

Smith County, one of the northern tier, is centrally located, east and west. It is bounded on the north by the State of Nebraska; on the east by Jewell county; on the south by Osborne and Rooks, and on the west by Phillips. It was named for Maj. J. Nelson Smith of the Second Colorado calvalry, who was killed at the Battle of the Blue.

The first settlers came in 1870. They were John Rhoades, J. K. Belk, Ambrose Oldaker, B. F. Myers, J. H. Johnson and J. C. Morrison. The next year Thomas Lane and Anthony Robertson came with their families. They were followed by H. H. Granholz, H. Menshoff, L. Binman, J. Rider, J. Eldridge, Thomas Decker, James H. Decker, T. J. Burrow, H. F. Albright, Charles Stewart, T. J. Tompkins, W. M. George and Fred Wagner. The first woman settler was Mrs. Mary Peebles, who located in Lincoln township in the fall of 1870. The first marriage was between Miss R. L. Dunlap and T. J. Burrow, in Smith Center township, Oct. 16, 1872. The first birth was that of a son of Christopher Noggles, Aug. 25, 1871.

A grocery store was established in Houston township in the spring of 1871 by C. P. Newell, and a general merchandise store was started about the same time in Germantown by Fred Wagner, who was appointed postmaster at that place. The first postoffice was at Cedarville, established in July, 1871, with John Johnson as postmaster. The first school was taught at Gaylord by Mrs. W. M. Skinner in 1871. E. M. Burr, the first attorney, located in Smith Center in 1872. The first churches were built in the middle of the '70s. The first newspaper (the Smith County Pioneer) was started at Gaylord in Nov., 1872, by Dr. W. D. Jenkins. Sawmills and grist mills were built along the Solomon at Gaylord and other points before the year 1880.

The county was organized in 1872, with a population of 3,876, all gained in two years. Cedarville (Cedar) was named as the temporary county seat and the following officers were appointed: county clerk, James H. Johnson; commissioners, George Marshall and Fred W. Wagner. At a meeting held in April of the same year the commissioners divided the county into six townships, Pawnee, Higley, German, Cedar, Houston and Holland. At the first election held on June 25, 1872, the ballots of four townships were thrown out for illegalities, and only 154 votes were counted. The county seat question was not settled, but the following officers were chosen: county clerk, W. R. Allen; commissioners, W. S. Angell, W. D. Covington and L. R. Hibbard. The following were appointed: superintendent of public instruction, Edmund Hall; register of deeds, B. Higley. At the November election Smith Center was chosen as the county seat and a new set of officers were elected. T. J. Morrison was the first state representative. There has never been a licensed saloon in Smith county.

Ten years after the first settler came into the county there was a

population of 13,904. Artificial forests had been planted; over 300,000 acres of land had been brought under cultivation; there were nearly 40,000 head of live stock, and about 90,000 fruit trees.

The county is divided into 23 townships, viz: Banner, Beaver, Blaine, Cedar, Center, Cora, Crystal Plains, Dor, Garfield, German, Harlan, Harvey, Houston, Lane, Lincoln, Logan, Martin, Oak, Pawnee, Pleasant, Swan, Valley, Washington, Webster and White Rock. The post-offices are Smith Center, Athol, Bellaire, Cedar, Claudell, Gaylord, Harlan, Kensington, Lebanon and Reamsville.

Smith county has two railroads. The Central Branch of the Missouri Pacific enters in the southeastern part and crosses northwest to Gaylord; thence west into Phillips county. The Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific enters in the east, a little north of the center, and crosses west and southwest to Smith Center, thence west into Phillips county.

The general surface is prairie with bluffs along the streams. The timber is in narrow strips and most of the varieties of wood common to Kansas are found here. Bottom lands average one mile in width and comprise 15 per cent. of the total area. The water system is formed by the north fork of the Solomon and its tributaries. The river enters from the west about 6 miles north of the southwest corner, flows east about 10 miles, thence southeast till it crosses the southern border. Its principal tributaries are Dry, Spring, Beaver, Cedar and Oak creeks. Magnesian limestone, gray granite and small beds of gypsum are found in different parts of the county.

Smith county is in an excellent agricultural section, and is one of the leaders in the acreage of alfalfa, and one of the two leading in swine. The farm produce in 1910 sold for \$5,829,000, of which wheat brought \$1,100,000; corn, \$2,238,000; tame grass, \$403,000; animals sold for slaughter, \$1,420,000. Poultry, eggs, butter and milk are important products. The population of the county according to the census of 1910 was 15,365. The assessed valuation of property was \$28,324,385.

Smoky Hill, a hamlet in Ellis county, is located in the township of the same name, on the Smoky Hill river, 15 miles southwest of Hays, the county seat. It has a postoffice, a good local trade, and the population in 1910 was 75.