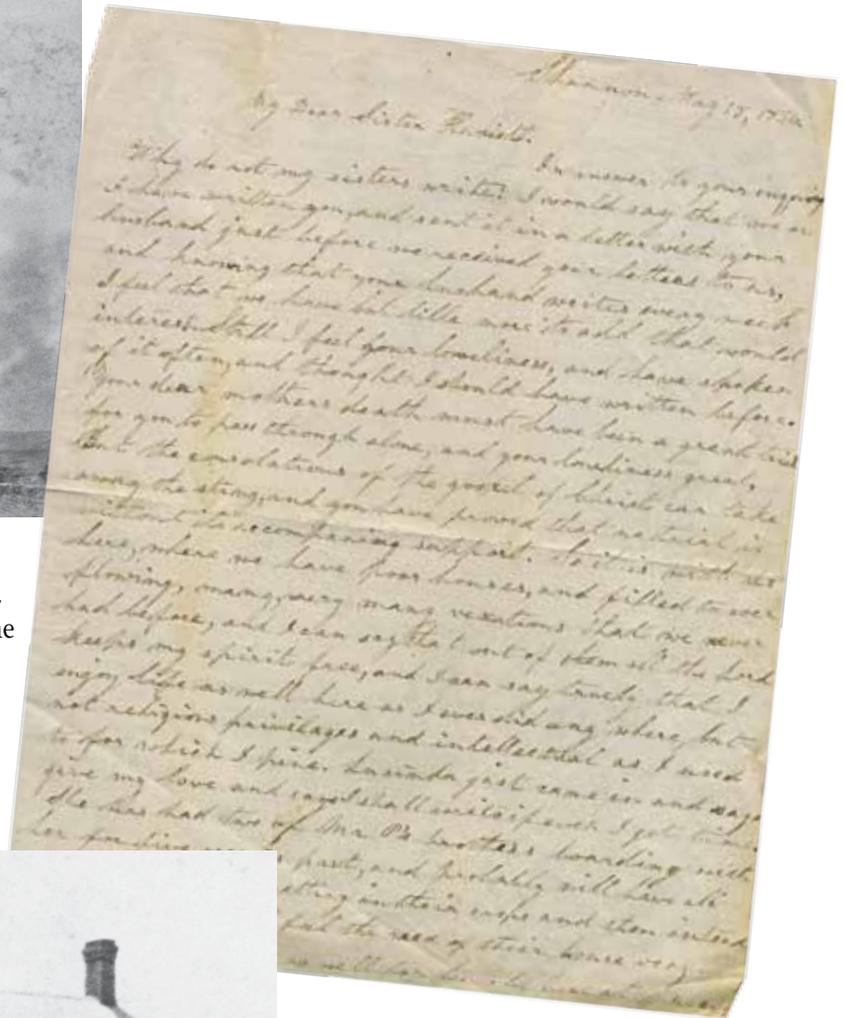
Bluemont Central College (later Kansas State University), which they founded. "The spirit that is in the carpenters is, how much am I going to make out of you," she wrote. "Give me an honest man that wants to earn every cent of his money or not have any."

Ellen and Isaac had no children of their own but adopted Harriet Parkerson, the daughter of Isaac's

deceased sister, and cared for several other nieces and nephews. Parkerson donated a number of Ellen's letters to the Historical Society around 1940. The letters can be viewed online at kansasmemory.org.



Above, Bluemont Central College, now Kansas State University. From Alexander Gardner's series, *Across the Continent on the Union Pacific Railway, Eastern Division, 1867*; right, Ellen's letter to her sister-in-law Harriet, 1856; below, Isaac and Ellen Goodnow's house, Manhattan, circa 1880s, now administered by the Historical Society as Goodnow House State Historic Site.



Hand Carved Wooden Cane

William A. Delapp lived in the Slovenian community of Arma, in southeast Kansas, and operated Delapp Drug Store for many years. Born in Kansas in 1884, Delapp became involved in many of the fraternal organizations in his community.

