

KANSAS

VOLUME II.

Jackson County, one of the counties formed by the first territorial legislature in 1855, is located in the second tier south from Nebraska, and the second west from Missouri. It is bounded on the west by Pottawatomie county, on the south by Wabaunsee and Shawnee, on the east by Jefferson and Atchison, and on the north by Nemaha and Brown. It is 1,172 feet above the level of the sea.

The first exploration in the regions that afterward became Jackson county was by M. De Bourgmont and his company of Frenchmen who made a journey in 1724 through the lands of the Kansas to the Padouca Indians. He passed through Jackson county in going from a point above Atchison to the Kansas river just west of Shawnee county. The next exploring party was conducted in 1819 by Dr. Thomas Say, who, with four other scientists, went west as far as the Kansas village where Manhattan now stands, and returning, passed through Jackson county on their way to Cow island near Atchison. Fremont "the Pathfinder," passed through in 1843 on his trip to the Rocky mountains.

The boundaries defined by the legislature of 1855 contained 1,140 square miles. The county was first called Calhoun (q. v.) in honor of John C. Calhoun. The county was surveyed in the same year and a place 7 miles from Topeka near the old Calhoun Bluffs was made the first county seat. New boundary lines were defined in 1857, when the actual organization of the county took place, and the present boundary lines were established by the legislature in 1858, when the county seat was located permanently at Holton.

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The settlements within the borders of the county as first described date back to the '30s, when Capt. Alley of Kentucky established a trading post on the Kansas river. But settlement within the present borders did not begin until 1855, when the county was divided into three townships, Douglas, Atchison and Haliday. Franklin township was formed in 1856, Jefferson in 1858, Grant in 1870, Netawaka in 1871, Whiting, Liberty and Soldier in 1872; Cedar and Washington in 1873 and Straight Creek, Adrian and Garfield since then. The townships of Atchison and Haliday no longer exist. The first settlers in Douglas township, who came in 1855, were John Rippetoe, William Cunningham, David Rice, Josiah Seal, Byron Stewart, J. W. Willard, A. W. Bainbridge, Hugh Piper and Rufus Rice. The land was not surveyed and the settlers established their lines by stakes or blazes on trees. They got their mail from Indianola, Ozawkie or Grasshopper Falls.

Cedar township was settled in 1855 by S. J. Elliott; Jefferson township in 1854 by Francis Smith; Franklin township in 1854 by N. D. Lewis; Grant township in the late '50s by Peter Dickson, R. P. Hamm, William Cruzan, J. P. Fraidley, John James, S. Stephenson and T. Keir; Liberty township was settled at a date not given, by Missourians, and is said to be the oldest settlement in the county. Some of the early settlers were: Charles Bateman, J. B. Parrot, Alfred Fuller, James Piper, W. R. Hodges and J. W. Taylor; Straight Creek township in 1855 by J. H. Thompson; Soldier township in 1857 by William Kline, Henry Rancier, William Knipe, W. Branham and the Fairbanks; and Washington, Netawaka and Whiting townships were not settled until in the '60s.

The first election for county officers was held on Oct. 1, 1855. The first officers were: James Kuykendall, probate judge; J. T. Wilson, sheriff; Anthony Wilson, treasurer; and James Kuykendall, William Alley and P. P. Beeler, commissioners. James Kuykendall was at different times probate judge, register of deeds, county clerk and prosecuting attorney. He was one of the early business men of the county. District court was held for the first time by Judge S. D. Lecompte Sept. 24, 1855.

The name of the county was changed from Calhoun to Jackson by Golden Silvers, who was the representative in the legislature in 1858. The county officials did not recognize the new name until a year later. In 1858 a vote was taken to choose a new county seat and Holton received 79 votes over all other contestants. The county voted 51 to 12 for a free-state constitution.

The famous Lane road (q. v.) ran through Jackson county and the "Battle of the Spurs" occurred at Fuller's ford on Straight creek, near one of the stations of the "underground railway." During the Civil war Jackson county furnished 175 volunteers, most of whom joined the Eleventh cavalry, the Fifth cavalry and the Eighth infantry.

Prior to 1859 the schools in the county were carried on chiefly by

private subscription. The first school was taught by Miss Harriet Warfield in 1857 in Douglas township. A log school house was built the following year and in 1859 district No. 12 was organized. The first school in Jefferson township was taught by Mrs. H. S. Hart; in Grant township by E. S. Hulan; in Liberty township by Sophia Lattimer; in Straight creek township by James B. Hastings; and the first real school house was built south of Holton in 1858 out of logs. In 1910 there were in the county 90 school districts, with over 5,000 persons of school age, and 60 libraries.

The first marriage for which any definite date is given was between John Coleman and Phoebe Hastings on Jan. 1, 1857; the first birth in the county was probably that of O. F. Cunningham. Some of the early ministers were: Rev. R. P. Hamm, Rev. Byron Stewart, who settled in Douglas township in 1855, Rev. Eli H. Robinson, Rev. William Knipe, who held services in a sawmill in Jefferson township in 1858; Rev. J. W. Williams and Rev. Pardee Butler, who was mobbed in Atchison for his anti-slavery opinions.

In 1871 the voters adopted a proposition to issue bonds amounting to \$160,000 to get the Kansas Central railroad, and the next year donated the county's stock to the railroad company. A delay in building the road from Holton to the limits of the county caused the company to forfeit all but \$60,000 of the money. This line is now a part of the Union Pacific system. The Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific runs from Topeka to Holton, thence northeast to Whiting, leaving the county near the northeast corner. The Kansas City Northwestern, a branch of the Missouri Pacific, runs from Valley Falls through Holton and Circleville and north into Nemaha county. Another branch of the Missouri Pacific enters the county from Nemaha and runs through the northeastern part through Netawaka and Whiting. The Topeka & Marysville, a branch of the Union Pacific, is a new road crossing the southwest corner of the county.

The surface of the county is undulating plains. The largest stream is the Big Soldier, which flows from north to south through the western part of the county and empties into the Kansas river. Other streams are Cross creek, Little Soldier, North and South Cedar creeks, Straight, Elk, Spring, Bills and Muddy creeks.

The county contains 421,120 acres, of which 316,163 are under cultivation (the Indian lands, comprising at present 74,400 acres, are not cultivated to any extent). The field crops in 1910 totaled \$2,013,064.78, of which corn amounted to \$1,328,664; oats, \$210,974, and wheat \$24,351.68. The value of all farm products for that year was \$3,322,371.63. Hay crops and Irish potatoes were also extensively raised. There are more than a quarter of a million fruit trees. Jackson has a high rank as a fruit growing locality, also for the breeding of thoroughbred stock. One source of wealth is the quarries of white, gray limestone. Brick clay and gypsum are found along the creeks. The population in 1910 was 16,861.