

1872 CENTENNIAL 1972
GREAT BEND



KANSAS

CITY SEAL of GREAT BEND, KANSAS

A Laurel of Golden Wheat encompasses the design designating Agriculture

The Center is a Gear, representing Industry

Within the Gear, is the design for Oil, a major factor in Great Bend's progress & growth

Immediately below the Wheat, Gear & Oil emblems are a pair of Indian feathers, symbol of the
Heritage & History of Great Bend.

A Historical Portrait of the City

GREAT BEND, KANSAS

A HISTORICAL PORTRAIT OF THE CITY



CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

July 1 through July 8, 1972

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Century 72, Inc. Organization



The Century 72, Inc. organization has led the centennial celebration planning. From left to right, back row: Herb Hoskins, Special Events; Gene Cole, Spectacle Tickets; C. J. Netherton, Treasurer; Jim Heaton, Publicity Division; Jerry Wendel, Special Events; Don Gibson, Participation Division; Ray Schulz, Revenue Division; Orville Huss, Secretary; Front row: Tom Fergerson, Headquarters Chairman; H. P. Thies, Operating Capital Division; Marge Netherton, Spectacle Division; Ruth Nelson, Womens Participation; Jerry Schnittker, General Chairman; and Tom Berscheidt, Century 72, Inc., President. Officers not included in the picture are Dick Jackson, Vice-President and Bill Southern, Spectacle Events Chairman.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 30, 1972

TO THE PEOPLE OF GREAT BEND, KANSAS:

As the City of Great Bend observes its one hundredth anniversary, I am proud to express my warmest congratulations to you, and tell you how much your community spirit, forward-thinking, civic activity and constructive accomplishment have contributed to the progress and well-being of our society.

May the confidence and satisfaction of a productive past be the foundation of an even more rewarding future.



STATE OF KANSAS
 Office of the Governor
 STATE CAPITOL BUILDING
 TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612



ROBERT B. DOCKING
 GOVERNOR

GREETINGS:

It is a pleasure to have this opportunity to extend greetings to the people of Great Bend as they celebrate the centennial of their city.

Economically, Great Bend has progressed rapidly throughout the past century and has become a leading community of cities its size in Kansas.

The citizens of Great Bend have demonstrated by their progress their willingness to participate together to make their community a better community. The spirit of willing participation in a common effort is the kind of spirit which does not accept the hardships of today as an excuse for the cruelties of tomorrow; it is a spirit which is not bound for the past, but is free for the future. It is this spirit which turns to the wisdom and effort of the people to build a better community, a better state and a better nation.

The citizens of Great Bend can reflect upon the past 100 years with pride. You can view the present with concern and the future with hope.

On behalf of all Kansans -- and personally -- I wish all citizens of Great Bend a most successful centennial celebration, and I wish you health, happiness and prosperity in the future.

With every good wish.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Docking
 Robert Docking
 Governor of Kansas



BOB DOLE
 UNITED STATES SENATE

March 30, 1972

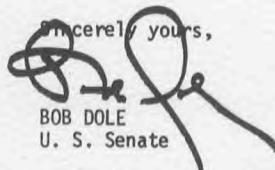
TO THE PEOPLE OF GREAT BEND, KANSAS

It gives me great pleasure to share in the celebration of your one hundredth anniversary.

Great Bend's celebration is exemplary of the best tradition of the American way of life. The flourishing community spirit demonstrated by Great Bend's citizens have made for its eventful history and will carry it through a meaningful and prosperous future.

It is with a great deal of pride that I represent the citizens of Great Bend, and their accomplishments, in the United States Senate. You are to be commended for your constructive contributions to the American way of life and for sharing fully in the responsibilities of the United States.

My congratulations to the people of Great Bend, and best wishes for the future.

Sincerely yours,

 BOB DOLE
 U. S. Senate

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 1110

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION congratulating the county of Barton and the cities of Great Bend and Ellinwood on the occasion of their one hundredth birthday; and wishing such county and cities a prosperous future in their second century.

WHEREAS, The cities of Great Bend and Ellinwood and Barton county will observe the 100th Anniversary of their founding with a series of Centennial activities throughout the year 1972 with special emphasis from May through October; and

WHEREAS, In March of 1872 a number of citizens living within the boundaries of Barton county, as designated by the Legislature of 1867, sent a petition to organize the county to Governor James M. Harvey and on May 16, 1872, Governor James M. Harvey, after due examination, signed the proclamation causing the organization of the county. The rich bottom land of the Walnut Creek and Arkansas River was recognized by the hardy men and women to be the finest farm land in all of western Kansas. The intervening 100 years has proven their judgment to be correct. The history of Barton county area extends several hundreds of years beyond the beginning of nearby counties for it was on the site of Great Bend that Coronado, a European, came 79 years before the Pilgrims ever stepped ashore. Explorers, fur traders, Missouri merchants and Santa Fe merchants followed the ancient Indian's trace from the Missouri River to the great southwest. Later gold seekers, adventurers and armies marched over the townsite of Great Bend years before the home-seekers came to build sod homes and make the prairie bloom. The county was named for Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross. During the summer of 1872, Great Bend was organized as a city of the third class. In September of that year, final proof was made and a patent for Section 28-19-13 was issued to the mayor in trust for the use and benefit of the occupants. Great Bend was named by Hiram Bickerdyke, son of Mary Bickerdyke, famous Civil War nurse, because the town was located on the big bend of the Arkansas River. Ellinwood townsite was surveyed and settled in 1872 and named in honor of Captain John R. Ellinwood, a Santa Fe Railroad engineer; and

WHEREAS, Throughout this Centennial Year, every effort will be made to preserve the brilliant history and pass on to future generations the great heritage that was given to this generation by the courageous and energetic pioneers of the century past. To do this, beards will grow, sunbonnets, derby hats and long dresses will be worn; barbeques, dress balls, square dances, parades and pageants will take place as Ellinwood, Great Bend and Barton county will, in a small way, bring the past alive; and

WHEREAS, The cities of Ellinwood and Great Bend and Barton county are excellent examples of the successful and prosperous growth of 100 years in the great state of Kansas; and

WHEREAS, The residents of Barton county and particularly those of Ellinwood and Great Bend have continued to express and display the attitudes and feelings of the people of this state and this country: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Kansas, the Senate concurring therein: That the members of the Kansas legislature extend their congratulations and best wishes to the county of Barton and the cities of Ellinwood and Great Bend, Kansas, on the occasion of their one hundredth birthday, and wish them a prosperous future as they embark on their second century of existence, and,

Be it further resolved: That the secretary of state be directed to send enrolled copies of this resolution to the chairman of the board of county commissioners of Barton county; the mayors of the cities of Great Bend and Ellinwood; the Great Bend Tribune, Great Bend, Kansas 67530; the Century 72, Inc., Box 400, Great Bend, Kansas 67530; The Ellinwood Leader, Ellinwood, Kansas 67526; the Claffin Clarion, Claffin, Kansas; The Hoisington Dispatch, Hoisington, Kansas; Radio Station, KVGB, Great Bend, Kansas; KCKT-TV, Great Bend, Kansas and to Ray S. Schulz, Barton County Historical Society, Great Bend, Kansas.

I hereby certify that the above CONCURRENT RESOLUTION originated in the HOUSE, and was adopted by that body

February 17, 1972
Calvin A. Starnig
Speaker of the House

W. Hagen
Chief Clerk of the House

Adopted by the SENATE February 17, 1972
Raymond S. Schulz
President of the Senate

Robert E. Zarker
Secretary of the Senate

DEDICATION

This historical portrait of Great Bend is dedicated to the generations of residents who participated in the 100 years of continual growth and development which the city has enjoyed.



As the Memorial Arch for a time announced a strong welcome and represented some of Great Bend's traditions to visitors and new residents in the first century, may the heritage of the community, here briefly presented, convey a welcome and encouragement to new generations and the new traditions which they will build in the second century.

Great Bend and The Great American Desert

I am at home here, and I want not only to know about my homeland, I want to live intelligently on it. I want certain data that will enable me to accommodate myself to it. Knowledge helps sympathy to achieve harmony.

J. Frank Dobie
Historian of the American West



Do not underestimate the dramatic changes which have taken place on the face of this Central Kansas homeland since your forebearers, or your neighbors' forebearers, came by covered wagon, pack horse or railroad box car to make their lives here. To do so will depreciate the special significance of their determination and courage. While our second century Summers and Winters follow with much the same extremes of temperature which the early settlers experienced and while the Springs and Autumns pass and reappear with the same subtle but expansive beauty, most of the conditions which made this country a hard place in which to live have been controlled.

The Great Plains environment of the nineteenth century was harsh, untamed, hostile, and, to the immigrant and pioneer and their families, irresistible. The land beckoned and offered a new, fulfilling way of life to those who were strong enough to come and take it. Living here imposed a difficult and basic existence and those who experienced it would not believe the romance that history now tends to apply. They were good people working hard to make a living in the best ways that they knew

how. In this respect, while technology and the environment have greatly changed, the character of the people of Central Kansas, Barton County, and Great Bend has remained the same.

On early maps, Kansas was in the center of a large area labeled "The Great American Desert," and this concept of the country as a vast tree-less, water-less waste was a reality in the minds of easterners. The image was unfortunate and exaggerated, but it served as warning to the faint-hearted. A more appropriate image of frontier Kansas eliminates the romance and exaggerated mystery and leaves a picture of boundless grasslands teeming with a variety of life which we cannot see here today. All of these now absent inhabitants, human and non-human, had adapted to life on the prairie in ways that strongly influenced the men and women who established Great Bend.

The area around the big bend and the northern-most point of the Arkansas river was a favorite range for vast herds of American bison, or buffalo. The Indians maintained a whole way of life dependent upon these huge, shaggy beasts. General Dodge, of the U.S. Cavalry in this area, appreciated the importance of this animal and wrote from his own observations, "It is almost impossible for a civilized being to realize the value to the Plains Indian of the buffalo. It furnished him with home, food, clothing, bedding, horse equipment, - almost everything." The buffalo also made life possible here for the county's first settlers. Edward W. Dewey, one of the first landowners in Great Bend township, write in 1871, "The country was overrun with buffalo, which kept us awake at night with their continual bellowing and stamping."

General Dodge also wrote this account about buffalo on what was to be Great Bend's location and the near vicinity,

"In May, 1871, I drove in a buggy from old Fort Zarah to Fort Larned, on the Arkansas River. The distance is thirty-four miles. At least twenty-five miles of that distance was through an immense herd. The whole country was one mass of buffalo, apparently, and it was only when actually among



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Great Bend and The Great American Desert (Cont.)

them, that the seemingly solid body was seen to be an agglomeration of countless herds of from fifty to two hundred animals, separated from the surrounding herds by a greater or less space, but still separated.

"The road ran along the broad valley of the Arkansas. Some miles from Zarah a low line of hills rises from the plain on the right, gradually increasing in height and approaching road and river, until they culminate in Pawnee Rock.

"So long as I was in the broad, level valley, the herds sullenly got out of my way, and, turning, stared stupidly at me, some within thirty or forty yards. When, however, I had reached a point where the hills were no more than a mile from the road, the buffalo on the crests, seeing an unusual object in their rear, turned, stared an instant, then started at full speed toward me, stampeding and bringing with them the numberless herds through which they passed, and pouring down on me, no longer separated, but compacted into one immense mass of plunging animals, mad with fright, irresistible as an avalanche.

"The situation was by no means pleasant. There was but one hope of escape. My horse was, fortunately, a quiet old beast, that had rushed with me into many a herd, and been in at the death of many a buffalo. Reining him up, I waited until the front of the mass was within fifty yards, then, with a few well-directed shots, dropped some of the leaders, split the herd and sent it off in two streams to my right and left. When all had passed me, they stopped, apparently satisfied, though



thousands were yet within reach of my rifle. After my servant had cut out the tongues of the fallen, I proceeded on my journey, only to have a similar experience within a mile or two, and this occurred so often that I reached Fort Larned with twenty-six tongues, representing the greatest number of buffalo that I can blame myself with having murdered in one day."

The destruction of the American bison herds is one of the tragedies that occurred with the settlement of the West.

As the buffalo disappeared, so did the herds of deer and Pronghorn antelope. The occasional herds of elk and wild horses, the legacy of the Spanish exploration, migrated to the West or were slaughtered. The sighting of a rattlesnake is rare today, but it was a common danger in the 1870's. Coyotes were common and even wolves were considered to be a menace to homesteaders. Ed Dewey wrote about these dangers, perhaps slightly exaggerated, again in Great Bend Township in 1871,

"As the winter progressed the wolves and coyotes became very savage, and it was dangerous for a person to be out on the prairie after dark. Sometime in December I had an adventure with the wolves, which I will relate to illustrate the terrible ferocity of the wolves at that time:

One evening as myself, wife, and babe were returning from

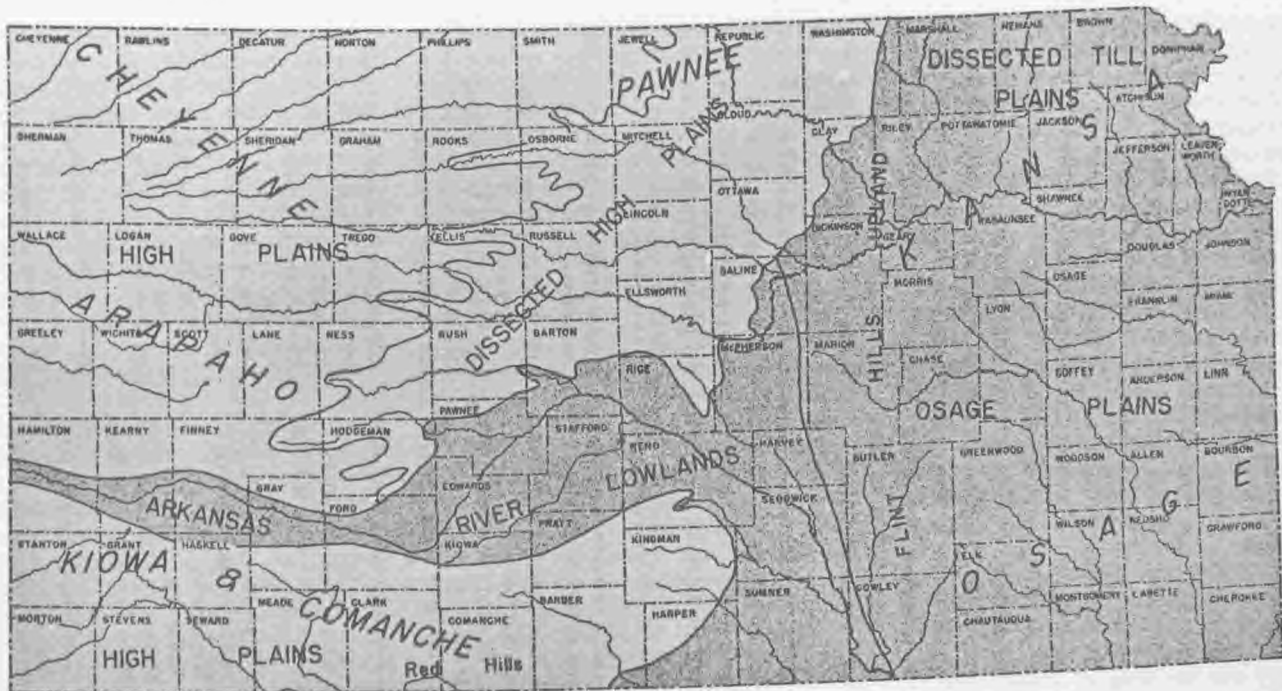


Mr. E. J. Dodge's (whose family had recently arrived, and where we had been on a visit), I had on a pair of skates, and my wife and babe were on a rude sled, which I had constructed, and was pushing it before me on the ice on the creek. When we had proceeded about one-half the way, we heard the wolves howl on the banks of the creek right ahead of us; and pretty soon their gaunt forms were outlined against the sky. It looked like certain death to go ahead, and almost as certain to turn back, so I pushed ahead and the wolves ran along on the banks beside us until we were nearly home. Then, as if they were afraid that we would get away, they became bolder, and finally, as we turned a bend on the creek, there on the bank, not 10 feet off, stood about half a dozen hungry, howling wolves. As we swung around the bend, two big grays made a leap for the sled but we were going so fast that they fell short of their intended prey, and as they tried to stop themselves their nails scratched on the ice right beside me, and I felt their hot breath in my face. Immediately I heard them coming behind, and now it was a race for life. I skated as I never skated before or since, and in a few minutes we arrived at the dugout. We ran in, and grabbing my gun I shot two dead within a few feet of the door. I shot at several more, and soon they disappeared."

Even prairie dogs are now scarce. There is little record of early Barton County birdlife, but the Passenger Pigeon and the North Carolina Parakeet were once here in great numbers and, like the buffalo, are gone today. Perhaps the strongest link with the past which we can easily see today is the jack rabbit, the only natural inhabitant that has proven to be almost as adaptable and prolific as the 1870 settlers who came to Great Bend to live.



The Plains Indians - First Owners of the Land



Some think, my father, that you have brought all these warriors here to take our land from us, but I do not believe it. For although I am but a poor simple Indian, yet I know that this land will not suit your farmers; if I even thought your hearts bad enough to take the land, I would not fear it, as I know there is not wood enough on it for the use of the whites. You might settle along this river, where timber is to be found, but we can always get wood enough in our country to make our little fires."

Big Elk of the Omahas

Big Elk was considered a wise man among his people, but he had no way of knowing that the relatively few white settlers had soldiers which he saw represented only the beginning of an exodus which could not be held back. The lack of plentiful water and timber would

only slow the progress of this new civilization.

At least seven major Indian tribes claimed territory in what was to be the State of Kansas and much of the time there was a steady process of raiding, or prairie warfare, among the migrating villages. The tribal distribution map published by W. R. Wedel in *An Introduction to Kansas Archaeology* indicates that a center-point in the regions claimed by the Cheyenne, Pawnee, Kansa, Osage, Comanche, Kiowa and Arapaho tribes would fall in the general area of the big bend in the Arkansas River. Tribal lands were never clearly defined and the Indians themselves continually changed the locations of most of their villages as they followed the migrations of the buffalo herds and sought better grazing for their horses. The availability of water, grass and buffalo drew all of these tribes, at one time or

another, and sometimes bands of several tribes simultaneously, to the area in which the City of Great Bend would grow. The Plains Indians valued this ground just as highly as would the pioneers who later made their homes here.



A Quiviran village.



Nineteenth Century Mobile Home.



Satank - a Kiowa Chief, led raids against early settlers in this area and killed George Peacock and two other men at the trading post at Walnut Crossing.

Exploration and Conquest

At various times in history, three different European countries claimed the territory of what was to become Kansas, a part of which is now Barton County and Great Bend.

Francisco de Coronado, a Spaniard, came first seeking the fabled cities paved with gold in the year 1541.

De Soto, also a Spaniard, claimed all the land that touched the Mississippi River, its tributaries and drainage, for his king the same year that Coronado tramped over the ground that bordered the Arkansas River—St. Peter and Paul's River he called it. Later the Spaniards called the river Napeste.

John Cabot's exploration of the east coast of North America in 1496 and in 1498 from Cape Breton Island as far south as South Carolina laid claim for England from coast to coast.

One hundred and forty-one years after Coronado, in 1682, La Salle, a Frenchman, paddled down the Mississippi River from Canada and claimed all this same territory for the King of France. Hence three European flags flew over this territory and later the American Republic added a fourth. Had the Indians in North America had flags, perhaps a dozen more could be added.

When Coronado discovered no gold, the drawing power of that metal was absent and no hordes of people swarmed here to claim it. Alas, the land's wealth was hidden and remained hidden for three hundred-thirty more years. This is not to say that no European ever passed this way, for several parties did descend the Arkansas River from the mountains to the West. Even Lt. Zebulon Pike was blind to the wealth as he named the area the Great American Desert and predicted that these plains would never support civilization. Pike was the first American to explore the area. He stopped at the mouth of Walnut Creek for over a week to dry his baggage, hunt buffalo and build skin bull boats for part of his crew to descend and explore the river to its mouth. He figured the latitude and longitude of the spot and hurried on to the mountains before winter caught him on the open plains. One part of Pike's orders directed him to communicate with all Indians he encountered. Even though the American government purchased this land from the French and they from the Spanish, it was still recognized that the Indians were occupying claims and still had to be dealt with before there was clear title to the land.

The Indians were the first owners of the territory around Great Bend, but European nations paid no heed to their right of title.

By right of discovery, the Spanish and Portugese clashed over their claims in the Western Hemisphere. The Pope interceded and established the Demarcation Line which gave all of North America to Spain in 1494.

La Salle in 1682, crossing the divide to the Mississippi basin, followed that river to its mouth planting leaden plates at the mouth of each tributary thus announcing France's title to the whole Mississippi valley.

