

# **YESTERYEARS**

A publication of

**The Jefferson County**

**Historical Society**

**October 2025**

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<https://www.jchsk.com/yesteryears> and at [storiesofyesteryears.blogspot.com](https://storiesofyesteryears.blogspot.com)

Established in 1966, the Jefferson County Historical Society (JCHS) connects people to the history of Jefferson County, Kansas by collecting, preserving, and sharing artifacts, materials, and information. The society provides education and research, maintains an extensive genealogy library and an online archive of artifacts, and manages and maintains [Old Jefferson Town](#) history museum, a unique collection of historical buildings from various locations across the county.

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For more information, or to volunteer, contact the Jefferson County Historical Society, P.O. Box 146, Oskaloosa, KS 66066. Contact JCHS for appointments, group tours and events, or chapel reservations: email: [info@jchsk.com](mailto:info@jchsk.com)

### Jefferson County Authors Recognized

The JCHS has had a program in 2024 and 2025 to recognize people with connections to Jefferson County who have written and published books. In 2024 we recognized nine authors: **Helen Dunlap Newton, Fran Borin, Jennifer Binkley-Bostock, Joy Lominska, Linda Williams Jungling, Mable Caldwell, Billy E. Hill, Karl Ramberg, and Emily LeRette.**

This year we have recognized eight authors: **Blake Watson, Julie Rice, Garret D. Tufte, Jim Weishaar, Linda Colvin Funk, James Thomas Crawford Sr., Kim Hurley Andrews, and Delila Mize McCabe.** We have had a good response from the public to our Recognition Award Meetings.

## In Memoriam: Keith Arthur Middlemas

**Keith Arthur Middlemas** of Oskaloosa, Kansas, was born on February 19, 1947, at St. Mary's Hospital in LaSalle, Illinois, the son of **George Middlemas** and **Audrey (Stickney) Middlemas**. He passed away at the University of Kansas Medical Hospital in Kansas City, Kansas, July 1, 2025, at the age of 78, following a brief illness. Keith is survived by his son, **Avi Cohen**.

Keith was a stone mason all his life and erected many stone figures in Jefferson and Douglas Counties and completed some in Kansas City, Kansas, and Missouri. Keith did the stone carving at the Curry Sitting area at Old Jefferson Town. He also set the cap stones from the old courthouse on the OJT grounds.



Keith dedicated his life to craft, thought, and beauty. Over the course of his career, he laid more than 4,000 tons of stone by hand, each piece placed with care, precision, and quiet reverence. He believed in making things that would last forever, not for legacy, but for the endurance of the work itself.

Beyond stone, Keith was a gifted storyteller, an unshakable friend, and a lover of conversation in all its forms. He lived deep in the woods, far from the noise of the world, but the life he built spoke volumes. Known for his wit, generosity, and unassuming brilliance, Keith could speak with anyone, and did, leaving no one a stranger.

Keith had a fixation on building things that would last. Stone was his professional medium, but words were his quiet passion. The Book of Small Humor was the name he gave to a collection of autobiographical stories he carried with him throughout his life. Some he wrote in full, many he simply lived. But all of them bore his signature: dry wit, deep thought, and an unshakable reverence for what was true and what was right.

Below you'll find one of those stories, straight from The Book of Small Humor.

*New Mexico, 1971:*

### A Night in the Sangre De Cristo Mountains

I went to an outdoor bonfire with story-telling, recently, at such gatherings, I usually remain mum. To my surprise I told of camping in the New Mexico mountains with my close pal, Paul, and finding a cave which we inhabited until dawn.

He was afraid of tight places, so sat up all night, tending a fire, smoking cigarettes, perched at the cave's high opening, pine silhouettes beyond, trout stream far below.

I crouched further into the darkness, locating up the left wall, a wee tunnel into which I crawled, dragging my unfurled sleeping bag behind me. Finally, the smooth bore became so tight I resigned myself to sleeping right there, absolute darkness all about. The ceiling was so close I had to compress my shoulders to turn over.

As I fell toward slumber, I kept sensing the tunnel air was buffeting around me, although there was no manmade mechanism to cause such a phenomenon. With a start, it came to me that bats were fluttering just past my face, deeper into some broader room, beyond. Had I set a grapefruit on my forehead, it might've been pinned to the vault. I dwelt upon this for a time, said "How about that!!", and went to sleep.

I had built a three room cabin in a more southerly chain of dry mountains, and Paul was determined to purchase the place since I was returning to Kansas University for a seventeen hour, Intensive Spanish course.

Shortly after our cave campout, he discovered he could not raise the money. He, my great friend, was too embarrassed to admit his situation, so he suddenly, completely vanished. The cabin was easy to sell, but I lost that familiar haunt and one of my best friends within the passage of a few days.

As I related the tail end of my story to the couples surrounding our double set of fires, I admitted aloud, "And I never saw him again...." Even as I thought upon him, the simple joy of our young friendship and how he had vanished forever, my voice cracked, and I had to struggle to keep that cloud of sadness from exposing me as an unmanly sap.

There is an emotional frailty in me, triggered by sentimental affection or lost kinship, which precludes me from holding forth, aloud. I'm given to falling into sudden doldrums when someone's last portrait springs into the continuous and vivid movie, ever running just behind my eyes.

Thus, I must adhere to the written word, as I do now, banging away at the truth from behind closed doors, defended from the view of others. "Stick with the written word, Keith. Send dry pages out so only you know you might have been born, stronger."

My friend, **Paul Nesbitt** of Albuquerque: "We are old men now. Where are you?"

## The Little Stone Building

### Saving the Newell-Johnson-Searle House

By Liz Leech

If **Keith Middlemas** had not called me with an idea for some stones, I doubt Oskaloosa's little 1850s limestone cabin would be on the National Register of Historic Places today.

Keith, a master stone worker and artist, called me in late 2012, I think, when I traveled back and forth to Oskaloosa, my hometown, attending to tasks that follow the death of a parent.

Keith was on the phone telling me that a local man had told Keith he might buy the property at 609 Walnut St. (U.S. Highway 59) to build a new business there. This man proposed bulldozing the formerly stately large frame house that stood in front of an ancient-looking stone building, which he would demolish, as well.

After all the bulldozing was finished, the man wondered, would Keith like to have “**the rocks**” from the demolished stone building?

To me, a demolition like that sounded scandalous. I don't really know how it struck Keith, who died this past July. But from what Keith told me and from what I heard at his uplifting and enlightening memorial, there weren't many things an artist like Keith couldn't do with the right stones. He could read and analyze stones as well as he could read people (very well) and had stone sources just about everywhere, from farmers' fields and friends' hillsides to quarries large and small. So. Keith had called me and told me what I've just told you. He wanted me to come take a look at the building at 609 Walnut St. just north of the Dollar General parking lot. Perhaps, he suggested, he could disassemble the limestone building and re-create it on my family's farmland south of town.

I already knew this place. It was right across the highway from where I grew up. More than 50 years ago I would cross the highway and walk the dirt and gravel lane skirting 609 Walnut St. to get to our horse pastures. I often visited “Mrs. Dr. Stevens” (**Blanche Stevens**, widow of **Dr. Delos Stevens**), the homeowner, who had lots of interesting grandchildren from other Kansas towns, and they were about my age. In fact, my father had grown up with Dr. and Mrs. Stevens' children, making us even closer neighbors.

The little stone building didn't blaze brightly in my consciousness back then. It had simply been there, often covered in vines, and I didn't pay much attention to it. The most interesting thing about it to me was the fact that Mrs. Stevens had attached a chicken coop and yard to the back of the stone building.

I accepted Keith's offer to meet him to look at the little building, about 24 feet by 12 feet large. He was analyzing the stones, their composition, character and arrangement. I took one look and guessed it had been a summer kitchen. I knew someone in Lawrence who had an old summer kitchen behind her old house, and I couldn't think what else this structure, with a cellar below, could have been. A brick chimney climbed the north side of the building, and a stove could have provided for cooking. Summer kitchen; that had to be it. We went with the “summer kitchen” designation for months.

Let me rewind for moment. The reason Keith had called me about the stone building and its potential destruction was this: Keith could take the stone cabin apart stone by weighty stone and reassemble it on our land south of town. He knew that my husband and I had longed to build a small cabin or something out on our family's farm and timber land so we would have a place to stay when we came out from Seattle.

Keith had the encyclopedic knowledge, mega skills, and genius intuition to do this intricate stone work. He would separate each stone from its rough pioneer mortar, number each stone in an exacting system I cannot begin to grasp, and move the lot to a new home. The result would be that every single stone composing a new cabin on our farm would be exactly where it had been in the old stone cabin at 609 Walnut St.

Back in Oskaloosa, Keith was describing how old the building might be. First, he explained that the stone masons who built the structure had used a lime-based mortar, the malleable, rough mortar that pioneers, as well as Romans and Greeks, made with sand, water and lime. This mortar, unlike cement-based mortar, allowed breathing room for the stones to move a bit, and wicked away moisture. Cement-based mortars weren't used much until the late 1800s. And now we had a date to think about: built before the late 1800s.



*This picture, by Stephen Smith, shows Keith Middlemas studying the stone cabin in 2013.*

I spent a lot of time looking at the tiny fossils swimming through the stones of this “summer kitchen.” But **Keith** was more interested in where the stone might have come from. It was locally sourced, he was certain, and it was from the same stratum (layer). (See photograph.) Knowing so many of the stone outcroppings and other stone sources around the county (and Kansas, for that matter), he was surprised that he did not know exactly where these stones were from.



*Post rehab, we can see the many layers, strata, in this stone. Photo by Joshua Dunkin.*

Keith, who created a serene stone birdbath to serve as a headstone on my parents’ graves, once told me bits of his process for choosing the precisely correct stone. “I can tell the vendor where this stone used to live, how it acquired the form we view, how rapidly it cooled when young, and if it has acquired flaws producing deep sadness along the way.”

He looked for limestone on our farm for the birdbath but found only “Big plates of pretty but low-quality limestone on hilltops. Halfway between extremes of elevation are ‘lenticular’ pieces of limestone, much used in fencing but that’s the limit of its value to humans.” (Should I have been insulted?) He combed Kansas quarries and shops for an appropriate piece of granite for the birdbath bowl but found that many boulders “... were not an answer to the question: ‘how happily doth a comely aesthetic meld with structural sweetness?’”

One thing Keith emphasized, and which helped me decide to find out more about 609 Walnut St., was the construction of the building’s

stone walls. Many stone buildings have stones on their outside walls, stone rubble filling in the center of the walls, and another layer of stones on the interior side of the walls. This building had a lot of large stones that went all the way through, outer wall to inner wall, one big stone. “Heavier monoliths would be cumbersome to lay but would also be harder to disassemble by someone intent on doing so,” Keith wrote to me in an update letter once.

The stone walls of this roughly 280-square-foot structure were a monumental 18 inches thick. (The 280 figure represents the ground floor space. The cellar below was about the same size, making the total square footage around 560.) That 18-inch depth might be appropriate for a small two-story building, or a one-story larger stone house. But for a structure as tiny as this one? And for a stone kitchen? Keith found the building’s structure and thick walls to be more fortress-like.

Soon after, maybe on another trip to Kansas, I went to the experts to find out who had owned this land after Jefferson County was opened to settlement in 1854. The women in the Jefferson County Register of Deeds hosted me (tolerated, ever so kindly) countless times for my research. They began checking into the earliest owners for the lot. The aged, hand-written deed books they use go all the way back to the U.S. government patents that granted land to settlers. I was learning that **Jesse Newell** and three of his sons owned more than 600 acres in Jefferson County, Kansas Territory, but these earliest documents didn’t break land holdings down to a 1-acre homestead.

Then the registrar found a document, part of a lawsuit, that gave the explicit land description of the 1-acre homestead. The lot had belonged to none other than Jesse Newell, co-founder of Oskaloosa. That was a surprise. I had never before seen, nor would I ever later find, any historical narratives saying that Jesse Newell had lived there.

Now I wanted pictures but lacked the skill to translate the land description to its place on a map. The legal land description that pinpointed the homestead used the national grid system of sections, townships and ranges, as we do now, but Newell’s further divided the measure of his lot by archaic “rods,” instead of by feet, for example. (A rod is 5 ½ yards.) No way was I attempting to figure that out.

The register of deeds women sent me downstairs to the county appraiser’s office. The appraiser accepted the challenge and pulled up the county’s GIS maps showing aerial images of the county in incredible detail. He translated the rods, calculated the placement of the 1-acre homestead square, and superimposed the square onto the map. And there were the 1850s homestead lot boundary lines on a 2012 satellite image. They framed the very buildings at 609 Walnut St. that Keith and I had been studying.

Never had I considered that this limestone building was an extraordinary remnant from the 1850s. Or that it had existed when Kansas Territory struggled to determine whether Kansas should allow slavery or prohibit it. Oskaloosa had long forgotten where Jesse Newell, who arrived with his family in May 1856, had lived. And worse, I would find later, we had no record of the extent of his courageous free-state and Underground Railroad activities.

Was this Jesse Newell’s stone building? We are certain that it is, although county property tax records from 1858 and on had not recorded it specifically.

When **Jesse Newell** first moved to Kansas Territory in 1856, he lived in a log cabin he bought from another settler. This cabin was in a little hollow, now home to Old Jefferson Town historic site, fewer than 300 yards from the stone cabin.

