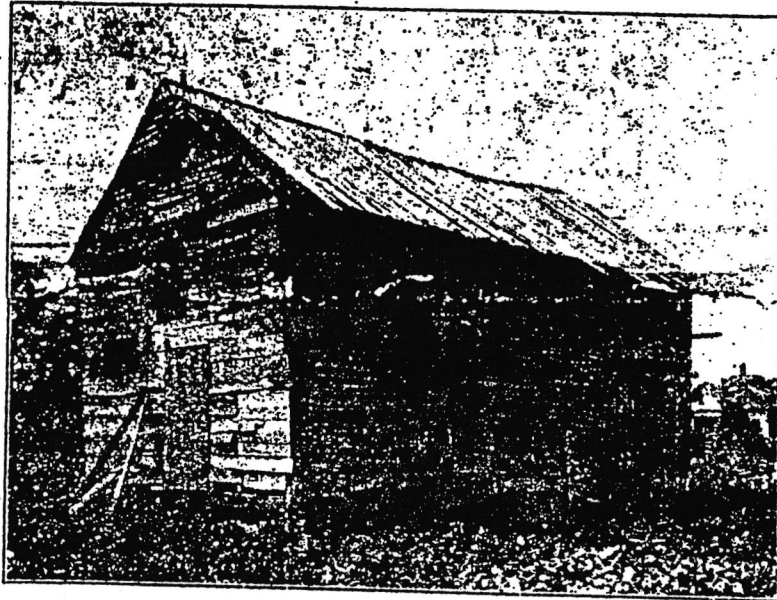


First House in Prairie City, built 1854



[Published by courtesy of the Prairie City News.]

Prairie City News: Last Friday Milton Hey finished tearing down the first house ever erected in Prairie City. It was erected by Edward Goldsmith in the early spring of 1854 for a dwelling house but of late years has served for the faithful horse. It stood on property owned by Luther Curtis, on West Main street. In this building J. R. Parker and Alonzo Barnes placed the first stock of goods ever put on sale in Prairie City. From a goods box in this store room a Baptist minister uttered the first warning for the denizens of the city to flee from the wrath to come. The building has withstood the ravages of time remarkably well but it is not surprising when we consider that nothing but hard wood was used in its construction. The ceiling plates were oak, being 10 inches square, while the sills were still larger. One by one these old timers are relegated to the "has beens" and new and up-to-date dwellings take their place.

PRAIRIE CITY

Douglas County, Kansas

WHERE WAS PRAIRIE CITY?

1855 to 1883

written in 1972

by

George H. Butell

and

Ethel A. Butell

PRAIRIE CITY

Douglas County, Kansas

WHERE WAS PRAIRIE CITY?

1855 to 1883

A NEW SETTLEMENT

The Territory of Kansas was created on May 30, 1854. By Act of Congress approved July 22, 1854, the Territory of Kansas was created a land district, with provision for the location of a land-office at the temporary seat of government.

On August 4, 1854, John Calhoun was commissioned surveyor-general of the twin territories of Kansas and Nebraska, and "ex-officio" register of filings for the land-offices soon to be opened in them. Calhoun opened an office in Wyandotte and commenced operations.

The first United States Land Office was opened for business at Lecompton in May 1856. (Lecompton having been voted for the location of the Territorial Capital on August 8, 1855.) Calhoun's incomplete records were moved to Lecompton in June 1857, and the Land Office was moved to Topeka in September 1861. Kansas had entered the Union as a State on January 29, 1861, and the capital was moved to Topeka.

The only currency then recognized by the United States in payment for land was gold and land warrants. The interest on money borrowed at that time ranged from 20% per annum to 5% per month, and in some instances 10% per month was obtained. In towns where land-offices were located, thousands of dollars were loaned at 3% per month for the purpose of entering lands.

Kansas was the crucial point for the decision of the conflict between free labor and slave labor, not only for the Territory, but for the Union. The issue was both political and moral. Able and prominent families were encouraged to migrate to Kansas by anti-slave advocates. For this and other reasons, families in

made of wire at a cost of about forty cents a rod. Stone fences were prominent.

CLAIMS AND BUILDING SITES

Claims with timber could be bought for \$5.00 to \$1,500.00. A claim could hardly be found without sufficient stone on the same to fence it, and build all that was desired. Also there was an abundance of building stone on the town-site. The cost of quarrying and hauling was about three dollars a cord. Lime and sand could be had at cheap rates and in any quantities.

The mania for town property, like a prairie fire, was sweeping over the land. By February 1858, Prairie City, considered the "banner town of Kansas for enterprise", was progressing rapidly and could boast of nearly forty good substantial buildings, with nearly all the comforts, advantages, etcetera, of Eastern towns of ten times its size. (Six months ago, Prairie City had only four insignificant log cabins.) All this had been done solely by the industry and energy of the people--for capital they had not.

On August 3, 1858, The Prairie City Association, now composed of S.S. Prouty, O. P. Willett, Wm. B. Hayden, H. Gifford, and John R. Winton, pre-empted the 320 acres for the Townsite, and the company was entitled to give Warranty Deeds for their proposed property.

The 320 acres was described as follows: The North $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 8, Twp. 15, Range 20, Douglas Co., Kansas (contents, 80 acres) was in the name of Jacob Vale; the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 8, Twp. 15, R. 20, (contents, 160 acres) was in the name of Mary W. Grumbine; and the South $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 5, Twp. 15, R. 20 (contents, 80 acres) was in the name of James Stewart.

Mr. O. P. Willett, William B. Hayden, Celestin Ardon, William W. Morris, Michael Sarver, George W. E. Riffith, Ruben Painter, John R. Winton, and James M. Hendry were among the first to receive deeds to property in the Prairie City town-site.

EDEN PARK

Eden Park in the center of the Prairie City Townsite, comprising Blocks 28 and 29, contained about 10 acres of land. The park was bounded on the west by Mt. Pleasant street, on the east by Aurora street, on the south by Fremont street, and on the north by Summer street. Main street ran north and south through the center.

The park was designed like a wheel and had a Community Well near the north side, on the west side of Main street. The well was dug in July 1857 at a cost of about \$150.00. (The well and pump can still be seen.)

Shade trees were to be planted in eight triangular areas with walk-ways between each triangle. Eventually it was to be given the title, "The Eden of Kansas."

IMPROVEMENTS

The First House in Prairie City was erected in the early spring of 1854 by Edward Goldsmith on Main street. The ceiling plates were 10 inch square oak, and the sills larger. It was erected for a dwelling, but in later years served as a stable for horses.

In this building, J. R. Parker and Alonzo Barnes placed the first stock of goods ever put on sale in Prairie City. From a goods box in this store, a Baptist minister uttered the first warning for the denizens of the city to flee from the wrath to come.

There were three hotel accommodations in Prairie City in 1858. The first hotel was a two-story log house, near Liberty Hill.