At this point, the Spanish, English and French had conflicting titles to the site of Great Bend. Attempted occupancy would inevitably result in a clash, especially if they had told the Indians what they were about. The fortunes of war cleared the title at least as far as the Europeans were concerned. When the French and Indian War closed in 1763, France lost out entirely at least for the time. England got the eastern half of the Mississippi valley and Spain the west. Great Bend was Spanish.

The title was to change hands again thirty-seven years later when Napoleon with a large, victorious army held the necessary high cards at the diplomatic table and persuaded the Spanish to return the western half of the valley to France.

The last trade came when Napoleon's fortunes were on the wane and he sold Louisiana to President Jefferson in 1803.

Napoleon Bonaparte, perhaps the most brilliant ruler in the history of France, and the victim of an unsatisfied ambition, had a dream in 1800 of re-establishing a French empire in America that would even surpass that of Canada, the possession of which had been wrested from the French by Great Britain aided greatly by the American Colonies.

Napoleon dreamed of crippling Great Britain's power in the western world by securing all of what is now the western part of the United States and, his dream worked a great advantage for the young American republic as it paved the way for the Louisiana Purchase. Had Napoleon realized his dream, America would have been a battle ground for marching armies.

The purchase of Louisiana from France in 1803 was no doubt the greatest accomplishment of the United States government. Louisiana included the territory west of the Mississippi River,

extending through the present western states to the Pacific coast and from British America on the north to the boundary of Mexico on the south. Actually, America found for many years that the boundaries were not exact enough to avoid disputes with both Great Britain and Spain. We claimed finally, as a southern boundary, the Red River from the Continental Divide to the mouth, but Spain claimed all that land south of the Arkansas River west of the 100th meridian (Dodge City). This matter was not settled until forty-three years later, or until the Mexican War of 1846.

In 1763 this immense territory was ceded to Spain by France, but by a secret article in the Treaty of St. Ildefonso in 1800, Spain ceded it back to France. Napoleon in 1800 coveted the Island of St. Domingo on account of its military importance of location in the Gulf of Mexico in guarding Louisiana, his secretly-acquired possession. He failed to acquire St. Domingo and his disappointment paved the way for the United States to purchase Louisiana.

In 1803, it was learned that France possessed Louisiana when a French Governor arrived. President Thomas Jefferson immediately appointed James Monroe to assist Robert Livingston, the American Minister at Paris, in negotiating the purchase of the territory from France.

Napoleon was busy with his wars in Europe and feared that England might take the possession from him. Consequently he was friendly to the U.S. and willing to sell the country to this government. On April 30, 1803, the treaty was signed and on October 1, 1803, the U.S. Congress ratified the treaty. The purchase price was only \$15,000,000.

Livingston at the time exclaimed: "I consider that from this day the U.S. takes rank with the powers of Europe, and now she has entirely escaped from the power of England."

Napoleon said, "By this cession of territory, I have secured the power of the U.S., and given to England a maritime rival who, at some future time, will humble her pride." The War of 1812 proved his words prophetic.

The Louisiana Territory included what is now the State of Kansas, so Napoleon's unfulfilled dream was the reason Barton County and Great Bend eventually became a part of the United States and the reason why we don't have to speak Spanish.

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Santa Fe Trail

The history of the area that was later to become Barton County, Kansas, has an ancient beginning in relation to man, perhaps more so than her sister counties. This situation was caused by a combination of several phenomena of nature that attracted man to this area. The flood plain created by the Walnut Creek and Arkansas River produced luxuriant pasture which attracted the great game herds which in turn attracted man, the hunter.

For man to cross the Great Plains, he required a dependable supply of food and water. The Arkansas River and the Walnut Creek furnished these essentials, so ancient man crossed the area in search of food and trade by following a trail adjacent to the river.

Long before Bucknell or Missouri and Santa Fe merchants "discovered" the Missouri-to-Santa Fe Trail, Indians carried sea shells from California, osage orange bowwood from eastern Kansas, and pipestone from Minnesota, as well as other essentials, over the trail.

The first American to visit this area was Lt. Zebulon M. Pike in 1806, arriving at the mouth of Walnut Creek on October 13th where he camped for two weeks exploring and resting.

In 1812, this trail was traveled commercially by pack mules with McKnight's Party, but in fact, there are brief records of even earlier use of the trail by Europeans.

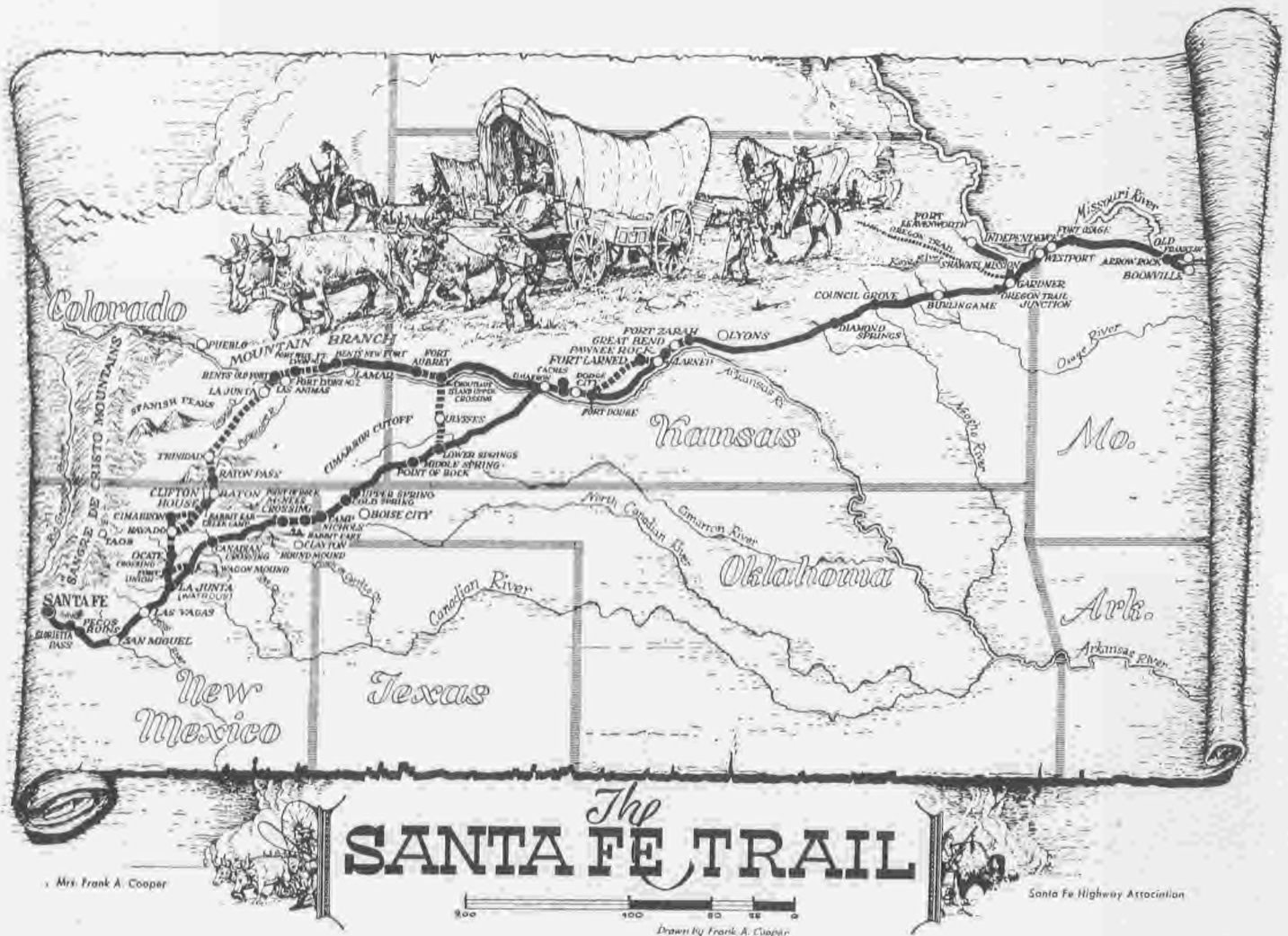
On August 9th and 10th of 1820, Major S. H. Long's expedition passed through

toward the west, the object, similarly to that of Lt. Pike, being to find if possible the sources of the Red River.

Cooper and Bucknell's pack-mule train passed through from Boonville, Missouri to Santa Fe, which was the real beginning of a great commercial enterprise that eventually led to the construction of the Santa Fe Railroad.

In 1825, in compliance with an act of Congress, Major George Champlin Sibley proceeded to survey a wagon road from Missouri to Santa Fe. His party probably entered present Barton County while following the Arkansas River on August 23rd and left the county to the west after considerable exploration of the Cheyenne Bottoms and its streams.

The wagon trains continued to stream



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Santa Fe Trail (Cont.)

west crossing Walnut Creek about a mile west of its mouth. Often military units guarding the wagons passed through, and it was not uncommon for troops of dragoons to be stationed at the Walnut Crossing during the trade season.

In the spring of 1829, Major Bennet Riley and his four companies of infantry and ox-drawn baggage wagons escorted a wagon train through the county June 28th and 29th, killing the first buffalo of the expedition at this point. He returned with the wagon train in October.

Although wagons laden with trade goods went through from Missouri to Santa Fe many times each year, none had formal military escorts other than the one in 1829, one in 1834 under command of Captain Clifton Wharton, and two caravans in 1843 under command of Captain Philip St. George Cooke.

In the year 1846, during the Mexican War, General Stephen Watts Kearny crossed to Santa Fe and stopped at the "great bend", August 18th. It took a span of three weeks for his army to pass this point. Traffic on the trail increased with each year, with the Morman migration, the 1849 California and the 1859 Cripple Creek gold rushes.

In the year 1855, two men established a trading post about one mile west of the

mouth of Walnut Creek which was to be the center for a host of historical anecdotes for ten years or more. Their names were William Allison and a Mr. Francis Booth. Mr. Booth was murdered at the trading post by a Mexican in October 1857. William Allison died suddenly of heart failure on April 19, 1859 at Independence, Missouri while there on a buying trip. The trading post was then run by George H. Peacock also of Independence, Missouri. Peacock was killed at the trading post by Satank of the Kiowas on September 9, 1860, after he had tricked the old chief.

Chris and Charlie Rath took over operations until 1868 when raiding Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians burned the post to the ground.

Two particularly important events occurred at this point on the Walnut Creek. The second Post Office to be established west of the immediate vicinity of the Missouri-Kansas line was established at Fort Atkinson (six miles west of Dodge City) on November 11, 1851. Samuel G. Mason was appointed Postmaster. The Post Office and Postmaster was moved to Walnut Creek August 22, 1853. Everything west of Marion County and south of a line extended west of the north line of Marion County was shown on maps as Washington

County. The address was therefore "Walnut Creek, Washington County, Kansas."

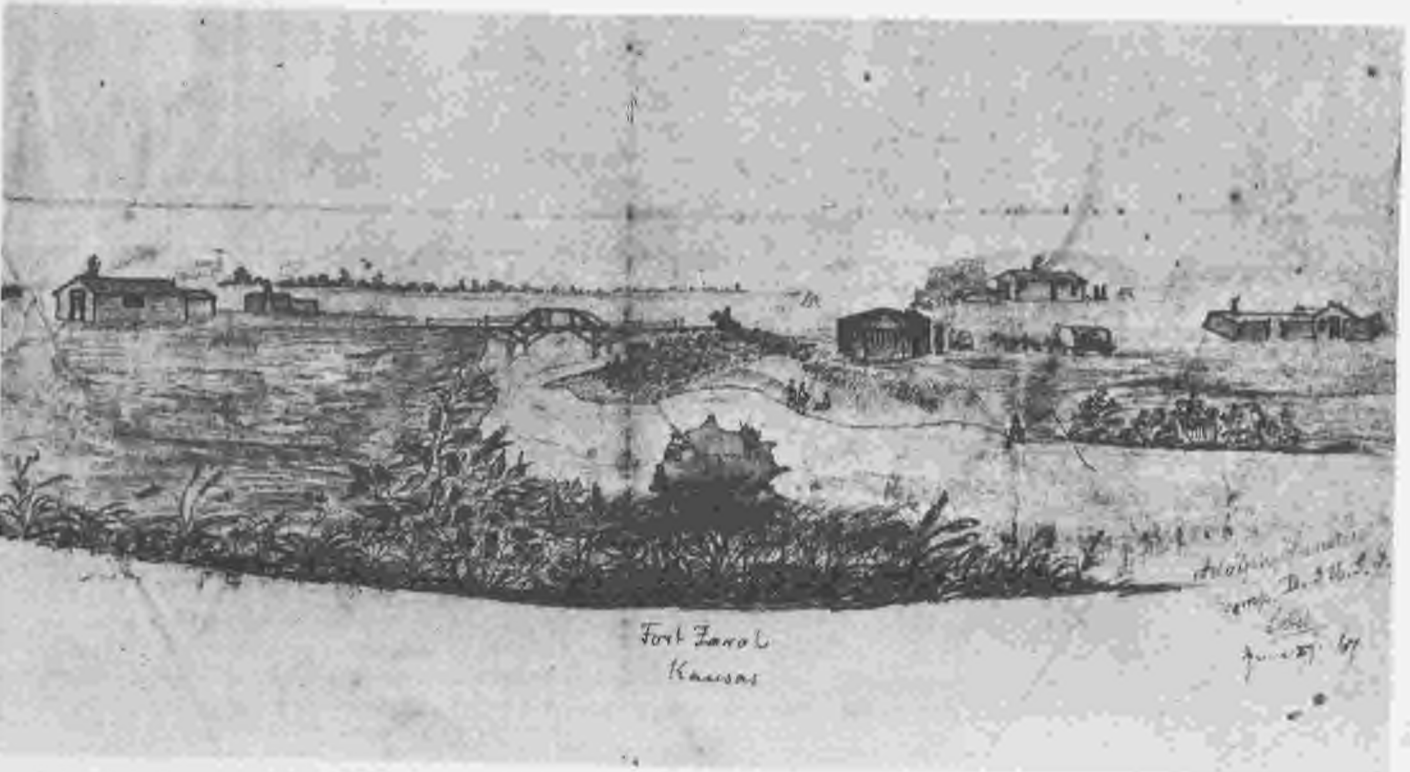
By 1860 this county was designated as Peketon County. By 1867 all of eighteen counties and part of another county were carved of the eastern half of Peketon County. It passed out of existence and so did the Post Office at Walnut Creek on November 20, 1857. It was re-established and continued during various periods as Fort Zarah Post Office until July 6, 1871.

The second event was the issuance of the very first corporate charter in the entire state of Kansas to a group of investors to build and operate a log-toll bridge across Walnut Creek at the Santa Fe Crossing. The year was 1863.

In 1864 General Samuel Curtis ordered Fort Zarah to be built near the Walnut Crossing. It was a sandstone building sixty feet wide by one hundred six feet long with two stone towers at two of the corners diagonally opposite each other.

In 1866 the Government held a peace council with the five principal Southern Plains Indian tribes. Some 14,000 Indians were camped in or about the "great bend" for three months or more.

Commerce continued in increasing amounts over the Santa Fe Trail until the Santa Fe Railroad was constructed through Great Bend in 1872.



Ado Hunnins, a government surveyor, made this sketch of the settlement at Walnut crossing, 4 miles east of Great Bend, in 1867. The foreground is the Arkansas showing the mouth of Walnut Creek. Upper left is the log toll bridge, next the first Fort Zarah, a hexagonal stone building, at center, the stage station and Allison's trading post at right.

The Founding of Great Bend and Barton County

Great Bend came into formation with the coming of the railroads that built westward and provided the "lifelines" to make the nation's expansion and permanent settlements possible during the turbulent years following the Civil War.

The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad laid track into Great Bend July 15, 1872. Nine days later the track extended west through Pawnee Rock and out of the county.

The Great Bend Town Company was organized at Topeka in August 1871. The directors, officers, and incorporators were C.R.S. Curtis, M.F. Bassett, J.L. Curtis, J.T. Morton, James Israel, A.R. McIntyre, T.J. Mitchell, R.F. Shinn, W.E. Johnson, T.L. Morris, D.L. Lakin, T.J. Peter, and A.L. Williams.

The site for the town was located early in September. Section 34 was first selected but since Section 34 was bisected by the River, the original survey group, probably among whom was G. N. Moses, D. N. Heizer, Hiram Bickerdyke, and Jonathan Tilton, settled in favor of Section 28, on higher ground. During the summer of 1872, Great Bend was organized as a city of the 3rd class with A. A. Hurd elected as mayor.

In September of 1871, the town company, to comply with the Townsite Pre-Emption Law which required occupation and improvements, started the erection of a hotel which was completed during the winter, and Thomas L. Stone was installed as landlord. The hotel was generally known as the Southern Hotel but may have been originally named the "Drovers Cottage". The next building constructed on the townsite was that of Edwin Tyler, a little south of the Southern on the west side of the Square. It was a small building, part of which was used as a dwelling and the balance as a store. Mr. Tyler became the first merchant to engage in business in Great Bend.

In September 1872, final proof was made and a patent for Section 28 was issued to Mayor Hurd in trust for the use and benefit of the occupants. These, under the laws of Kansas, were considered to be the Great Bend Town Company, most of whom resided at Quincy, Illinois. Accordingly a deed was made to said town company by the mayor. The U.S. Courts afterward decided that the provision making a non-resident town company occupant was not in keeping with and according to the spirit of the law of Congress and that the deed

must be made by the mayor to each of the actual occupants according to his respective interests. After the filing of a law suit, a compromise was effected, the first deed was set aside and commissioners allotted the occupants all of the lots who in turn deeded one-half back to the town company.

In May 1872, A. C. Allen located a drug store in a building he constructed west of the Court House Square. Later that year, Ed Markworth, E. L. Morphy and John Cook were among those who came and engaged in business. Markworth and Cook were grocerymen and Morphy started a hardware business.

The Typer family came about this same time, and erected the Typer House on the east side of the Square.

Barton County was created and its boundaries defined by the Kansas Legislature in 1867 and later changed in 1868 and remained in that form until 1875 after the county became formally organized. In March of 1872, a petition signed by a number of Barton County residents was sent to the Governor, James M. Harvey, for organization of the county. A census was ordered and a sufficient number of people were found to be resident and Governor Harvey signed the proclamation organizing the county on May 16, 1872. He appointed Thomas L. Morris, John H. Hubbard, and George M. Berry special County Commissioners, and William H. Odell as special County Clerk whose main duties were to hold a special

election for the purposes of electing regular county officers and to vote on a permanent county seat. The election was held on July 1, 1872 and despite great rivalry between the incorporated town of Great Bend and the unincorporated town of Zarah, Great Bend was favored in receiving 111 votes to 33 for Zarah and 22 for Ellinwood.

M.W. Halsey, John Cook and L.H. Lusk were elected County Commissioners; W.H. Odell, County Clerk; T.L. Morris, Register of Deeds; J.B. Howard, Clerk of the District Court; E.L. Morphy, County Treasurer; D.N. Heizer, Probate Judge; A.C. Moses, County Superintendent; John Fanrow, County Surveyor; George N. Moses, Sheriff; D.B. Baker, Coroner; and J.B. Howard, County Attorney.

Barton County was named in honor of Clara Barton, a prominent and beloved nurse of the Civil War times and generally credited with the founding of the American Red Cross.

The first Barton County Court House and Jail was built within the boundaries of what would have been a street had not the original town plot joined two blocks together to form Lafayette Park. A controversy arose among the citizens as to whether the county had authority to build in the park or not. The County Commissioners apparently rationalized that if the building did not exceed thirty feet in width (the width of the street had it been laid out to correspond with Cowgill Street on the east and Maggie Street on the west)



An uncovered covered wagon fords the Arkansas River at Great Bend in 1872.

This page sponsored through the courtesy of

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Barton County Historical Society

The Founding of Great Bend and Barton County

that they could legally locate the building where they did. The building was finished in July 1874 and was in constant use until it was razed in 1917 in favor of a second County Courthouse built on the spot in 1918.

The first settlers to file for ownership of land in the county were John Reinecke and Henry Schultz who came to their claims on the Walnut Creek six miles northwest of Great Bend in April 1870. By the end of the year 1870, twelve more claims were started in the immediate vicinity, and by the time the census was taken in 1872, over six hundred inhabitants called Barton County their home. The county now boasts nearly 35,000 souls.

The first marriage in the county was solemnized at Great Bend in November 1872, the contracting parties being Jonathan F. Tilton and Miss Addie Eastey.

The first birth in the county was that of George A. Hansuer born October 2, 1871, and the first death among the settlers was that of a child of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Sneck, which occurred in January 1872.

A wooden pile-bridge 1,400 feet long across the Arkansas River at Great Bend was built in 1873. There were 28 spans of 50 feet each and cost \$15,000 which was assumed by Great Bend Township. The iron pile-bridge, 630 feet long at Ellinwood across the river, was built in March 1876. It was the first iron bridge to cross the river. There were 10 spans of 60 feet each, and one span of 30 feet. Lakin Township bore the cost of \$10,000. Six more iron and wood bridges were built across the Walnut, one wooden on the Dry Walnut, one wooden on Blood Creek and one wooden on Cow Creek, and all were completed before 1880.

