

## Kansas Historical Notes

The Thirty-Fifth Division Association of World War veterans held its twentieth annual reunion in Kansas City, October 19, 20 and 21, 1939. The following officers were elected: Sen. Harry S. Truman of Missouri, president; Mahlon S. Weed, Kansas City, first vice-president; Col. Edmund J. McMahon, St. Louis, Mo., second vice-president; Capt. John A. Ashworth, Topeka, third vice-president; Col. Albert Linxwiler, Jefferson City, Mo., fourth vice-president; Col. Fred W. Manchester, Joplin, Mo., secretary; Capt. Wilford Riegle, Emporia, historian; Harold Powell, Great Bend, sergeant at arms; and Maj. L. Curtis Tiernan, Fort Leavenworth, chaplain.

Plans are under way in Seward county to organize a county historical society. H. D. Massoni, of Kismet, has been assembling a list of persons who have lived in the county thirty years or longer, and is sending out questionnaires for historical information which will be used as a basis for organizing the society.

The Lyon County Historical Society held its annual dinner and program meeting at Emporia on October 30, 1939. Almost three hundred persons attended, including fifty members of high-school societies that have been organized in the ten high schools of the county and affiliated with the county society. The program featured the history of Hartford, and the Rev. E. T. Rice of Oswego, son of the Rev. C. R. Rice, a missionary to the Indians in the 1850's, was guest speaker. The regular annual meeting of the society will be held in January.

Members of the Dickinson County Historical Society met in Abilene November 2, 1939, for their annual meeting. Mrs. Carl Peterson, of Enterprise, was elected president; Mrs. W. C. Bocker, of Solomon, second vice-president; and Walter Wilkins, of Chapman, treasurer. The terms of office of Mrs. A. B. Seelye, first vice-president, and Mrs. H. M. Howard, secretary, hold over until next year.

First step in the organization of a Cherokee County Historical Society was taken on November 6, 1939, when a meeting was held at Columbus and the following temporary officers elected: Mrs. Leah Baird, Columbus, chairman; Miss Bess Oliphant, Columbus, secretary, and Mrs. Grace Burr, Galena, treasurer. A committee consisting of Miss Oliphant, Mrs. Cora Taylor and Mrs. Henry Mitchell was appointed to draft a constitution and bylaws.

The seventh annual meeting of the Douglas County Historical Society was held in Lawrence on November 16, 1939. W. C. Simons,

the retiring president, presided. Reports of the activities of the society during the preceding year were presented, and the following officers were elected to serve during 1940: Robert C. Rankin, president; Miss Irma Spangler, first vice-president; John Akers, second vice-president; Miss Ida G. Lyons, secretary, and Walter Varnum, treasurer. Dr. Edward Bumgardner, W. C. Simons, Allen Crafton, C. E. Beeks and W. H. Morgan were elected to serve three-year terms as directors.

Unveiling of the \$50,000 Lillie Gordon Munn Memorial, a forty-five foot stone frieze with two central bronze figures dedicated to the native sons and daughters of Kansas, occurred at Gage Park in Topeka on December 5, 1939. The ceremonies included short addresses by Dr. Charles M. Sheldon; Kirke Mechem, secretary of the Kansas State Historical Society; Robert Stone, Mrs. Charles Spencer, and Chester Woodward, of the board of trustees of the memorial; Fred M. Torrey of Chicago, the designer and sculptor; Mayor John Scott of Topeka and Glen Archer, representing Gov. Payne Ratner, who accepted the memorial on behalf of the city and state. The day was also the eighty-fifth birthday of Topeka, and the Shawnee county early settlers met for their annual meeting. Helen McFarland, librarian of the Kansas State Historical Society, was the principal speaker. She discussed Shawnee county historic sites. John McKnown, who came to Topeka in July, 1855, for the third consecutive year received the distinction of being the city's oldest settler. New officers elected for the coming year were H. B. Heberling, president, and M. T. Kelsey, vice-president. Florence Eckert, secretary-treasurer, was reelected.

Florence Finch Kelly of New York, who retired in June, 1936, after fifty-six years as a newspaperwoman, died at New Hartford, Conn., on December 17, 1939. Mrs. Kelly came to Kansas from Illinois in 1869, attended the University of Kansas, from which she was graduated in 1881, and began her newspaper work in the summer of 1880 on the staff of the Topeka *Commonwealth*. Subsequently she worked for papers in Oakland, Cal., Chicago, Boston, Troy, New York, and other cities. She was also a novelist, poet and critic. Shortly before her death she published her autobiography, *Flowing Stream* (New York, Dutton, 1939).

In December, 1939, the Kansas division of the Historical Records Survey published in mimeographed form a preliminary "Check List of Kansas Imprints, 1854-1876," comprising 1,594 separate titles of books, pamphlets, folders, broadsides and broadsheets. This volume

is the first exhaustive bibliography of Kansas printing ever to be assembled. The project was inaugurated in the state by the Works Progress Administration on February 1, 1938, and work on the list employed an average of twenty field workers in Kansas, inventorying the holdings of thirty-three Kansas libraries. The project is nation-wide in scope, materials for this volume being drawn from 187 libraries and five private collections in thirty-seven states.

Of the total number of titles in the check-list 1,114 bear definite Kansas imprints, according to the introduction, while 480 lack imprints but are in all probability products of the Kansas press. In addition the list includes twenty items whose origin is unknown but whose content would suggest inclusion in a Kansas list, and sixteen items which bear names of Kansas publishers but are known to have been printed in other states. More than half the titles, 853, were the output of presses in Topeka, Lawrence and Leavenworth. The latter two led in the early period, with totals of 224 and 227, respectively, but after 1865 Topeka took the lead and is represented by 402 items. The only other important printing center before 1877 was Atchison, with forty-nine titles.

From the bibliographer's standpoint Kansas occupies an unusual position among the states, Douglas C. McMurtrie, the national editor, comments: "Anyone examining this list will be struck by the noteworthy holdings of Kansas material in Kansas libraries, a situation which should be, but is not always, found in other states. Almost before the events that gave birth to the state had become history, their witnesses realized the value to posterity of collecting and preserving contemporary accounts, and the Kansas Historical Society was organized in 1875. The result is that of the 1,594 books, pamphlets, and broadsides recorded in this first and admittedly incomplete listing of the products of the Kansas press, all but 200, or 1,394, are in the possession of that institution, over half, 731, of which are apparently unique copies. This does not include the 423 legislative bills forming the last portion of this list, all of which are known only from the copies in that collection. . . ." Other large holdings were found in the libraries of the College of Emporia, the Kansas State College, the University of Kansas, and Baker University. Of the total number of imprints, 92.5 percent are in Kansas collections, only 120 items having been located in libraries outside the state. Eighty-three of these are unique copies, not duplicated elsewhere.

The Historical Records Survey and the American Imprints Inventory, now sponsored by the Kansas State Historical Society, supplied the field workers for the project. Harold J. Henderson is state director.