The Hiram McAllister House, located on Mt. Pleasant St., opposite Eden Park, was projected and built by Major Shore for a cost of about \$1,500.00. It was constructed of stone, three stories in height, including the basement, about 20x35 ft. in dimensions. "Mac" was a right jolly, good natured, whole souled, liberal hearted fellow, and his wife was a fine lady. Guests

topping at this house could not but feel themselves "at home." In May 1858 the Hotel was closed for a few months because the front wall, fatally injured by late rains, was taken down and the hotel was undergoing thorough repair. The new proprietor, Reuben Painter, planned to complete the house internally before it was again occupied.

The Lane House, located on the corner of Aurora and Sumner streets, was erected by Dr. William and John Graham in February 1858. This hotel was built of stone, three stories in height, independent of the basement. The stone was plastered, which gave it the appearance of a beautiful color of white. It was 32x65 ft. on the ground, and at that time was the largest hotel in the Territory south of Lawrence.

At one time in 1857 and 1858, Prairie City could boast of three Mercantile, or General Stores.

Samuel T. Shore and McManus were in the mercantile business, but dissolved partnership in July 1857, and the business was established under the name of Shore and Mewhinney. This was on the NW corner of Mt. Pleasant and Fremont streets. In the 1860's-'70's, John Doak owned and operated this store and a flour mill. It is now the C. N. Mowrer residence.

In the 1860's-'70's, F. P. Vaughn and Brown each had General Stores in the blocks south of this Doak store on Mt. Pleasant street.

Mr. H. T. Goudy's "One Price Cash Store" was in a new building erected by Major Shore in 1857 on the SE corner of Mt. Pleasant and Fremont streets. In August of 1858, Major Shore purchased Mr. Goudy's stock of goods.

Mr. John R. Winton of the "Prairie City Cheap Cash Store" was the oldest merchant in town. Mr. Winton and O. P. Willett were partners for a time, and in the later part of 1857 constructed a stone building 20x30 ft., two stories in height at an expense of \$1,000.00. Mr. Winton was also Postmaster, and the post office, (the first in the area, Oct. 7, 1856) was in this

building, distributing and sending out as much mail matter as some towns of a thousand inhabitants. This building was located on Mt. Pleasant and Lane streets. In March 1858, Winton and Willett dissolved partnership, and in June 1858 Mr. Winton sold his stock of goods to Mr. W. L. Mothrick, who in September 1858 sold the merchandise to a Mr. Shepherd who moved the stock of goods to a new building erected by E. G. Scott.

Two Doctors were in town in 1857-58. Dr. William Graham, Physician & Surgeon, had his office on Main street in a building opposite Winton's store.

Dr. H. J. Canniff, M.D. (also Justice of the Peace) had an office and residence on the east side of Eden Park, but in the fall of 1857 a two-story and a half dwelling on the south side of Liberty Hill was erected by Dr. Canniff in which he had his office. He came here from Plane, Ill.

A Restaurant on the west side of Eden Park, near the post office, was a frame building erected by Henry Evans from Aurora, Ill.

The Seth Adams printing press for the local newspaper, THE FREEMEN'S CHAMPION, published by S.S. Prouty, was housed in a small stone building near the corner of Fremont and Church streets.

An Implement Dealer, Mr. Hezekiah Gifford, (he also had nursery stock) constructed a two-story, stone dwelling, costing about \$1,200.00 on Main street. This was one of the most elegant homesteads in this part of the country. His wife, Eliza, was a school teacher in Prairie City. They were from Aurora, Ill.

A Merchant and Tailor, F.E. Kaler, had a store and shop on the corner of Lane and Liberty streets.

Two Blacksmith Shops: John Griffith and Kell built a new frame blacksmith shop near their old one on the corner of Mt. Pleasant and Fremont streets.

Brook and John Henry Deering had a blacksmith, carriage and wagon shop at the NE corner of Aurora and Dayton streets.

prepared a yard on the claim of Mr. Jardon, one mile east of Prairie City, to manufacture brick.

In addition to these various improvements, there were many contracts made for the immediate construction of more buildings in 1858, and the prospects of Prairie City grew better and more cheering every day.

ADVERTISEMENTS

A few advertisements appearing in the local newspaper, Freeman's Champion:

July 16, 1857 - McAllister is burning limestone on his claim. He intends to sell lime for 20¢ per bushel. Also his sorghum mill is in operation for the large quantity of Chinese Sugar Cane grown this season.

Feb. 25, 1858 - Wanted Immediately! A horse and wagon in exchange for lots in Prairie City. Inquire - Prouty & Willett.

Sept. 9, 1858 - A bridge is wanted over East Ottawa Creek near Jones's Mill, on the Prairie City and Black Jack Road. All persons interested in said Road are hereby respectfully invited to meet at said place on Thursday, Sept. 16 at 8 o'clock, and assist in building a bridge.... Mr. Simeon Cole is solicited to act as superintendent. --- Many Citizens.

Jan. 28, 1858 - Claim for Sale! Distant just one mile from Prairie City. It contains 20 acres of choice timber, and 140 acres of good prairie, with 15 acres under improvement and a fine one-story and-a-half log house. Price \$800.00. Inquire of Prouty & Willett.

Feb. 4, 1858 - Claim for Sale! $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from Prairie City, with 100 acres timber, and the balance excellent prairie. 40 acres under cultivation, with corn, potatoes and garden sauce planted for this season, good story-and-a-half hewn log house, and

an excellent well of water, well stone; lime kiln capable of burning 800 bushels of lime at one burn. The claim also has a never-failing stream of water running through it, and is adjoining a claim which has on it a large steam saw-mill. The claim will be sold reasonably. Inquire on the premises. C. Jordan.

Feb. 4, 1858 - John Graham. Ready for the Spring Campaign! Ready! - Take Aim! - Fire! And then charge with all your might and main with pick axes, crowbars, spades, shovels, stone-hammers, and every other necessary weapon, into the stone quarry on Liberty Hill, and construct there a formidable stone fortress for JOHN GRAHAM to secure a retreat and obtain fresh supplies of building material when he is strongly pressed by the numerous applications to be made to him for his services in house-building. Mr. Graham is fully prepared to execute all orders that may be given him in the stone masonry line, and will work upon such terms as will be unobjectionable to his employers.

Feb. 4, 1858 - Matrimony. --- men advertising for wives. (there are many of these ads.)

Feb. 4, 1858 - Medical Notice. The undersigned respectfully tenders to the citizens of Prairie City and vicinity his services as a practitioner of Medicine and Obstetrics. In his practice he never bleeds or blisters; never prescribes Calomel, Opium, Arsenic, or any other poison, and invariably has better success than those who use those agents. A supply of genuine Vaccine Virus on hand, and inserted and warranted. Office and residence on Aurora street, East side of Eden Park. - H.J. Canniff, M.D.

Feb. 4, 1858 - Prairie City Market

Flour--Superfine, \$5.25 per cwt.
Wheat - - - - - 1.50 per bu.
Corn - - - - - none on market
Corn Meal - - - 1.25 per cwt.