Within a couple of months of his arrival in Kansas Territory, Jesse Newell's outspoken free state and anti-slavery beliefs brought hostility from slavery supporters. September 1856 would find him writing to Kansas Territory **Gov. John Geary** about attacks by the proslavers against him, friends and family.

"Guerillas" had taken Jesse Newell and a son, **Robert**, from their home and threatened to hang them; they had the rope around Jesse Newell's neck, he wrote. They threatened to hang fellow Oskaloosa co-founder and brother-in-law **Joseph Fitzimmons**. These proslavery partisans had knocked down all of Jesse Newell's fences and destroyed his grain, and they threatened to burn his house and tear down his steam sawmill nearby.

The *Oskaloosa Independent* newspaper didn't begin publishing until 1860 but in that year it reported that Jesse Newell already had a large, two-story house with a business or two on the first floor. Analysts determined that the foundation for the house that later went up on that spot was built around the time the stone cabin was built, and that someone had likely lived in the stone cabin while the larger home was under construction. The stone cabin was estimated to have been of the territorial era, as well, likely 1858.

**Keith**'s observation that the overbuilt stone cabin was capable of serving as a fortress made sense for Jesse Newell's defense against the proslavers bent on driving away a strong freestate man.

**Paula Newell Ellis**, a descendant of Jesse Newell, with some family members, purchased their ancestor's homestead to save it and to help educate Kansans about important, previously unknown history of Oskaloosa and Jefferson County. On the property were the stone cabin and the big frame house renovated from Jesse Newell's two-story home into the elegant home of **Francis Marion Johnson** and his descendants, and later of the **Stevens** family. That big white house was in poor shape, though, and the city had boarded up the windows and doors and declared the house uninhabitable.

In 2017, Paula Newell Ellis won a spot on the National Register of Historic Places for the property, which was dubbed the "Newell-Johnson-Searle House." Acting quickly to save the buildings, she secured a Kansas Heritage Trust Fund grant and got to work on the stone cabin, the older of the two. The work was done in 2021.

The city of Oskaloosa continued pressing the Newells to fix the large boarded-up house or the city would tear it down. I will write an obituary for the house to explain its glory and its demise, but the Newells found the estimated renovation price tag of \$500,000 for a historical restoration to be too much. They brought the house down lovingly, piece by piece, this past summer.

Over the years, Keith and I had visited the stone cabin many times. We had taken to calling it "Mariah," for a young black woman pictured with about 50 women at a party on **Mrs. Francis Johnson**'s roomy porch. **Mariah Burton** was listed in the 1880 U.S. Census as a servant living in the Johnson household.

Did Keith find that limestone strata he wanted to locate for Jesse Newell's stone cabin? He didn't mention it to me if he did. But I think that sometime between 2013 and 2025 Keith likely did set eyes upon that strata.

## Jefferson County Historical Society Centenarians

By **Mary Luse**

It would be nice if people would send those who are in the "Greater than 100 Club" a card for their next birthday. They will definitely enjoy it.

**Rev. Dick L. Edmonds** (birthday **Dec. 13**) writes: "I graduated [from Winchester High School] in '41 and joined the Merchant Marines, sailing supplies to troops in Normandy (two trips across Atlantic to England, then two trips across Pacific up the Euphrates River). Then two trips across the Pacific to the Philippine Islands to an air base and delivered the bombs on Japan. Then back home and retired from military and went to college at Washburn in Topeka to play football. Years have gone by, and I am 101 years old living in a Senior Retirement Home, 7310 N. 127 E. Ave, #9, Owasso, OK 74055."

**Roberta Hagemann** volunteered weekends in the genealogy library. She was a member of the Genealogical Society and is a life member of JCHS. She lives in Restwell Home Plus, 508 Union Street, Oskaloosa, KS 66066. Roberta is doing well. Her birthday is **May 25**. She will be 104 on her next birthday.

**Helen Terry** is a life member of JCHS. She worked a lot at Old Jefferson Town. She cleaned the buildings, painted, and hung wallpaper when needed. Helen celebrated her 103rd birthday on **June 22**. Her health is fairly good. She is now blind but still can hear. She lives at the Lansing Care and Rehabilitation Center, 210 Plaza Drive, Lansing, KS 66043.

## Troublemakers: Champion, Washburn, Jaycocks

(Our emigrant ancestors were troublemakers.)

By Janice Bower Tompkins

My mother, **Margaret Evelyn Bower**, was a Champion right from the first. That is, her maiden name was **Champion**. And her great-grandmother was actually named **Experience I. Champion**—well, her married name. The ‘I’ stands for **Ingersoll**. The Champion name goes back a long way in America—back to the days of what was called the Great Migration, which began about 1620, a decade or so after **William Shakespeare** died. People seem to have left Europe in droves that century; perhaps they felt they had no choice but to go. These folks left England during the reign of **Charles I**, when there was little civil or religious liberty.

Among the emigrants: 19-year-old **Thomas Champion**, who left England in 1634. These emigrants don’t seem to have been poor and starving. In fact, the first settlers on Long Island were well educated and “sensible.” Some of them had left reputable connections in England. Thomas, who traveled on the ship “Hercules” with an unnamed servant, doesn’t seem to have been poor. No, he and Mom’s other ancestors just refused to conform to the local religious authorities back in England in the 1620s and ’30s.

Thomas Champion seems to have settled down with a bunch of religious troublemakers at Hempstead, Long Island. The **Washbournes**, the **Whiteheads**, the **Nicholses**, the **Williamses**, the **Jaycockses**—they were all there at Hempstead, and they all fit into our family tree.

How do we know they were troublemakers? Because most of them (Washbourn, Nichols, Jaycox, Whitehead, and Williams) started out at Stratford, in Connecticut, an English colony, but didn’t stay. When these folks became dissatisfied with their religious lot at Stratford, they decided to begin a new settlement in New Netherland on a barren place called Long Island.

“The Indians had burned the woods in order to clear the land so they could provide food for deer and other wild game,” writes **Ruth Crawley Champion**, a genealogist. “After the settlers purchased the land, they enclosed large tracts so that townspeople could plant crops and pasture stock. Town meetings ordered each inhabitant to provide 20 poles of fence to enclose a common field for corn, plus a common pasture for their calves.”

The Town of Hempstead received its official patent from the Dutch in 1644, after the town was already in existence. The patent, which granted these Englishers liberty to continue to practice their own version of Christianity, also required that these first colonists had to secure 100 new settlers within five years. Thomas Champion was one of the people who accepted the invitation to live in Hempstead in its early days. Our records say that Thomas married a young woman named **Frances Jacocks** at Hempstead, Long Island, in 1642.

She was a daughter of **Francis Jacocks Sr.** (1593-1672), from Stratford on Avon, Warwickshire, England. We have some documented indication that this Francis (the father) might have been a troublemaker because there are statements in the records of the English church. December 13, 1622, a Francis Jacocks was excommunicated by the church court. Just 48 days later, on January 31, 1623, a Francis Jacocks was excommunicated by the church court. Assuming that the church court would not excommunicate the same fellow twice in two months, one of these Francis Jacocks is likely the father and the other miscreant is maybe **Francis Jacocks Jr.**, the son.

(The Jacocks family is a nuisance to genealogists because they kept reusing the names Francis and Frances and William and Thomas. There were at least three Francis Jacocks in a row, and there is some question about which Francis the Hempstead records refer to. The surname Jaycocks has a great many spelling variations, including Jecoxe, Jecokes, Jeacockes, Jaycox, Jacobs, and my personal favorite, Jacax.)

The Puritan migration had begun in the fall of 1629, and more English had followed [Massachusetts Bay Colony **Governor John Winthrop**’s group to America. Francis, Francis, Frances, Thomas and William Jacocks apparently all moved to America about 1635. The Jacocks family doesn’t appear in the burial records or church records of Stratford on Avon after 1634. Frances (the daughter) must have been about 15 when the family emigrated. The youngest brother was eight, the eldest 16. Francis Jaycocks was in Massachusetts in 1635. In 1647 in Stratford, Connecticut, a Jecoxe, probably Francis, was ordered to post bond for £10 “against his continued good behavior.” These were among the English folks who were unhappy enough to move to Hempstead, on an island in New Netherland.

That’s the family that our **Thomas Champion** married into. The Champion-Jecoxe son married into the Washbourne family, another bunch of troublemakers in Hempstead. **William Washbourne**, the emigrant, came from Bengeworth, Worcestershire, England. He was born in 1601 and in 1621 at Bengeworth married either one or two women named **Jane**, both of them born in 1603. William and Jane lived at Bengeworth at least until 1637, when their daughter **Martha** was baptized at St. Peter’s Church. William then probably moved to London for a while before emigrating, as he still owned property in London at the time of his death in “the united colonies” in 1658.

**William Washbourne** came to Long Island with a **Rev. Mr. Leverich**, who was the first minister at Sandwich on Cape Cod, not far from Duxbury, Massachusetts. However, a Champion genealogy researcher, **Ruth Crawley Champion**, says the Washbourne family was Quaker. But some records show him as an elder of the original board of elders of Old First Church of Hempstead, Long Island. How this squares with him being Quaker is unknown to me.

In 1647 at Stratford, Connecticut, **William Washbourne** was one of the 35 men who accepted the invitation of the first Hempstead settlers to join them. He was in Hempstead, Long Island, as early as 1647, when his name appears as a freeholder. The records show that William Washburn, together with his brother-in-law **Dan Whitehead**, **Rob Williams**, **John Washbourne**, and others, purchased land at Oyster Bay in 1653; but William was still an inhabitant of Hempstead in 1654. He was Hempstead's town deputy in 1653. That same year, William Washbourne and a **John Seamen** were representatives to the provincial conference called in New Amsterdam. That is the year that delegates from eight English towns on Long Island met and drew up a protest against "**Peter Stuyvesant's** tyrannical methods."

In Hempstead, William Washbourne is listed as owner of 9.5 milk cows. Apparently he was only part owner of one of the cows. William was back in Stratford in 1655, perhaps on real estate business. He and his son **John Washbourne** were founders of the town of Oyster Bay. John was in Hempstead, while his brother **Hope Washbourne** was in Derby, Connecticut. John's descendants subsequently moved to Chappaqua, New York, and Mt. Pleasant, and were Quakers. Hope's descendants moved to upstate New York.

Next stop for the Champions and Washbournes: Gloucester County, West Jersey, apparently a part of a Quaker migration, attracted some of our ancestors, making them New Jersey pioneers.

During the American Revolution, some of these folks, Quakers or not, were on the rebels' side, according to Ruth Crawley Champion:

"The residents of Waterford Twp. were particularly obnoxious to the British during the Revolution, as Haddonfield was occupied by the British in 1778 and temporarily the Capitol of the Confederacy. The homes north of Cooper's Creek were sacked by foragers. One morning a British officer went to the **John Champion** dwelling and demanded the best horse on the farm. A young, unbroken steed was saddled and the officer mounted, only to be thrown into a muddy pond that intercepted the lane. The angry officer ordered his men to rob the house, then rode away on an old plow horse."

**William Smith**, one of our ancestors, is recognized by the D.A.R. as a patriot. (He may be the reason that my mom's grandfather was named **Smith Champion**.)

The Tuckahoe, New Jersey, area wasn't all Quaker. Head of the River M.E. Church, considered a "cradle of Methodism," was formed in 1781 at Smith's Mill and included some of our Smith, Williams, and Champion ancestors, says Ruth Crawley Champion. **Reverend Joseph Champion**, local preacher and direct ancestor, was one of the organizers. Nearby towns at the time included Williamsburg, Steelmantown, Old Ingersoll, Smith's Mill (all names that appear in our family tree), and Champion's Landing ("now Corbin City").

Smith Champion (**Evelyn Champion Bower's** grandfather) was a grandson of Rev. Joseph Champion (1768-1828) and **Sarah Smith Champion** (b. 1778). Smith was a son of **William Champion** (1799-1875) and **Experience Ingersoll Champion** (1809-1889). These are the folks who left Tuckahoe, New Jersey, and moved west to Sangamon County, Illinois, where they settled near Pleasant Plains, Illinois, before most of their grown children moved on to Jefferson County, Kansas.

The eight children of William and Experience:

**Elizabeth Champion** (1829-1924) married **Cunningham Campbell** and remained in Sangamon County.

**John I. Champion** (1830-1917) married **Sarah Elder** and moved to Lawrence, KS.

**Smith Champion** (1835-1916) married **Nancy Shirley** and moved to Jefferson Co., Sarcosie twp.

**Abel Champion** (1837-1911) married **Mary Myers**, moved to Jefferson Co, then moved on to Oklahoma Territory.

**Mary Ann Champion** (1838-1924) married **Martin Mowry**, moved to St Louis and Colorado, died in Carthage, MO.

**Rachel S. Champion** (1840-1900) married **Horatio Phinney**, lived in Providence, RI.

**Thomas P. Champion** (1842-1934) married **Elizabeth Thompson**, stayed at Pleasant Plains, IL.

**Sarah Maria Champion** (1849-1935) married **Charles Henry Phinney** of McLouth.

(The old-fashioned purple iris that we Bower kids keep moving from state to state with us are "the Champion irises from Illinois." When we move, we say, we take our roots with us in the form of these purple irises.)

## **Narrow Gauge: Ella Hull Fulton and Her Son William Stewart Fulton Recall the L.K. & W. Railroad**

*From the Winchester Star, Feb. 9, 1934*

**By Stewart Fulton**

In the year 1871 there was promoted a railroad, known as the Kansas Central. This was a narrow gauge railroad. The promoters were capitalists and businessmen from Leavenworth. Their names were **Mr. Len Smith**, a **Mr. Dillon**, **Mr. Caldwell** and others which was sure a welcome project by most of this part of the country to furnish transportation for passengers, freight and mail service.