With the coming of the railroads, settlers and European emigrants poured in to the county to buy railroad land and file on government homestead land. Englishmen settled at Pawnee Rock first and then German-Russian Mennonites came later; Austrians settled near Ellinwood; Bohemians and German-Russians spilled over from the north into the county.

The county suffered with the rest of the State in the 1874 Grasshopper Plague. Mother Mary A. Bickerdyke came to the rescue of the adopted county of her two sons Hiram and John by raising a train load of relief supplies back East for distribution to the Barton County settlers, many of whom were Civil War veterans and whom she considered to be "her boys".

While the predominant industry has

from the beginning been agriculture, the county has had several other industries that have sustained the economy at the high level that it has always enjoyed. The foremost of these has been flour milling. The Walnut Creek Mill began in 1875 on the banks of that creek. Other mills operated in Great Bend, Ellinwood and Claflin over the years.

Brickmaking has continually bolstered the economy with five or more kilns or brickmaking plants being a part of past history with one still responsible for a significant share of the county's present economy.

For many years creameries played a major role in the furtherance of agriculture with principal buttermaking facilities at Heizer and Great Bend. In fact, a cheese factory operating at full capacity at Hoisington gives proof that dairying is a substantial part of the county's agriculture to this day. Poultry, egg and red meat processing and packing were leading industries in the county as is evidenced today by the location here of the largest family-owned meatpacking plant in Kansas, the Thies Packing Company.

The brewing of beer was once an industry at Ellinwood.

Cigar-making, a foundry, soft drink bottling and poultry packing, were all industries that flourished at one time in the county.

Another important industry to affect the county was petroleum and natural gas production starting in the early 1930's. Oil

activity reached such proportions that for many years, the county was foremost in production in the state in wells drilled, number of persons employed, number of various companies located in the county and volume of sales tax collected for oil industry related sales. Even today it is of considerable importance as compared to other industries.

The railroads contributed much to the county's economy with a division headquarters and roundhouse in Hoisington and four branch lines terminating in the county.

The county has always been in the forefront of military and national defense activities from the early Civil War Veterans organizations to modern reserve and National Guard organizations. Old Company "C" National Guard was activated and saw brilliant performance in France in World War I. In World War II, Barton County was the home of many airmen and families during training days at the B-29 Bomber base built four miles west of Great Bend. That base is now the municipal airport with a host of modern industries there including two mobile home plants, a Fuller Brush plant, and four or five other factories.

Barton County was not without her share of strong, vigorous patriotic, fraternal, religious and civic organizations. It has three fine hospitals, three nursing homes, an exceptional medical force, outstanding lawyers and judges, and bankers and financial men of note.



A sod house was the home of many farm families in early Barton County. This picture shows the Lewis Meyers family homestead in Buffalo Township in 1874.

This page sponsored through the courtesy of

Safeway Stores, Inc.

Central Kansas Electric Coop

Great Bend in the 1870's



FOREST AVENUE — One of the first pictures taken of Great Bend's business section is this one of Maggie street, now Forest avenue, looking west from the courthouse or Curtis avenue, now Main street. G. H. Hulme operated the dry goods, grocery and hardware store on the left, now the site of the American State Bank, and A. S. Allen ran a drug store in the two-story brick and stone building on the right, now the location of Burke's Shoe Store. Hulme, father of Jim, Ray and Charley Hulme and Mrs. Earl Epperson, now of Great Bend, was one of Great Bend's first businessmen. Allen constructed the two-story building in 1876 to house the drug store he opened in 1872. The third building on the left with circle window was the Methodist church, erected in 1878, and across the street from it, or the location of the old library, is pictured, with cupola, Great Bend's first public school, constructed in 1873. Several years after the turn of the century the schoolhouse was moved and now is part of the Dixon residence at 1112 Williams avenue.



Main Street - Move your bird's-eye-view in the picture above one block to the north. In what is now the 1400 block of Main was located the Southern Hotel, City Drug Store, the Peoples Store (now Komarek's) and on the South corner, the A. S. Allen Drug Store. The Southern Hotel, previously called Drover's Cottage, was the first building erected on the townsite.

This page sponsored by

Barton County Bar Association

Main and Broadway - 1879



This view of Broadway west from Main gives some idea of the sparse arrangement of residences in early Great Bend. The rear of the Southern Hotel is at center-left. The city's first school is upper-left and the Culver Implement Co. is at lower right. Residences can be seen in the distance at upper-right. The water-pumping windmills were just one of the important inventions which made the settlement of the Great Plains possible.

This page sponsored by

Great Bend Tribune

Broadway, East from Main in the 1890's



Above, a funeral procession proceeds west in the 1900 block of Broadway. A merchant by the name of James Holland constructed the two-story building on the left, now the location of the Federal Building, then went back east to purchase a stock of goods and was never heard from again. He apparently was murdered for the money he was carrying to buy merchandise. Below - viewing from the top of the County Courthouse, you see the Morrison Hotel, constructed in 1888, and a farm on the Cook & Weber Funeral Home corner.



This page sponsored by

Great Bend Lions Club

Rowland's Decorating Center

"South side of the Square"

Great Bend Businesses in the 1890's



The Great Bend Implement Company occupied the southeast corner of Main and Lakin where the Zarah Hotel now stands. Mr. Louis Zutavern is guiding a steam tractor past the corner. In these days, steam was growing competition for the traditional form of power and men like the employees of the harness shop below would have urged Mr. Zutavern to "get a horse."



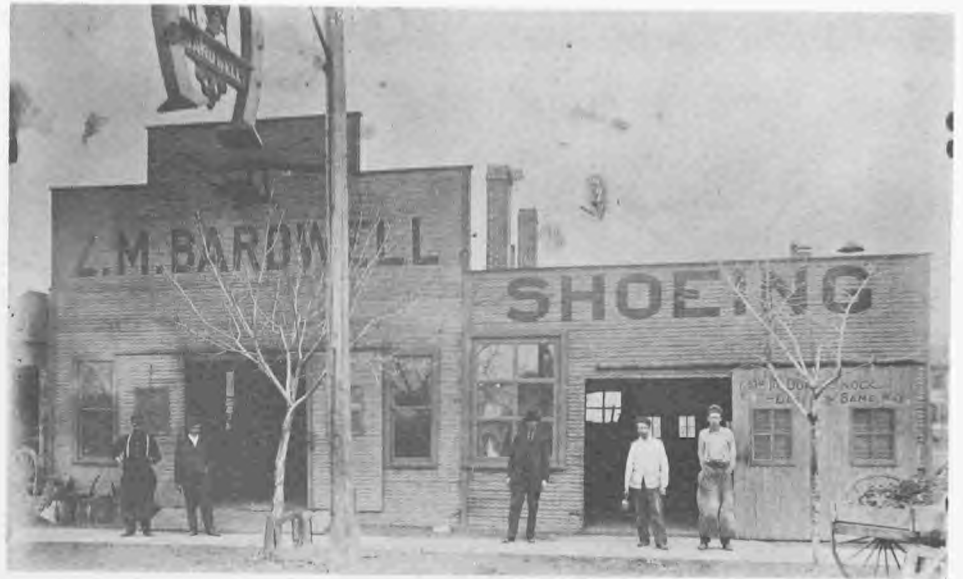
The Hiss Harness Shop was an important concern in the horse and buggy days of the 1890's. Mr. Hiss is on the right. The harness shop was located in what is now the 1400 block of Main on the site now occupied by Howard's Apparel Shop.

This page sponsored by

Thies Packing Company

Great Bend Businesses in the 1890's

Bardwell Blacksmith Shop, 1200
Block of Kansas Ave. on east side.
Later developed into auto repair
and rebuilding.



The Great Bend Bottling works
was purchased in 1905 by Don A.
Weltmer from H. E. Dean who
had started the business in 1895.
The building which still stands at
1209 Kansas, at one time housed
the first electric light plant.

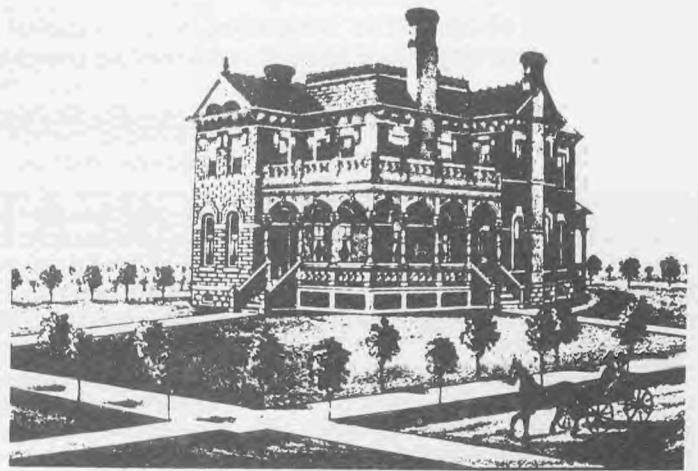
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Harper Construction Company

Great Bend Homes In The 1890's



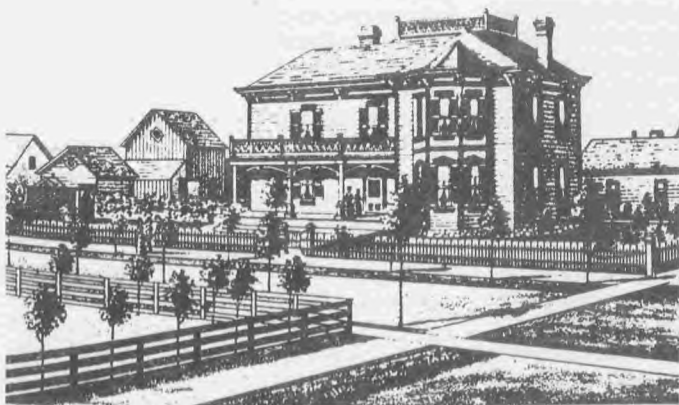
The A. S. Allen residence stood on the west side of the 1300 block of Stone Street.



The D. N. Heizer home became the first St. Rose Hospital at Polk and Broadway. The building was razed to make way for the second St. Rose Hospital.



This house, built by Theodore Griffith, can still be seen at Broadway and Odell, and is now the home of the Don Hewitt family.



Originally the J. C. Gwinn home at Morphy & Forest.



The home constructed by Louis Zutavern, one of Great Bend's early businessmen.

Great Bend In The 1890's

In April of 1898, The Irrigation Era magazine published the following article about established businesses in what they considered to be the irrigator's paradise in Barton County:

THE PRINCIPAL
BUSINESS
FIRMS AT

GREAT BEND

ARE
REPRESENTED,
AS FOLLOWS:

The first National Bank of Great Bend was established in 1885, with a capital stock of \$50,000, and is a splendidly conducted institution, occupying a central location in the town. The officers and directors are: G. L. Chapman, president, G. H. Hulme, vice-president, H. J. Klien, cashier, which together with John Dickson, J. S. Winget and F. V. Russell constitute the board of directors.

The A. S. Allen Drug Co. has been established here twenty-five years, and this is the leading drug establishment in the city. Mr. Allen came here from Ohio. They carry a stock of goods amounting to about \$8,000.

John F. Lewis & Co. is one of the oldest established real estate firms in the county, Mr. Lewis coming here in 1873 from central Illinois. This firm is interested in both farm and city property, but give more special attention to farm lands, etc., at this time having over 400 farms in the county on their list, thirty-five of which are under the new canal now rapidly nearing completion. Mr. Lewis is an old soldier, having served both in the regular and volunteer service, eight years in all, and at the close of the civil war he served as an officer in the 21 14th and 22 regulars in the Indian wars of Arizona. He is personally acquainted with every farm he represents on account of his long residence here, as well as with nearly all the residents of this and adjoining counties.

The Barton County Exchange, J. W. Downey, manager, has been established here six years, but Mr. Downey has been a resident of this county since 1872, coming here at that time from Ohio. The line of goods carried by this firm consists of boots, shoes, clothing, groceries, gents' furnishings, hardware, etc., the stock amounting to about \$3,000, and the annual business transacted about \$15,000. Mr. Downey is also engaged in farming, having 160 acres five miles west of town, nearly all in wheat, under the canal on this land he has a very fine five acre orchard.

G. H. Hulme is the proprietor of the Great Bend Mills, cut of which appears in this issue. Mr. Hulme came here from Ohio in 1876. The mill shown here has a capacity of 200 barrels and the elevator of 20,000 bushels.

The real estate firm of Gunnell & Moses

has been established here since 1872, and control a very large list of farm property throughout the country and are general agents for Union Pacific R. R. lands through this section and do a general real estate business. They are also interested in city property, rents, loans and insurance. Mr. Gunnell of this firm is a native of Illinois and Mr. Moses of New York, coming here in the early days of the town, and both these gentlemen are largely interested in property of their own throughout the county and town. Mr. Moses of this firm is a partner in the large merchandise establishment of G. N. & E. R. Moses and owns considerable real estate throughout this section.

The J. V. Brinkman Company Bank is the oldest banking institution in Central Kansas, having been established here in 1874 with a capital stock of \$50,000 and surplus of \$10,000. J. V. Brinkman of the Walnut Creek Mills is president of the company, J. Geo. Brinkman vice-president, Louis Zutavern cashier and Chas. V. Brinkman assistant cashier.

The deposits of the bank amount to between three and four hundred thousand dollars. The officers own about 6,000 acres of land in the county a portion of which comes under the new canal, and this will be greatly increased in value when the canal has been fully completed.

The Walnut Creek Mills, located at Great Bend, are the largest flouring mills in Central Kansas, having a capacity of 400 barrels, and an elevator of 80,000 bushels capacity. These mills were established in 1887, and are owned by a corporation nearly all the stock of which is held by J. V. Brinkman, who came to this state from Ohio in the early history of the county. The product from this mill is sold in Colorado, New Mexico, Western Kansas and Arizona. The cost of construction was \$60,000. One of the largest wholesale and retail merchandise firms doing business in the Western country is that of G. N. & E. R. Moses, having their main offices here, one branch house at Hoisington under the management of D. J. Lewis, and another at Claflin under the management of John Barth. This business was established in 1873 and has grown steadily from something very insignificant at that time until they now occupy a quarter of a block

of ground, two stories and basement, each department stocked full to overflowing. The principal goods handled by this firm consists of hardware, farm implements, buggies, carriages, furniture, jewelry, queensware, harness, silverware, undertaking, etc., etc., and they purchase these goods in such large lots at a time that they are able to give their customers as good service as they can secure in Kansas City, Chicago, or Eastern States anywhere. Their mail order business is very heavy.

These gentlemen are also largely interested in farming, conducting several large farms about Great Bend, which they have brought under irrigation in years past by the use of windmills. They are both natives of New York, but have spent the greater portion of their time in the West. Mr. E. R. Moses of this firm is the champion of irrigation in the West, having served for several years as chairman of the National Irrigation Congress. He is known all over the West as the most able exponent of the values of irrigation and is at present chairman of the executive committee of The Trans-Mississippi Commercial Congress, which meets in Wichita, Kans., about October 1st.

C. F. Rathbun has recently opened in Great Bend an art studio, executing exceptionally fine work in crayon which is fully up to the standard of the work anywhere. Mr. Rathbun has lived in Great Bend nearly all his life, coming here from Missouri at an early age, and this work he has picked up himself being naturally adapted to the use of the pencil and brush and we predict for him a very successful business wherever he may be located. He has a splendid studio in the Allen & Hubbard building on Main street.

A. W. Hornbeck is in the wholesale and retail produce and commission business, having a very large trade. The specialties which he handles are apples, potatoes, cedar and vinegar. He came here ten years ago from Ohio.

There are three newspapers in Great Bend all published weekly. The Barton County Democrat was established in 1884 and is a Silver-Democratic paper. W. E. Stoke, editor and proprietor, is a native of Iowa, and came to this county in 1876, and for eleven years has been the editor and

Great Bend In The 1890's

publisher of "The Democrat," which is at this time the official paper of Barton county and also of the town of Great Bend. Mr. Stoke has served as postmaster for four years past but expects soon to give up this position to the McKinley administration.

Allison Bros. are wholesale and retail dealers in coal, handling the Colorado product almost entirely. They have been established here 13 years, coming from Ohio.

Dr. T. F. Blanke is the leading physician of Great Bend and the only German Homeopathic physician in Barton County. He has been established here five years, coming at that time from St. Louis. He now occupies a suit of office rooms over the postoffice.

Lundblade & Bolinger are engaged in the grocery, hardware and drug business, and carry a stock of goods amounting to \$8,000 and do a business annually of \$40,000. They have been established here six years.

The Great Bend Implement Co. has been established here since 1890, and are doing a splendid business in hardware, farm implements, vehicles of all kinds, wind-mills, pumps, harness, etc., etc. They carry a stock of goods amounting to about \$20,000. J. V. Brinkman is president of the company and Fred Zutavern manager.

M. B. Fitts, county clerk, came to Barton County twenty-five years ago from Illinois. He has a 600 acre farm on Walnut Creek, over half of which is under cultivation and 140 acres in wheat this year.

Elmer S. Brodie is recorder of deeds for Barton County, and came here in 1882 from Indiana. He has 160 acres of land in the northern part of the county, sixty acres of which is in wheat this year.

D. Bosse is county treasurer for this county and has lived here twenty-three years, coming direct from Germany. He has 1,000 acres of land in the county most of which is in cultivation and 700 acres in wheat this season. Mr. Bosse has a fine orchard of twenty acres on his place which he has grown by means of irrigation, using a windmill for furnishing the supply of water. This is the finest orchard in the county and shows remarkable care and growth.

The Morrison House, a well kept \$2 a day hotel is located at Great Bend, with L. L. Dudrey as proprietor. Mr. Dudrey has been here four years only, but the hotel has been in operation since 1886 and is first class in every respect.

The Hotel Greene is one of the leading hotels in Central Kansas operated by Geo. W. Greene, who came here three years ago from Indiana, where he has been engaged in the hotel business nearly all his life. The rates at this hotel are \$2 per day and it is one of the best in the country. Mr. Greene is assisted by Geo. W. Greene, Jr., his son, in conducting the hotel.

C. F. Diffenbacher is one of the leading attorneys of Barton County, and has resided here for twenty-five years, coming from Pennsylvania at that time. Mr. Diffenbacher is at present serving a term as county attorney for Barton County, and also has extensive farming interests about Great Bend.

The Kincaid stables, the leading livery establishment of Great Bend, is owned by G. C. Kincaid, who came here from W. V., in 1874. This stable is first class in every particular, well equipped with stock. Mr. Kincaid also runs the delivery for the Wells Fargo Express.

B. Dotson & Son are engaged in the bicycle and repair business, carrying a full line of bicycle sundries of every character and several different makes of wheels. They have been here fourteen years, coming from Indiana.

The largest dry goods and furnishing establishment in Great Bend is "The Cyclone." This establishment carries a large line of dry goods, gents' furnishings, and racket goods a specialty. They occupy a large building, two rooms 50x100 feet and have been established here for twelve years. They are now carrying a stock of goods amounting to \$20,000 and employ from fifteen to twenty clerks. R. Caro is proprietor and Ed. S. Marx manager. They are enjoying a very large trade even in these dull times and now with the new era of prosperity which has set in for the benefit of Kansas, they expect this to largely increase from time to time. They sell strictly for cash.

W. R. Bunting is engaged in the Insurance business at Great Bend, and is a live, wide awake business man in every respect. He has lived here twenty-four years, and is a native of Pennsylvania.

Halliday & Luse is the leading Photographing establishment in Great Bend, and their work in this line is fully up to the standard of any artist in the state. This business was established in 1889.

The Moses Bros., Grain Co., is a factor of no small importance in the wealth of Barton County. They are dealers in grain and livestock, having at this point the largest grain elevator in central Kansas, the capacity of which is 40,000 bushels, and the working capacity 100,000 bushels per day. In addition, they have no less than twenty-five large elevators scattered along the line of the Santa Fe R. R. in western and central Kansas. They buy the grain direct from the farmers and sell again when the best opportunity presents itself. They are now opening a grain house in Kansas City, which will be under the management of W. A. Moses. These gentlemen are also largely interested in land throughout the county, owning about 5,000 acres, 1,000 of which is in wheat this year. They are also extensively interested in the cattle business, having a herd of 600 high-grade Herefords, twenty-five of

which are registered, and in addition, are the owners of four large business blocks in Great Bend, costing \$10,000 each. They are natives of New York and have been engaged in this business at Great Bend since 1874.

E. L. Hotchkiss is engaged in the practice of law at Great Bend, and is one of the leading men of his profession, having resided in this county for fourteen years. He was admitted to the bar at Broomfield, Kans., and was for four years prosecuting attorney at this place.

Jas. W. Clarke came to Great Bend in 1884 from Tennessee, and has since that time been engaged in the practice of law at this place, having a large clientele.