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|----------|-----------------------|----------------|
| White Beans | \$3.00 | per cwt. | Oil - Linseed per gal | 1.50 |
| Potatoes | 1.00 | " " | Molasses per gal | 1.10 |
| Green Apples | 1.75 | per bu. | Syrup | " " 1.25 |
| Dried Apples | 3.00 | " " | Wood-hard | " cord 2.50 |
| Crackers | .15 | per lb. | Coal-stone | " bu 25 & 50¢ |
| Fresh Butter | .25 | " " | Glass-8x10 | " light 7¢ |
| Cheese | .25 | " " | Glass-10x14 | " " 8 & 8 1/2¢ |
| Saleratus | .12 | " " | Lumber | " thousand |
| Brown Sugar | .14 & .16 | " " | | \$25 & 35. |
| White Sugar | .25 | " " | Shingles per thousand | \$5.50 & 6.50 |
| Rice | .10 & .12 1/2 | " " | Work Oxen | \$50 & \$100 |
| Tea - - | .75 & 1.00 | " " | Cows | \$18 & \$ 35 |
| Coffee | 16 2/3 & .20 | " " | Horses & Mules | \$75 & 150 |
| Beef - - | .06 | " " | Lumber Wagons | \$80 & 110 |
| Bacon - - | .14 | " " | | |
| Codfish | .10 & 12 1/2 | " " | | |
| Mackerel - - | .15 | " " | | |
| Tobacco | - 45 & .60 | " " | | |
| Manilla Rope | .25 | " " | | |
| Soap - - - | .10 | " " | | |
| Candles - Star | 30 & 35 | " " | | |
| Tallow | .14 | " " | | |
| Cotton Batting | .35 | " " | | |
| Iron | 7 & .10 | " " | | |
| Nails --- | 8 1/3 | " " | | |
| Log Chain | 10 & 12 1/2 | " " | | |
| Sad Irons | 10 & 12 1/2 | " " | | |
| Hides--Green | 5¢ dry 10¢ | " " | | |
| Salt - per sack of 200# | 3.00 | | | |
| Axes - | 1.00 & 1.25 | | | |
| Ox Bows - - per piece | .50 | | | |
| Socks - per pair | .40 | | | |
| Boots - Stogies per pr | 3.50 & 4.00 | | | |
| Boots - Calf | " " 5.00 & 6.00 | | | |
| Sheetings, Browns, per yd. | 12 1/2 & 15¢ | | | |
| Sheetings, Bleached | " " 12 & 20¢ | | | |
| Prints - - - - | " " 8 & 15¢ | | | |
| Delaines - - - | " " 20 & 35¢ | | | |

TRANSPORTATION AND MAIL

The commerce of New Mexico would soon be carried through this city, in wagons, each drawn by five or six pair of oxen or mules, carrying from four to six thousand pounds, and in trains of from ten to fifty wagons; making the distance of nine hundred miles in drives of from ten to twenty miles each day.

The Prairie City and State Line Railroad Company was granted a charter by the State Legislature in February 1858. In August 1858 the railroad was being called the Leavenworth, Fort Gibson Railroad Company which had its headquarters in the McAllister House on Mt. Pleasant street. (James, H. Lane was the first president of the Board of Directors.)

The Railroad was built in 1867. The depot was located on Church and Sumner streets. At this time they were proposing to connect the railroad with the Pacific Railroad at the Missouri State line. In 1875 it was called the Lawrence, Leavenworth & Galveston R.R., with principal stations at Lawrence, Baldwin and Prairie City. In 1885 it was the Kansas City and Southern Kansas R.R. Finally it became the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad.

The Prairie City Post Office, the first in the area on October 7, 1856, was housed in the Winton General Store, with Mr. John R. Winton as postmaster. John Vanderbilt was deputy P. M. This was located on the corner of Mt. Pleasant street.

The Eastern mail arrived in Prairie City regularly every Monday, Wednesday and Friday on its way to Osawatimie, K.T. And departed every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday on its way to Lawrence. The office was open every day through the week during business hours, and every Sunday from 9 A.M. to 10 A.M.

The Prairie City and Lawrence Daily Express left the City every morning at eight o'clock, passed through Brooklyn and Wakarusa, and made its return trip at four

5'clock. It connected at Lawrence with Richardson's Missouri River Express. Cost, one-way fare, \$1.00; round trip the same day, \$1.50.

The Lawrence and Humbolt Mail Stage Line (running weekly) established a road through Prairie City in August 1858.

A tri-weekly stage, founded in 1858, plied between Westport and Sac Agency via Prairie City.

Mr. Wm. Mewhinney, the expressman, (living in Prairie City) ran a semi-weekly hack from Prairie City to Lawrence and did errands for those having business there.

CHURCHES and SCHOOLS

No part of Kansas Territory were the people so blessed with educational privileges as the people of this section. On Liberty Hill, within the city site, was being erected in 1857 and 1858 a Church and Seminary, which was designed for four teachers. When completed it would be two stories in height, surmounted with an ornamented cupola.

This was the Catholic Mission Church, completed in 1859, and a parochial residence near the church, completed in 1870 by Rev. Felix Swembergh. This was a two-story stone building 18x34 ft., cost about \$600.00. (Part of the ruins still stand.) This residence served as a home for two or more priests for many years. From this point, they administered to the spiritual wants of neighboring missions. Here, also, a small Catholic school was maintained for a short time.

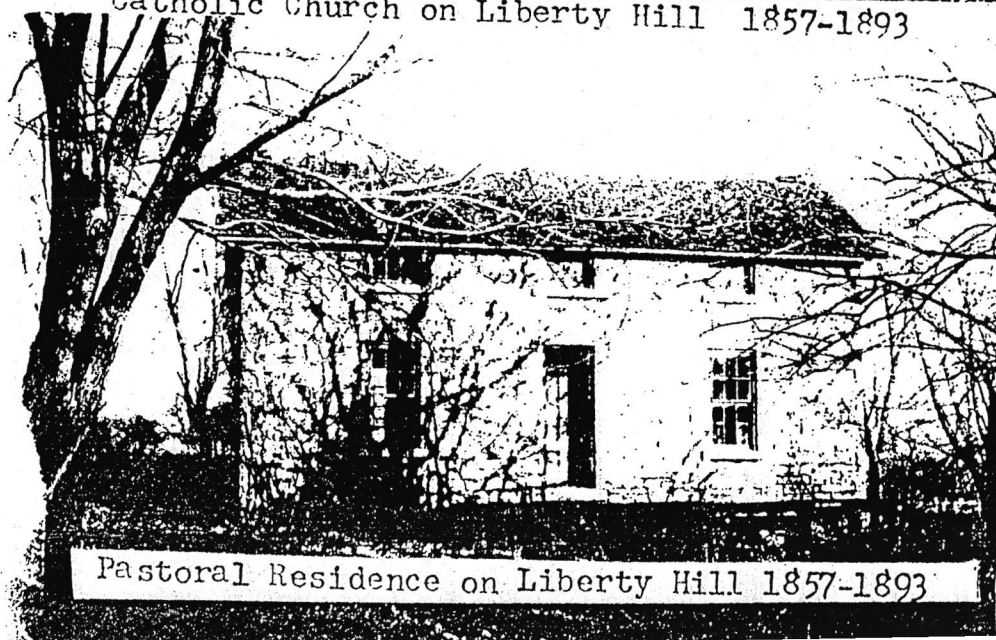
The Catholic Mission was established in 1857 by the Jesuit Missionary, Father Paul Ponziglione, in a log cabin on the C. Constant Butel farm. The Sacrifice of the Mass was celebrated once a month for about a year in the homes of non-Catholics, of Mr. W.W. Graves, Mr. Henry Stevenin and others until the church building was completed in 1859 by Father Ivo Schacht. This was a small stone building, about 20x30 ft., cost about \$400.00. The Lots 13, 14, 15 and 16, Block 6 were



Rev. Paul M. Ponziglione S. J.



Catholic Church on Liberty Hill 1857-1893



Pastoral Residence on Liberty Hill 1857-1893

Freemen's

Volume 1—Number 1. Terms—\$2 Per Annum.



PRAIRIE CITY, KANZAS, THURSDAY, JUNE 25, 1857.

Champion

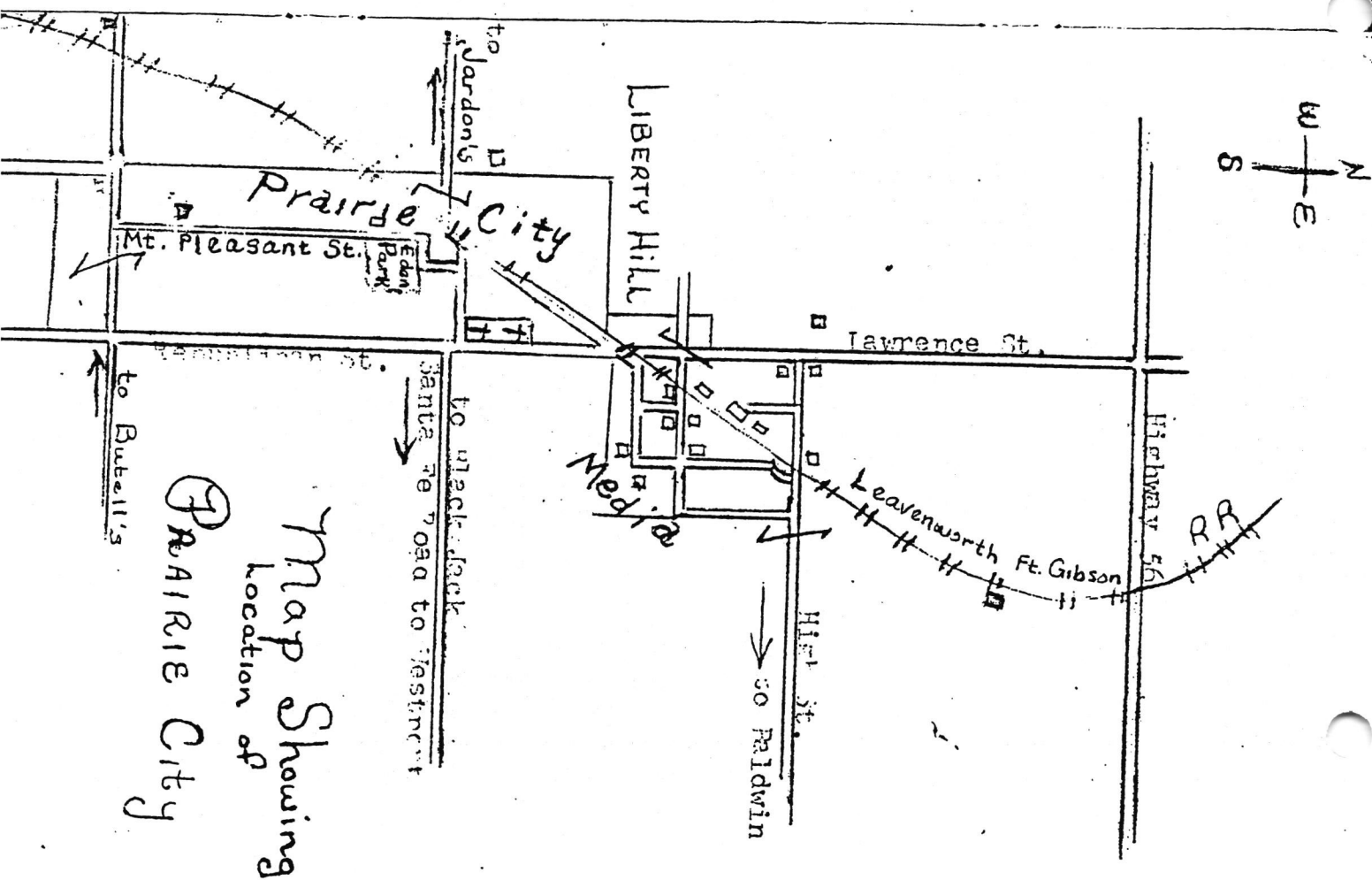
It was with a very superior talent, and as no other has been taken there by any one, they will of course have no privilege of even voting. Had there been no State Constitution in Kansas, had a fraudulent person not been elected to the Territorial Legislature, the steps to which have been taken, had the action been taken from the people, as it

Territorial Legislature is the power conferred for this purpose by the United States, and in opposing it, you oppose the authority of the Federal Government. Well knowing the complaint, that the "Legislature" referred to did not derive its power from the people of Kansas, he makes up for its lack of

of the people," should not have given a Constitution emanating from them, a more careful investigation. At the time the Constitution was submitted to the people, a resolution from the people to the first Legislature was also submitted. This was neither "in," nor connected with the Constitution, and has just as much force as the first Legislature

The delusion will not save us the penalty of our folly and our crime. Let us then preserve the Union maintaining the integrity of the Union. It is a universal maxim, the man never voluntarily relinquishes power. Under whatever guise come, the action of those who pretend to hold Territorial power for the continuation of the error. For Governor Walker, into the sticky trap into they hope to ensnare our people; and to talk to us in the name of "fairness" and "justice" is to add insult to the wrong. While the great principle we have to contend is, to our right to self-government, secondary and subsidiary

First of the 40 issues of the Prairie City Newspaper published by Salmon S. Prouty in 1857 and 1858 on the first Kansas Printing Press.





