

Barber County, one of the southern tier, is bounded on the north by Pratt county, east by Kingman and Harper counties, south by the State of Oklahoma and west by Kiowa county. It was organized in 1873, from territory that was originally embraced in Washington county. The county was named for Thomas W. Barber, who was killed near Lawrence on Dec. 6, 1855. It was intended when the county was organized that it should bear the name "Barber," but in some manner the spelling was changed to "Barbour" and stood that way until 1883, when the legislature passed an act changing the name to "Barber," its present form, according to original intention. Its area is 1,134 square miles and, according to the Kansas Agricultural reports of 1908, it then ranked 73d in population.

In the winter of 1871-2 the first white settler, a man named Griffin, located a ranch on a branch of the Medicine Lodge river, about a mile from the present site of Sun City, in the northwest part of the county. The following spring E. H. Mosley, and two men named Lockwood and Leonard, located on the Medicine Lodge river in the southeastern part of the county near the present town of Kiowa. Mosley brought with him goods for Indian trade and spent his time hunting buffalo and buying hides for the eastern market, while the other men broke some of the prairie and engaged in farming. This displeased the Indians, who opposed white settlement in this section, and they raided the homes of the pioneer farmers. In the fight that ensued Mosley was killed, but the other two men saved themselves by remaining behind a stockade. The Indians left after killing most of the stock. In Oct., 1872, Eli Smith joined this settlement, and a store was opened there by a man named Hegwer in the spring of 1873. Derick Updegraff settled on land near the present site of Medicine Lodge in Dec., 1872, and Salmon P. Tuttle drove a herd of cattle near this claim about the same time. During the year claims were taken up in the vicinity by William Walters, W. E. Hutchinson, Jake Ryan, A. L. Duncan, David Hubbard and John Beebe, while Samuel Larsh and a man named Wyncoop took up claims on Cedar creek 3 miles from the Up-

degraff ranch. Lake City, on the upper Medicine Lodge, was settled by Reuben Lake about the same time. During the spring and summer of 1873 a number of people came and the northern part of the county became settled. Ralph Duncan was the first white child born in the county, in the spring of 1873, and the first wedding took place in July, 1874, when Charles Tabor married a Miss Moore.

The first record of the county commissioners is dated July 7, 1873. The board consisted of S. H. Ulmer, L. H. Bowlus and J. C. Kilpatrick. On Sept. 1 the board made a contract with C. C. Bemis for a court-house to cost \$25,000, and the clerk was directed to issue warrants for that amount, but the building was never erected. On Sept. 2, 1873, W. E. Hutchinson was appointed immigration agent, and warrants to the amount of \$1,000 were drawn in his favor. On Oct. 6 G. W. Crane received the appointment as advertising agent and was given \$5,000 or as much of that amount as was needed to advertise the advantages of the county. The first regular election of county officers took place in Nov., 1873. The vote of the Medicine Lodge district was thrown out for some reason, and the officers chosen by the remainder of the county were: M. D. Hauk, clerk; Jacob Horn, treasurer; D. E. Sheldon, probate judge; Reuben Lake, sheriff; S. B. Douglas, superintendent of public instruction; C. H. Douglas, clerk of the district court; M. S. Cobb, register of deeds, and M. W. Sutton, county attorney. The county was divided on Nov. 7, 1873, into three districts for the election of commissioners, and on Feb. 11, 1874, a special election was held to determine the question of issuing bonds to the amount of \$40,000 for the erection of a court-house. The result of the election was a majority of 41 votes against the issue, but under a law of March 7, 1874, the county commissioners issued the bonds.

Indian depredations continued through the spring of 1874 and Cutler's History of Kansas (p. 1,521) says: "It was in the summer of 1874 that the so-called Indian raid occurred—when a band of Indians, led by a number of white men, it is alleged, came into this county and murdered several citizens up the Medicine river." For protection the citizens built stockades, one of which was erected near the center of the present city of Medicine Lodge. It was made of cedar posts set upright in the ground. Another stockade was built 12 miles up the river at Sun City, and for further protection a company of militia was formed to fight the Indians.

Barber county had but one contest for the location of the county seat—that of Feb. 27, 1876—which can hardly be called a contest, as Medicine Lodge received more votes than all the competing towns. The first school district of the county, which included Medicine Lodge, was organized in the spring of 1873, and the school building erected that year was used until 1882. Early religious services in the county were held by traveling Methodist preachers, but no regular organization was affected until 1878. The first newspaper was the Barber County Mail, which was started on May 20, 1879, by M. J. Cochran.

It was sold the next year to J. W. McNeal and E. W. Iliff, who at once changed the name and started the Cresset. The first large body of cattle held in the county was a herd of Texas cattle brought by Solomon Tuttle in the fall of 1872, which wintered along the Medicine river. The first graded cattle were brought into the county in the spring of 1873 by William Carl, who held them on the river about 12 miles above Medicine Lodge.

The early railroad history of the county consists of one experiment. On Aug. 27, 1873, a special election was held to decide the question of subscribing \$100,000 to the stock of the Nebraska & Southwestern railroad, and issuing bonds in a like amount in payment therefor. The measure was carried, the bonds were issued, and though the railroad was never built they became a valid lien against the county. At the present time the county has over 90 miles of main track road within its bounds. A line of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe crosses the extreme northeast corner; another branch of the same system enters the county on the east and crosses to Medicine Lodge, thence northwest into Pratt county; still another line of the same system crosses the southeast corner and runs into Oklahoma, with a branch north from Kiowa to Medicine Lodge.

The eastern part of the county is undulating and in some places nearly level, while the western portion is hilly, breaking into bluffs along the streams. In the east the river bottoms vary from one and a half to two miles in width, but in the western part are narrower and deeper. The timber belts are usually about a half mile wide along the water courses, the native trees being walnut, elm, cottonwood, hackberry, ash, mulberry, cedar and willow. The county is a good agricultural country and stock raising is an important industry. Winter wheat, corn and Kafir corn are the staple products, while there are more than 50,000 bearing fruit trees on the farms of the county. Barber county is exceptionally well watered. All the streams have a general southeast course. Medicine Lodge river, the largest stream, flows diagonally across the county from northwest to southeast. Little and Big Mule, Big Sandy and Salt Fork creeks in the south, and Elm creek in the north are also important streams. Springs are abundant throughout the county, while good well water is reached at from 10 to 12 feet on the lowlands. Soft red sandstone is abundant along the streams and an excellent quality of brick clay is found in several localities, the best being near Medicine Lodge. Gypsum is found in the central part of the county and shipped to different points.

The county is divided into the following townships: Aetna, Cedar, Deerhead, Eagle, Elm Mills, Elwood, Hazelton, Kiowa, Lake City, McAdoo, Medicine Lodge, Mingona, Moore, Nippawala, Sharon, Sun City, Turkey Creek and Valley. According to the U. S. census of 1910 the population of the county was 9,916, a gain of 3,322 over 1900, and the Kansas agricultural report for the same year gives the value of farm products as \$1,564,471, wheat leading, with a value of \$675,094; corn second, with a value of \$441,720.