At that time most of the country was settled up and owned by young pioneers, ready and willing to sacrifice and give and take for the good of the country, and when the surveyors came through they were made welcome by most of the people with regard to building the road.

The public spirited men of Winchester behind the movement were: **Squire Wilhelm**, **Lake Clark**, the shoemaker, **Ad Bromley**, **Rev. Dodds**, **Isaac Hull**, and many farmers and their families. The road was to be built from Leavenworth to Holton first. The people sure went to the polls and voted bonds to help build the road.

My uncle, **Joe Fulton**, and my father sold the right-of-way thru their land for \$30.00 for each 80 and were glad to do so; and when the roadbed was built, an Irishman by the name of **James Alexander**, and my father helped to build it from Crooked Creek, west to the top of the hill, where No. 73 Highway is now. They always seemed proud that they had a part in helping to build a railroad, which was to help develop and make a country worth while.

In the '80s the road was extended to Onaga, then to Garrison and Clay Center and later on to Miltonvale.

The engines were all named after builders of the road. The passenger engines were named the "Caldwell" and the "Len Smith," the big freight engine was named the "Dillon."

The engines were fine looking — painted and striped with bright colors with large brass bands around the boiler; drive wheels were painted a bright red with drive rods white. The smoke pipes were built for wood and coal and the headlight was an arc lamp of lantern type. When they were on a siding waiting you would see the fireman with a hand full waste wiping his engine, keeping it clean, and how proud he was of his engine! The first conductors I remember were **Mr. Al Stokes** and **Mr. Hall**. How proud they were of their coaches — keeping them fine and clean — for they were finely finished on the inside.

How we did enjoy being with these men — always pleasant, always had a smile — and a free ride for us boys from Winchester to Boyle — that is, if we got on board and they did not see us; they would take us home and if not running too fast would drop us off in our father's field, and most times we lit all right.

The first engineer was our old friend **Buckflop**, known as "Buck," and his fireman would give us a good long ride in the engine for a gallon of butter milk, and would put us off and see that we would light in the mud, and then laugh at us getting to our feet and wiping the mud out of our eyes. In the winter our joy was to see them buck the snow — sometimes they would be two days getting from Winchester to Boyle.

Sometimes it was the pleasure of father and mother to have Mr. Stokes with them for the night, as his train and engine were stuck in a snowdrift, in our field. The farmers nearby would all get their scoop shovels and help them out; some would join the crowd and work west with them.

When the road was first built there was no telegraph system or operators. I well remember when they built the telegraph line — put in the poles and put up the wire. There were prairie chickens at that time and on a foggy morning they would rise and strike the wire and that meant a chicken for us — if we knew it.



*Kansas Central — Narrow Gauge Train. Valley Falls, about 1885.  
Photo courtesy of Jefferson County Historical Society.*

The first weather service that I remember was out of Leavenworth; as there was no telegraph or phones, we would get the weather report from the side of the passenger coaches. There was a large weather sign about 36 inches square. If it was to rain, it would show a wet moon, if dry weather, a dry moon, and the great argument was whether it was a wet or dry moon, as we did not know the difference, which was which. In those days when the sign in the moon failed us and it seemed that everything was going to dry and burn up, the people would set a day for prayer and ask God for rain.

I shall never forget the men who had a part in keeping up the roadbed. Uncle **James Carney**, to my father and us boys, a true christian friend to his men in his charge, always so kind and pleasant; and when he had a low joint, and there were many at that time in the spring of the year, he would tell his men to jack up the rail and drive a shim, as the tie was so deep in the mud, it was almost lost. Uncle **Billy Barkley** with his snow white hair, how faithful he was and so kind to Mr. and Mrs. Carney and all. He had no family, but a great christian. As he pumped the water for the engines at Crooked Creek, my father and I would go and visit with him. He was a great lover of a good dog and always had one with him, if possible. He was asked one time what kind of dog that was, and his answer was, "he is half Shephard, half Bull and half Newfoundland."

In later years the road was widened out to standard gauge and new men came, new management, new rules, new engineers, new steel rails, from 30 to 70 and heavier. Then we came to know our friends, **Ed Kiernan**, **Eph Bristow**, **Jim Lake**, the conductor, **Buckflop** and **Kiernan**, engineers, and **Brinkerhoff**, general superintendent at Leavenworth, **Mr. Dawson** and **Mr. Hedrick**, men that braved the storms of many a cold night of snow and sleet to keep the trains moving. Always on the job. Some are on the retired list, some are in the great beyond, and some still in the service and many others who helped build the L.K. & W. and helped build up the country and enjoy the many blessings, and when we read, in our local papers, sometimes, in regard to stopping the operation of the road, we ponder and think, is it possible after so many years of faithful service, from the general manager down to the section hand, for over 60 years, can this be.

## **Excursion to Leavenworth by Narrow Gauge**

*From the Winchester Star, June 30, 1933*

**By Ella Hull Fulton**

The 24<sup>th</sup> of June—and it rained.

We always remember the 24<sup>th</sup> of June, 1872, for our railroad had just been completed to Valley Falls, and how proud we were when the little engine came puffing up the hill — the Grasshopper, the **Alexander Caldwell**, and the freight engine, **Sidney Dillon**. We felt we were a part of the great world when we got daily mail and could go east from our own doors, for that seemed to be in the minds of more of our people to go home some day — and home meant Ohio or Indiana. People from Missouri could get up early and ferry across the river and get home the same day.

But this 24<sup>th</sup> of June the railroad sent out word there would be a free ride to Leavenworth for all, so I think every man and boy went between Valley Falls and Leavenworth. There was a small passenger coach for ladies but gentlemen taking their best girl had to ride with the common herd — that meant on flat cars with board seats.

**Doctor Cantwell** and **'Squire Wilhelm** and **John Boyle** and boys were men with the company, and the train did not leave Leavenworth until 11 o'clock, and it rained on them in flat cars until all were soaking wet. The road bed, being new and soft, made traveling by narrow gauge rather uncertain, and a cave-in on the Government Hill kept part of the train back and those who had some money stayed over night and the others got home on the flat cars wet and muddy, but they had a good time. One man's tobacco ran out his pocket; another lost his eggs and the others got a fine ride to Leavenworth and a good wetting, so on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June we look for rain.

*From the Valley Falls Vindicator, Oct. 26, 1934*

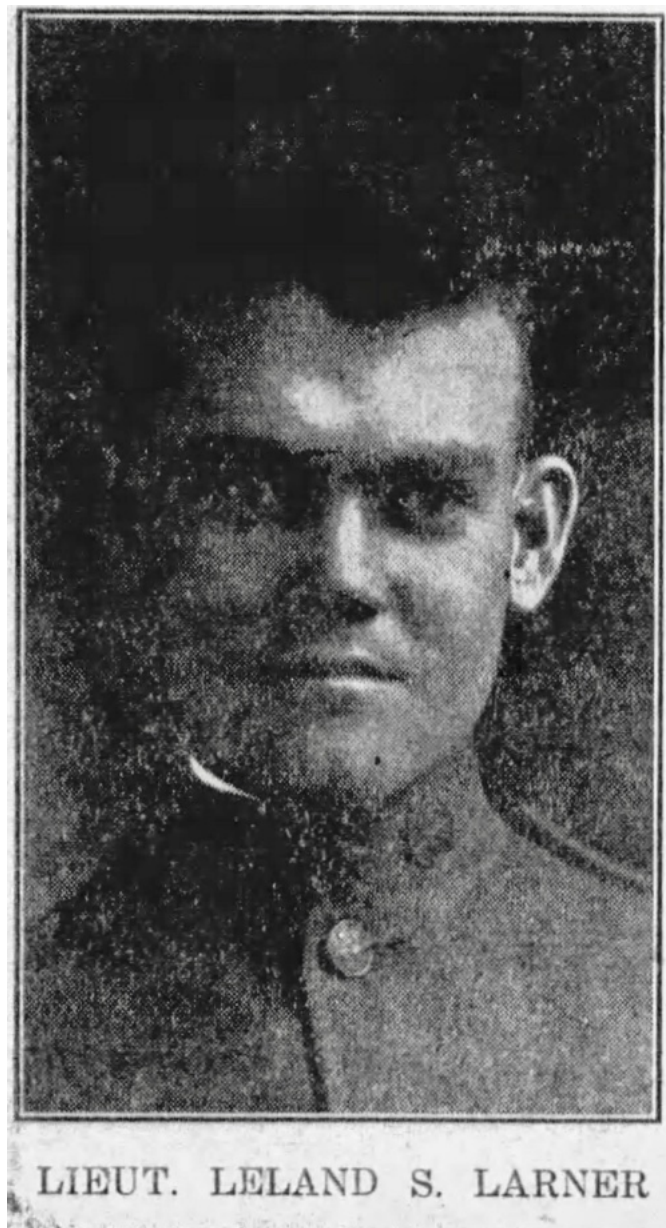
**By Ella Hull Fulton**

And now they tell us sure enough our little railroad — the L.K. & W. is going to be junked. Well enough we remember June 24, 1872, when the first little engine came chugging up the grade — the Fulton cut — the highest point between Leavenworth and Valley Falls, and we felt now we were connected with the outside world and could get daily mail and markets and other reports of interest, and how we missed that train if it failed to come. Often at dinner time it would come chugging up the hill and perhaps the whole family would go and see it pass by and how many miles the writer traveled after children and stock, but will say the Fulton family was always friendly and well treated by the railroad company and we are sorry to see it go.

## Lieutenant Leland Stanford Larner

### Reported that Lieut. Lee Larner Was Killed in Battle

*From the Oskaloosa Independent, Oct. 4, 1918*



*Photo from the Jefferson County Tribune, Oct. 11, 1918*

A distressing story came to town Sunday, thro letters from Co. B boys that Lieut. Lee Larner had been killed in the "big fight" — probably meaning the battle of Chateau Thierry, which occurred the latter part of August. The letters were from **Henry Williamson, Wm. Kimmel** and others and the Kimmel boy said the word came from **Lieut. Karl Young**, who was up on the same front with Lee and in the same division, but not the same regiment. Lee and Karl were promoted and transferred to the 28<sup>th</sup> division, but were later put in different regiments, and just how much Lieut. Young knew or just what he wrote has not been revealed.

**Lieut. Will Smith**, who censored the boys' letters, has written nothing himself, as far as is known here — which seems strange. The most disturbing thing in connection with the report is that **Mrs. Larner's** last letter from her son was dated August 5, and he said in that letter that he would write twice a week. That looks bad, but then again where are the four to six letters he would have written between August 5 and the "big fight?" A telegram was sent to **Senator [Charles] Curtis** at Washington Sunday evening by **F.H. Roberts**, and on Tuesday a reply came by wire that the Department would cable for information. If there was no record at the Department of Lieut. Larner's casualty, there is hope yet that the report may be wrong, and the silence may be because Lee is a prisoner. Reports of both killed and wounded men have reached Kansas where the casualties occurred several days after the Chateau Thierry fight. It is said that it sometimes takes a week or two to get returns from a cablegram, even, and meanwhile the whole community is in suspense, hoping against hope that Lee Larner is alive yet, for everybody is his friend and recognizes that no finer young man or truer soldier ever went out from the community at his country's call.

### Lieut. Larner Killed

*From the Winchester Star, Oct. 11, 1918*

The following telegram was received by Lieutenant Leland Larner's mother from the adjutant general's office at Washington one day last week, which verifies an earlier report from France to the effect that her son had been killed in battle:

From 28<sup>th</sup> Division,  
111<sup>th</sup> Regiment.

We deeply regret to inform you that your son, Lieutenant Leland S. Larner, was killed in action August 12, 1918.

Adjutant General,  
Washington.

Monday's Topeka Capital contained this special telling about Lieutenant Larner's death:

Oskaloosa, Oct. 6 — (Special) — A telegram from the adjutant general's office, Washington, confirmed today the rumor that Lieut. Leland Larner was killed in action August 12, in the battle front near Chateau Thierry.

He had been made a second lieutenant and transferred from Company B. of the 139<sup>th</sup> infantry, the original Oskaloosa company, to the 111<sup>th</sup> regiment of the Twenty-eighth division, which did such heroic work and which was shot to pieces in the battles near Chateau Thierry, with more than 800 casualties in the regiment. Lieutenant Larner served on the border in the Mexican trouble, was made a sergeant on his merits, went from Camp Doniphan to France in April, was promoted to a lieutenantcy in July, and made the supreme sacrifice while gallantly doing his part in one of the greatest battles of history. Memorial services will be held Sunday, October 13, at the Methodist church, Oskaloosa, of which he was a member.

### **“The Supreme Sacrifice”**

*From the Jefferson County Tribune, Oct. 11, 1918*

Another of Jefferson County's young men has made the Supreme Sacrifice, in the pursuance of his duty.

**Lieutenant Leland S. Larner**, son of **Mr. and Mrs. Mike Larner**, of north of Oskaloosa, was killed in action on August 12<sup>th</sup>. Various rumors of his death had reached Oskaloosa a week or ten days ago but not until official notice was received last Saturday from the Adjutant General of the United States did his relatives and friends give up hopes of a mistake.