LIBERTY HILL

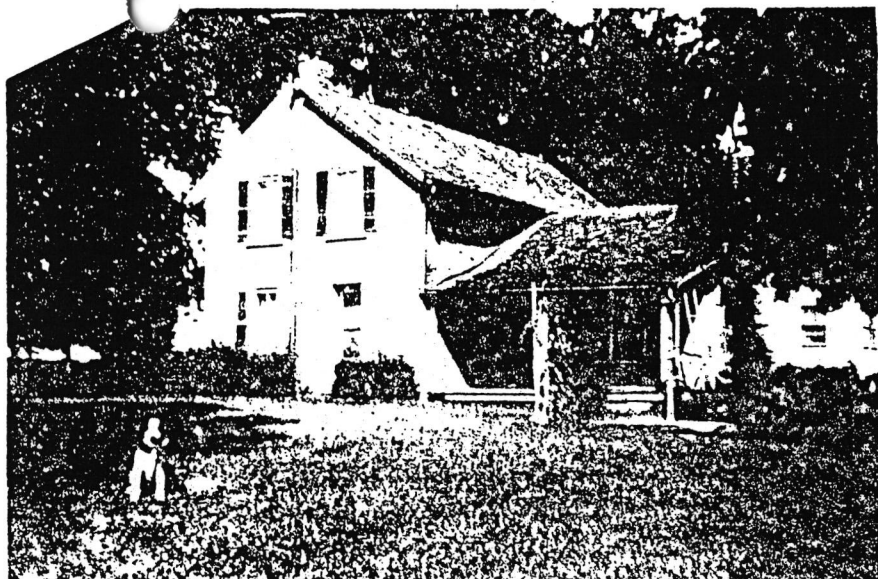
PRAIRIE CITY

1857 Survey



1. Store, Shore & Mewhinney
2. "Champion" Office
3. Restaurant
4. Blacksmith, Griffith & Kell
5. Store, Goudy's
6. Store, Brown)
7. Store, Vaughn) came later
8. Winton & Willett
9. Merchant & Tailor
10. Carpenter Shop, Wolfe
11. Office, Dr. Graham
12. Implement & Nursery
13. Blacksmith, R. & Deering
14. Methodist Church
15. Carpenter Shop
16. The Lane Hotel
17. Blacksmith, Heney
18. School Dist. #1
19. Episcopal Church
20. Dodge Home & Shop
21. Catholic Cemetery
22. Prairie City Cemetery
23. Well
24. McAllister Hotel
25. First Hotel
26. Grist-Mill, Hayden
27. Credit Home
28. Office, Dr. Canniff Home
29. Window Sash, Morris
30. First House, 1854
31. Catholic Church
32. United Brethren Church
33. Mechanical Shop, Passinger
34. Jardon Dwelling
35. Depot
36. Office, Vanderbilt
37. Shop, Shoe, Leonard
38. Auctioneer, Cook
39. Architects & Builders
40. Dave Griffith Home
41. John Higbie Bldg.
42. Scott Dwelling
43. Elmer Butler Home
44. School Dist. #87
45. School Dist. #45

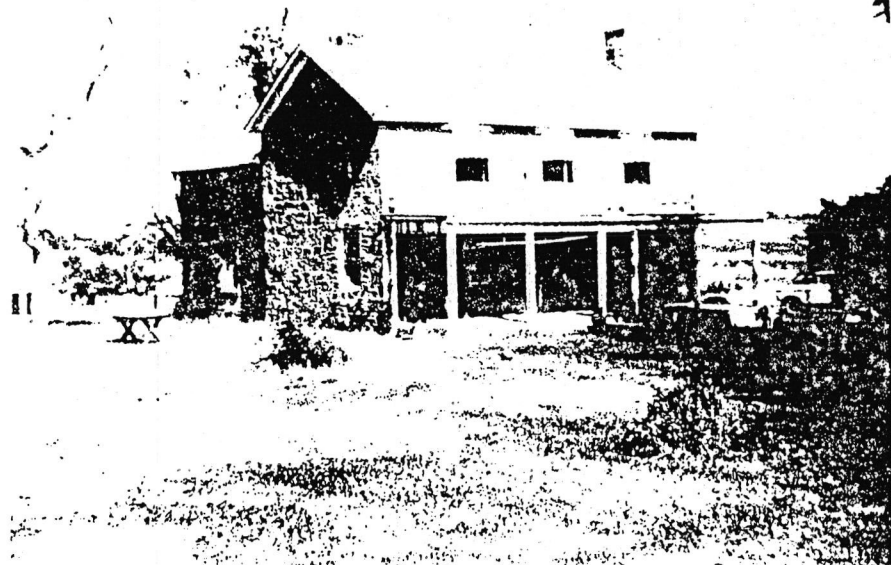
Each Block had 16 Lots,
60' x 120', a NS Alley, 15' wide
EW Alley 30' wide.



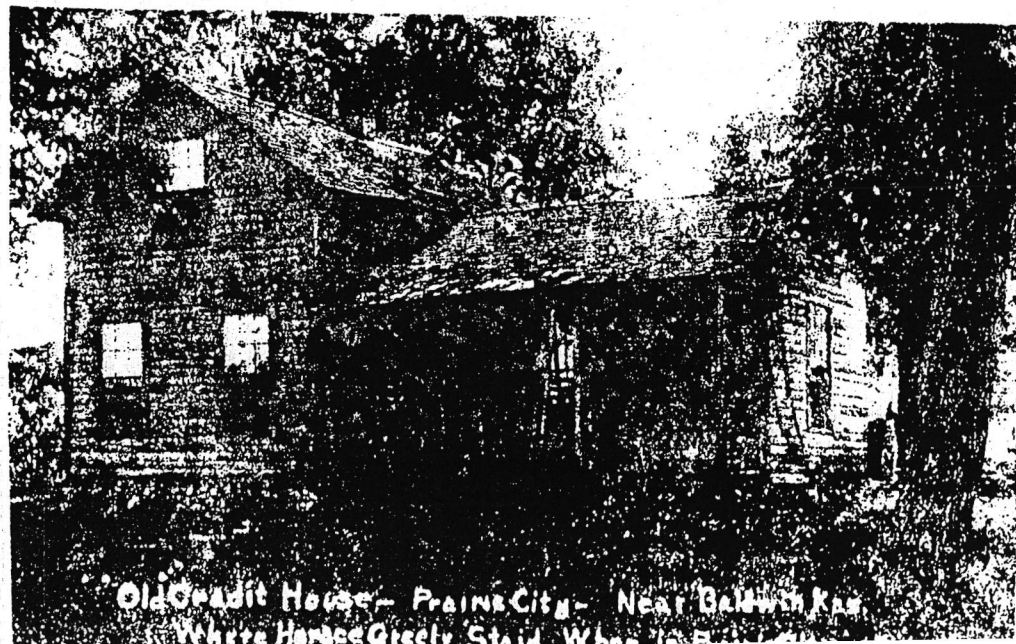
Constant Butel, his father Joseph, & son Emil "Jim" built this home in 1863. George H. & Ethel A. Butell, now living here, and son, George Robert "Bob" are the 5th & 6th generations to own and operate this farm.



General Store and Post Office in Prairie City
(now the C. N. Mowrer residence)



Xavier Jardon home where Quantrill watered horses.
C. Bud Jardon & family, now living here, are the 4th & 5th generations.



Oldenadit House - Prairie City - Near Baldwin, Kas.
White Horse Greely Stand, Wm. J. Greely, owner.

ere held in a cabin. On Sunday, June 1, 1856 a considerable number of people (including G.W.E. Griffith) were gathered attending services when the Border Ruffians came charging into town. Two of the six Ruffians were captured, the other four escaped amidst a volley of bullets, as the worshippers apprehensive that the order of service might suddenly change from spiritual to carnal had brought along their guns.

The Presbyterians held worship service in the Methodist Church on Aurora street in 1857-58. Rev. Mr. Wilson of Lecompton was the preacher. Rev. Mr. Torrence (New School Presbyterian) also preached at this Church.

In July 1858, under the auspices of the Old Presbyterian Church, an association was formed for the purpose of erecting an institution of learning, or High School, for boys. It was to be called "The Prairie City Institute."