The Great Bend Creamery was established at this place in 1894, and is a factor of a great deal of importance to the farmers of the community. Mr. W. G. Merritt is the proprietor of the works, and has over \$7,000 invested in the plant. Mr. Merritt is a native of Illinois, and in this line of business no one could be found better qualified. The highest make of butter in one day of this plant was 2,500 pounds, and \$30,000 annually is paid the farmers for milk. The greater part of the product of the creamery is shipped to Colorado, such markets as Pueblo, Denver, Victor, etc., being especially good.

F. Vernon Russell, with a handsome suite of offices over the Brinkman Bank, is engaged in the practice of law, coming from Virginia to this state in 1890. In addition to his law practice, he is largely interested in the First National Bank as an officer and the largest individual stockholder.

Mr. Cornett, physician and surgeon, is located at Great Bend, and enjoys a very remunerative practice throughout the county. He is a native of Ohio and has been here fourteen years.

It is seldom you find in a town the size of Great Bend a store so fully up to date in every particular as the New York Store at this place, owned by C. Samuels and under the management of H. S. Born. Splendid business ability on the part of the owner and his manager bring about the results always found here, viz: a full stock in every department and the latest goods at the very lowest cost. Buying in large lots of eastern manufacturers direct, this store is enabled to sell its goods at as low a price at all times as prevails in Kansas City.

Mr. Samuels is an old resident of Great Bend, having been located here in this business for eighteen years.

John Armstrong resides at Great Bend and represents the 35th district in the senate, serving his second term. He has been a resident of this county twenty years and is a native of Michigan. He has extensive agricultural interests, having out over 800 acres of wheat this year.

The Register is one of the leading papers of Great Bend. It is the oldest paper in western Kansas. M. A. Hoisington is editor and proprietor.

Great Bend In The 1890's

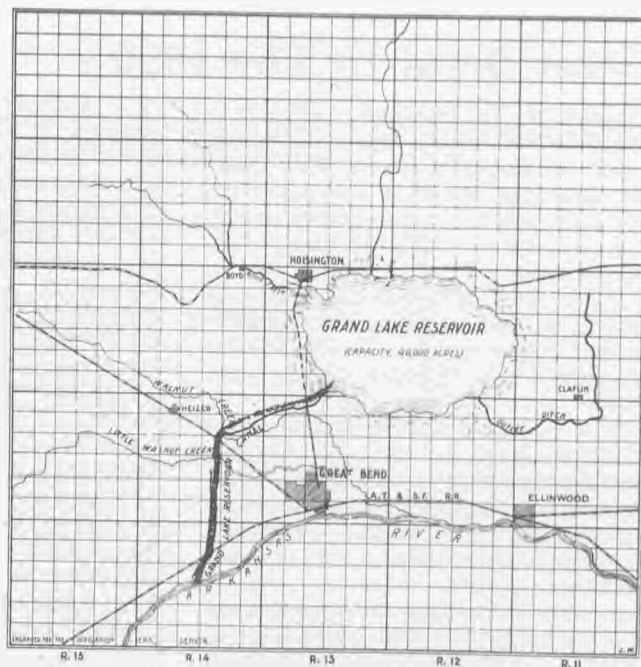
The Koen Ditch

The availability of water for farm, and home use was a constant concern to the early citizens of Great Bend and Barton County. Generous amounts of water for farm irrigation would insure the farm-based economy of the city. Local people would do anything possible to make this area the garden spot of the Great Plains. The constant water supply of the Arkansas river and the availability of an intermittently dry, natural lake at the Cheyenne Bottoms caused several businessmen, led by George and Ed Moses, to think.

In 1897 the Grand Lake Reservoir Company was formed to finance and promote an irrigation system for the country surrounding Great Bend. A Mr. F. B. Koen and George A. Tritties, old-time promoters of similar systems in eastern Colorado, were hired to supervise the construction of the Grand Lake Reservoir Canal. The canal, when dug, would carry water from the river west of the city, around to the north and into the lake bed and would be thirteen miles long. Land irrigated from the canal and lake was expected to increase in value from \$10 to \$100 per acre.

Men were hired, digging was begun, at one time 75 teams of horses were being used to move earth, and water flowed into the western end of the trench. In February of 1899, the canal was open through to what was to be called Lake Cheyenne and water actually flowed from the river into the bottom.

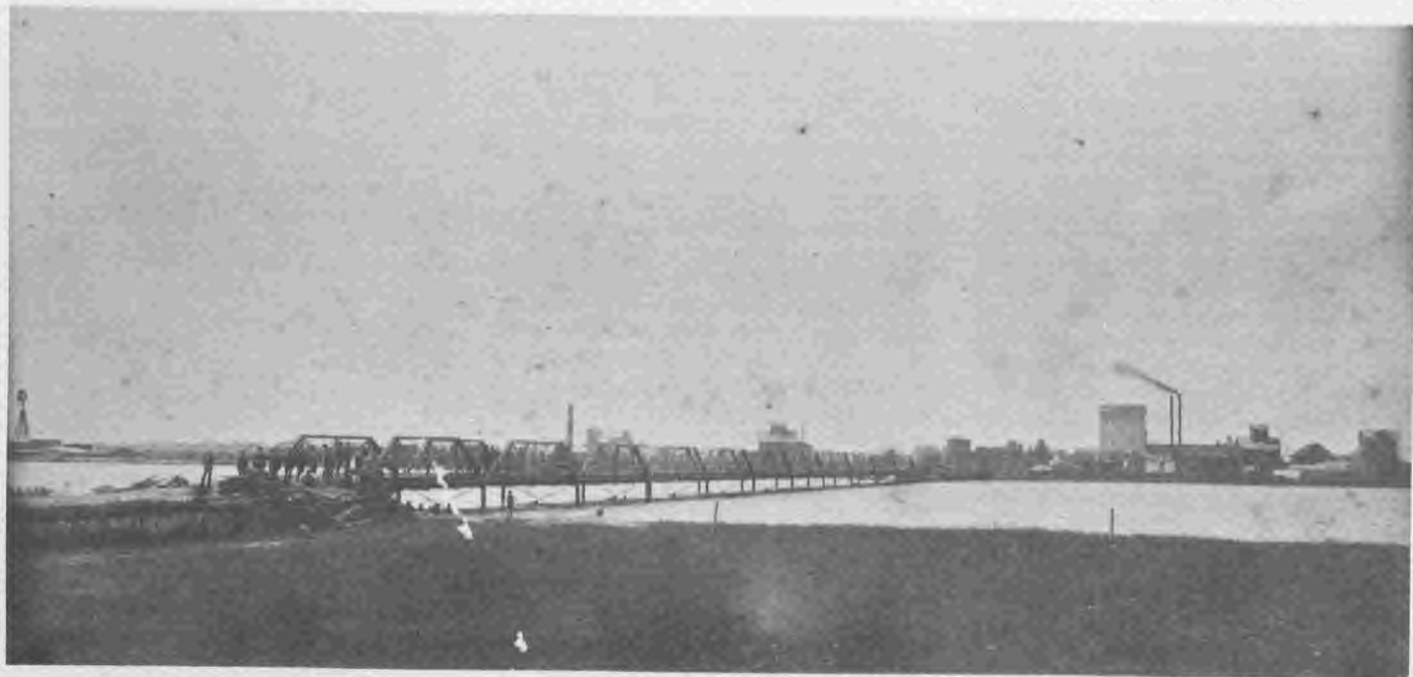
Mr. Koen grew more optimistic. The May 19, 1899, issue of the Barton County Democrat newspaper quoted the irrigator and his intention to fill the lake in one winter. "The primary objective of the lake will be to use it as a great reservoir to store water, to be used during the dry season, but if plans don't



Sectional map of southern Barton County showing the canal, or Koen Ditch, around Great Bend.

miscarry somewhere, that lake will be a good deal more than simply a storage reservoir. Hotels and boat houses will be built on the banks and pleasure steamers will ply on the waters of this restored sea. 'I expect,' said Mr. Koen, with a smile, 'to put a steamer on there that will carry a thousand.' "

But Cheyenne Lake remained only a bottom. Not enough water was supplied from the river, law suits arose over financing and land ownership and the dreams of an unlimited water supply and Barton County as an irrigated paradise began to evaporate under the hot Summer sun of 1899. Mr. Koen blew back into eastern Colorado with a dusty Kansas wind.



In the 1890's a steel bridge with plank flooring connected Great Bend with land to the south. This view was taken from the south bank, looking back at the city's skyline. The usually steady river flow, above or below ground, tantalized would-be irrigators.

Great Bend at the turn of the Century



The winter scene above was photographed from the top of the Opera House, the building in which Steinert's Furniture and Appliance Store is now located. The view looks east, up the 2000 block of Forest, toward the County Courthouse. The Morrison Hotel is at left-center, the old Catholic Church at center, and empty, snow-covered fields lay to the east where future Great Bend homes will stand.

Below, the wide angle view of Main Street taken from the top of the Courthouse also shows that the city had begun to expand west and south by the early 1900's.



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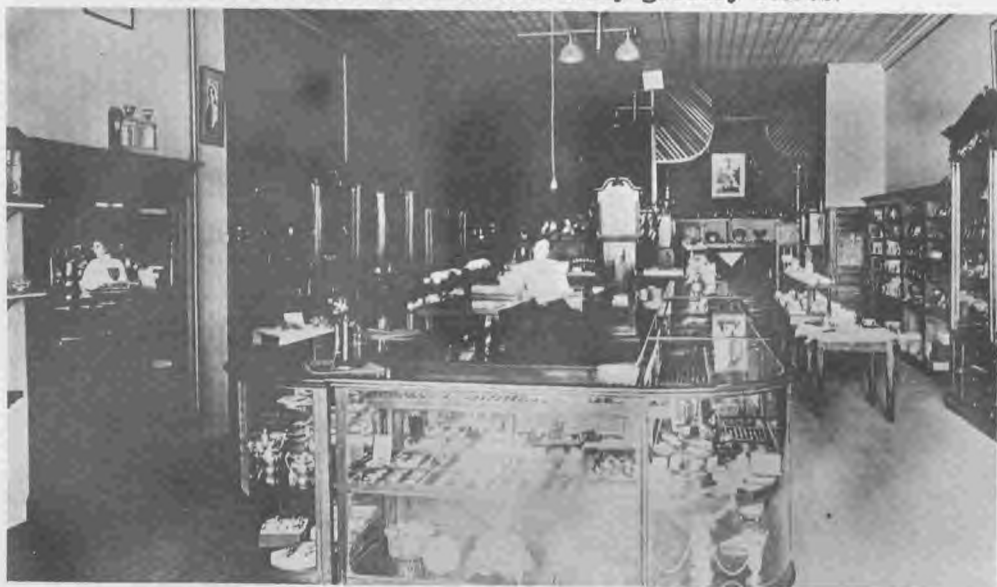
Silver and Gold Club

and the Progress Club - Founded in 1896

Great Bend Retailers At The Turn Of The Century



One of Great Bend's several early grocery stores.



A Great Bend Jewelry store in about 1901.



The Allen Drug store was one of Great Bend's earliest businesses.

In 1899 citizens exhibited pride in their city with the following description:

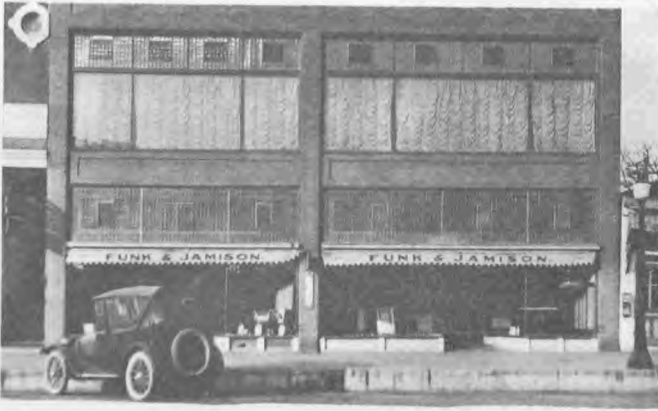
"Great Bend is the gateway of the famed Arkansas Valley, and is located on the great northern bend of the Arkansas River, at an altitude of 1,700 feet, which puts her beyond the malarial influences of the East and the mountainous climatic changes and fevers of the West. The healthfulness of her climate is not surpassed by that of any other locality. Here pure air, pure water and a mild climate make life pleasant and enjoyable.

Great Bend has twelve Christian denominations and eight church buildings; four public school buildings—three of brick and one frame—and the Central Normal College, which draws students from afar; three solid banks; two large flouring mills; five large elevators; one foundry; two opera houses; six hotels, two of them brick, three-story and very large; an excellent system of waterworks; one bottling works; four weekly newspapers; one creamery and cheese factory; three railroads—viz., A.T. & S.F., Mo. Pacific, and C.K. & W., which give her over three hundred miles of tributary territory; two machine shops. She has electric lights; steam laundry; three cigar factories, and almost all the lodges, secret and insurance societies known.

Great Bend has a population of 2,700; Barton County, 14,000. Barton County has 576,000 acres of land, and is capable of supporting double her present population. Land is worth from \$2 per acre up, just as located and improved. We do not say we have the Garden of Eden or the best country under the sun to live in, but we do say we have a country where everyone can live and thrive by work. Our diversified farming, stock and dairy interests, gardening and fruit-raising, and the cheap and easy system of irrigating (the latter if needed) will make this section of Kansas sought after. We want no boom. We seek none.

We invite one and all to visit our country."

Great Bend In The 1920's



Funk and Jamison Mortuary and Furniture occupied the old Moses Brothers Mercantile building at 1405 Main, Purnell's Fabric Center's location now.



The E. R. Moses Mercantile Co. sold Dodge cars at the same location that Bob Parrish now operates.



George Duncan's old Ford garage at 1907 Lakin. Rowland's, Inc. is now at this location.



Martin Jaeger, Inc. is now at this location at 1306 Kansas.



Kopke Mercantile located at the south end of Stone was destroyed by fire in 1923.



White's Garage still stands at 12th & Williams. The Trail Cafe, on the corner, is now at 2210 Tenth.

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*O'Neil Tank Company, Inc., Peoples Savings & Loan Assn.,
Parrish Motor Company and by Pease Plumbing & Heating, Inc.*

Great Bend In The 1920's



1200 Block of Main
from 12th Street intersection.



1300 block of Main.
Old City Hall is at center-left.



1400 Block of Main
from Broadway intersection.



Broadway west from middle
of 1900 block.



Kansas Avenue South
from Broadway.



Forest Avenue east
from Williams.

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Stone Sand Company and by the Thurman-Morrison & Associates, Inc.*

Great Bend In The 1920's



The Jeanette Eppstein Tea Room in the Cork Building at Forest and Williams.



"Candy" Nelson's Restaurant and Confectionery in the 1200 block of Main.



Sanderson's Drug Store at 1417 Main.



In 1920, Wagaman Clothing was at 1301 Main, now at 1223 Main.



The Shepler Hotel, later the Parrish, at 12th & Main, burned in 1968.



The Gibson Farm Supply, located at 1907 Lakin, now the Crest Theatre, became today's Gibson, Titus & Stafford, Inc.

This page sponsored through the courtesy of

Gibson Titus & Stafford, Inc.

Great Bend Homes As They Appeared In The 1920's



The Baker Art Gallery at 2323 Broadway was originally the home of J. V. Brinkman, owner of Great Bend's second bank established in 1874.



The E. R. Moses home at 1407 Washington. The Loyall Komarek family now lives here.



The O. W. Dawson residence at Morphy and Forest. Mr. Dawson, first elected Mayor in 1909 served a total of 13 years, the longest tenure of any Great Bend Mayor.



Mr. and Mrs. Edward Coon in front of their home at 1416 Kansas, now the location of the Cook and Weber Funeral Home.



The F. V. Russell home at 2500 Broadway. The Harlan Spatz family now enjoys this house.



The southside of the 3000 block of Broadway. Mrs. Adah Robison now lives on the corner at 3019, Mrs. Mabel Zugg at 3015 and Mrs. Herb Kopke at 3009.

Great Bend Overcame Difficulties

Of the many difficulties and several disasters which have been endured and overcome by Great Bend residents, the first which must be mentioned is the grasshopper plague which occurred in 1874. Locusts which came in such numbers that they could not possibly be controlled devastated vegetation in Great Bend and most of Barton County. Farmers throughout the area were left with no crops for income and no food for the coming winter. Mary Bickerdyke, "Mother" to the men she had nursed during the Civil War, was in Great Bend at this time visiting her sons Hiram and James. Realizing the calamity the area had suffered, she left for the East after the cloud of grasshoppers had passed and collected train loads of donated supplies and clothing to be distributed to area families. Her efforts helped hundreds of Barton County families survive the winter of 1875.

The most serious fire that has ever occurred in the Great Bend business district occurred in 1879. The Tribune of July 21, 1879, states, "Great Bend has had her first fire, on Monday night, the frame building owned by J. H. Hubbard on Maggie street and occupied by J. S. Long as a furniture store, was discovered to be on fire. The flames had made such rapid headway before discovery that nothing could be done to save the building or its contents. The fire originated in this building by the dropping of a coal oil lamp by Mr. D. S. Harrington, who was coming down stairs. The stock of furniture was insured at \$1800."

"Burton, Moses and Brother's building next west, (between the present Tribune building and Williams avenue) occupied by John T. Hall, groceries, was soon in flames. D. Merton's grocery house, adjoining the furniture store, was in flames almost before the alarm was given, and he lost almost all he had."

"The warehouses of Burton, Moses & Bros. in the rear of their building were consumed together with six or eight thousand dollars worth of agricultural implements."

The next major disaster to visit Great Bend was the tornado which hit on November 10, 1915 at 7:05 in the evening. The violent storm killed nine persons, destroyed hundreds of head of sheep and cattle, and caused a property loss estimated at \$600,000.

The storm, traveling in a northeasterly direction, first struck and destroyed the McMullen Laundry then located near the river, and then crushed the electric light plant which put the city in total darkness. The Walnut Creek Mills were next to go, then the Moses Brothers Mill, the Chanute Oil Refinery, the Great Bend Mills, part of the Santa Fe Depot, several small businesses on South Main, the Roosevelt Grade School, and more than one hundred homes in the south and east part of the city. Buildings were literally blown apart and scattered like kindling. At least fifty more homes were so severely damaged that they had to be torn down. All of the buildings and 1,500 head of sheep on the Moses & Clayton ranch adjoining the city were also destroyed.

Three days after the storm, the Tribune editor observed that, "from the ashes of the disaster of yesterday, a new city is arising that will surpass the old . . . the city is not stunned, it is not even discouraged (the newspaper had not been destroyed). We will build for the future."

On June 19, 1921 is recorded the flood of the Arkansas River when Great Bend imitated the City of Venice. The south half of the city was inundated and water came as far north on Main as Twelfth Street. During this flood, two young men, Ray and Leonard Gunn, were drowned in a pleasure boating accident.

During a two-day period in August of 1927, Great Bend was bathed in a total of 6.27 inches of rain and spent the 13th and 14th wading in the waters of Walnut Creek which flooded the northern part of the city. The waters reached south beyond 17th Street on the west side of town and beyond 16th Street and the east end of Broadway on the east side. This flood made an inland sea of the Cheyenne Bottoms which did not become totally dry again for several years. Floods also occurred in 1942 and 1951. The latest flood occurred in 1965, but the waters did not seriously threaten the city.



Roosevelt School wrecked by the 1915 Tornado.



A residential section after the tornado destruction.



Walnut Creek Flour Mill before and after the cyclone.



Great Bend Water Company showing wrecked pumping station and water tower.



Main Street in 1890 after a light hail storm.

Great Bend City Government

The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad reached Great Bend in the middle of July 1872, and about the same time, the first city election was held in Great Bend, which resulted in the election of A. A. Hurd as Mayor and A. S. Allen, G. W. Poole, M. S. Kutch, Ed Markworth and D. Cooley as Councilmen. Mr. Cooley moved from the city in about a month, and Edwin Tyler was elected to fill the vacancy. James C. Martin was elected Police Judge, A. C. Moses appointed City Clerk, James Gainsford, Marshall, and D. R. Smith, Treasurer.

The first city administration accomplished a great deal in attracting business to the town and encouraging the building of business and residence buildings. In all there were forty-two buildings erected on the townsite during the year 1872.

The principal effort of this administration was to secure the cattle trade, which was at that time monopolized by Abilene, Wichita and Newton.

Excepting one in 1853, the first herd of cattle was piloted through Great Bend during the year 1872 from Texas to Newton by George N. Moses.

At the election in 1873, A. A. Hurd was re-elected Mayor as were most of the city officers.

By this time the town had become a thorough cattle town and was to a great extent dominated by the cattle interests. Buffalo hunters were numerous and made their headquarters at Great Bend.

In 1874 Samuel Maher was elected Mayor. On July 4th the Courthouse was dedicated and the infamous grasshopper invasion occurred. The first murder trial in the County was held. The defendant was Hefty who was charged with killing two Frenchmen; he was acquitted. A "genuine" Indian War Dance was held on the Courthouse Square. About 200 Indians of the Pawnee tribe led by Spotted Horse participated.

Richard Taylor became Mayor in 1875. The year was notable because of the visit of Mary A. "Mother" Bickerdyke to her two sons, James and Hiram, of the city. It was she who saved the county's farmers by raising a train load of relief supplies for distribution at Great Bend. This year saw the height of the cattle trade in Great Bend.

C. F. Diffenbacher was elected Mayor in 1876 and the Texas Cattle Quarantine Line was moved thirty miles west of Great Bend. It fell to this administration's lot to clean up the town of the rough element or undesirable class.

A. C. Fair became the next mayor and was elected on the issue of "no salary for city officers".

George N. Moses who had been a part of the city government in one capacity or another since its inception, became the mayor in 1878. The following men also

served as mayor for the years set opposite their names:

1879 A. W. Gray
1880 E. L. Chapman
1881 H. M. Kline
1882 J. V. Brinkman

During the year of 1882 the city was visited with the terrible scourge of smallpox which practically paralyzed business for several months.

1883 G. W. Nimocks
1884 E. W. Moses

E. W. Moses again served as mayor in 1885 and the first drainage system was established by building a ditch from the west line of the city, both at the north and south, through the township to Walnut Creek. The city moved from 3rd class to 2nd class in the year 1886 and at the election that year, chose its first officers as a city of the second class. Prior to the election, however, the officers chosen at the previous election were named by Governor John Martin as the first officers of the second class city. This was the first election held in the city of Great Bend by wards and at this time, the city was separated from Great Bend Township for all political purposes, and all officers from this time on were elected for two-year terms. D. N. Heizer was the first mayor of the second class city. During this administration, the city voted aid in the sum of \$23,000 for the Kansas & Colorado Pacific Railroad Company being the branch road of the Missouri Pacific running from Hoisington to Great Bend. Electricity came to Great Bend in 1886.

A. J. Buckland became Mayor in 1887 and in 1888 the first city water works system was installed, a franchise being granted to the Great Bend Water Supply Company for twenty-one years, and aid was voted to the Chicago, Kansas & Western Railroad in the sum of \$15,000.

The following men were elected Mayor for the years set opposite their names:

1889 O. B. Wilson
1891 A. Laidlaw
1893 E. W. Moses
1895 G. N. Moses
1897 G. N. Moses
1899 G. H. Hulme
1901 L. P. Aber
1903 Martin Weirauch
1905 E. W. Moses
(New City Hall was built)
1907 E. W. Moses
1909 O. W. Dawson
1911 O. W. Dawson
1913 D. C. Luse

In 1913 the council form of government was changed to the commission system and D. C. Luse served for only one year.

1914 to 1923 O. W. Dawson
1923 to 1932 L. L. Gunn

In 1931, the city acquired the county fair grounds for a city park.

1932 to 1935 A. S. Gibson

In 1933 the council form of city government was re-established.

1935 to 1941 Charles Lischesky

In 1935 Great Bend's Municipal Swimming Pool was opened to the public, and the City Auditorium was completed in 1938.

1941 to 1945 Don C. McIlrath

1945 to 1949 H. P. Thies

While Mr. Thies was mayor, the city was deeded possession of the air base property which now forms the Great Bend Industrial Park and Airport.

1949 to 1951 Joe Mermis

The City Office Building, 1209 Williams, was completed in 1950.

1951 to 1957 J. E. McMullen

1957 to 1959 R. E. Morrison

1959 to 1961 Don Weltmer, Jr.

1961 to 1965 W. Eldon Harwood

1965 to 1969 H. C. Davis

The City Recreation Building was added to the Auditorium in 1969.

1969 to present Robert A. Parrish

With the assistance of Mr. Parrish's city administration, the new main fire station is now under construction.



The old City Hall, constructed in 1906-07 and razed in 1937. The fire bell tower is at right.

Great Bend Fire Department



The first volunteer fire department was organized in December, 1876. Members attending the first meeting at the court house were H. H. Kidder, S. J. Siddorn, E. W. Burton, S. P. Crain, A. W. Gray, S. P. Bartell, George Moses, James Gainsford, R. C. Calhoun, Dr. Winner, L. T. Stone, C. F. Diefenbacher, and G. H. Hulme. According to City Ordinance, the chief received a salary of \$25.00 per year.

The first big fire occurred in Great Bend July 21, 1879, starting in a building owned by J. H. Hubbard on Forest Avenue, then called Maggie Street, west of the present Tribune building occupied by J. S. Long as a furniture store. Adjoining buildings which were also destroyed by the flames were the Burton, Moses and Bros, building next west occupied by John Hall's grocery, D. Merton's house, and the Burton Moses Bros. warehouse at the rear of their building.

The Great Bend Volunteer Fire Department was reorganized in 1886 and was not changed again until the paid and volunteer department was formed January 1, 1949.

Previous to 1886 the department was a "bucket brigade," but that year the city purchased two hand-pulled, two-wheel hose carts and a few hundred feet of hose, plus a pair of horns for the use of the chief in directing the firemen.

Arrangements were made with dray owners to make the run to the department building when the fire alarm sounded, and the first dray to reach the department got the job pulling the carts. If no drays arrived, as often happened, the men pulled the carts themselves.

Members of the original 1888 department are Jack Morrison, Sr., Charles Hooper, William Stokes, the first chief, Bob Ewalt, Dick Glissman, Gus Shaffer, Newt Willhide, Bill Kepple, Charlie Brickman, Frank D. Wilson and Frank Kramer. Ed Moses was the mayor. That year also saw the construction of a city water plant in Great Bend.

Members joining the department in succeeding years were: Axel Wimmergreen, 1894; Clyde Moore, 1903; Charles Frankhauser, 1904; Fred Richardson, 1905; Jim Donnell, 1906; O. P. Holmes, 1910; Otto Patton and Otto "Waxie" Woods (date of entry lost); Roy Evans, 1921; E. M. Brack, 1924; Harley Bledsoe, 1924; who was a member of the department for only two weeks before he was killed in an automobile accident; Bob Evans, 1930. Stokes and Ewalt, plus several other members died while members of the department. Their pictures are mounted on the wall of the department's quarters at the City Hall.

Other members of the department who are no longer active are Lester Cox; Reg Russell, 1910; Shelby DuBois; Frank McCracken; Lyman Dodge; Carl Wimmergreen; Art Tonkin, 1921; Les Naylor, 1927; Ed Morris, 1928; and Les Curtis, 1928.

Fire chiefs in chronological order have been Stoker, Ewalt, Jim Donnell, Charles Frankhauser, Clyde Moore, Axel Wimmergreen, Fred Richardson, Walt Sears, and Clarence Myers. Walt Sears has had the longest period of service, having been

chief continuously since 1933. Harold Walter now serves as chief and was appointed in December, 1969.

The department's first motorized mount was a Buick bought in 1911 from the Cook agency, and sold some years later to a purchaser in Ellinwood. The next truck, a White, nicknamed the "Betsy" was purchased in 1917, and Jim Hulme helped drive it out from Kansas City. A Seagrave truck was purchased in 1924 for \$12,500, after a fire at the Kopke wholesale building in 1923 dramatized the need for a new truck and ladders. It was called "Aunt Huldie" and in the Great Bend Tribune of February 20, 1951, we find this clipping:

"'Aunt Huldie', Great Bend's first piece of motorized fire fighting equipment with pumping apparatus attached, rolled out of the fire station for the last time today (February 20, 1951).

"'Aunt Huldie', was the venerable 27-year old Seagraves truck, which was purchased in 1924. No one knows how many times she roared out the doors to fight fires, and no one knows how she got her name either. Some one started calling her 'Huldie'. As time passed, the 'Aunt' was prefixed, and that is what she was called ever after."

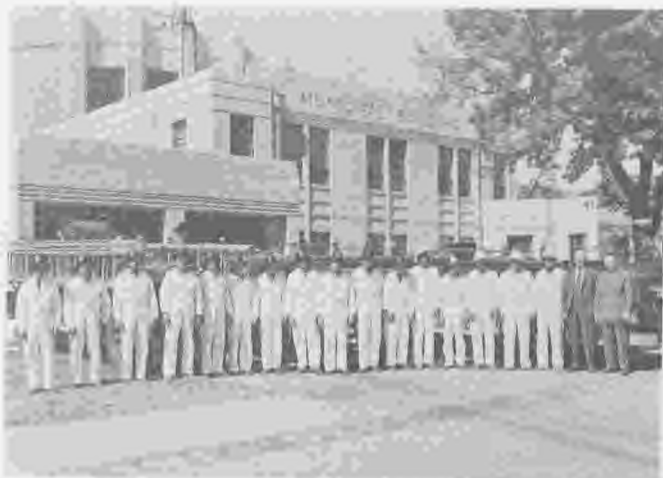
The department has always been housed at City Hall, which in the two previous incarnations has been located at the same place where it is today. The department moved to its present quarters when the new City Hall was built in 1938.

A fire bell mounted on a wooden tower was used to inform the department and the town of a fire until the present siren was procured in 1923. A fire in the first ward was denoted by one ring of the bell, a fire in the second ward two, and so on.

Memorable fires which the department has combatted include the Kopke building fire in 1923, where Macurdy's locker plant is now located; a fire in Miller's livery barn in 1932; the 1941 Safeway store fire on New Year's day; the 1947 Safeway store fire with damage amounting to \$35,600; the Bentley fire in 1934; the Santa Fe freight depot fire in 1943; and the Parrish Hotel fire in 1968.

In 1972 the personnel on the Great Bend Fire Department are: Harold Walter, Chief; Louis Holmes, assistant chief; David Christiansen, assistant chief; Lee Miller, captain; Marion Root, captain; Wilbur Root, captain; Bill Shepard, captain; Verl Bailey, captain; William Owen, inspector; Robert Barker, Olen Burdette, Don Calvert, Vernon Hayes, Shelby Jones, Larry Johnson, Harry Schneidewind, Joe Stukey, Morris Stukey, Richard Spanier, Mike Harbaugh, David Yahne, and Doyle White.

A new fire station is now under construction, located on Williams, in the 1200 block, immediately south of the City Office Building.



The fire department as it appeared in 1949. Before this time, the men, with the exception of the Chief, had been volunteers. Jack Morrison and Joe Mermis, city officers at the time, stand at right.

County Buildings



The courthouse you see in 1972 was constructed in 1918. This 1920 view from the west shows the long steps which were taken off in about 1948.

On September 2, 1872, a petition signed by E. L. Morphy and fifty-one others was presented to the Board of County Commissioners asking for an election to be called for the purpose of issuing bonds in the amount of \$25,000 to build a courthouse and jail. The election was held on October 8 and the bond issue passed 198 to 36.

On March 26, 1873, a contract was signed with John McDonald of Emporia to construct the stone building for \$24,200 and to finish construction during that year. In April, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad filed an injunction against the issuance of the courthouse bonds and other county bonds for bridge construction. A. A. Hurd was hired to represent the County in the legal action. The matter was finally adjusted, the bonds issued, and the necessary taxes were paid by the Railroad.

Work on the courthouse had not been completed when McDonald left the job at the end of December, but he had collected the full contract payment. The Commissioners took possession of the building in early 1874 and hired the unfinished work completed. After a lengthy court suit, not settled until 1879, the firm that had bonded McDonald was forced to pay the County \$2,000.

In June of 1877, the Commissioners paid \$75 to have the cupola taken from the top of the building. On June 7 the Register reported, "The cupola not being solidly built is racking the building and now leans to the south fully six inches. Taking the cupola down will very much mar the architectvive beauty of our Courthouse, but under the circumstances, it was considered best by the board."

The first courthouse stood until 1917 when it was razed to make way for the new building.



Before the first separate county jail and sheriff's - quarters were built in 1908, the jail had been in the basement of the courthouse.



The second county jail was constructed in 1953.

Health Care In Great Bend

Until the spring of 1903, Great Bend residents received medical care in their homes or in the doctor's office. At that time the Sisters of St. Dominic established the first St. Rose Hospital in a small frame building near the convent on west Broadway.

In December of 1903, citizens of Great Bend contributed money to purchase the D. N. Heizer residence, also on west Broadway, and presented this property to the Sisters. When the large brick house had been remodeled, it would accommodate about twenty patients.

In 1920, additional land was purchased near the convent and plans were begun for an improved facility. The new St. Rose Hospital was placed in service in August 1922. A wing was added to this building in 1927. The building would accommodate more than 100 patients and served the city and the surrounding area for 42 years. But as the city grew, it outgrew its hospital.

After years of planning, involving dozens of citizens in the community, as well as doctors and the Dominican Sisters, the Central Kansas Medical Center was dedicated on March 1, 1964. The Community Hospital Association, Inc., Mr. H. P. Thies, President, had been formed to assist with the area-wide fund raising campaign to finance the project. The community effort was completely successful. The innovative cloverleaf design and the finest equipment and furnishings makes this one of the most advanced hospitals in the Midwest.

The Medical Center has a maximum capacity of 230 beds.



The 2nd St. Rose Hospital was housed in the remodeled residence of one of the town founders, D. N. Heizer.



Bishop Schwertner dedicated the new St. Rose Hospital, August 17, 1922.



Aerial view of the Central Kansas Medical Center showing the circular cloverleaf design.

Sponsored in memory of

Clark W. Zugg, M.D.

The Great Bend Public Library

The citizens of Great Bend have developed a habit of relying heavily on the public library for service. The trustees and staff of the library have encouraged this. The result has been the continual strengthening of a well-used and well-supported public library since the construction of the original building in 1908. But the people were aware of a need for a library long before this building was opened.

The January 18, 1877 issue of the Great Bend Register had this note in the local news, "A. S. Allen has started a circulating library. For full particulars, call at his Drug Store." Later, a public reading room was sponsored by several civic clubs in the 1890's. Early Great Bend residents wanted books.

The library tradition was begun in 1908 when the Daily Item Newspaper made this announcement, "The Great Bend Public Library will be formally opened to the public on Friday, August 14. The opening will be attended with appropriate ceremonies."

The old Carnegie building is gone now and library users are happy that an inviting, modern service center has taken its place, but the quiet pain one suffers at the loss of a close friend was felt by many Great Bend citizens when those familiar red bricks came tumbling down.

Any old-timer can tell you that the library's history goes back a good long way. How in the 1890's "literary studies" and a "public reading room" were supported by the men and women of the Progress Club, the Athenian Club and, the forerunner of the Chamber of Commerce, the Commercial Club. How later, a "rich feller named Carnegie" gave the city \$12,500 to build the native brick building that became a local landmark. How, under the guidance of the first librarian, Sabina Deighton, the services of the public library became a strong and valued tradition in Great Bend.

But a library is, or should be, no more immune to the demands of progress than any other institution and so the first era of the Great Bend Library came to a close when the old building was battered to the ground by a crane and a two-ton wrecking ball during the week of January 25, 1971, at the age of 62 years, five months, and eleven days. A bright, new facility now dominates the location.

Planning for the library's improvement began in 1963 when cramped quarters, full book shelves and deteriorating walls and ceilings made it apparent that something had to be done. Consulting engineers advised against an addition or a remodeling process largely because of the limitations which the inflexible Carnegie design would impose on a renovated structure. After lengthy and careful consideration, the Board of Directors ac-

cepted the fact that the high expense of some form of renovation would be more wisely invested in a completely new building. Planning for project financing, and land acquisition was begun.

The City of Great Bend endorsed the project in 1965 by passing a resolution creating a two mill tax levy for a ten-year period to be accumulated as a building fund. State statutes permit the issuance of bonds during the interim period so that construction could begin after the second annual building fund levy.

A site survey indicated that the present library property, on Forest between Stone and Williams, was the most desirable location from the standpoint of pedestrian traffic, relationship to the rest of the downtown area, city growth projections, and flood hazard. However, the existing property was not large enough upon which to locate the building needed. The Board of U.S.D. 428 who held title to the land immediately bordering the library property generously agreed to donate their holdings on the south two-thirds of the block if the library directors would assume responsibility for the vacated Central School buildings occupying the site. The property was deeded to the library board and the razing of the school buildings was included in the general construction contract.

The Board of Directors was notified by the State Library in early 1969 that on the basis of their application, they were to receive an LSCA, Title II construction grant of \$201,413 to be used in addition to all local funds available. Adequate land and financing had been arranged.

Rondeau, Williams and Smith, Architects, Great Bend, were retained as the library architects and began the technical design of the building in June of 1968. Bids for construction and furnishings were let in October of 1969 and site clearance began in December. The new structure was located on the site so that construction could proceed without the demolition of the original library.

The new building was arranged as a one-story structure with full basement. All public service areas are on the main floor with environmental equipment, maintenance room, storage facilities, library system processing center and the Barton County Law Library located on the ground floor.

Interesting physical comparison of the original building and the new facility are:

New Building	Old Building
Square Footage	Square Footage
38,000—Total Square Footage	9,500
9,390—Adult Department	5,900
3,424—Children's Department	1,600



The original Great Bend Public Library as it appeared in 1920.



Under construction in 1908.

The Great Bend Public Library



The new library opened for service on February 1, 1971.
The building was dedicated on April 15.

1,200—Fine Arts Department	none
610—Local History Department	none
2,688—Barton County Law Library	none
10,090—Book and Equipment Storage	600
984—Work Room	170
1,420—Book Processing Area	none
824—Administrative Area	185
2,620—Environmental Equipment	210
627—Custodial Storage	none
645—Rest Rooms	175
450—Staff Lounge	none
500—Service Desk Area	145
2,528—Unassigned Areas	520

Examination of the building data shows a total project cost of \$788,833.49 and a per square foot cost of \$20.75. Individual costs were:

- Building construction—\$641,746.29
- Includes all built-in equipment and carpeting as well as demolition of the Central School building and original library.
- Building cost per square foot—\$16.88
- Furniture and equipment—\$87,101.13
- Pavings and grounds improvement—\$11,369.00
- Insurance and professional fees—\$48,617.17

The staff and administrators of the Great Bend Library have seen that this institution has responded to the need for change, but the strong tradition for public service will remain the same.



The Magazine Department for informal reading.



The public service area in the new building.

Great Bend Public Schools—A Continuing Source of Pride

The best possible education for Great Bend children was a strong concern of the people even before the town had been formally organized. In 1871, plans for a public school were underway and construction of a building was begun before the end of that year. Wood with which to build was hauled here from Ellsworth. The school was finished in 1872 and had required the sale of \$5,000 worth of bonds for financing.

Located on the northwest corner of what is now the Forest and Williams intersection, the building had two stories with one room on each floor and for style, a cupola graced the roof line. (The original school can also be seen in the picture appearing on page 16).

The earliest enrollment report yet found appeared in the October 5, 1876 issue of the Great Bend Register newspaper and noted the number of students currently attending was: High school — 25 girls and 15 boys, Intermediate and Primary — 37 girls and 18 boys, for a total of 95.

The first meeting of the Board of Education was held on June 15, 1872 in John Hubbard's grocery store on the town square. The first board consisted of D. N. Heizer, George W. Nimocks and James C. Martin. Mr. Heizer was a land agent and farmer and had been a promoter of the original Great Bend Town Company. Mr. Nimocks was a prominent lawyer and had his offices in the County Courthouse. Mr. Martin was a wagonmaker, and had his shop on what is now Broadway, east of where the St. Rose Church now stands.

Before a formal school district could be organized, a subscription school had to be established to prove that a sufficient number of students would be attending. This was done, the quota of students was met and the County Superintendent from

Ellsworth established School District No. 1 in Great Bend concurrently with the first meeting of the School Board.