“Lee” as he was known to all, was one of the original members of Company B, which was organized at Oskaloosa two years or so ago and when the call to troops came to go to the Mexican border he accompanied his company, returning as a first class private. Upon the mustering in of the company in Federal service he was made a corporal, in which capacity he served for a week and was then made acting sergeant, followed later by his promotion to that rank. He accompanied the boys to Camp Doniphan and on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1918, entered the 35<sup>th</sup> Divisional Training school at Ft. Sill, and in the month of April was given his certificate as a second lieutenant. His commission not having been received when the division “went over” he left as a member of Company B and it was the 15<sup>th</sup> of July that he received the commission and he was almost immediately transferred to the 28<sup>th</sup> Division, 111<sup>th</sup> Regiment — composed largely of Pennsylvania troops. The last letter received from him by his parents was dated August 5<sup>th</sup> and stated that he expected to rejoin his company the next day. Meeting his death on the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month would mean that he was with the company but six days when he met his death.

Although nothing definite is known the supposition is that he was with the Pennsylvania organizations during the fierce fighting near Chateau Thierry; where the

casualties at that time were extremely large.

Lee was 22 years of age and had been a home loving young man. Upon his graduation from the High School he entered the profession of teaching at Liberal, Kansas, where he was located prior to his being called for service with Company B, he is highly spoken of, both as an educator and as a model young man.

### **Body of Long Missing Soldier Will Be Brought to Oskaloosa for Burial**

*From the Winchester Star, Dec. 11, 1925*

Oskaloosa, Kan., Dec. 3. — (Special) — Word was received today of the arrival at Brooklyn of the body of Lieut. Lee Larner of Oskaloosa. And thereby hangs a “human interest” story of surprising interest.

Lee Larner was a member of Oskaloosa Company B, of the 139<sup>th</sup> Infantry of the 35<sup>th</sup> Division, and after service in the Mexican expedition, went to France. When Pennsylvania troops were shot to pieces on the Northern front, requisition was made on Kansas troops for officers to fill the places and man the troops of Pennsylvania in the 28<sup>th</sup> Division.

Lee Larner, sergeant, was one of these, and was promoted to first lieutenant. He and the others from the 35<sup>th</sup> were scarcely in command until the troops went into battle and Lieut. Larner was killed, or supposedly so, although no trace of the body was found and diligent search instigated by a Pennsylvania congressman, military officers, and personal friends.

The fate of her son and the loss of his body so preyed upon the mind of Mrs. Larner, the devoted mother, that she was beside herself and became so melancholy that she was taken to a sanitarium. The whole family was depressed and under a cloud. Happily the mother recovered and became reconciled and cheerful again in her home. Lately, after all these years, word came that the grave had been found, isolated from the other graves, and the body identified positively by means of a signet ring, a gold watch and a fountain pen. The body will come to the old home town for burial in a beautiful cemetery in the family lot beside a sister who died years ago. Appropriate services will be held in the Methodist church where Lee was a member, and Jefferson county will be there to pay tribute to one of the best men and bravest soldiers who ever went abroad for the sake of the old flag.

The date of the service will be announced, so that old national guard men may attend.

*[Editor's note: Larner-Segaves American Legion Post 36 in Oskaloosa, Kansas, is named for Lieut. Leland Larner and Sgt. Victor Segaves, Oskaloosans who died in World War I.]*

## Double Weddings in Perry

(Contributed by **Leanne Chapman**)

*From the Perry Mirror, May 27, 1920*

### ITEMS OF YEARS AGO

#### Things of Special Interest to Older Residents of Perry.

A double wedding occurred at the Presbyterian church, in Perry, Wednesday evening, June 12<sup>th</sup>, when **Misses Marie and Sadie Lott**, daughters of **Rev. and Mrs. H.J. Lott**, were married to **Harry E. Sheffer** and **Edgar E. Tolle** of Roxbury, Kansas. The Rev. Lott officiated, assisted by **Dr. Grass** of Lawrence.

*From the Perry Mirror, June 6, 1918*

#### A Double Wedding.

At the Catholic church in Perry, Wednesday morning at seven o'clock, by nuptial mass, **Mr. William Quinlan** and **Miss Mary Bleske** and **Thomas F. Quinlan** and **Miss Agnes Bleske**, were united in marriage, **Rev. Father Herron** officiating.

Many relatives and friends of the contracting parties were present to witness the impressive ceremony.

Mr. William Quinlan is the son of **Mr. and Mrs. William Quinlan** deceased, and Thomas F. is the son of **John and Jennie Quinlan**. The brides are the daughters of **Mr. and Mrs. Paul Bleske**, for many years residents of this section of the county. The newly weds are numbered among the splendid people of this part of the county and their many friends wish for them a long and happy wedded life.

Immediately after the ceremony a wedding breakfast was served at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bleske in Perry, participated in by relatives and Father Herron.

*From the Perry Mirror, Oct. 19, 1922*

### A DOUBLE WEDDING

An unexpected meeting of two old schoolmates in the probate court resulted in a double wedding yesterday afternoon. While **Meyers Edward Sibel** of Emporia and his bride, **Miss La Vera Davis**, of Neosho Rapids, were getting their marriage license, **Glenn Hamm**, of Williamstown, and **Miss Nellie Brown**, of Perry, entered the court room.

Mr. Sibel immediately recognized Miss Brown as an old schoolmate. They talked over old times for a few moments. It was then decided to hold a double wedding. **Judge J.D.M. Hamilton** officiated. — Topeka Daily Capital, October 17.

Miss Brown is the daughter of **Mr. and Mrs. Tom Brown** north of Perry and Mr. Hamm is the son of **Mr. and Mrs. George Hamm**, north of Williamstown. The young people are well known in this section of the county.

M.E. Sibel was a resident north of Perry several years ago.

## They Want Some Cake!

*From the Oskaloosa Times, July 2, 1914*

(Contributed by **Leanne Chapman**)

**Miss Jennie Sutton** received six letters from as many different girls who are attending Normal at Emporia who are especially desirous of receiving a cake. A portion of the letters follow[s]: "My Dear Jennie — We of the Hungry Six do solemnly swear that we would appreciate a sample of cake made by yourself. Devil's food seems to be the most desired kind; though I think Angel food would be the most appropriate. Your most devoted admirer; The Biggest of the Six Hungry Little Devils."

Here's another one: "Your dear sweet LITTLE sister, **Bessie**, is getting very thin and frail and if you want to see her alive send something quick — a Devil's Food preferred. — **Lora Carter**." And still another one drifts into verse with her plea: There is a young lady named Jenny,

And I believe she is loved by many.

Now a cake will she bake;

Please don't make it a fake;

This is **Dot**, a wee tot,

O, by Henny.

The cake will go forward by parcel post tomorrow.



## Mildred Irene Baer of McLouth

**Mildred Irene Baer** was born July 31, 1910, at McLouth, the daughter of **Elbert Marion “Bert”** and **Lydia Almeda “Meda” Andrus Baer**. She graduated from McLouth High School in 1928. She earned a bachelor’s degree in education from Washburn University and a master’s degree from the University of Kansas.

Miss Baer taught school in McLouth, Oskaloosa, and Topeka at the Highland Park schools, where she helped organize the speech pathology program. She coordinated programs for special needs children in Wichita, Kansas, and Wichita Falls, Texas. She retired in 1972 after 43 years of service.

She began her career in 1929 in District 31, Round Grove, a one-room school where she taught all eight grades. From 1932-35, she taught 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades in McLouth Elementary school. From 1935-39, she taught McLouth Elementary grades 7 and 8 and served as school principal. She taught Oskaloosa Elementary grades 5 and 6 from 1939-42, and grades 7 and 8 from 1942-45.

From 1948-62, she taught remedial reading and special education in the Highland Park, Topeka, schools. She was appointed coordinator of speech and hearing programs in Wichita, Kansas, in 1962. She was coordinator of programs for students with physical disabilities in Wichita until 1970.

From 1970 until her retirement in 1972, she was in Wichita Falls, Texas, where she helped to start a program for testing special needs preschool children. She was director of special education in the Texas Region IX Education Service Center, serving 12 counties. After retiring, she became an educational consultant to Project PEECH, Programming for Early Education of Children with Handicaps, a home training program for parents of children with mild to moderate disabilities, ages three to five.

Mildred Baer was a life member of the National and Kansas Speech and Hearing Associations and a member of St. Luke Presbyterian Church in Wichita. She died Jan. 25, 1999, in Topeka. She is buried in Mount Hope Cemetery, Topeka.

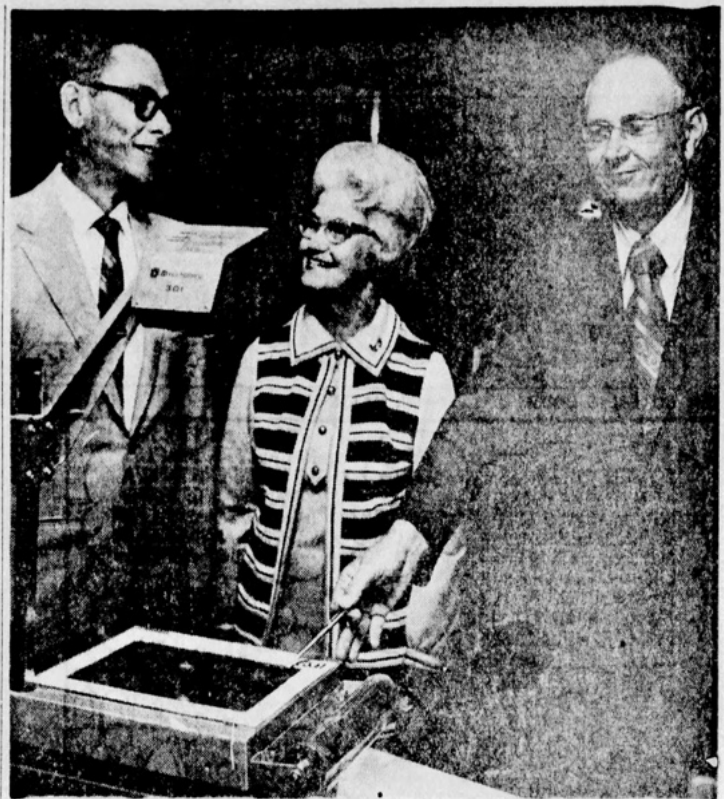
(Research by **Leanne Chapman** and **Denny Alumbaugh**)



### A bit of history . . .

The first airplane to land in McLouth. This photo was taken on the old Bert and Meda Baer farm west of McLouth in 1914. The photo was furnished by Mildred Baer, daughter of Bert and Meda. Mildred was a long time school teacher in Jefferson County, now residing in Topeka. (Courtesy photo)

*From the Oskaloosa Independent, Feb. 22, 1996*



**REGIONAL PLANNING** — Don Partridge, director of special education for Texas Education Agency, right, explains five-year plans for special education across the state to

Hal Mabry, deputy director of Region IX Education Service Center and Mildred Baer, region director and coordinator for special education during Tuesday’s regional meeting here.

*From the Wichita Falls, Texas, Times, Oct. 5, 1971*

[Editor's note: The following articles from 1880 contain prejudicial language and attitudes, but the stories still matter.]

## Color Line in Winchester

From the *Oskaloosa Independent*, "Winchester Press" column, May 8, 1880

Winchester, K[s]. May 4, '80

**Mr. Editor.** — As recent occurrences in this place are likely to attract considerable public attention, and unfair and injurious reports are liable to get abroad, I deem it just and right to give a brief statement of the facts.

A few weeks ago a family of colored people, claiming to be refugees from South Carolina, suddenly appeared in our village. The presence of a family of "n-----" in town, and of their children at the public school, was a new thing in Winchester, and of course created no small stir. From the first they were subjected to those annoyances and abuses which, it seems, communities not accustomed to the daily sight of colored people, must visit upon the first of this class who come among them. There were occasional outbursts of violence on the part of a few, who are not too careful to respect either the country's laws, or the rules of common decency; but justice requires i[t] to be said that the great body of our citizens were not slow to express their condemnation of conduct that defied all legal and moral restraint. — The friends of the colored people advised them to give no offense, to be industrious, and patient under wrong; and they appeared so ready to follow this counsel that it was hoped that race prejudice would soon be so educated out of our people, that the presence of one family of poor, helpless and inoffensive colored people would come to be regarded as a thing that could be endured. But the most reasonable expectations are often doomed to disappointment. Whilst everything was supposed to be going on quietly, and no trouble was apprehended, a plot to get rid of the hated "n-----" was skillfully concocted, and hurriedly and successfully carried out, before those who could and would otherwise have interfered to prevent such action were aware of what was being accomplished. Late on Friday evening, April 30<sup>th</sup>, this family were ordered to vacate the premises they occupied, and to leave the town; a written notice being served on one of the men to the effect that refusal to comply with this humane and reasonable request would be followed by a *cowhiding*, the reasons being given that he "was of no use and was not wanted." By repeated threats and manifestation of violence, they were driven out of the house at a late hour of the night, to find shelter where they could. Early on Saturday morning a subscription paper was circulated, money obtained, a conveyance procured, and the frightened and bewildered people, under a storm of profanity and vulgarity, which I shrink from attempting to describe, were hustled into a wagon together with their effects, and driven off to Nortonville.