So anxious were the people to have the institution that they subscribed for the purpose upwards of \$500. in cash, about 30 Lots in Prairie City townsite, and over one hundred acres of land. This, with the aid that was expected from the States, would furnish ample means to erect a large and worthy structure. Rev. Mr. Wilson was the projector of the movement.

The Prairie City Sabbath School, held in the Methodist Church on Aurora street in 1857, had an attendance of sixty-six. The library contained about 200 volumes, besides a supply of Testaments, Bibles, Hymnes, Questions, etc. For this they were indebted to the efforts of Jones Griffith and Mrs. Blair of Perrysville, Ind. who sent the supplies to Mr. G.W.E. Griffith of Prairie City.

The M.E. Church (North) as early as July 1857 had located and designed to commence erecting a University within one-half mile of Prairie City, which when completed, would be second to none west of the Mississippi River. It was expected to be open for students by May 1, 1858.

On September 10, 1857 it was announced in the Freeman's Champion that a New School - Select School - would open as soon as possible. W.N. Shed would give instruction in all branches of learning taught in common schools, and also in some of the higher ones, such as Arithmetic, Grammar, Geography, Philosophy, Geometry, Trigonometry, Surveying, Phonography, Physiology, and Phrenology.

Instruction in Reading and Spelling - .75 per month
Instruction in common higher branches - 1.00 per month
Surveying, Phonography, Philosophy, Phrenology or
Bookkeeping - at a trifling additional expense.
Books and stationary furnished on reasonable terms.

On March 18, 1858, Miss Eliza Gifford (dau. of H. Gifford, one of the trustees) announced that she contemplated opening a school at the house recently vacated by Mr. Shed. Eliza married Henry L. Coe.

Mr. William S. Sturdevant was forming a singing school in Prairie City on August 26, 1858.

Heber Institute was organized by the Protestant Episcopal Church in Prairie City in 1856. Trustees for Heber Institute were: Henry W. Lee, Charles Reynolds, William H. Hickox, William Graham, Hezekiah Gifford, William Preston, Salmon S. Prouty, Samuel Reynolds, and Oliver P. Willett. The Institute was housed in a two-story stone building, located on the NW corner of Aurora and Sumner streets, across from Eden Park.

In 1858, The Prairie City Institute, and Heber Institute, both having failed, Prairie City School District No. 1 was organized by Dr. H.J. Canniff and was housed in this building. (Dr. Canniff also organized four other school districts in Douglas County that year.) Miss Julia Miller, daughter of George Miller, was the last teacher to teach at this school.

It was in this building that the noted lecturer, Horace Greeley, who made famous the statement, "Go West Young Man", spoke to a Republican gathering of 400 people on June 19, 1859. He was entertained at this time in the N.C. Cradit home, a frame house near

Liberty Hill on the west side of Aurora street.

The building was used as a Grange Hall after Peach Grove School No. 45 and Prairie City School No. 1 combined to form the new Prairie City District No. 87, located on the SE corner of Lawrence and Reeder streets. Peach Grove No. 45, organized in 1873, was located on the SW corner of Lawrence and Reeder streets, just outside of the Townsite.

FREEMEN'S CHAMPION

The first printing press brought to Kansas in the fall of 1833 was used by Samuel S. Prouty to print the Prairie City newspaper, Freeman's Champion, from June 25, 1857 to September 16, 1858. The Seth Adams press was first housed in a tent with holes in the sides for windows and the ground for a floor, which was erected by the ladies of Prairie City. This was located on the east side of Church street in Block 27, west of Eden Park.

The first edition was Thursday, June 25, 1857, and another every Thursday until after the 11th edition on September 10, 1857 when the tent blew down. The next edition, No. 12, was printed January 28, 1858 in a new comfortable stone building, with Mr. O.P. Willett as associate publisher.

The newspaper, consisting of four pages, each about 20 inches long and 13 inches wide, had for its emblem the Eagle and the American flag; and for its motto, "Liberty or Death." The editorial in the first issue reads: (in part) "On one point only can we speak with a firm reliance: We shall be uncompromising, unflinching, bold, fearless in aiding to secure the triumph of Freedom over tyranny in our Territory, and shall labor assiduously for the Free State Party.... Justifying our name--Freemen's Champion--we design to be a warrior in vindicating the rights of free men. We hope to be always found on the side of freedom and an ardent friend of the oppressed and the down-trodden--a relentless foe of the tyrant, the demagogue and the doughface traitor."

The front page of the newspaper was usually devoted to National and Territorial News, but most of the other three pages were local items, advertising (local, Lawrence, and out-of-state), the progress of Prairie City and the surrounding area. The roads, bridges and methods of transportation were weekly items, and the actions of the legislature were followed closely. There were always many humorous sayings.

The terms of subscription were: One copy for one year, \$2.00; fifteen copies for one year, \$20.00. Terms of advertising: First insertion per line, \$.10; each subsequent insertion per line, \$.05. Advance payment required for both subscription and advertising.

Often there were articles taken from other newspapers, especially if it was about Prairie City. Some of these were: The Minneola Statesman, The Herald of Freedom of Lawrence, and the Aurora, Illinois Daily Beacon.

The last issue, September 16, 1858, was the 40th issue. From May 27, 1858 the paper was published by S.S. Prouty without an associate. All forty copies of the Freeman's Champion are in a bound file at the Historical Society Library in Topeka, Kansas.

The material, except for the printing press, was taken to Burlington, Kansas in September 1859. And this is the story of the printing press: It was brought to the Shawnee Baptist Mission, now Johnson County, by Rev. Jotham Meeker of Xenia, Ohio, in the fall of 1833. This was the first Kansas Printing Press, and Rev. Meeker printed the first Kansas newspaper, called Shaw-wau-nowe Kesauthwau, meaning "The Shawnee Sun." Many books and pamphlets for use among different tribes were also printed. In 1837 Rev. Meeker took the press to the Ottawa Mission.

Several years later, G.W. Brown of the Herald of Freedom at Lawrence bought the press from Rev. Meeker, used it in his office, then sold it to S.S. Prouty who used it to print "Freemen's Champion." It was then taken to Lecompton and used in the office of Solomon

weaver. From Lecompton it was taken to Cottonwood Falls, and from thence to Cowley County, finally going into the Indian Territory. The type used at the mission was scattered over the prairie by the Indian children. The Seth Adams press had twenty stars on it, indicating that it was made in 1817, when the Union contained twenty states.

Salmon S. Prouty, one of the organizers of Prairie City, was Register of Deeds, Justice of the Peace, General Land-Agent, and one of the most prominent newspaper men in the state. He was the first State Printer from 1869 to 1873, and started the publication of the Topeka Daily Capital.

S.S. Prouty came to Prairie City from Aurora, Illinois, and in June 1858 married Miss Hannah Whitehead of that City. He became a lieutenant and quartermaster in the army during the Civil War. He died at Topeka, Kansas, January 31, 1889.

ITEMS

In Freeman's Champion - July 2, 1857 Baker University. - Last Wednesday, the Trustees of Baker University assembled to decide upon the point for locating their institution. Two days were consumed in their deliberations, when they finally agreed it should be located upon the section of land between this place (Prairie City) and Palmyra, which had been secured for its benefit.