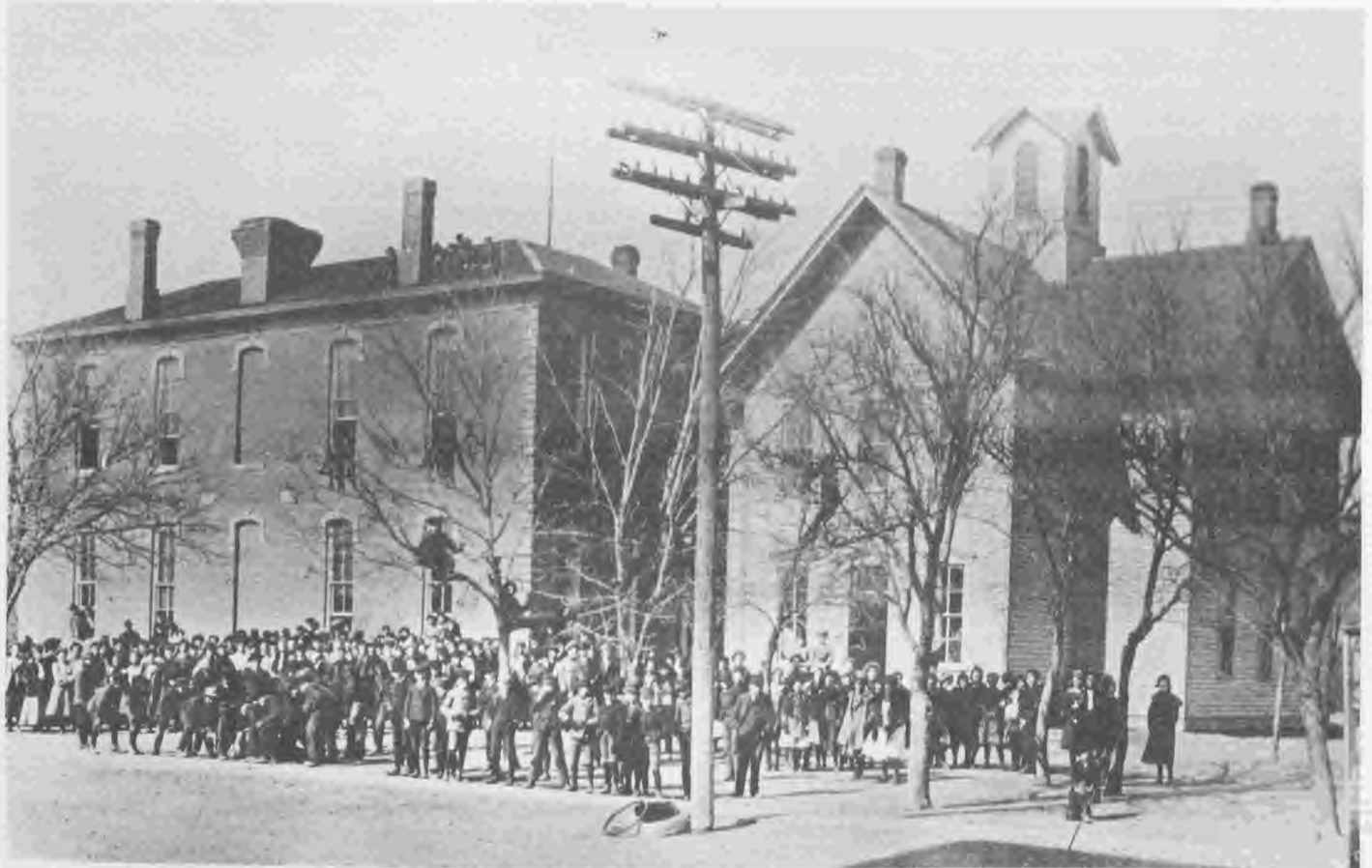
A report on the early public schools appeared in the January 4, 1877 issue of the Great Bend Register. It reflects the city's pride in its educational system: "Our school at present takes rank with the best in the State. The enrollment during this year is, we believe, two hundred. The pupils are classed and taught in four grades, as follows: Academic, Grammar, Intermediate and Primary.

In the Academic course, the higher Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Latin, English, Analysis, Rhetoric, Elocution, Composition, Oratory Debate, etc., are taught. In the Grammar Grade are taught the common Englishes Branches. In the Intermediate and Primary departments are taught such elementary branches as are common to corresponding grades in other city schools.

Persons desiring first class educational privileges for their boys and girls can do no better than to locate in Barton County and Great Bend."

The Barton County Teachers Association was organized in Great Bend in the spring of 1874. County Superintendent Brundidge was the first President. The Association met irregularly and was largely concerned with the improvement of the school curricula, general social activities and occasional debates. A debate question in 1875 was, "Are modern geologists justifiable in ascribing to the earth a greater age than that given in the Bible Chronology?" It wasn't reported whether the affirmative or negative won.

In 1878, the first High School building was constructed just a few feet to the west of the first school building. The high school



The entire student body was called out for this picture showing the city's first school building on the right and the first high school on the left. The wood school building was moved in the early 1900's and now stands as part of a private residence at 1112 Williams.

Great Bend Public Schools—A Continuing Source of Pride



The East Side, or Roosevelt, elementary school was destroyed by a tornado in November of 1915.

was of brick and stone and made an interesting combination standing next to the wood frame of the earlier structure. The structure cost \$8,000.

In 1887 the ward buildings named the East Side (later to be called Roosevelt) and West Side elementary school were constructed by the Morrison Brothers Construction Company at a total cost of \$16,863.35. This cost for both native brick buildings! The Roosevelt school was destroyed by the tornado which blew much of Great Bend away in November of 1915 (see the cyclone view on page 31).



The West Side elementary school continued in use until 1918 when it was razed to clear the way for the new Washington School.

The original wood school building was moved and now stands as part of a residence on the east side of the street in the 1300 block of Williams. The first high school building was razed to make way for the construction of the new Central High School in 1907. In 1912, the Central Junior High was built to the west of, and adjoining, the high school. These two buildings, with the library, constructed in 1907, occupied the north side of the 2100 block of Forest.

Riley Elementary School, in the 1500 block of Tenth, was built on the site of the tornado-destroyed Roosevelt School in 1916.



The high school and Central School building, in the 2100 block of Forest, were razed in 1970 to allow construction of the new public library.

Great Bend Public Schools—A Continuing Source of Pride



Riley Elementary in 1920.



Washington Elementary in 1920.

Washington Elementary, in the 2500 block of Lakin, was erected in 1919 on the site of the old West Side School.

The city's third new high school was built in 1925 at 2100 Broadway. This building is now Roosevelt Junior High. Morrison Elementary was constructed in 1937, the same year that the Practical Arts Building was added to the high school grounds.

The new Great Bend Senior High was planned and constructed in the years 1950 through 1952 at a total cost to the school district of \$1,650,114.00.

Park and Eisenhower Elementary Schools were constructed in 1953. Jefferson Elementary, Lincoln Elementary and Harrison Junior High were constructed in 1958.

The old Central School buildings were razed in 1970 to provide room for the new public library. All of the school buildings erected since 1916 remain in use in 1972.

Growing from a total student body of 95 in 1876, the Great Bend School system currently serves 4,661 students and employs 262 teachers.

Mr. A. C. Moses was the first Superintendent of Public Instruction, appointed on May 16, 1872. Mr. Dan V. Swartz is the current Superintendent of Schools and began in this position in 1953.

Building Chronology

- 1872 - first wood frame school
- 1878 - first high school
- 1887 - East and West Side elementaries
- 1907 - Central High School
- 1912 - Central Junior High
- 1916 - Riley elementary
- 1919 - Washington elementary
- 1925 - 2nd high school, now Roosevelt Junior High
- 1937 - Roosevelt Practical Arts building
Morrison elementary
- 1949 - Memorial Stadium
- 1952 - Great Bend Senior High
- 1953 - Park elementary
Eisenhower elementary
- 1955 - Addition to Riley
- 1958 - Jefferson elementary
Lincoln elementary
Harrison Junior High
- 1959 - Track developed
- 1961 - Completion of Jefferson and Lincoln
- 1965 - Senior High addition
- 1966 - Administration Bldg.
- 1969 - Physical Education Bldg.



The Jefferson building also houses the offices of the Board of Education.



The Great Bend Senior High is the fourth building constructed here for high school use.

Private and Continuing Education in Great Bend

Parochial Education in Great Bend

The establishment of parochial schools in Great Bend occurred later than the start of the public schools, but they have always been respected for the strength of their educational system.

St. Mary's Academy was established in 1902, in the impressive building which formerly housed the Central Kansas Normal College. At that time, the school offered elementary and secondary grades. The academy ceased operations in 1909 and reopened in 1917 with the name of Immaculate Conception High School. This high school was formally closed in May 1971.

St. Rose School at 1400 Baker was constructed and opened in 1929, and continues in operation now with elementary grades. The St. Patrick School at 4200 Broadway was dedicated in 1954 and now serves students in the first through eighth grades.

Parochial education in Great Bend has developed a strong tradition under the leadership of the Sisters of St. Dominic, but during the past five years, lay teachers have been hired to carry some of the teaching responsibility.

A less successful attempt at private education is indicated by this note in the Great Bend Tribune, August 9, 1876: "The German school, east side of the Square, is advancing the boys and girls rapidly. Now is the time for parents to send their children, during the vacation of the English schools." No other report discussing the German school has been found.

Central Kansas Normal College and Higher Education

In September, 1886, the Tribune carried the announcement that the Central Kansas Normal College "will be open to both sexes with a full corps of competent professors, Wednesday, September 29, 1886. Classical, scientific, normal and preparatory departments. For circulars of information, address either of the undersigned, Great Bend. W. A. Bosworth, Chairman of the Board of Trustees and A. Y. McCormick, M.D., Secretary." Hundreds of individuals were educated at the college during the years that it was sponsored by the Congregational Church and before the facilities were sold to the Catholic order, Sisters of St. Dominic, in 1902. Higher education returned to Great Bend in 1969 with first enrollment of the Barton County Community College (see page 53).

Great Bend Commercial College

Originally called the Great Bend Business College, the school was organized in 1905 with Professor A. L. Lessenman as President. The first years were difficult and the number of students enrolled increased slowly. The city's Commercial Club provided some financial assistance to the business school during these years.

By 1920 the school's name had been changed and it was operated on the second and third floors of the old Opera House building at 2103 Forest.



The Central Kansas Normal College was closed in 1902 and reopened as the St. Mary's Academy for elementary and secondary school grades.



The Great Bend Commercial College operated here in the early 1900's.

Religion In The Life Of Great Bend

If religious activity is a good indication of the basic strength of a community, and it surely must be, then Great Bend has been sound from the very beginning. Just as local citizens were determined to establish a school system that they could be proud of, they were equally determined to have religious organization in which they could place their faith. Churches and a school helped make a new town more like a home.

The January 4, 1877 edition of the Great Bend Register states that the Church of Great Bend, Congregational denomination, was the first formal organization in what was to be the city and the county. The church was organized in 1871 with Reverend Harvey Jones as pastor. The newspaper account indicates that Reverend H. A. Brundidge followed Reverend Jones as pastor.

Several other sources indicate that the first church organization in Great Bend

was the Congregational Church of Great Bend, established August 10, 1872, and officially recognized by the church's district council on March 27, 1873. Whichever of these accounts is correct, it appears that the Congregationalists staked the first church claim in the city.

According to the City Directory of 1886-7, the Methodist Episcopal organization constructed the first church and dedicated the building on January 20, 1878. The congregation quickly outgrew this structure and another, with a seating capacity of 600, was under construction at the 1886 date of publication of the directory.

The second church building was dedicated in 1879 by the Congregationalists. Specifications for a building had been drawn up by church trustees in 1873 and they started the building sometime after that using sandstone, but the walls fell down before it was



The First Congregational Church stood on the corner of Broadway and Stone.



The old First Methodist Church.



St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church; new building constructed in 1915.



The old Presbyterian Church stood at Broadway and Williams.

Religion In The Life Of Great Bend

completed. They started construction again, this time using wood, and were more successful. The building cost the small congregation \$3,000.

The September 7, 1876 issue of the Register identifies five active congregations, all of which held meetings in private homes or in the city's school building. These churches were the Methodist Episcopal, Rev. N. F. Tipton; Congregational, Rev. H. A. Brundidge; Catholic, Rev. Felix P. Swedenberg; Baptist, Rev. L. Harris; and German Methodist, Rev. J. J. Eichenberger.

Black citizens in Great Bend were instrumental in organizing two of the city's earliest churches. In approximately 1876, a Baptist Church was established, but unfortunately, no history was recorded. In 1882, the African Methodist Episcopal Church was established by Reverend J. M. Meyers with 40 members in the congregation.

Dates of formal organization of early Great Bend churches as stated in the local newspapers are:

Congregational	1871
Methodist Episcopal	March 1873
Catholic, St. Rose of Lima	1874
Baptist	1876
German Methodist Episcopal	1876
Christian	1881
African Methodist Episcopal	1882
Presbyterian	May 1885
Baker Avenue Baptist	April 1887
Episcopal	1891
Christian	October 1899
Seventh Day Adventist	February 1904
Trinity Lutheran	August 1908
Christian Scientist	October 1912

Most of these congregations were meeting informally before the date of organization.

In 1972, Great Bend has 18 denominations and 28 churches. These numbers were somewhat larger before the ecumenical movement.



The Baker Avenue Baptist Church.



The First Methodist Church in construction in 1920.



St. Patrick's Catholic Church at 4100 Broadway.



The First United Methodist in 1972.

Entertainment in Great Bend

Great Bend on Saturday Night - History of Entertainment

Take away the television and radio, the theaters, the Brit Spaugh Park Zoo and the city's parks, the public library, the city recreation center, the roller skating rink, the swimming pool, country clubs and golf courses, the city's best restaurants and the automobile in your garage that takes you, in comfort, to entertainment in other cities, and Great Bend would appear to be a bleak place in which to live. But residents here in the 1870's enjoyed none of these luxuries and still they had fun.

These local newspaper items give you some idea how you could amuse yourself in the 1870's. Most of the notes are taken from the Great Bend Register.

August 31, 1876 - Great Bend, Kansas, August 26, 1876. To the Editor of the Dodge City Commonwealth. We consider your assertion that the Western Baseball Club of Topeka is the champion of Kansas is rather premature. The Fernaught Club of this place are the acknowledged champions of Western and Central Kansas and they doubt not their ability to completely scoop anything in the state. James Clayton, Secretary, F.B.B.C.

Oct. 26, 1876 - Wolf Hunt! Fun. Fun. Fun. All persons are invited to attend a grand wolf hunt on Cheyenne Bottoms on the first Saturday after the election. Wolves, antelope, and heaps of fun can be expected.

Oct. 26, 1876 - Our Brass Band - the best in the Arkansas Valley - have plenty to do these days and will have so long as the political meetings continue.

Dec. 28, 1876 - A pleasant social party was held at the residence of S. H. Mitchells, south of the river last Friday night. Over twenty persons were present. Refreshments were served at eleven and the party broke up at half past twelve, all returning home much happier and colder for their evening's enjoyment.

Dec. 28, 1876 - What with private parties, public entertainments and such like places of enjoyment, Great Bend is an enjoyable place of residence. Fun abounds and the natives are happy.

The Register - March 22, 1877 - The entertainment given by the Amateur Dramatics Club at the Masonic Hall last Friday evening, was a decided success. The principal play entitled "One of You Must Marry" was remarkably well-rendered.

May 10, 1877 - There will be a church social at the Court House on next Tuesday evening for the benefit of the new Congregational Church. Everybody - and all their friends and relations - cordially invited. The entertainment for the evening will consist of Vocal and Instrumental Music, Solo and Quartet, "The Model Church" to be sung and acted. A good social time and lots of fun is expected. Admission, 10 cents; children under five

years admitted for 10 cents. No other charges. Good music by the band.

May 10, 1877 - The famous Gen. Tom Thumb, the smallest man in existence, and known all over the world, and who is now making a tour of the new West, arrived here Wednesday and gave two entertainments. Tom was never before in such a beautiful country and had never seen so pleasing a landscape as he found in our Barton County. True to his American instinct the cheap land fever seized him and a choice tract of government land he must have in the great Arkansas Valley. So Tom - the veritable Tom Thumb - took a claim in Barton County and goeth on his way rejoicing. Who says Barton County and Great Bend is not growing popular and populous?

Dodge City Commonwealth, May 17, 1877 - Great Bend sent two horses here to participate in the races at the Fair Grounds on the 22nd and 23rd. These horses belong to Mr. Zutavern, who owns a livery stable at the former point, and his purchases of horses at Topeka average a carload each month. Zutavern also has a stable at Dodge City.

June 28, 1877 - Fourth of July Ball. Yourself and lady are respectfully invited to attend a Ball at the Court House on the evening of July 4, 1877. Tickets, one dollar. Proceeds for the benefit of the Great Bend Cornet Band.



THE CHEYENNE BOTTOMS, 7 miles north of Great Bend, was the site for dog races sponsored by the American Coursing Club organized in 1886, the first organization of its kind in the United States. The club flourished for eight years. The first meet was held in October, 1886. Pictured above are some of the greyhounds with their owners and those enjoying the sport. D. C. Luse, Great Bend man, who was a member of the executive committee, is shown at the right. R. H. Smith of Worcester, Mass., was the club's first president; Colonel David Taylor of Emporia, Dr. P. VanHummel of Denver, C. G. Page of Minden, Nebr., Edward Kelley of New York, H. Boyd of San Francisco and S. K. Dow of Chicago were vice presidents and J. V. Brinkman of Great Bend, was treasurer.

Mid-Continent LP Service, Inc.

Schenkel's Retail Liquor Store

2205 Washington 793-3682

Great Bend on Saturday Night



The Great Bend Opera House, the building in which Steinert's is now located, 2103 Forest. Before the hall's construction in 1886, plays and shows were presented in the Masonic Hall on the second floor of the building at the N.E. corner of Broadway and Main.



The old Lakin Theatre, shown here in 1920 is now the location of the Masonic Temple, at 2015 Lakin. Marion Davies, in Beauty's Worth and a Clyde Cook western are advertised on the theatre billboards.



The Old Rome Saloon ready for business in about 1875. Other early bars were Cutler's Place, Tony Foley's Place, First and Last Chance, Nueces and Oasis. In February 1882, the Register noted that Great Bend had three churches and four saloons.



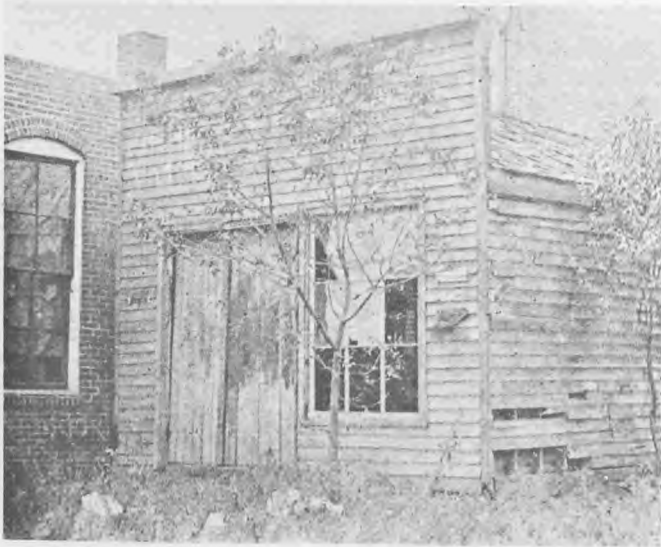
Cheyenne Bottoms has long been popular with hunters. Here, Charles Hulme in about 1910, displays his success. Unfortunately, the Bottoms were not always wet.

County Fairs were annual events in Great Bend until they became too costly. This picture is of the fair grounds a mile northeast of the city. The grandstand faced east and the structure in the center was known as the Fine Arts Building.



The Great Bend Post Office

Great Bend was designated as a fourth class post office during the first year of the city's organization. The first postmaster was Mr. Fossil. Very little is known about the pioneer postmaster or his years of administration. By May 1876, A. J. Hoisington had been appointed postmaster and the postoffice was located two doors south of the Southern Hotel in what is now the 1400 block of Main.



The Great Bend Register, in January 4, 1877, issue describes the businesses around the Courthouse square and mentions the post office: "The Post office comes next, where Uncle Sam deals out the news to his obedient children who dwell in this portion of the Arkansas Valley. A. J. Hoisington is the 'Nasby' and through this office annually about 200,000 letters pass and fully 100,000 copies of newspapers are distributed."

In 1886, Great Bend was served by a postmistress, Mrs. Hattie Bain.

The Barton County Biographical History states that Great Bend was designated a postoffice of the second class in 1902 and in 1906 had reached a point where it was possible to make application for free delivery in the city. City delivery was established that year with three carriers.

In 1908, the U. S. Congress appropriated \$65,000 to construct a new postoffice building in the city. The project was completed August 8, 1912. This structure, located on the northeast corner of Broadway and Main, now houses other federal offices.

The new postoffice building, located on the northwest corner of 16th and Williams was completed in 1961. There are currently 48 employees working in this office and current, annual postal receipts total more than \$615,000.00.



Mr. Fossil,
Great Bend's First Postmaster.



Post Office building completed in 1912. It is now the
Great Bend Federal Building.

The Railroads—New Stimulus For Development

FREE HOMES IN KANSAS

Along the Line of the ATCHISON, TOPEKA & SANTA FE RAILROAD.

30,000 FREE HOMES
In one of the Richest Valleys in AMERICA are
WAITING for OCCUPANTS.

1,500,000 ACRES
Subject to Homestead and Pre-emption in the Great
Arkansas Valley along the line of the Railroad.

The ATCHISON, TOPEKA & SANTA FE R.R. COMPANY has **3,000,000** Acres of Land in KANSAS which are now offered on **ELEVEN YEARS TIME** **7 PER CENT.** on DEFERRED PAYMENTS.

Just twelve years after the first rail of track was laid in Kansas, in the northeast section of the state, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe rails reached Great Bend in July of 1872. The railroads were to replace the Santa Fe Trail as an avenue for new settlers to the west. For their own interests, the railroads promoted land development, encouraged frontier industry and coaxed immigrants to the West. The map above printed in Great Bend's year of establishment, advertises the newly-built A.T. and S.F., its Kansas land holdings and its availability for shipping the cattle being trailed north from Texas. The railroads were building their own empires, but cities such as Great Bend benefited.

