

**Trego County**, in the western part of the state, is the third county south from the Nebraska line and the fourth east from Colorado. It is bounded on the north by Graham county, on the east by Ellis, on the south by Ness, and on the west by Gove. It was named in honor of Capt. Edgar P. Trego of the Eighth Kansas infantry. The first settler was B. O. Richards, who located at Coyote, near the present town of Collyer, about 1875 or 1876. During the year 1877 the following settlers located in the county: J. R. Snyder, J. C. Henry, Harlow Orton, Earl Spaulding, J. K. Snyder, D. O. Adams, George Brown, George McCaslin and George Pinkham. The same year came the advance agents of a colony from Chicago, viz.: Mr. Warren, W. S. Harrison, George Barrell, F. O. Ellsworth, Thomas Peak and C. W. F. Street. The next year there was a rush of immigrants, most of whom were from Chicago and vicinity. The influx continued through the first half of 1879, the population reaching 3,500 by midsummer.

With a view to organizing the county a census enumeration was made and upon receiving the returns Gov. John P. St. John issued a proclama-

tion, dated June 21, organizing the county. The town of Wakeeney was named as county seat and the following officers were appointed: Clerk, George Pinkham; commissioners, T. W. Miller, H. C. Bryant and W. H. Fuson. The first meeting of the board of commissioners was held on June 26, when they divided the county into the townships of Ogallah, Collyer and Wakeeney. An election was ordered for July 26, when Wakeeney was made the permanent county seat and the following officers were chosen: County clerk, George Pinkham; treasurer, John Weckel; probate judge, W. H. Fuson; register of deeds, A. H. Deppe; sheriff, J. F. Allen; coroner, J. W. Scott; attorney, J. C. Phillips; clerk of the district court, A. B. Poler; superintendent of public instruction, J. K. Wilson; surveyor, T. K. Peck; commissioners, