

Finney County, in the southwestern part of the state, is the third county north from the Oklahoma line and the third east from Colorado. It is bounded on the north by Scott and Lane counties; on the east by Hodgeman and Gray; on the south by Gray and Haskell, and on the west by Kearny county. This territory was settled about 1880, but was traversed at early dates by Coronado (q. v.), Pike's Expedition and the Santa Fe road. As proof of the presence of Coronado in Finney county, historians cite the finding of an old two-edged sword in the northeastern part of the county, with the name of Juan Gallego inscribed on it and the following motto, which the Spanish were accustomed to put on their weapons: "No me saques sin razon. No me enbaines sin honor." As the two-edged swords went out of use about 1600, it must have been lost before that time. Fowler's Journal of Glenn's expedition for Oct. 30, 1821, says: "We camped on an Island clothed with tall grass and Cotton Wood trees—the main Chanel on the north Some Small Islands on the South with out trees." Coues located this island about 8 or 10 miles above Garden City. The last Indian raid ever made through Kansas, that of the northern Cheyennes under Chief Dull Knife, came through the eastern part of this county on their way northward in 1878.

The same year saw the first settlement, when William and James R. Foulton of Ohio located on the site of Garden City. Their houses were the only ones in the county except a section house at Sherlock and one at Pierceville. Very few people located in this region until about 1884-85. However, several consecutive years of rain and good crops brought settlers with a rush in 1885 and 1886. They were eastern people accustomed to farming and living in ways which were entirely unfitted to the climate of Finney county, and as a consequence had to devise new farming methods and new implements suited to the soil had to be invented before much success was achieved. Many of those who lacked the capital or the courage to do this went back east in a few years, but those who stayed have been well paid for their efforts, and they have been joined by enough newcomers to make land valuable.

The county was organized in 1884 and named in honor of Lieut.-Gov. David W. Finney. It then covered a much larger area than at present, the counties of Kearny, Sequoyah, Grant, Arapahoe, Kansas, Stevens, Meade and Clark, as they existed prior to 1883, were disorganized in that year to make Finney. In 1887 the area was reduced, so that it occupied less territory than it does now. In 1893 the present

boundaries were formed. In Gov. Glick's proclamation organizing the county, which was made on Oct. 1, 1884, Garden City was named as the county seat and the following officers appointed: Commissioners, H. M. Wheeler, A. B. Kramer and John Speer; county clerk, H. E. Wentworth. The census at that time showed a population of 1,569 inhabitants, 375 of whom were householders.

The building of canals was begun early. The first one was the Garden City canal, which was built in 1879. In 1881 the Farmer's ditch was dug; in 1882 the Great Eastern canal; and in 1887 the Amazon, with a capacity of 400 cubic feet and capable of irrigating 8,000 acres. These ditches are in use at the present time, and many of the farmers who do not have access to them irrigate with windmills. Many of them have learned to raise good crops of certain vegetables without irrigation, by cultivating in such a manner as to conserve moisture. A government irrigation plant was built at Deerfield a few years ago at a cost of \$250,000. The Arkansas river, which flows from west to east through the southern part, furnishes water for irrigation purposes.

The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe R. R. follows the course of the river through the county, running through Pierceville, Mansfield, Garden City and Holcomb. The Garden City, Gulf & Northern R. R. extends north from Garden City through Gillespie, Alfalfa and Tennis into Scott county. It is in process of construction south into Haskell county. There are but seven townships, the northeastern one being the territory which formerly comprised Garfield county. The townships are: Garfield, Garden City, Ivanhoe, Pierceville, Pleasant Valley, Sherlock and Terry. The postoffices are: Eminence, Essex, Friend, Garden City, Holcomb, Imperial, Kalvesta, Pierceville, Ravanna and Terryton.

The surface of the county is nearly level north of the Arkansas river, and undulating prairie in the south, with a range of sand dunes. The bottom lands along the Arkansas average 4 to 5 miles in width. Natural timber is very scarce, there being but a few cottonwood trees. The government has set apart 70,000 acres, which covers nearly the whole area south of the river as a forest reserve, and has planted the most of it to artificial forest. Magnesian limestone of a fair quality and sandstone are found in the northeast. Clay for bricks exists in various parts of the county and potter's clay and gypsum are found in small quantities.

The area of the county is 829,440 acres, about 300,000 of which have been brought under cultivation. The value of farm products is about \$1,500,000 per year. The principal crop is sugar beets, which in 1910 brought \$252,000. The next in importance is alfalfa. A great many of the farmers, after cutting their alfalfa two or three times, let it go to seed, and Finney county alfalfa seed took the gold medal at the Louisiana Purchase exposition at St. Louis in 1904. Other grains and vegetables are also raised in commercial quantities. Wheat, corn, oats, sorghum, broom-corn, barley, milo maize and Kafir corn are impor-

tant field crops. Live stock yields about \$250,000 per year. Dairy products, poultry, eggs and honey bring nearly \$100,000 yearly to the farmers. There is a very fine and well equipped county farm with seldom an inmate. The same is true of the county jail.

The assessed valuation of property in Finney county in 1910 was \$13,906,521, and the population in the same year was 6,908, which makes the average wealth per capita a trifle over \$2,000. The gain in population from 1900 to 1910 was 3,439, or nearly 100 per cent.