Delapp had an ornately carved wooden cane showing his many activities and interests. Along with an engraving of name and town, his cane included the date of December 25, 1914. Below the handle is pictured the pharmacist symbol, a pestle and mortar, and initials for Ancient Free and Accepted Masons and Fraternal Order of Eagles.

Robert Puckett, former director of the Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum and a collector of canes, recently donated the item to the Museum.



Clockwise: pestle and mortar, the pharmacist's symbol; square and compass, the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons' symbol; the cane is 32 inches long and one inch in diameter with a rubber cap on the end.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Online at kshs.org/calendar

November 1

Kansas Historical Foundation Annual Meeting • Topeka

November 2

Chili Supper • Grinter Place State Historic Site, Kansas City

November 3, December 1, 2013; January 5, 2014

Bleeding Kansas Characters • Constitution Hall State Historic Site, LeCompton

November 9, December 14, 2013; January 11, 2014

Saturdays by the Grinter Stove • Grinter Place State Historic Site, Kansas City

November 16

Historic Sites Board of Review meeting • Kansas Historical Society, Topeka

December 5

Holiday Open House • Kaw Mission State Historic Site, Council Grove

December 6 – 7

Christmas Past • Fort Hays State Historic Site, Hays

December 7

Christmas at the Adair Cabin • John Brown Museum State Historic Site, Osawatomie

December 7

Holiday Open House • Shawnee Indian Mission State Historic Site, Fairway

December 7

Holiday Open House • Hollenberg Pony Express Station State Historic Site, Hanover

December 14

Holiday Open House • Pawnee Indian Museum State Historic Site, Republic

December 30

Teaching Social Studies in Today's Classroom • Kansas Historical Society, Topeka

January 17 – August 31, 2014

Speaking of Quilts: Voices from the Collection and the Community exhibit • Kansas Museum of History, Topeka

January 26

Bleeding Kansas Lecture – Kansas Day commemoration • Constitution Hall State Historic Site, LeCompton

January 29

Kansas Day commemorations • Kansas Museum of History and Kansas State Capitol, Topeka; some state historic sites • visit kshs.org for details

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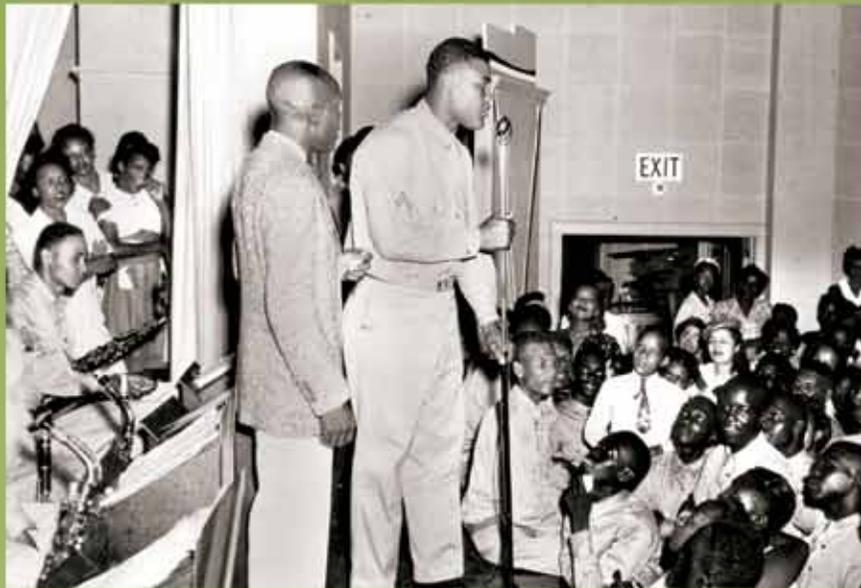
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Kansas Memory

World Heavyweight Champion Joe Louis speaks to military personnel at a recreation center for military and factory personnel in Junction City, circa 1940s. The recreation center was part of the Works Progress Administration. kansasmemory.org/item/209507