This brings the University within 1 mile of us, instead of 3, as it was supposed it would be. We understand it is the desire of the stockholders to survey the entire section into lots, which are to be sold to the highest bidder and the proceeds appropriated to the University until \$200,000 have been expended on it--Operations are to be commenced on it this season with a capital in hand of \$5,000.00.

"Two colleges at Prairie City! --one within the town limits, and another within a mile! Colleges, Churches, Sabbath Schools, a District School and a

Newspaper!" Who says we have not the elements indispensable for the formation of a great and noble community and the advantages essential for the building of a City?

July 2, 1857 - A colony of about fifty persons have been encamped near our city for the past 3 or 4 days. They are from the northern part of Iowa and are mostly farmers. They have with them horses, cattle, agricultural implements, household furniture--everything indispensable for farming. They are anxious to locate in our vicinity, and if suitable claims can be obtained on reasonable terms, will do so. We noticed among them several rosy and blooming daughters of the Hawk-eye State. Can't our young men induce them to stay?

June 25, 1857 - Members of the I. O. O. F. in and about Prairie City are requested to meet on Monday, July 12, at 3 o'clock P.M., at the office of the Freeman's Champion, to take into consideration the propriety of organizing a Lodge of the Order in this place.

July 10, 1857 - A Startling Rumor - A report is current here that among the emigrant trains which were murdered by the Cheyennes, was one that left Prairie City about the latter part of May last. In that train were Hon. Samuel Mewhinney and family, Dr. Westfall and family, Thos. McCowan and family, A.O. Carpenter and family, Cyrus S. Gleason, George F. Havens, and several others well known by many of our citizens. As the Indians are unusually troublesome this season, and as several trains are reported to have recently been captured and murdered, we fear there is too much truth in the rumor. We wait with painful anxiety for further developments.

Sept 3, 1857 - The sale of lots in Prairie City last Saturday was quite a spirited affair. The sales were brisk and Lots ranged in price from \$5.00 to \$37.00.

Sept. 3, 1857 - Never in the history of Prairie City have prospects been so flattering. Buildings are springing up everywhere like mushrooms, the sound of

Stone-hammer, the trowel, the jack-plane and the sledge hammer are constantly ringing in our ears. Our merchants are continually sending for re-supplies of merchandise and provisions to meet the demands of increasing customers; our mechanics are overburdened with business, and our hotels and boarding houses are filled to overflowing with travelers and boarders.

Jan. 28, 1858 - New Bridge - now being constructed across Ottawa Creek through the exertions of Messrs. Ashbys near their saw-mill. It is to be frame, 40 ft. long and 10 ft. high. One needed on East Ottawa Creek near Uncle Johnny Graham's, then the entire travel of the Santa Fe trade would pass through Prairie City.

Feb. 25, 1858 - Facts for Emigrants to Kansas - 1. Kansas has an area of 114,798 sq. miles. 2. It is 14 times as large as Massachusetts. 3. Kansas is the garden of the U. S. 4. Every male adult or widow is entitled, under the laws of Congress, to pre-empt 160 acres; and they are not required to pay for it until the day of public land sale. 5. Those men--Free State men--who cannot raise \$200 when their land falls due, will find no difficulty in borrowing it, or in mortgaging their farm. 6. Prairie City is the best point in central Kansas for persons of limited means to locate in.

April 1, 1858 - Mr. E.G. Scott, Father Moore, and Dr. Wm. Graham raised the frames for 3 good substantial buildings during the week.

May 13, 1858 - Railroad Meeting. The Leavenworth, Fort Gibson R.R. is now being surveyed between Lawrence and Prairie City.

May 20, 1858 - An article about John Baldwin returning from the East where he has been making purchases of saw, grist and lath mills, with the intention of erecting them in Baldwin during the coming summer.

May 27, 1858 - Monsieurs Butell and Jardon are now engaged in preparing a yard on the claim of Mr. Jardon near town to manufacture brick. Good clay, it is said, is found adjacent to them, and nothing is wanting, it is believed, to enable them to manufacture 1st class brick. If they meet with anticipated success, their operations will be of the greatest benefit to our community of any lately attempted. With plenty of good building brick accessible to us, we will be enabled to erect, not only cheaper houses, but handsomer ones.

June 17, 1858 - Baldwin City and Palmyra have lately consolidated their towns and name their joint town BALDWIN.

June 17, 1858 - The Minneola Statesman says there are plenty of young ladies in that vicinity who want husbands. The bachelors of Prairie City will please make a note of this.

June 17, 1858 - The people of Minneola and Centropolis are enjoying good times in dealing with the Sac Indians who recently received their annual payment from the Government. We wish they would scatter some of their "shiners" over this way.

Aug. 5, 1858 - Prairie City Republican Club - This organization met pursuant to adjournment, on Saturday evening last and elected the following officers for the first quarter: President, Dr. Wm. Graham; Vice-president, Simeon Cole; Secretary, John R. Winton; Treasurer, John Graham; Executive Committee, N. Credit, H.J. Canniff and Hiram McAllister.

Aug. 19, 1858 - The Leavenworth, Ft. Gibson R.R. is surveying through the entire length of Ottawa street at Prairie City.

Aug. 29, 1858 - A Flock of 10,000 sheep passed on the Santa Fe road north of Prairie City this week.

Sept. 3, 1857 - A Lawrence newspaper - The Herald of Freedom of last week says:--"Prairie City. We passed through this thriving town last week and pronounce it one of the most beautiful townsites in Kansas. In a country like this, where every man thinks his claim handsome enough for a town, and every town sees beauties in its own location, it is no little credit to the originators to say and feel that the natural beauties of scenery which surround them are equal to the first in Kansas. The people too have the pioneer grit; stone buildings, frame buildings, log buildings, shanties and cloth houses, all indicate thrift and courage. On the summit of the hill, which overlooks the country far and wide, is now being erected a substantial stone building for a seminary of learning."

COUNTIES, TOWNSHIPS and PRECINCTS

The first Territorial legislature, held in 1855, passed three acts relative to the establishment of counties in the Territory of Kansas. Douglas County was one of the 33 counties established with population large enough to justify organization.

On January 27, 1856, the townships in Douglas County were reconstructed as follows: Leecompton, Washington, Wakarusa, and Calhoun. (Calhoun Township was named after John Calhoun the surveyor-general commissioned in 1854.) The population of Calhoun Township in 1860 was 1,516.

In 1858, Calhoun Township (now Palmyra) had for its election precincts: Prairie City, Palmyra, Brooklyn and Black Jack.

Voters were urged to go to the polls on May 18, 1858 and give their sanction to the Leavenworth Constitution. They were voting for Free-state government.

Judges on the Prairie City Election Board were John Roe, L.F. Carver and H.J. Canniff.

It is interesting to note that Prairie City received one (1) of the 36 votes cast for the location of the Capital for the new state at the Constitutional Convention held at Topeka from Oct. 23 to Nov 11, 1855. In the second voting, Lawrence received 16 and Topeka 20. Less than 2 years after the opening of Kansas Territory to settlement, and less than 1 year after the Topeka Townsite had been located, action was taken to make Topeka the Capital of Kansas.