In 1887, a subsidiary of the A.T. and S.F.,

the Chicago, Kansas and Western railroad, extended a branch line from Great Bend to Scott City. In 1888, the Missouri Pacific extended a branch line here from Hoisington. On most days, three A.T. and S.F. trains left here going east and four left going west. There was one arrival and one departure daily on each of the branch lines.

The March 8, 1883, edition of the Great Bend Register newspaper stated that .03 per mile is the maximum rate for passenger fares on Kansas railroads. In contrast to the 1970's, railroads in those days considered people to be acceptable cargo.

The September 15, 1881, issue of the Register published the following story:

"The west-bound passenger train Thursday night west of the Bend killed three horses for a widow woman who was moving through. The boys going to the Kinsley convention were on the train but were so engaged in singing and uproarousness that none of them knew that three horses had been run over."

The 1972 schedule for Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe in Great Bend is one freight train daily from the East, six days each week, and a freight train from the West on three days of the week. No passenger service is available. The Missouri Pacific branch line from Hoisington is still used occasionally, but no regular service is maintained. Unless the trend is changed, the railroads may be consigned to history along with the Santa Fe Trail.



The Missouri Pacific depot in 1899.



The Santa Fe depot as it appeared in 1920 and much as it appears today.

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Great Bend Banks

The first bank in Great Bend, the Barton County State Bank, was established in 1873 by Sam Maher and a small group of citizens. Within a year the bank ran into financial difficulty after failing to receive payment for a check it had accepted for more than \$10,000. In 1874, the J. V. Brinkman Company Bank was organized with several of the investors that had participated in the attempted operation the year before. The Brinkman bank continued until the interests were sold on December 8, 1913. In February, 1882, another operation taking the name of the Barton County Bank was opened. H. C. Harrison was the president; J. F. Rogers, Cashier; and G. H. Young, Asst. Cashier. The closing date for this operation was not located.

The original First National Bank was chartered in 1885, by E. L. Chapman, E. M. Parland, R. C. Bailey, G. H. Hulme and C. F. Willner. The Farmers and Merchants Bank also operated here in the 1880's and 1890's.

The Citizen's National Bank was organized and chartered in 1900 by E. R. Moses, president; G. N. and R. H. Moses, cashiers; R. Merten, J. A. Sterrett, Peter Brack, Joseph Troillet and M. F. Sowards. The Citizen's National continued until 1932.

The American State Bank was chartered in 1910, named the German American State Bank. On August 8, 1910, the Daily Tribune carried this description: "The German American State Bank opened its doors for business this morning and is one of the busiest places in town. The first equipment in the institution, according to C. R. Aldrich, was a used safe bought for \$15



In 1920, The Farmers National located in the building built by the original J. V. Brinkman Bank Company.

(costing an additional \$15 to be moved from Ellinwood), a used adding machine, a second-hand typewriter, some pens and ink and some journals."

The American State is the oldest continuously surviving bank in Great Bend. It has had five presidents since its opening: E. W. Moses, 1910-1915; C. L. Moses, 1915-1922; E. C. Davis, 1922-1942; C. R. Aldrich, 1942-1959; and now H. P. Thies. The bank's initial capital in 1910 was \$100,000. Total assets now total more than \$26,000,000.

The present First National Bank was organized and opened for business on May 10, 1920, as the Farmers National Bank of Great Bend. Total assets at that time were \$189,685.00. Bank executive officers have been: W. H. Hammond, 1920-1931; F. M. Hammond, 1931-1932; W. F. Duckwall, 1932-1948; Edward Opie, 1948-1956; and Dale Weller 1956 to the present. Total current assets are approximately \$25,500,000.

The Security State, the city's youngest bank, was established and opened on December 9, 1950. Mr. J. A. Mermis, Jr. has been the bank's president since its opening. Total current assets are approximately \$18,500,000.



The stages of development of the American State Bank.

This page sponsored by

The American State Bank

Early Industry In Milling And Oil

Flour Milling in Great Bend

Milling was one of Great Bend's earliest industries and played an important role in the city's commerce through the 1950's. The Walnut Creek Mill was established in the fall of 1877 on the banks of the Creek just east of town. As the structure was completed, a tornado, occurring on August 16, demolished all that the men had built. With determination, the new operation was reconstructed. The owners, J. V. Brinkman and E. C. Sooy, attempted unsuccessfully to run the mill with water power, but the Arkansas would not cooperate. During the next year the mill was moved into town, to its present location.

On August 10, 1876, the Great Bend Register ran the following colorful story about the completion of "Clement's Grist Mill": "Monday afternoon, a score or more of our citizens got into Shaw's wagon and 'we all took a ride' to Clement's mill to assist in raising the smokestack into position over the furnace. It proved to be no slight task, and even Squire. Ellis found himself in a situation where he had to lift or be-ground. He lifted. It (the smokestack, not Ellis) is a huge affair, nearly fifty feet in length and when it fell among the boys as it did once after it had been elevated about fifteen feet, it is not surprising that Buckland, James Clayton, J. Lightbody and another man did not stop or look back until they reached the stock yards.

At the conclusion of the 'raising', 'floury' speeches were made by such 'mealy'-mouthed gentlemen as Barnes, Kidder, Buckland, and Vowels. Mr. Clement responded with a short-speech."

In 1886, George H. Hulme and William Kelley purchased an interest in Clement's mill, which was later to be called the Great Bend Flour Mill. Mr. Hulme became sole owner of the mill in 1905. The mill and elevator were destroyed in the tornado of 1915.

The Barton County Flour Mills were established in the 1890's by a stock company of farmers. The mill was run on a cooperative plan but was not entirely successful and in 1903 was sold to Linn and Seward Moses. In 1905, C. L. and Frank Gunn bought the Linn Moses interest and worked with Seward. The Barton County mills have changed ownership several times since this period, but still continue operations in grain storage and marketing. Milling was discontinued in 1969.

The Moses Brothers Mill and Elevator was part of a large organization of elevators and mills built by C. L. and E. W. Moses starting in the 1880's.

The Moses Mill changed ownership and became the Great Bend Milling Company which ceased operation and later reopened as the Great Bend Co-Op Association which operates today.

Crude Oil Production

The impact of crude oil production as a successful industry, was felt in Great Bend much later than that which accompanied the milling enterprises of the 80's and 90's, but the effect was much more dramatic and a larger number of people prospered. Crude oil eased the burden of the Great Depression in Great Bend.

The first exploration in the area was financed in 1886 by a group of Great Bend speculators including D. N. Heizer, G. H. Hulme, Don Dodge, A. C. Fair, Ed Moses and others. The well produced a great deal of salt water.

A more successful exploration was begun in 1917 by Dr. Walter Amend and the locally organized Cheyenne Oil and Gas Company. The well was located in the Cheyenne Bottoms and was named the No. 1 Sooy. Drilling difficulties delayed the completion of the well for six years, but it was a producer and signaled the beginning of a new industry for the entire Central Kansas area. In the 1930's it was estimated, conservatively, that the County received more than \$2,000,000 annually as a result of oil-related industry.



Barton County Flour Mills in 1920.



Moses Brothers Mills in 1920.



Both the Moses Brothers and Walnut Creek Mills were rebuilt after the 1915 tornado.



No. 1 Sooy in 1923.

This page sponsored by

Boogaarts Super Market

City Ice

C & P Electric, Inc.

Corregan Plumbing & Heating

Electric Power and Telephones

It's not hard to take electric power for granted now because it comes so easily—at the flip of a switch or circuit breaker. Western Power Division might be forgotten completely if it wasn't for the monthly reminder of our indebtedness which they faithfully send. None of this in 1884; residents read in the evening by the light of a coal oil lamp.

In 1885, electric lights for Great Bend were being discussed by a group of enterprising citizens, with the result that "The Great Bend Electric Light Company" was formed and in November, 1885, was granted a charter to operate in the city.

Work was started on the erection of a white stone building, 26 by 40 feet, to house the equipment. This building is located on Peter Avenue (now 1209 Kansas Avenue). Associated with the venture were Louis Zutavern (who also served as Treasurer), Jacob Stauffer, Superintendent, and Fred Stauffer.

A contract was let with The United States Electric Lighting Company for the installation of an engine and a direct current generator having capacity for "three hundred lights of sixteen candle power each".

The machinery began arriving in Great Bend during March, 1886. The people took a lively interest in the proceedings and during that period, there are recorded many suggestions such as "A light on top of the Court House would light the town nicely," "The Company expects to strike a light by March," and "We believe that the electric light will be cheaper even than the coal oil lights in business houses."

On May 1, 1886, the townspeople were invited to witness an exhibition of electric lighting. On June 25, 1886, the Company began commercial operations.

Little is known of the Company's progress, but records show business men using lights, praised the innovation highly; that lights, installed in the Court House, were described as "a perfect success," and that on July 2, 1886, a Mr. J. W. Brown "struck a match to light the electric light in his office." Agitation was started for a system of lighting for the streets.

The Great Bend Electric Light Company continued its operations for a few years, apparently with not too much financial success. Nor was the Company without other difficulties - a one-man strike is recorded.

An engineer, whose demands for a long

term employment contract were not met, "struck" the afternoon of a convention for which the Company had promised an electric light display. Mr. Brueser, President of the Company, offered the engineer \$40.00 to put back in order the engine, which, it is alleged, had been disabled, but the offer was refused. The engineer was arrested, fined and sentenced to jail. On promise of remittance of the jail sentence, the engineer returned and had the equipment operating "in a short time."

The business slowly expanded and in 1888 or 1889 it became necessary to enlarge the plant, so the equipment was moved to the rear of what is now the Bentley Hardware Store.

During August of 1891, it is certain that the Kapps were actively engaged in installing new machinery, poles, and otherwise improving and extending the system. It was then that eight arc lights were installed to light the streets and much difficulty is noted by newspapers of the time, regarding their operation. By the middle of September, work had been completed and the plant was "in full running order." At this time practically all lighting was confined to business houses.

In October, 1891, W. T. Stout purchased the plant which apparently was still doing business under the original Great Bend Electric Light Company's name.

The very charitable attitude in which

newspapers commented on the many service failures clearly shows that Great Benders of 1891 were a good natured lot, determined to give the new industry every advantage possible, and registering few complaints when service was discontinued even for days at a time.

In 1892 there were less than 300 incandescent lamps in Great Bend. Most homes enjoyed only one lamp, usually installed in the living room.

Until December, 1903, no electric service was available during daylight hours and the plant was shut down at midnight. A local citizen confessed that he, with other members of his dancing club, were in the habit of bribing the engineer to operate an hour or two longer, so that the dance might continue.

On December 23, morning service, from 5 to 8 o'clock was established, "until after the holidays at least." Probably 24-hour service was not established until 1904 or 1905.

Work was started in April, 1909, by the Morrison Brothers (Jack and Charlie), Great Bend contractors, on a new plant building, located at Second and Main Streets. There, a 55 horsepower gasoline engine was installed to supplement the equipment in the old "Grimes" plant, still operating downtown. Later, a 100 horsepower and a 150 horsepower producer gas engine were installed with alternating current generators and the downtown plant was dismantled about 1910.



GREAT BEND'S FIRST ELECTRIC PLANT—1885

Left to right—Judge Torrey, A. Weiss, Fred Stauffer, E. R. Moses, Sr., Louis Zutavern, J. V. Brinkman, Wm. Brueser, E. W. Moses, Jacob Stauffer, C. E. Parker.

This page sponsored by

**Western Power Division,
Central Telephone & Utilities Corporation**

Electric Power And Telephones

Producer gas proved to be unsatisfactory; boilers were installed at the new plant in 1910 and the engines converted for steam operation. Direct current service was discontinued and the conversion of the above equipment marked the complete establishment of the modern alternating current system of distribution.

On November 10, 1915, both water and electric plants were totally destroyed by a tornado which claimed the lives of nine Great Bend citizens, and caused at least a million dollars of property damage. The Company's losses were stated at in excess of \$100,000.

A new building was constructed following the cyclone and in 1916, the first Diesel units, then coming into popularity, were installed. These units were of approximately 300 horsepower each, and in 1921 a 500 horsepower unit was added.

In 1927, the Great Bend Water & Electric Company, with a number of other companies, was organized into a Kansas corporation, known as The Kansas Power Company. In 1934, the General Offices of the Company were moved to Great Bend.

In 1945, the company expanded its operations and the name was changed to Western Light and Telephone, Inc. In July, 1965, it merged with and assumed the name of Western Power and Gas Company, Inc. On June 5, 1968, the name again was changed to its present form, the Central Telephone and Utilities Cor-

poration. The administrative offices of the Western Power Division of this corporation are headquartered in Great Bend. C. F. Edwards is Vice-President-Electric and Kenneth Grobe is the Central Division Manager. There are 118 additional employees operating out of Great Bend. The company serves 6,772 electric and 5,320 water customers in the city.

First Phones In City - Square-Shaped Boxes

The first telephone to make its appearance in Great Bend was in the early 80's when the late C. P. Townsley installed a private line from his office in the old Tribune building on the site of the present Tribune building, to his home, corner Broadway and Morphy.

Judge Townsley attended a political convention in Chicago at which time inventor Bell was exhibiting his "new-fangled" invention, and the Judge came home with his own ideas.

Communication was made possible by a copper wire stretched from the office to the house and connected to the rubber button on the phones at each end.

Poles were put up between the residence and office building.

Reminiscing over that early day experience, the Judge's oldest daughter, Mrs. Florence Townsley Leland of Troy, said:

"We used to have great sport. Every time a high load of hay would take the street between our house and Brinkman's, it couldn't clear the wire, and snap! We had no service.

"Then you would see father in his stovepipe hat and Prince Albert coat and carrying a ladder on the way to the trouble.

"He loosened the wire at home so he could mend the break, then the time he would have getting it stretched again.

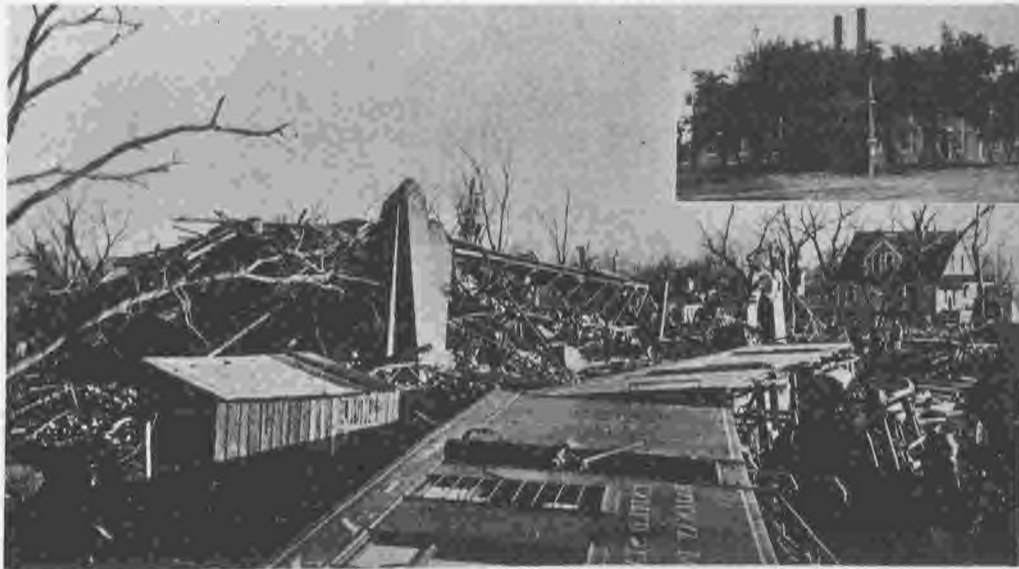
"It was quite a marvel and people came from all around to see the wonderful invention, and the voice was as clear as it is now on the phone. It was only a few years later that a telephone system was installed."

One of the telephone boxes used by Judge Townsley and family is still in existence and is now among the relics of the Barton County Historical Society.

The first telephone exchange referred to above was organized April 11, 1888. The owners were J. V. Brinkman, Jake Stauffer, Wm. Brueser, Albert Weiss and Fred Stauffer.

The Missouri and Kansas Telephone Company purchased the remaining telephone plant in the same year and installed improved equipment. The company changed hands several times until corporate reorganization created the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company in 1918.

The office now serves 1,523 business lines; 5,792 residential lines and a total of 13,411 telephones within the city.



THE TORNADO OF NOVEMBER 10, 1915, TOTALLY DESTROYED THE PLANT

This page sponsored by

Drummer Boy Restaurant

Duckwall Stores, Inc.

Everitt Lumber Company

Farmer's Food Store

Newspapers, Radio And Television

Great Bend has been the ink-stained battlefield of more than a dozen newspapers in the span of 100 years.

When Great Bend was incorporated in 1872, the community was served by one newspaper, The Arkansas Valley, edited by S. J. McFarren, and printed in Lawrence. There were two issues that year. It is interesting to note that the salutatory editorial of the Arkansas Valley consisted chiefly of an apology for publishing a newspaper in The Great American Desert.

Its local columns made mention of T. L. Stone's Great Western Hotel — the Southern; E. L. Morley, hardware dealer; A. S. Allen, druggist; Dahm Brothers, bakery; Rice and Brinkman, lumber merchants; Yoxall Sons and Company, lumber; Poole and Bell, livery stables; John Typer, restaurant building, and 20x60 foot hotel; Markwort's store to have a glass front; A. C. Moses and Sons running the store of W. D. Hart and Company on the north side of the square; Harpham and Giddings, blacksmiths; Samuel Maher, banker; John Cook, grocer; T. L. Morris, postmaster; W. H. Odell, county clerk; A. A. Hurd, M. S. Ketch and others.

In 1873, the Arkansas Valley came into possession of Samuel Maher who changed the name to the Barton County Progress. This paper was successively followed by the Farmers' Friend which made its appearance in 1873, the Register in 1874, the Inland Tribune in 1876, The Arkansas Valley Democrat in 1877, the Volkstreund, a German Democratic newspaper in 1878, the Barton County Democrat in 1884, the Daily Evening News from 1888 to 1897, and the Quid Nunc (What Not) in 1893, the Barton County Beacon in 1895, the Daily Graphic in 1898, the Daily Item in 1901, the Daily Rustler in 1903, the Morning News in 1909 and the Barton County Daily Democrat, the last daily newspaper, which was consolidated with the Tribune November 30, 1918.

News of the outside world naturally was scarce in the newspapers printed in the early days of Great Bend but what they lacked in coverage, they made up for in the ardor of their politics and details of the happenings, loves, hates and life of its times.

An examination of early pages of The Tribune would startle the most avid reader of a modern newspaper. Like contemporaries throughout the nation, The Tribune took sides on all issues, pointed out the guilty without hesitation and placed the stamp of its disapproval wherever it saw fit in the bold language of its era.

As the country developed, this style of journalism gave way to a more orderly presentation of the news and this advancement has been followed since.

The one piece of equipment that attracted much attention and which The Tribune was the first to own in central Kansas was a standard linotype, a machine that casts a line of type in one operation and simplified the handling of type.

The growth of the paper was rapid and, as it is today, speed became an important factor. In this connection, The Tribune purchased a new machine to fold its papers, one that fastened on to the press and folded the papers as they were delivered from the printing press.

In 1927, the Tribune took out a full membership in the Associated Press which provides a leased wire telegraph service, the same received by the Wichita, Topeka, Kansas City, and other papers in cities many times the size of Great Bend. With it came the news picture and feature service and other features that enables The Tribune to present to its readers a class of news matter that, it believes, cannot be excelled. In

TRIBUNE.

Established 1876.

Republican of the Lincoln and McKinley Stamp.

\$1.00 a Year in Advance,

when it can be had; otherwise, otherwise.

Special attention given to Local News
and Fine Job Work.

Business Manager: My Wife.

C. P. TOWNSLEY.

1972, The Tribune began the expensive change in printing process from linotype to photocomposition using phototypesetters.

The current administrative staff at the Tribune includes: Ben H. Emerson, Publisher; Bob Fairbanks, Managing Editor; F. C. Shelton, Circulation Manager; and Bob Werner, Advertising Manager.

KVGB Radio

Radio station KVGB, "The Voice of Great Bend," made its initial broadcast at 1370 KC. on Wednesday, March 10, 1937. Main studios were located on the second floor of the Cork building at Forest and Williams and the transmitter with a 169 foot tower was located on the highway south of town. The station was owned and managed by Ernest Ruehlen.

The original station staff, in addition to Ruehlen were, Carl L. Hall, chief engineer; Leo Leglieter, announcer; Doug Romaine, announcer; and J. B. Piper, news services.

KVGB, now broadcasting at 1590 with 5,000 watts of power is owned by Forward of Kansas, Inc. Robert D. Hilgendorf is the Vice-president and General Manager. The station staff includes Ray Beals who has been with the station since 1938, Hank Calnan, and Richard Boyle, commercial sales, and George Donley, Jane Engleman, Larry Knupp, Bill Rhoades and Boyd Rodman, announcers. Harold Riedl and Walt Patterson are the station engineers.