These people had secured a lot and a shanty, and expected this very day to own and occupy a home of their own; but while a Turk would hospitably entertain his worst enemy under his own roof, these defenseless creatures were given to understand in no gentle terms that the shanty, however it might protect them against the wrath of the elements, would be no defense against the wilder rage of man. It is not at all denied that the white men engaged in this affair violated the civil law, not to say every law of humanity, decency and morality; nor is it claimed that the colored people broke any law, or really troubled or wronged anyone. There is the usual expression of race prejudice, that they were "shiftless," "of no account," "a poor set," &c., and that "n-----" are not to be desired on any terms. But whatever easy going gossip there may be, it is evident that the real *animus* of the movers in this matter was solely and only hatred of the negro. Through the efforts of a Christian lady those poor and needy ones had been brought into the Sabbath school of which I am superintendent, and to worship with the congregation of which I am pastor; circumstances that occasioned sneering remark in a certain quarter. A "hundred eyes" must be expected to see a great deal. Suffice it to say that on the day following the outrage, at the S.S., and during the discourse, the Supt. and pastor took occasion to express his mind in no doubtful terms. The S.S. teachers, thirteen in number, got together during the interval of worship and prepared a resolution expressive of their sentiments which was read to a congregation composed of 145 members with many attendants, and instantly adopted by a unanimous rising vote. Many leading members of the congregation, with whom many others unite, authorize me to say that this affair could not have occurred had they been cognizant of it; and that they are now prepared to secure protection in the enjoyment of their just rights to this family that was driven out, if they should desire to return, or to any other lawabiding people of color who may come to this place. We do not propose to protect or befriend either colored or white people in acts of lawlessness and violence; but we do propose that hereafter, as regards legal and just rights, all shall be treated alike; and white men shall not deprive colored citizens of their common rights without due process of law.

Race prejudice is cherished by no civilized people outside of the United States, and intelligent American citizens, who accept the issues of the war, support the amendments to the constitution, and especially those who claim to be Republicans, ought to be ashamed of it, and never again lift hand or voice in its interest. I submit herewith the resolution adopted by the congregation.

D.H. Coulter

## Resolution

Winchester, Ks., May 2, '80

At a meeting of the teachers of the R.P. Sabbath school of Winchester, it was *Resolved*, that we look with indignation and abhorrence on the conduct of certain of our citizens, in their action in regard to the driving away under threats of violence and death; certain colored people who had located in our midst; and who were, so far as to us known, peaceable and quiet citizens; and that we feel that such conduct is an insult to us as Christian citizens, and to God the Creator of all men.

Signed, Committee

*From the Oskaloosa Independent, May 1, 1880*

On Tuesday a couple of brothers who reside near Winchester were in this city and deported themselves very badly — at least one of them. Of course the first thing was to imbibe bad whisky enough to “raise the devil.” This done the next thing was to do the devil’s work. One of them went to **Geo. Miller**’s house, who resides up stairs in the old Woolley building, and made insulting proposals to his wife, who took a stick of stove wood and drove him down the stairs with a number of blows well laid on, one of which cut quite a gash in the eyebrow, which had to be fixed up. During the night he went to the house of another colored man and frightened his wife out of bed and to seek safety elsewhere. Such conduct is beastly and disgraceful to the last degree. We have on one or two occasions withheld the names of these boys — or one of them — because of their parents who reside at the east, and would be greatly shocked to know that their boys were behaving so badly; but we shall spare them no more, if after this they disgrace themselves by such acts as have heretofore been done by them.

*From the Oskaloosa Sickle, May 8, 1880*

*Winchester Argus:*

Some rude boys threw clods and stones at the house of the colored family the other night, and one stone went through a window pane.

*From the Oskaloosa Sickle, May 15, 1880*

*Winchester Argus:*

**George Ralston** took a notion that he did not want the colored family to stay in his house any longer and on last Friday evening he ordered them to leave immediately. The next morning a purse of three dollars was raised to take them to Nortonville, and a wagon and driver were soon found to convey them over. While their goods were being loaded into the wagon the old lady done some lively talking, and we understand talked to some of our prominent citizens in a very unbecoming manner, much to the disgust of a large crowd. They were taken to Nortonville, but did not stay, as the citizens of that thriving little town raised another purse and sent them to Valley Falls.

## Exodusters

*From the Kaw Valley Chief, Perry, Mar. 12, 1880*

Southern papers state that a great many of the colored people of the south are preparing to come to Kansas this spring, and that they discredit all stories told them about there being no work here for them, and look with contempt on those who came last year and returned to the south. It is stated that many of those now preparing to come west are possessed of some means, and that all are able-bodied and industrious.

*From the Kaw Valley Chief, Perry, Mar. 19, 1880*

Dr. Laney has sold his property in Perry to a colored gentleman from Mississippi, who will move upon it with his small family of 20 souls.

*From the Kaw Valley Chief, Perry, Mar. 26, 1880*

Our new colored population are making themselves at home in their new quarters. The house they now occupy is a little too small for them and consequently they camp in the front yard, which is literally alive with them. It is reported that seven hundred more will stop at this place. If we are not mistaken our citizens are very well satisfied with what we already have. Don’t send us more than seven hundred, anyway, unless they are self-feeders.

*From the Kaw Valley Chief, Perry, Apr. 16, 1880*

Four of the colored exodusters who arrived here a short time ago have died. The first died over a week ago, the second last Friday, another last Saturday, and the fourth Sunday. They contracted the measles before or soon after their arrival here and afterwards took violent colds which settled on their lungs. Eight or nine more of them are sick but it is thought they will all recover.

## Jayhawkers

*From the Oskaloosa Independent, Sept. 28, 1861*

**Jayhawking.** — We copy an article from the Topeka *State Record*, which happily expresses our views on the subject of j[a]yhawking. We are glad this popular system of plundering is about to be suppressed by the proper authorities. If allowed it would soon be so prevalent that even Union men would not be exempt from the pillaging propensities of Jayhawkers. We hope the practice will be stopped; for jayhawking is none of “our things.”

*From the Oskaloosa Independent, Jan. 18, 1862*

### Just as We Predicted.

Several weeks ago, in an article against Jay-Hawking, we stated that we believed the prime motive of Jay-Hawkers was gain — that their depredations were not committed out of love for the Union, or simply for the annoyance of men of doubtful loyalty, but that it was an organized system of *plunder for profit*. We then predicted that it would not be long till horses were jayhawked — *stolen* — from “men whose loyalty was above suspicion.” Unfortunately, that prediction is already verified. Some of the best Union men in Jefferson county have had their Horses stolen. As an evidence that they were taken by Jay-hawkers, their horses were taken, in almos[t] every instance, at the time when horses were stolen from men who are suspected of being tinctured with secessionism.

We predict again. The time is not far distant, if Jay-Hawking is carried on in future with the same boldness that has characterized it in the past, when some of them will meet summary punishment at the hands of some outraged citizen — punishment that may put them where they can never jay-hawk another horse. If they are wise, they will themselves “quit the business” forthwith. We hope they will act as wise men, and speedily “turn from the evil of their way.”

*From the Oskaloosa Independent, July 19, 1862*

**Jayhawkers Caught.** — Two notorious Jayhawkers, named respectively **Bartwell** and **Coombs**, were arrested on Wednesday of last week near Grasshopper Falls. Eleven horses and mules and several other articles were found in their possession, which were taken from them, and the rascals were sent to the fort.

*From the Kansas Jeffersonian, Grasshopper Falls, Sept. 9, 1863*

**Jayhawking.** — The Natches (Miss) correspondent of the St. Louis *Republican* gets off the following serious joke:

And so far as quiet stealing goes, the soldier gets alarmingly skillful. ‘Strategy, my boy,’ becomes an element of his larcenies. It is a fact, I believe, that a party of the Fifth Kansas once stole a *grave*. How? you ask. In this way: Some members of the Second Wisconsin had to bury a comrade, and dug a grave for the solemn purpose. Some members of the Fifth Kansas having the melancholy office to perform for one of their deceased companions, watched a chance, and while the detail of the Second Wisconsin had gone for the Wisconsin corpse, took possession of the grave, and buried their own inanimate jayhawker therein. I call that the gravest offense, in its way, on record.

*From the Kansas Jeffersonian, Grasshopper Falls, Oct. 28, 1863*

**A Couple of Bold Jayhawkers.** — **Mr. Herman Newman**, keeper of the “Travellers’ Home,” one mile east of town, had two valuable mares stolen, just in the edge of the evening, on Monday night last. The thieves were in the garb of soldiers, and represented themselves to one of our settlers as **[Charles R.] Jennison’s** men. They were in town just before dark, enquiring the route to Nebraska City, which course they did in fact take. A party of our citizens were soon in close pursuit, who pressed the scoundrels so hard that they quit the stolen animals, and probably took to the brush on foot. The horses were found yesterday morning on their way home. At last accounts a portion of the party were still in search of the horse thieves.

## Horses Stolen

*From the Oskaloosa Independent, Nov. 21, 1863*

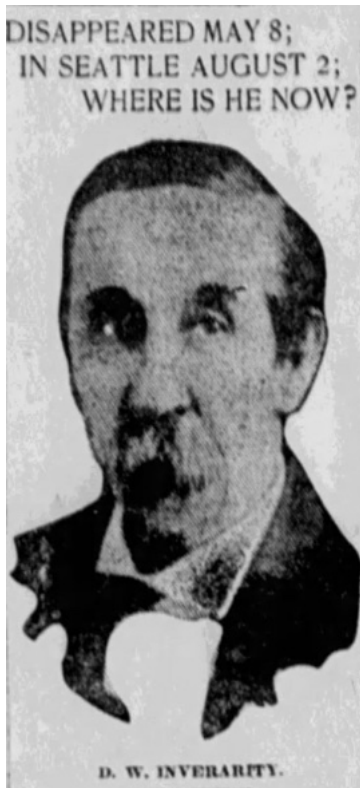
Two horses were stolen from a man named **Higgins**, in Kaw bottom a mile or two east of the Grasshopper on Monday night last. The thieves made a straight shoot for Leavenworth, which appears to be headquarters for such gentry, and a safe asylum for all stolen property.

We wish the city authorities there would go to work in earnest to ferrit (*sic*) out the thieves and their dens, and rid the country of the pests.

## The “Mysterious and Sensational Disappearance” of D.W. Inverarity

On May 8, 1918, **David W. Inverarity** left his home in Oskaloosa and went to Kansas City. His family received no word from him after that. His son, **Ben**, went to Kansas City searching for him and learned only that he had registered at his usual hotel. The *Oskaloosa Independent* reported that he had been seen on May 9 near Union Station, “greeting some of the Oskaloosa boys with the 110<sup>th</sup> Ammunition train.” The grocery store and meat market he operated with his son closed in mid-May. Representatives of the Modern Woodmen and the Episcopal Diocese of Topeka arrived to audit the records Inverarity kept as treasurer for their organizations.

On May 31, the *Independent* reported that between \$18,000 and \$20,000 was missing from a Topeka Episcopal fund administered by Inverarity “for the benefit of negro students.” The diocese had proposed to invest some of this fund in Liberty bonds. A church meeting to call for the money coincided with Inverarity’s disappearance. The Modern Woodmen fund administered by Inverarity was reported short about \$200. Inverarity’s Oskaloosa businesses — an abstract firm, grocery, meat market, lunchroom, pool hall, and furniture store — were all in difficulty. The *Independent* said, “the entire property of the missing man, even his home, is heavily mortgaged and none of the real estate is in his own name.



From the *Kansas City Post*,  
Nov. 9, 1918

In early August, the *Independent* said

Inverarity’s family had received a card from Seattle, Wash. Inverarity claimed to have “wandered away under aberration of the mind, remembering nothing after leaving some Oskaloosa men on the street at Kansas City, and asking that money be sent him to come home on, which was done.” The Seattle chief of police informed the family that Inverarity was on his way home by way of San Francisco. He never arrived. In November, the family advertised in the *Kansas City Post* for information about him.

On Jan. 28, 1919, the *Junction City Daily Union* reported that Inverarity had resurfaced in Seattle. He claimed to have been “Shanghaied” from a lodging house in San Francisco and held captive on a tramp steamer for eight months. His story, according to the *Daily Union*, was that “the captain put him to work in the galley, cooking for the crew. Inverarity says the ship made two round trips to Alaska, one to Honolulu and another to Sidney by way of Java and New Zealand.” He escaped from the ship when it put in at Seattle and wrote to his family asking for money to come home. His son, Ben, forwarded a train ticket.

By mid-February, Inverarity had still not returned home. His wife, **Marie**, received a telephone message from him saying that he was stranded in Lincoln, Neb., and needed more money. She sent him the funds, but a week later he was still not home. Mrs. Inverarity then set out for Lincoln, hoping to find word of her husband. The Mar. 7 *Jefferson County Tribune* reported, “The Chief of Police advised her that Mr. Inverarity had left some days prior to her arrival and that he stated he was going to his home in ‘Liberty, Mo.’ No further word or trace has been had since he left there.”

### Disappearance of D.W. Inverarity.

Very mysterious and unaccountable is the disappearance from his home at this place of D.W. Inverarity, the well-known abstractor and businessman. He went away on the 8<sup>th</sup> of this month to look up some land titles, he said, and was last seen at Kansas City, Mo., on the 9<sup>th</sup> — the day following his departure. He was registered at a hotel in the city where he usually stopped, and it is said was seen at the union station next morning — Thursday.

In photographic cards sent out by **Sheriff [Edward] O’Brien** the following description is given:

Small build; weighs 125 pounds; 5 feet 3 inches high; aged 60 years; black hair and mustache, tinged with gray; brown eyes; when he left home he was wearing black hat and tie, blue serge coat, pants, gray with dark stripe.