CEMETERIES

Prairie City Cemetery is comprised of a tract of land, 295 ft. from east to west and 295 ft. from north to south, which was set aside by the government to be used as a cemetery at the time Prairie City was organized in 1855. This was located in the north $\frac{1}{2}$ of Block 16, on the SW corner of Republican and Harris streets. The first burial on record in this cemetery is that of M.G. Lobingier on August 2, 1856.

In September 1857 as the town of Prairie City was now growing by leaps and bounds, there was concern about the burying ground being located in one of the best portions of the townsite for the business houses, and the center of a populous and bustling City. The association was asked to consider moving the few graves before the task became expensive.

Mt. Calvary Cemetery, comprised of Lots 5,6,7,8,9, 10,11, and 12, in the South $\frac{1}{2}$ of Block 16, on the NW corner of Republican and Geary streets, purchased in 1867 from Louis F. & Martha E. Green by Father Joseph Perrier who attended to Catholic Mission at that time. The consideration was \$32.00. The oldest marked grave in this cemetery is that of Celestin Jardon, September 27, 1863.

Thomas McQuillian was first in charge of the books for Mt. Calvary Cemetery, then Emil J. Butel and Thomas Dyer, and later William Dyer, then Robert Jardon, and George Butell. Both of these cemeteries are still being used.

Hendry, John Doak, A.R. Morton, H.N. Gardnier, Jacob Painter, Leander J. Dallas, A.B. Gilliland, James R. Young, W.W. Junkins, Levi P. Jardon, Joel S. White, W.O. Pickrell, F.P. Vaughn, H.S. & M.K. Fillmore, J.D. Thomas, Mace R. Clough, H.W. Willett, William T. Jones, Elmer Butler and many others.

Of the surrounding area in the 1870's a few more settlers besides those mentioned in the preceeding pages, were: I.L. Baker, J.L. Carpenter, A.W. House, W. Tipton, Lige, George Havens, G. Aarens, W.L. Andrews, A.J. Miller, Joseph D. Hope, Henry Ash, J.A. Dobbins, Adolphus Jardon, F.X. Jardon, Isaac Gray, G.W.E. Griffith, H.D. Dodge, A. Whitcomb, T.W. Lyon, J. McGee, C. Kirkmiller, C. Lige, A. Scott, C. Mayfield, A.A. Atwood, R.H. Howard, N.T. Howard, C. Howard, W.E. Haxton, John Davenport, Wm. Pennock, Rosanna Claypool, Elijah Sells, Adam Weaver, E. Hill, Ivan Mosier, and many more.

Peter D. Ridenour and Harlow W. Baker, land speculators in the Prairie City area, were also interested in getting the railroad established. (they also started the Redenour and Baker Baking Powder Company of Kansas City.) In 1880 they had title to a number of lots in the townsite.

POST OFFICE MOVED

By December 11, 1878, the City of Baldwin, named in honor of John Baldwin, was making definite progress, with Baker University well established. The business enterprises of Prairie City, one by one, moved in closer to the more thickly populated townsite. Some moved farther west in Kansas. In 1874 Baldwin had a population of 400.

On this date, December 11, 1878, the Post Office was moved from Prairie City to Media (now West Baldwin), so named because it was a half-way point between Prairie City and Baldwin.

After twenty-eight years of abundance of energy and labor and the capital of a few, one of the most beauti-

ful and most thriving Citics of the State of Kansas was gradually being abandoned.

Honey's Blacksmith Shop on the SE corner of Main and Geary streets was one of the last businesses to vacate Prairie City. It served the public until about 1910.

H.D. Dodge had a Carpenter Shop at his home near the corner of Ottawa and Geary streets, where he lived until the early 1900's.

VACATING the TOWNSITE

On March 24, 1883, the County Commissioners, having under consideration the Petition of L.F. Green, etal for the vacation of certain streets and alleys in Prairie City, ordered the County Surveyor Alva H. Pearson to survey and apportion said vacated townsite among the respective owners. From such a survey a map was filed May 12, 1883.

The remaining townsite in 1883 was composed of about 160 acres, extending from the south side of Fremont street north to Robinson street on Liberty Hill, and from Liberty street east to Republican street (now public road.) The streets remaining were parts of Fremont, Mt. Pleasant, Sumner, Main, Aurora, and Church streets, (and a small portion of Robinson street.)

The new map shows Lots (or plots) with new numbers, the names of the owners, the K.C.L. & S.K. Railroad (now Santa Fe), and the public roads. Besides the railroad the new owners were: W.F. Corkill, H.D. Dodge, L.F. Green, S.C. Marshall, Mrs. Andrews, N.C. Credit, J.W. Scott, N. Renert, Mrs. Thomas, George Miller, Eliza K. Newton, W.C. Hoops, Mrs. Howan; Catholic Church, Lot 26; Mt. Calvary Cemetery, Lot 34; Prairie City Cemetery, Lot 35; School, Lot 36.

The Catholic Church on Liberty Hill was abandoned in 1893 when a new frame church was built in Media (now West Baldwin.) Part of the ruins can still be seen.

The School, District #1, with Peach Grove Dist. #45, was abandoned in the early 1900's to form Prairie City Dist. #87. This was located in the abandoned townsite, south of the public road (on the SE corner of what was Lawrence and Reeder streets.)

Prairie City School Dist. #87 was annexed to the public school in Baldwin City in 1961, and the building has since been used as a residence.

The cemeteries, the railroad, the pump and well on what was Eden Park, the ruins of the Catholic Mission on Liberty Hill, the abandoned school house, and the two-story stone house (the C.W. and Mary Mowrer residence) which at one time was a general store and inn, and lots of stone and other evidence of buildings, and people having lived in the area in earlier days is all that remains, nearly a century later, of PRAIRIE CITY.

ITEM - "FREEMEN'S CHAMPION"

April 2, 1858 - Baldwin City. This is the name that has been selected by the proprietors of Baker University for their town. The town comprises 640 acres, or one section of land, and is situated one-half mile East of Prairie City, and adjoining the townsite of Palmyra. It is one of the most lovely situations for a town that the Territory affords--excelled by no other locality for beauty, probably, but Prairie City!.....

SOURCES

Source of information in "Where Was Prairie City? - 1855 to 1883."

1. The Prairie City newspaper, Freeman's Champion, published by Salmon S. Prouty, 1857-1858.
2. Kansas and Kansans - Vols. I and II, by William E. Connelley.
3. Fiftieth Jubilee and Year Book of Sacred Heart Church, Ottawa, Kansas, 1876-1926, by Rev. Thaddeus Barttro, Rector.
4. My 96 Years in the Great West, by G.W.E. Griffith.

BALDWIN

SIT IN SEC 38 R 2
DOU CO

MEDIA

IN SEC. 4 T 15 R 20

N. C. Credit

Marshall

CHURCH ST

SITE OF PRAIRIE CITY

W. S. Foster

W. F. Corbitt

J. W. Smith

Syr. 7. Ser. 6

12 SAC CO