KCKT Television

KCKT-TV began broadcasting operations on November 11, 1954, in the offices in which they are now located, four miles north of the city. The station opened on channel 2 and generated a maximum broadcasting power of 100,000 watts. The transmitting tower, at 1,006 feet, was the tallest in the state.

Leslie P. Ware was the first General Manager; Kenneth Cook, Chief Engineer; Robert M. Cauley, Production Manager; Gilbert Canfield, Newscaster; and Howard W. Morgan, Newscaster.

KCKT became affiliated with the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) soon after opening and began using network programming on November 28.

The current General Manager is Bill Clarke and Bob Dundas is the News Director. The station employs 15 other employees.

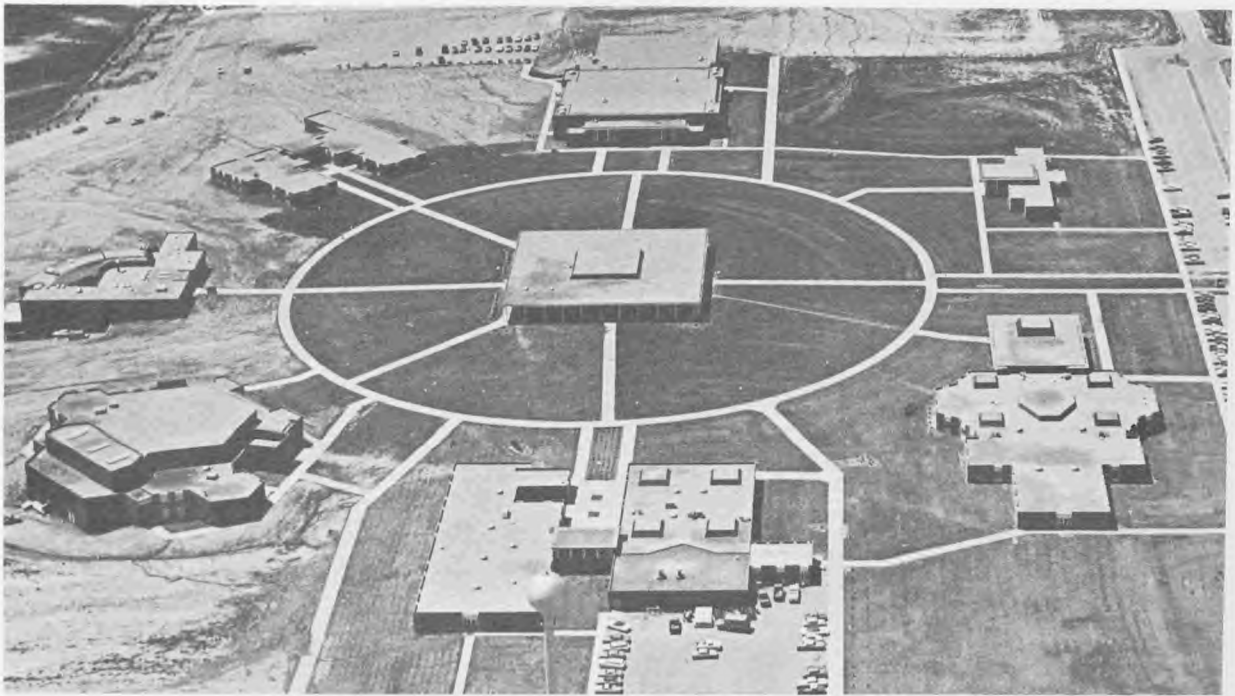
This page sponsored by

KVGB Radio

Foree Tire & Treading Service, Inc.

Kiwanis Club

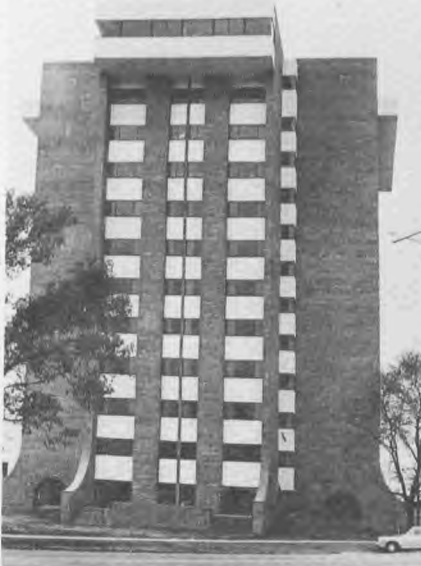
Graves Truck Line, Inc.



Barton County Community College

This aerial view shows the campus, viewing toward the west, in 1971. The Student Union building has been constructed between the Fine Arts and Classroom buildings on the left.

Founding of College	April 6, 1965	Approx. cost of buildings	\$5 million
Dedication Day	April 3, 1971	Total useable area	200,000 sq. ft.
First fall enrollment, 1969	835	Number of full-time employees	93
Enrollment, fall of 1971	1,153	Number of part-time employees	24
Campus site	5 miles NE of Great Bend	School Colors	Blue and Gold
Campus size	160 acres	School Mascot	Cougar
Number of buildings	8	Governing body	6 member Board of Trustees



The High Rise Apartment building is Great Bend's most recently completed major construction. The building will have 100 living units, one bedroom, two bedroom, and efficiency, available to individuals or couples aged 62 years or older. The building has twelve stories and was constructed at a total cost of \$1,833,700.

Another major construction project, the new main fire station, will also be completed in 1972.

This page sponsored by

*Komarek Jewelers,
Misco United Supply*

*Morrison Jewelry
Northwest Oxygen Inc.*



Forest Avenue west from the Courthouse in 1905.



In 1946



In 1972

One of the City's Busiest Intersections



Main Street North from Tenth, 1972



Main Street South from Tenth, 1972



Tenth Street East from Main, 1972



Tenth Street West from Main, 1972

Representative Businesses in 1972



1315 to 1319 Main.



Security State Bank, 1623 Main



Westgate Shopping Center



The south side of the Square.



The County Courthouse in 1972



Great Bend's daily at 1012 Forest.

Representative Businesses in 1972



Meschke's at 1523 Main



West side of the 1100 block of Main.



First National Bank, 1222 Kansas



West side of the 1200 block of Main



1200 block of Main and west-northwest from the High Rise Apartment building.



Main and north-northwest from the High Rise.

Great Bend Homes in the 1970's



2108 24th



3400 16th



822 Frey



2001 Lincoln

This page sponsored by

Dillon Companies, Inc.

Great Bend Homes in the 1970's



2920 Meadowlark



820 Holland



2602 Broadway



3500 21st

This page sponsored by

Manning Real Estate

Petroleum Club

Morrison - McFadden Post No. 3111 V.F.W.

Great Bend Statistical Review—1972

Population

1873 - 954	1887 - 2,958
1874 - No record	1888 - 3,343
1875 - No record	1889 - 2,223
1876 - No record	1890 - 2,421
1877 - No record	1900 - 2,470
1878 - 1,816	1910 - 4,622
1879 - 1,430	1920 - 4,460
1880 - 1,050	1930 - 5,548
1881 - No record	1940 - 9,044
1882 - 1,166	1950 - 12,665
1883 - 1,088	1960 - 16,670
1884 - 1,412	1970 - 16,133
1885 - No record	1971 - 18,571
1886 - 2,233	

Altitude - 1843 feet above sea level

Average annual rain fall - 27 inches

Average daily temperature - January, 30 degrees F.
July, 80 degrees F.

Mean annual temperature - 65 degrees F.

Average number of clear days annually - 199

Average annual growing season - 181 days

Telephones in service - 7,315

Churches - 28 with 18 denominations

Newspapers - Daily Tribune 12,131 circulation

Tribune & Western Kansas Press 13,343 circulation

Postal Receipts - \$442,432.00

Area within city limits - 2,822 acres

(excludes Industrial Park)

Developed parks - Brit Spaugh Park, 43 acres

Veteran's Memorial Park, 74 acres

Individuals and Businesses who have sponsored this publication

A & A Crafts

Allan Pump Company

Amerine Electric Company, Inc.

Athenian Club

B & B Auto Wrecking Company

B & K Body Shop

B & W Industrial Supply Co., Inc.

Baltzell Motel

Bayless Dry Cleaners

Bell Engine Service

Bird Oil Company, Inc.

Black Angus Steak Ranch

Brown's Shoe Fit Company

Bryant & Fryberger Mortuary

Bud Bollman Specialty Advertising

Burke's Fashion Footwear

Business and Professional

Women's Club

Charles L. Carroll, Jr.

Carter's Trophy House, Ellinwood

Central Kansas Medical Center

Child's Furniture

City Service Oil Company

Concrete Service Company, Inc.

Craig's Cinderella Shoppe

Credit Bureau of Great Bend, Inc.

Culligan Water Conditioning Co.

Custom Wrought Iron

Dawson Jewelers

Diesel Equipment Company, Inc.

Don's Radiator and Welding

Evans-Bierly-Hutchison Engineers

Esfeld Engineering, Inc.

Foster Lumber Company

Friedeman Service Store

Gibson Discount Store

Max Goss Insurance Agency

Grace's Fabrics

Great Bend Co-op

Great Bend Ford Tractor, Inc.

Great Bend Garden Club

Great Bend Music Company

Great Bend National Education Assn.

Great Bend Office Products

Great Bend Volkswagen, Inc.

Griff's Burger Bar

Guthrie Trailer Sales, Inc.

Harv's Furniture

Helianthus Study Club

W. W. Homes, Inc.

Home Appliance Company, Inc.

Mr. Charles Hulme

Jayhawk Transportation Co., Inc.

Johnson Refrigeration, Inc.

Klepper Oil Company

Kottwitz Motor Co. Inc.

Kummer Wholesale Beverage

Roy E. Knupp Company, Inc.

Dr. & Mrs. Loren Kutina

Lillard Insurance, Inc.

Lindholm Construction Co., Inc.

Litwins Department Store

McDonald Tank & Equipment Co., Inc.

Mr. & Mrs. A. A. McNeive

Malone Goodyear Tire Center

Marlette Homes, Inc.

Martin Jaeger, Inc.

Mayflower Cafe

Meschke's Mens & Boys Wear

Moore-Jaco Corporation

Northern Natural Gas Co.

O'Connell Motor Company

Phillips Sporting Goods

Phi Sigma Alpha

Portia Club

Pugh Electric

Drs. Reinhardt & Gillette

Dr. & Mrs. Homer B. Russell

Ruth and Ray's Records

Ruth's Style Shop

Sawhill Rentals

Scheufler Supply Company

Dr. Jerry L. Schrader

Glen A. Schuetz & Co.

Self-Service Drugs

Sherman Brothers Machine Works

Shoe Center, Inc.

Bill Southern Insurance

Spencer Office Supply, Inc.

Spruill Ford Lincoln Mercury, Inc.

Stanion Wholesale Electric Co., Inc.

Steinert's Furniture and Appliance Co.

Suburban Cleaners & Launderers

Sweetbriar Shops, Inc.

T.G.&Y Stores Company

Taylor Radio and Tee Vee

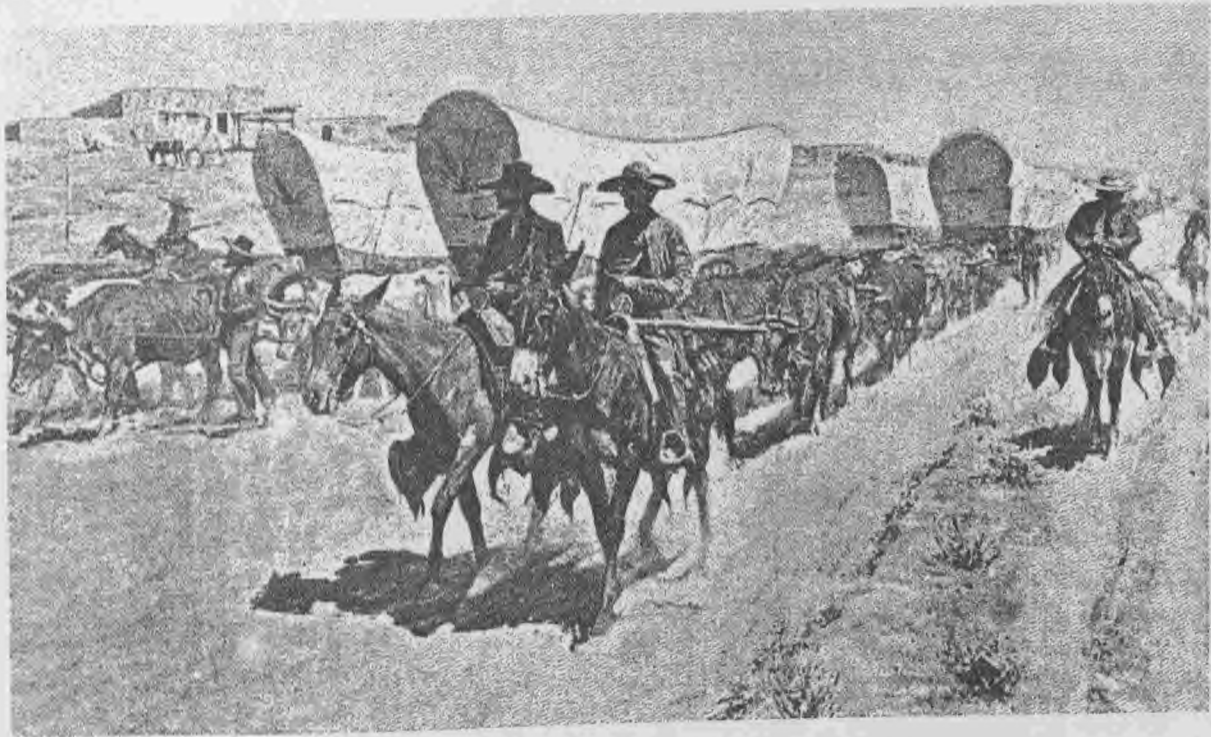
Ed Thompson Furniture City

Triangle Rexall Drugs

Ken Weatherbee Insurance

Wells Discount Furniture, Inc.

Wells Mens and Boys Wear



Frederic Remington captured the spirit of the pioneer and the freighter on the Santa Fe Trail in these two famous paintings. The Santa Fe Trail was the most important pathway to the new American West and it is perhaps the most important single element in the history of the establishment of the City of Great Bend.

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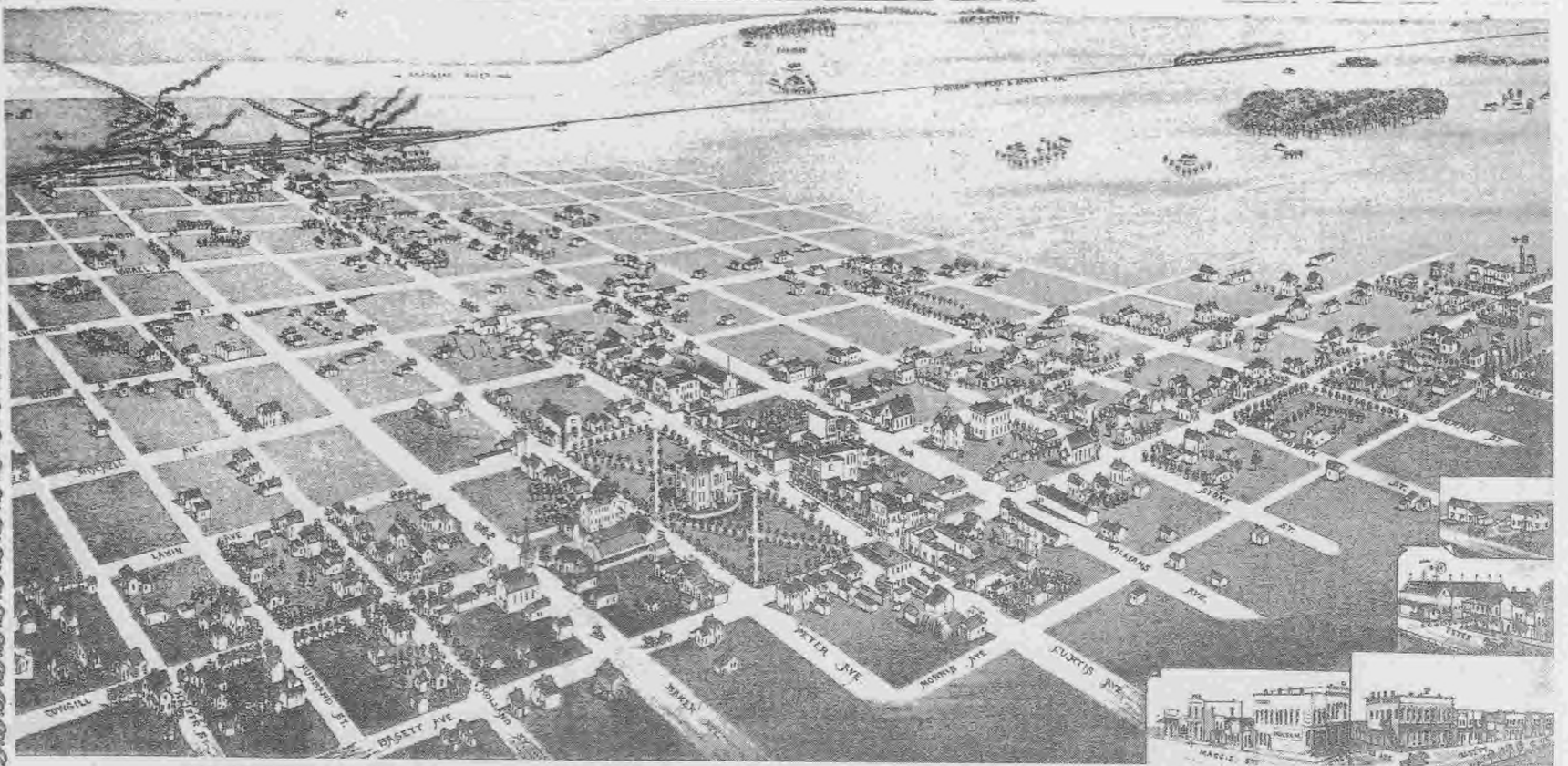


First National Bank in Great Bend

Great Bend, Kansas 67530

Colonial Savings And Loan Association

This page sponsored by



GREAT BEND IN 1882—Kansas Avenue was Peter Avenue, Main Street was Curtis Avenue, Sixteenth was Morris Avenue, Broadway was Bassett Avenue, Park was Cowgill Avenue, Forest was Maggie Avenue, Twelfth Street was Mitchell Street, Eleventh was Wilder Street, Tenth was Ellinwood, Ninth was Israel Street, Eighth was Johnson Street and Seventh was Hurd Street when this sketch of Great Bend was drawn. The courthouse near the center of the picture can be easily identified, occupying a site where the present courthouse stands.

Colonial Savings And Loan Association

This page sponsored by



GREAT BEND IN 1882—Kansas Avenue was Peter Avenue, Main Street was Curtis Avenue, Sixteenth was Bassett Avenue, Broadway was Cowgill Avenue, Forest was Maggie Avenue, Twelfth Street was Morris Avenue, Broadway was Mitchell Street, Eleventh was Wilder Street, Tenth was Ellinwood, Ninth was Israel Street, Eighth was Johnson Street and Seventh was Hurd Street when this sketch of Great Bend was drawn. The courthouse near the center of the picture can be easily identified, occupying a site where the present courthouse stands.



The Morrison Hotel, formally opened on March 15, 1888, placed Great Bend on a level with the largest cities of the midwest in terms of elegant hotel facilities. For several years, the Morrison was the finest bed between Chicago and Denver. The Morrison Brothers Construction Company spared no expense in the building's construction and equipment. Great Bend citizens were justly proud.

On opening night, some three hundred guests and residents of the city were on hand to enjoy a feast of buffalo, duck, venison, beef, chicken, turkey, goose, ham, oysters and a dazzling assortment of trimmings. One-hundred and fifty persons were served at a time. The evening's entertainment included speeches and toasts, songs by a choral group from

Topeka, and music and dancing until the early hours of the morning. One guest from eastern Kansas toasted the indomitable spirit and courage of the pioneers of Great Bend and noted that while he now dined in a palace, fifteen years earlier he had visited here and had to eat in a tent. Great Bend changes rapidly.

The site of this grand hotel, across the street from the northeast corner of LaFayette Park, has been an important location throughout Great Bend's history. When the beauty of the Morrison had faded, the building was razed in 1952 and the attractive Wiley's Department Store was constructed. The J. C. Penney's Department Store now occupies this still modern building and the Broadway and Kansas intersection continues as a prominent center in the life of the City of Great Bend.



THE MORRISON, AS DESIGNED & BUILT BY MORRISON BROS. GENERAL CONTRACTORS & BUILDERS
N. E. CORNER LA FAYETTE PARK, GREAT BEND, KANSAS



This page sponsored by

JCPenney
The values are here every day.
Great Bend