The grocery store and meat market was closed a week ago, and it is said men will be here today to check up the accounts of the Woodmen and of the Episcopal church, funds of which the missing man is treasurer.

His family fear he is the victim of foul play, and his son Ben made a trip to Kansas City to get a trace of him, but the registered name at the hotel is the only clue, it is said.

From the *Oskaloosa Independent*, May 24, 1918

## Inverarity Has Returned

**David W. Inverarity**, local abstractor and loan agent, and at one time treasurer of the Episcopal church of this diocese, who disappeared four and a half years ago, leaving no trace of himself or the thousands of dollars of church funds in his care, came back to Oskaloosa a few days ago. He was clothed in overalls and wore work shoes and a paint smeared cap.

He told friends he went from Oskaloosa to Scotland and stayed six weeks with a brother's family and other relatives and then went to London and visited his aunts for a short time. He says he worked in the ship yards of Scotland for a while.

He returned to Canada, where he lived when a young man, and worked there, then drifted into California and to Montana and other northwestern states, taking whatever jobs he could obtain, painting a farmer's house and barn just before coming here. He used to get occasional bequests from his father's estate in Scotland, thousands of dollars at a time. At Los Angeles he found the family of a deceased brother whose whereabouts was sought by Scotland attorneys in order that legacies might be sent them.

"Dave" says he will get some more windfalls himself after awhile — one if not two of considerable size. Some months after his disappearance his wife obtained a divorce and holds in her own name a brick business block and some other town property. Inverarity makes no reference to his strange disappearance nor the reason for it.

*From the Perry Mirror, Dec. 28, 1922*

leave soon for Oskaloosa, Kansas, to live near her son. The son, his wife and son attended the sale."

**David W. Inverarity** died May 18, 1927. **Marie McKay Inverarity** died June 27, 1936. They are buried together in Pleasant View Cemetery, Oskaloosa, Kansas.

—Jane Hoskinson, with thanks to **Leanne Chapman** for research

## Sources

*The Jefferson County Tribune*, May 31, 1918; Nov. 22, 1918; Feb. 7, 1919; Feb. 14, 1919; Mar. 7, 1919; Apr. 18, 1919; May 2, 1919  
*The Junction City Daily Union*, Jan. 28, 1919  
*The Kansas City Post*, Nov. 9, 1918  
*The Leavenworth Post*, Sept. 7, 1920  
*The Leavenworth Weekly Times*, June 20, 1918  
*The Oskaloosa Independent*, May 24, 1918; May 31, 1918; Aug. 9, 1918; Nov. 15, 1918; Jan. 24, 1919; Sept. 24, 1920; Dec. 22, 1922  
*The Perry Mirror*, Dec. 28, 1922  
*The St. Clair County Republican*, May 26, 1927  
*The Winchester Star*, Jan. 9, 1920

While Inverarity was wandering, his businesses were disintegrating. The *Independent* reported on Jan. 24, 1919, "George Smith of south of town bought the Inverarity [athletic] hall and is going to tear it down and move it to his farm to build an apple shed of the lumber." Creditors sued Inverarity, and the sheriff sold everything connected to his businesses to satisfy his accounts. The Episcopal Diocese sued **Ben Inverarity** for \$708.40 and foreclosed on his property in Oskaloosa.

In April 1919, **Marie Inverarity** sued her husband for divorce on the grounds of abandonment and requested sole ownership of all their property. At Christmas, Ben Inverarity's children received a letter from their grandfather, saying he was on his way to Liverpool, England, and would not write again until June.

In September 1920, the *Leavenworth Post* reported that Marie Inverarity had "disposed of [her husband's] abstract books to **Amos H. Leech** of Oskaloosa to save them from sheriff's sale for taxes." The *Post* called this event "the last chapter in the disappearance of D.W. Inverarity."

However, in December 1922, the *Oskaloosa Independent* reported, "After more than four and a half year's absence, following his mysterious and sensational disappearance from these parts, Dave W. Inverarity drifted back to Oskaloosa early last week — just as if he had been on a little visit to Ozawkie or McLouth."

\* \* \*

On May 26, 1927, the *St. Clair County Republican*, Osceola, Mo., published two items:

"David Inverarity died last Wednesday after a long and painful illness. The body was taken to an undertaker in Osceola, prepared for shipment and sent to Oskaloosa (*sic*), Kansas, for burial."

"Mrs. Inverarity had a public sale Monday afternoon and will

## An Invader

*From the Nortonville News, June 26, 1903*

A stranger invaded the **Jeffrey-Babcock** fishing camp near Elmdale, early this week and received so cordial a welcome that he came near taking a permanent residence there. The boys are pleasantly located on the bank of the Cottonwood river and are enjoying all the luck that usually falls to fishermen, with the exception that they are catching a good many fish. They are proving themselves competent cooks, so much so that their fame is attracting the attention of the gentler sex. Their boys' appetites are nearing the ferocious stage and their mothers should at once prepare for their return home. They expect to start for Nortonville some time next week and after experiencing a two weeks stay amongst mosquitoes, as large as hummingbirds, it will not be surprising if they will need an introduction to Nortonville society.

*From the Winchester Star, Aug. 15, 1913  
(from the files of **Raymond Riley**)*

Commencing Aug. 18,  
For One Week  
THE BEST OF THE SEASON  
**VanHousen's Vandeville Co.**  
Better Than Ever  
Our Third Visit to Your Little City  
Everybody Turn Out. A Continuous Laugh From Start to Finish.  
ADMISSION 10C-15C  
Starts at 8:30 P. M.

## Robbery

*From the Winchester Argus, July 11, 1878*

Wednesday morning, the 3<sup>rd</sup> inst., our people were much surprised to learn that a robbery had been committed in town during the night, and at the store of **John A. Gorham**. We called around early to see how it was done. There the lower sash of a rear window had been pried out although well fastened, with two railroad picks left lying there, and entrance effected. Doubtless the thieves took a look at the safe but did not tackle it. Finding the money till they extracted from it twelve or fifteen dollars in silver, most of it being 3 cent pieces and old-time money — money of our dads — one half dollar being dated 1807.

Nothing else was missed from the store except two boxes of cigars, some plug tobacco and some cheese. Suspicion rested on two fellows who had been around town during the day selling soap and polish, who pretended to live in Lawrence. But suspicion is a very "uncertain" chap, and nothing more is known of the matter. Load up your guns, robbers are around.

*From the Winchester Star, Aug. 25, 1922  
(from the files of **Raymond Riley**)*

**COMING!**  
SWAMI and BHAKTA PAUCHADASI  
who will present a full evening's program of magic, black art, and popular cartooning at the new high school auditorium, TUESDAY EVENING, AUGUST 29.  
Come and see the "Mystery of the Orient" and the "Hindoo Lota Jar," together with other great magic acts and one full act of the finest drawing and cartooning on the stage.  
8:15 o'clock. Admission 10c and 20c.  
Music by the Happy Harmonizers.  
Auspices Winchester Hi-Y Club.

## Double Murder/Suicide, 1931

### A Double Murder

*From the Winchester Star, June 5, 1931 (Contributed by Leanne Chapman)*

#### Charles Richardson and Son, Charles, Jr., Killed by William Hunsucker

Winchester and surrounding country was shocked on last Saturday morning when it became known that **Charles Richardson** and his son, **Charles Richardson, Jr.**, had been killed by a shotgun in the hands of **William Hunsucker**. News of the double murder spread rapidly and it was not long until the roads leading in that direction were lined with automobiles, people going to the scene of the tragedy. The murder occurred at about 7:30 o'clock in the morning, and was witnessed by only one person, **Marvin Mallory**, who was employed on the Richardson farm at that time. A dispute, it seems, over the closing of a gate, caused some difference between the parties and resulted in the tragic affair. Hunsucker occupied the house and had a truck garden on a farm, the old "**Bobby**" **Carter** place, near the Richardson farm, which Mr. Richardson had rented and which was owned by **G.E. Stanley**, of Kansas City. Mr. Stanley was having a lake made on the land and young Richardson and Marvin Mallory had been at work on the lake. They started to pass through Hunsucker's place early Saturday mornin[g] going to their work, and as they approached the gate Hunsucker appeared on the scene and remarked that he was there to see that they closed the gate after passing through. He had a shotgun in his hands. After some words between young Richardson and Hunsucker the boys decided to return to the Richardson home and tell Mr. Richardson about it. This they did, and Mr. Richardson then drove to the Hunsucker place, accompanied by the boys. As he got out of his car Hunsucker leveled a single-barrel shotgun on him and fired, death occurring immediately. The charge of shot entered the body near the heart. Young Richardson then grappled with Hunsucker, finally throwing him to the ground. When he released his hold on Hunsucker to go see about his father, Hunsucker reloaded his gun and fired another shot that resulted in young Richardson's death. Marvin Mallory, eye-witness to both murders, then got into the car and went to Oskaloosa to notify the officers. He plead[ed] with Hunsucker not to shoot him and he assured Marvin he did not intend to do so.

**Mrs. Richardson** heard the shots and hastened to the cottage, arriving just after Hunsucker had left the place. She found her husband and son dead in the yard.

The county coroner was notified and reached the scene of the tragedy later. **Deputy Sheriff Lewis Thompson** came from Oskaloosa. **Sheriff [Conrad H.] Aull** was in Kansas City at the time. Blood hounds from Kansas City were brought here in the afternoon and they took up a trail and followed it for some two and one-half miles to the public road near Plum Grove school house and lost it. This fact gave rise to the belief that maybe Hunsucker made his escape from that point in an automobile. Several hundred citizens engaged in the man-hunt.

Marvin Mallory, the youth who was with the Richardson's, and was the eye-witness to the tragedy, does not know exactly how he escaped death. He knows of no other motive for the shooting than that Hunsucker wanted a gate closed and the Richardsons did not believe the gate needed to be closed.

#### Gate Causes Dissention

"Young Richardson and I had gone from Richardson's place to Hunsucker's to work," he said. "Hunsucker occupied the house and barnyard only of the second farm. The Richardsons farmed the remainder of the second farm. The gate in question opened from the barnyard lot into a small, unused pasture, through which a path lead to the fields across a small ravine.

"When young Richardson and I arrived at Hunsucker's," Mallory continued, "Hunsucker stepped out from behind the barn, pointed his shotgun right at Charles' stomach and told us to beat it.

"Richardson argued with him trying to reason with him about the gate. Their argument was not heated, however. Hunsucker was matter-of-fact in his statements. Richardson called to me to accompany him, got back in his car and we returned to the Richardson home, where the incidents were reported to Charley Richardson.

"Charley Richardson was indignant. He jumped into his car and we followed in young Richardson's. As we returned to Hunsucker's yard, Hunsucker walked out from behind the barn where he evidently had been waiting. Richardson opened the door and was just stepping out of his car saying, 'Put down that gun Flick.'

"Just as Mr. Richardson said that," Mallory went on, "Hunsucker shot him. Mr. Richardson threw his hand in front of him and the charge tore his thumb away. He was shot in the heart. He fell forward, running several paces before falling to the ground.

"Young Richardson and I got out of the car, and young Richardson threw Hunsucker to the ground, the shotgun falling about four feet away. I ran to Mr. Richardson and felt his pulse. It was beating faintly.

“Young Richardson called to me to go for help. I got back into the car, and as I did so, heard a shot. I looked around and saw young Richardson falling to the ground. He had been shot through the neck. He must have let Hunsucker up and gone over to his father, and Hunsucker had slipped another shot into his gun and killed Charles.

“I jumped from the car and ran behind the granary,” **Mallory** said. “Hunsucker called to me, saying, ‘don’t be afraid son, I don’t want to kill you.’

“As Hunsucker said that, I ran back to the car. The motor was still running and I shot into second gear and turned around. Just as I was turning I saw Hunsucker break his gun as through to re-load. I looked around again and Hunsucker was walking toward his house.

“And I drove to Winchester to get a doctor and then to Oskaloosa to get the sheriff.”

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The funeral service was held in the high school auditorium, Monday afternoon at 2 o’clock, conducted by **Rev. C.L. Ruhlen**, pastor of the Methodist church, assisted by **Rev. E.K. Patton**, of the R.P. church, and the sermon was preached by **Rev. Brammel**, pastor of the Church of the Brethren of Ozawkie, a very close and long-time friend of the family. The music was rendered by a double mixed quartet from the several churches. The floral offerings were very beautiful and most expressive of the sympathy of many friends and relatives. The attendance was about the largest of any funeral ever held in Winchester. More than 800 passed the two beautiful caskets in review. The deepest sympathy of a heart-broken community goes out to the bereaved widow and her daughter. And the prayers of many hearts are raised to God, that strength and grace may be given them.

**Charley J. Richardson** was born near Clayton, Hendricks County, Indiana, September 5, 1868, and died near his home south of Winchester, Kansas, May 31, 1931, aged 62 years, 8 months and 23 days. He moved with his parents to Sheffield, Illinois, in 1869, and from there they came to Kansas and settled on a farm near Winchester, March 6, 1872. Here he continued his residence until the time of his decease.

He was married to **Miss Emma Meyers** at Oskaloosa, Kansas, February 20, 1902. To this union four children were born, one of whom died in infancy. **Ada LaVerne** was nearly 3 years of age when the Master called her away from this earth to the heavenly home. **Charles Samuel** died with his father. **Edna May** is the fourth and only surviving child.

Charley Richardson was a good and successful farmer, a highly respected citizen, a good neighbor with a host of friends who held him in highest esteem. He had many friends and few enemies.

**Charles Samuel Richardson** was born near Winchester, Jefferson county, Kansas, October 26, 1910, and died near his home May 31, 1931, aged 20 years, 7 months and 5 days.

He finished the grade schools of Jefferson county and graduated from the Winchester high school in the class of 1928. Since finishing the high school he has continued to live with his parents and assisted his father with the farm work. Last summer he spent a few month[s] in South Dakota after which he returned to the home and was busily engaged and deeply interested in the farm work.

Charles was a boy who had very many friends among the young folks of the community. He, like his father, could not believe that any person was his enemy or held any purpose in his heart to do him harm. He had absolutely no fear, even after he saw his father fall by the deadly blow of an assassin. His only thought was of the welfare of his father to whom he went seeking in vain to do something that might minister to his need. He had no warning and made no defense in his own behalf.

### **Wm. Hunsucker Found Near Home, Dead**

*From the Winchester Star, June 5, 1931 (Contributed by **Leanne Chapman**)*

The closing chapter in a tragedy which shocked Jefferson county last Saturday morning, when **William Hunsucker** shot and killed **Charles Richardson** and his son, **Charles, Jr.**, was written when the body of Hunsucker, who poisoned himself, apparently a short time after the double killing, was buried in the Wise cemetery Wednesday evening.

**Coroner Frank Sheaffer** of McLouth, announced that no inquest would be held.

Buzzards circling above a wooded bluff near the scene of the double killing, 3½ miles south of Winchester, led a party of searchers to the body of Hunsucker.

The body was badly decomposed, and apparently having been gnawed by coyotes or other wild animals. Hunsucker had committed suicide by taking strychnine, a poison he kept for use in killing fur-bearing animals, according to authorities. The clump of timber in which the body was discovered is about one-half mile east of the old “**Bobby**” **Carter** home, where Hunsucker lived, and where he shot to death his two neighbors.

*(Double Murder/Suicide, 1931, cont.)*

## **William Hunsucker, Typical Woodsman**

*From the Winchester Star, June 12, 1931 (Contributed by **Leanne Chapman**)*

### **Friends Shocked When They Heard He Shot and Killed Two Neighbors — He Never Had Trouble with Anyone.**

**By Francis Clark, in Topeka Daily Capital.**

A hunter all his life, **William Hunsucker**, who killed **Charles Richardson** and **Charles, Jr.**, last Saturday, died a hunted man. While posses were combing the woods around him he took strychnine which he had used in trapping coyotes, and died as one of them might.

To those who had known him for years his sudden crime of violence was a surprise and a shock, for they assert that never before had he had trouble with anyone. For the past year or so, however, his mind had been failing, and a once genial personality disintegrated.

All the years of his life, Flick, as he was commonly known, had lived in the wooded creek lands around Winchester, except for brief journeys down into Arkansas. A pure woodsman, who disdained ordinary work, he was disapproved of, but until the last years of his life there were few who could dislike the man.

Flick never had a permanent home after he got old enough to shift for himself. He had plenty of chances to get one, but he just couldn't abide it. A rude hut, tent, or cave in the woods gave him all the shelter he wanted, and didn't tie him down. A brother was much the same way, and they consorted together until the brother died years ago.

Hunsucker was a wonder fisherman, hunter, trapper, and gardener. Gardening was about the only thing he did that the farmer neighbors approved of, but they had to admit that the acre of ground he used to cultivate produced the best flowers, watermelons, and garden truck in the country.

He was a crack fisherman and hunter, too. Parties used to consider it a privilege to go with him on a fishing trip, even if he wouldn't let them fish anywhere near him.

Townsfolk would tell Flick that a nice catfish would be appreciated.

"Well, what size do you want?" he would ask, and if the answer was, say three pounds, "You'll have him. I know just where one like that is," and he would name some certain rock or stump. He'd bring in the fish the next time he came to town.

He used to come to town often. Liked to sit around the store and talk; and would as long as anyone would listen. Some of the tales he told about himself were whoppers, but he never would tamper with the truth when talking of anyone else.

Flick was a rather picturesque fellow in appearance. His red hair he wore just long enough so that it curled up under his hat brim. Always till his failing years he was scrupulously clean, and smooth shaven. He used to carry snakes and other creatures around in his pockets, but he kept clean.

He liked to have fellows come out and visit him at his cabin, which he moved as fancy moved him, or when the proprietor of the land wished him to. If the season was right he would take them fishing or hunting, and they would get what they went after. His hospitality included meals of quail, rabbit, fish or squirrel, which he would call skunk or muskrat if the visitor looked gullible. He liked for people to admire his flowers, too.

Flick had a violin, and one of his greatest pleasures was playing it, with some of his musical cronies, or at gatherings. Infrequently he would leave the Winchester community for a jaunt, and never a word or him would his mother hear. She lived on a farm in the neighborhood, as did all the members of the Hunsucker family except Flick and his brother. The family was one of the earliest in Jefferson county and respected as such.

When he came back from one trip of four or five years in Arkansas, she failed to recognize him as he came down the road and up to where she sat on the porch. Flick looked at her without a word, for a time, and then said, "Oh, mother dear, have you any fresh water drawn?" and walked around to the well for his drink. That was his only salutation.

Altho he had probably never read Huckleberry Finn by **Mark Twain**, and although Twain had probably never heard of him, the characters were strikingly similar. Flick was a Huck grown up.

But whereas Huck was a fiction character, and ageless, Flick had to grow old. Like an aging wild creature, he became dangerous, and finally died like one, alone on a wooded hilltop, with hunters all about them.

## The Scourged Back\*

By Rev. George Lansing Taylor

*From the Kansas Jeffersonian, Grasshopper Falls,  
Aug. 26, 1863*

A wilderness of scars!  
A field, by tangled furrows torn and riven!  
A sea of waves, by meeting whirlwinds driven!  
A cloud, storm-shattered through the midnight heaven!  
A wreck of rayless stars!

A human form! O God!  
Who of one blood hast made all tribes below,  
Is this thy work, thy image, mangled so?  
Ay; thus was thy own Son, for human woe,  
Scourged by the soldier's rod.

A human form! O yes;  
That skin had nerves as exquisite as thine;  
That flesh could quiver, like thy child's or mine;  
Those muscles writhed, when floods of burning brine  
Drenched their gashed nakedness.

Why was it done, or borne?  
Behold the brow that crowns that manly form,  
See the strong shoulder and the sinewy arm;  
'Twas done to crush that man into a worm!  
'Twas borne in hope of morn.

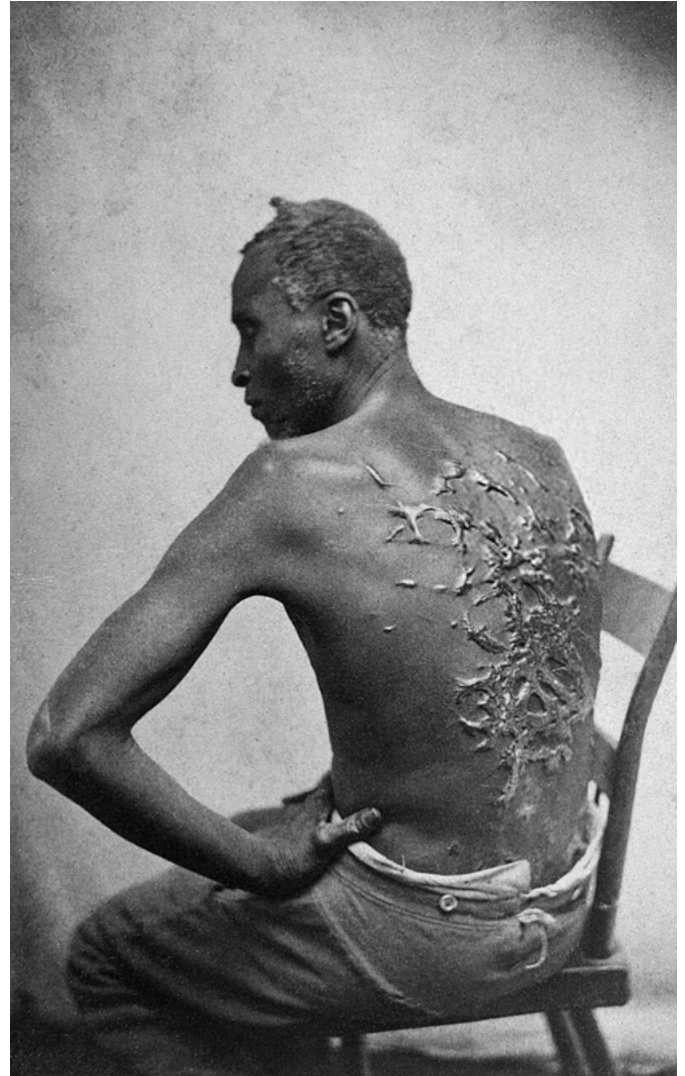
But all is over now:  
A deep serenity of unearthly grace  
Sheds soft o'er every lineament its trace;  
Hell's mark behind, but heaven's on his face,  
And victory on his brow.

The sun with golden pen  
Has drawn two pictures here, and all may read;  
"Curs'd be the fiends who wrought this devilish deed?"  
Nay, rather curse the worse than devilish creed  
That makes such fiends of men.

Send such men back to chains?  
Not while a conscious nation feels and thinks!  
Not till each freeman's lifted right-arm shrinks!  
Not till the perjured land that dares it sinks!  
And God no longer reigns!

Seymour, Conn., July 15, 1863

\*A photographic picture taken at Baton Rouge, La., April 3, 1863, of the back of a negro who was whipped there during the preceding October, in so horrible a manner that, although more than five months had elapsed when the picture was taken, the whole back was still a horrible tissue of ghastly wounds and scars.



*This image was published in Harper's Weekly, July 4, 1863. The Kansas Jeffersonian reprinted the poem by George Lansing Taylor, but did not print the picture. Photographed by William D. McPherson and J. Oliver, Baton Rouge, La. Photo from Wikimedia.*

## Early Reminiscences of North-Eastern Kansas in 1857

By Isaac Maris

### Chapter V

*Published June 26, 1903, The Nortonville News*

The spring of 1857 was rather a cold and backward one with an early frost in the Fall that caught the sod corn before it was matured, but the winter of '57 and '58 was a very mild and delightful one and '58 and '59 were ideal seasons throughout. Winter set in quite early in the fall of '58 and sledding was quite good by the middle of November. December was one of the coldest months of the winter with quite a considerable [amount] of snow.

The winter of '59 and '60 was a very mild and open one with but very little snow or moisture of any kind, but the great drought of 1860 really began in the last of September or the first of October, 1859, so by the time spring opened and farming work began in '60 the ground was so dry that not more than a third of the spring wheat sown ever came up. Oats were an entire failure. A few of us had small fields of wheat in and got about six bushels per acre. We cleared off a little place on the ground, spread the wheat upon it, tramped it off with horses and fanned it with the wind, making us seed for the next spring. Not much of the corn that was planted ever came up. We had no truck or vegetables of any kind, and but few sweet potatoes and melons.

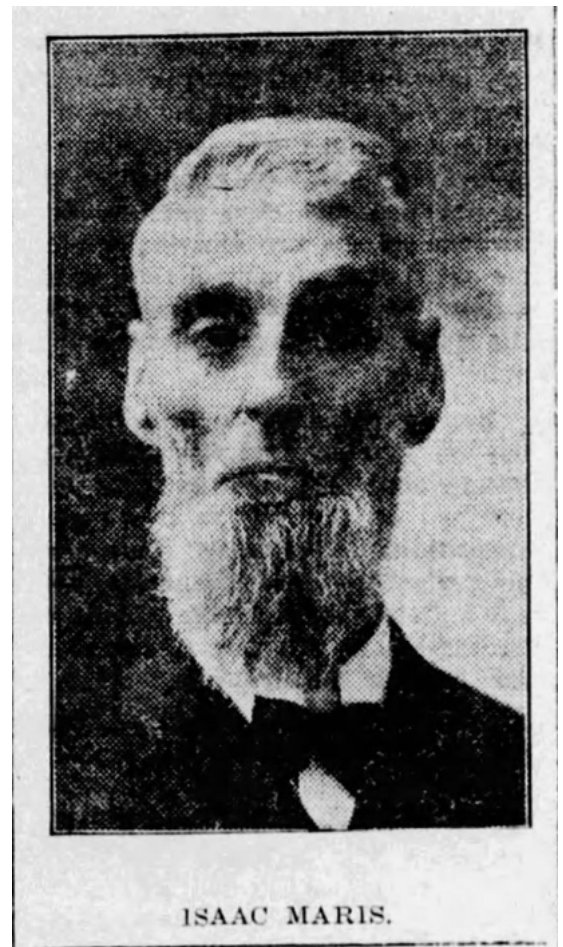
Some of us went on tending the corn ground, although the corn was very thin. It looked quite green and fresh until near the middle of July and had began to tassel out some and the ears were trying to start when one of those terrible hot winds from the southwest struck us. The wind was so hot that it felt to a person as if they were standing near a prairie fire, brush heap, or a burning building. People had to shut the doors and windows of their houses to keep the wind out and carry an umbrella or something between themselves and the wind.

Dishes, especially tin ones, sitting on the shelves were as hot as if they had been near a fire, and of course the corn crop was nearly all ruined. A few pieces in sheltered places along Stranger creek on the bottom lands were reported as yielding near ten bushels per acre and what little rain there was passed down along the Missouri River. Some fifteen or twenty bushels of corn was raised along the river for some five miles back from it. We did not have the ground wet I don't think an inch deep for near fifteen months. We had quite nice corn fodder and it was generally cut up for the stock.

### Isaac Maris

By Liz Leech

Isaac Maris, a young Quaker, came to Kansas Territory in 1857 and settled about three miles north of Nortonville, in Atchison County. He had come from Ohio to help Kansas become a state free of slavery. He married **Alma Louise Buten**, a Seventh Day Baptist, the year after he arrived. Maris remained a Quaker and his wife a Seventh Day Baptist, but the couple helped organize and guide young peoples' Bible schools and teacher conventions for other Christian branches. He also was called the "the Pioneer Preacher" for his widespread ministry, filling in for preachers of other denominations around Northeast Kansas. He and his neighbors were involved in the Underground Railroad and wrote historically precious letters for the Kansas Historical Society about nearby enslavers, how many slaves they owned, as well as the people who worked to help the enslaved liberate themselves through the Underground Railroad.



*From the Atchison Daily Globe, Mar. 24, 1915*

The drouth was much worse south and west of us. It was a very trying time to all, and sifted out some of the floating population. In the fall we built us a four room one story frame house, and moved into it just as winter began.

The supply station for the aid sent from the east for the drouth sufferers of Kansas for the winter of 1860 and 1861 was located at Atchison, the terminus of the Hannibal and St. Joseph railroad. Ex-senator **Samuel C. Pomeroy** had full charge of all supplies or aid sent to said station and to see that proper care should be taken that the supplies sent be carefully and prudently distributed. In this case, as well as perhaps all similar ones, the most worthy and needy ones were the most backward in applying for aid, so therefore got the least. A home or supply station for the men and teams going and coming to Atchison from the southwest was established at **Dennis Saunders** on the [Seventh Day] Lane and we would take in corn fodder for the teams. Toward spring the neighbors got together and bought prairie hay and hauled it to said station to feed the teams, quite a few of them, mostly with ox teams, came from miles beyond Emporia and Manhattan.

The winter of 1860 and 1861 was quite cold and with an unusual amount of snow. In January of '61 the snow was over two feet deep on the level and all travel was stopped for some four days. Five men and their teams were shut in at our house, twelve or more at Mr. Sander's and twenty-five or more on Walnut Creek northeast of Valley Falls. I remember well the great rejoicing among the men shut in at our place by the snow storm. I think the fourth day a little after noon as we looked out south of us over prairie just one mass of snow when we saw out on the ridge some ten or twelve yoke of oxen dragging a wagon behind them headed toward Atchison, trying to follow the old trail as near as they could thus breaking out the road. This gave new heart and courage to all as they were so anxious about the dear ones at home. It was a pitiful and heart rending sight to see nice intelligent, cultured men clad in rags, and should they have on two or more pairs of trousers or coats invariable holes in them would always come at the same place and in some instances their feet were frozen and they would have them wrapped up with old rags. Illinois, Iowa and other states were very kind in sending in seed wheat, oats, corn, potatoes, etc.

When spring opened in 1861 every one seemed to rejoice and went to work with a zeal and push to get the crops in in as good condition as possible and revive all branches of industry as best they could. The season throughout was one among the best, and crops of all kinds that were put in yielded a bountiful harvest, but the price of all kinds of produce we sold the following fall and winter was quite low. In the spring and summer of 1862 the Mississippi river being closed to all traffic down south made grain and all kinds of produce very low. Potatoes from eight to ten cents per bushel, oats ten cents, corn ten to twelve cents, wheat 35 to 40 cents, pork from \$2.00 to \$2.50 per hundred and dressed beef about the same, all delivered in Atchison. I sold that season about seven hundred bushels of corn in the crib to **George Howe** of Atchison, who had a large government contract to be delivered at Ft. Laramie [Wyoming] in the northwest. I sorted, shelled, run through a fanning mill and sacked it and got fifteen cents per bushel. Grain and produce remained about the same price for nearly a year.

In the spring of 1868 **Rev. A.A.F. Randolph** and family from Pennsylvania came and settled near the east end of the Lane, as it is called. He was the organizer and first pastor of the new Seventh Day Baptist church of Nortonville. He was a good preacher, faithful and efficient in all phases of Christian work; delivered good orations at the Fourth of July and when it was necessary worked upon the farm or at the carpenter bench and was a first class citizen.

During this season, if I remember correctly, the first grading of a railroad on Kansas soil began at Atchison and was built by the government from Atchison to Waterville, very nearly a due west course, a distance of one hundred miles and was called the Central Branch Union Pacific railroad. In the summer and fall of 1863 the price of all kinds of produce and stock that a farmer had to sell demanded quite a high price and continued to advance through 1865 and 1866.

But as my readers are aware our Nation at this time was engaged in the great rebellion or civil war, and so very many of the citizens of Kansas had and did volunteer their services to the government and went to the front in the regular army and others in large numbers joined the state militia and they too for some two years or more were called out repeatedly to defend the east border of the state against the repeated attempts of **General [Sterling] Price** and his army and others making a raid into Kansas. For four long years during the Civil War, our country being in such an unsettled condition, it can readily be seen that the farm interests and all branches of industry must of necessity have been largely neglected until more favorable circumstances. Three of the Lane boys, as we called them, **Lyman Saunders, Joseph Wheeler** and **John Davison**, offered their services to the Government and went into the regular army of volunteers near the beginning of the civil war. Lyman Saunders in about a year after died of a fever in the hospital. The other two went all through the war. The three **Stillman brothers, Joshua Wheeler** and **C.T. Butin** and others also of the Lane, joined the state militia, and in the fall of 1863, were called along with the balance of the state militia from Atchison, and adjoining counties to Atchison, and were camped west of the city, now perhaps 11<sup>th</sup> street, some two blocks north of Commercial street. The writer would frequently take the boys sweet potatoes, vegetables and melons.

The state militia was called out again in the fall of 1864 and those from the north part of the state were requested to go this time south of the Kansas river. I think that on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October, near Lexington, **Gen. Price** was laying his plans to surround them but by a forced march **General [Alfred] Pleas[o]nton** and his men arrived just in time to save the boys from being taken prisoners and perhaps many of them being killed. General Price and his army were defeated and General Pleas[o]nton and **[General James G.] Blunt** with other officers of the army followed the retreating rebels down the state line and drove them way down in Missouri near the Arkansas line. At Indian creek the following general field order was issued: "By order of **Major General [Samuel R.] Curtis**, the enemy repelled and driven south. Our success is beyond all anticipation. The general commanding delights to relieve the people north of the Kaw of this burden." Under this order the militia of northern Kansas were relieved, returned to Kansas City and thence home.

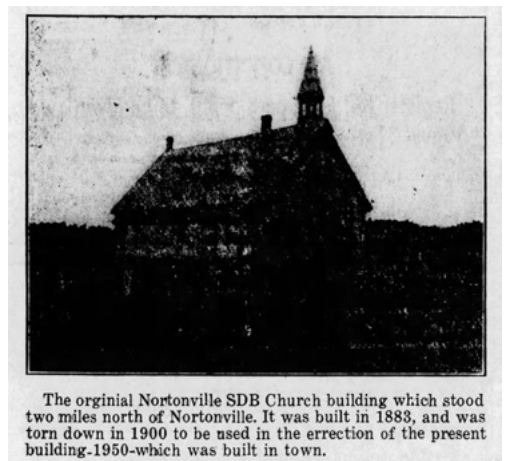
## Seventh Day Lane

*From the Atchison Daily Globe, Nov. 15, 1906*

One of the historic spots in northeast Kansas is a lane extending a distance of two miles east and west about four miles north of Nortonville and it is given the name of the Seventh Day lane because Seventh Day Baptists laid out the road, own the land adjoining it and make their homes there and a prettier piece of country or more attractive and prosperous homes cannot be found in a similar distance anywhere in Kansas.

And right here is a good chance to correct the public mind of the notion that Seventh Day Baptists and A[d]ventists are the same. The Adventists add a diet list to their catechism through life, and believe in soul sleeping after death. The Seventh Day Baptists believe in everything advocated by the regular Baptist Church, with the exception that they respect Saturday as the Sabbath, and engage in regular week day duties when the rest of the world puts on its best clothes and goes to church.

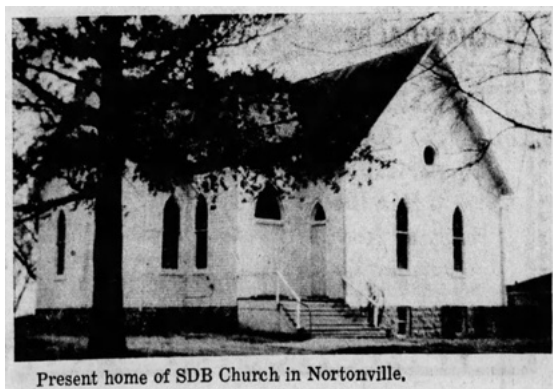
The pioneers of this creed in Kansas were **Dennis Saunders, David Stillman, Lyman Saunders, Samuel Pettys, Mrs. Anna Buten** and two children, a son and a daughter, and **Joshua Wheeler**, and they came from Farmington, Ill., to Atchison county in 1857, each taking up a claim on the north side of a road which was then known as Gopher street, because of the number of gopher hills. Of this number, **Mrs. Joshua Wheeler, Mrs. Samuel Pettys**, and **Mrs. David Stillman** are the sole survivors of the heads of the families. It must have been a strange looking sight in the early days: A strip two miles long, and a quarter section wide, laid out in farms, while across the road, and on all sides stretched away mile after mile of unbroken prairie.



The original Nortonville SDB Church building which stood two miles north of Nortonville. It was built in 1883, and was torn down in 1900 to be used in the erection of the present building-1950-which was built in town.

*From the Winchester Star/Nortonville News, Aug. 9, 1963*

The handful of pioneers met around in houses every Saturday for religious services until 1862 when a church was built on the Lane. The first preacher was a man named **Ezariah Randolph**, who located there in 1860, and who preached and farmed and delivered Fourth of July orations, and was an excellent all-purpose man. The first store for this handful of pioneers was opened at Pardee in 1858, and the first postoffice was at Ocena, north of Pardee, now abandoned. In time, members of the faith opened stores at Nortonville, which was started several years later, and now one-third of the business at Nortonville is done by men who close their stores on Saturday and open them on Sunday. It is to the credit of the Seventh Day followers that they were never molested or interfered with. They were thrifty, industrious, kind and intelligent, and minded their own affairs and respected the rights of others. Little wonder that if there were any in the early day who felt like scoffing, they soon began to admire, and many became followers of the faith. Many a man, like the **Rev. Isaac Maris**, for instance, took a wife from the Seventh Day people, and began to observe her Sabbath, in addition to his own, and the fact that they kept two Sundays in a week, and prospered more than most men who work six days, and do not entirely keep one day of rest, bears a wonderful significance. Isaac Maris did not come to Kansas with the Farmington, Ill., colony, but had been on the ground a month when they arrived, coming from Damascus, Ohio, and reaching Atchison county in September 1857. Landing in Atchison from a Missouri river boat, he started to walk to Ocena, but got lost on the prairie and spent his first night in Kansas in the cabin of a man named **Archibald Elliott**, on Stranger creek. He got a patent from the government for his land, and located on it; met **Miss Anna [Alma] Buten**, a daughter of one of the Seventh Day Baptist colonists, and was married to her in December 1858. Mr. Maris was a Friend and early became a member of a Friends church located at Springdale, in Leavenworth county, fourteen miles southwest of Leavenworth, and many a time he has driven to Springdale and back to attend services, a distance of fifty miles. When 35 years of age, he was acknowledged a minister by the Friends, which is similar to being ordained in other churches, and this is where he got the title of "Reverend." He had received no theological training, but was well versed in the scriptures, and has never had a church, devoting his time to the greater field of doing union work whenever and wherever he was called. He conducted the first services ever held in Nortonville and they were held in the depot in 1872, which was built the year the railroad went through. **John Taggart** built a store near the depot, and the foundation of the town was laid. Nortonville now has five churches. Mr. Maris observes the Seventh Day (Saturday) with his wife, by abstaining from all work and going to her church. On Sunday, he conducts services wherever called, sometimes driving great distances. He seldom works on this day unless the season makes it imperative. For forty-eight years he has observed two Sabbaths in the week, and has prospered, and there are scores of men in Nortonville and vicinity who do the same. Many men in Nortonville who clerk, hire out with the stipulation that they are to have two days in the week for religious observance; many employers and farmers observe the two days, and they prosper, and keep pace financially with the man who works all the week.



*From the Winchester Star/Nortonville News,  
Aug. 9, 1963*

It is a strange sight: On Saturday in Nortonville and vicinity men and women may be seen going to church, while others are doing the hardest day's work in the week. On Sunday, those who went to church Saturday are engaged in the field; washings hang on the line and there is a general Monday look to things, and those who worked Saturday go by to church. And many, perhaps wiser than all, make no mistake in violating the Sabbath by observing both days. But there is no scoffing, no unfriendly arguments; every man follows that which he believes to be the right path, and his neighbor respects him. But to an outsider, the calendar seems badly upset: He does not know if his wife should be doing her Saturday scrubbing, her Sunday church going, or her Monday washing.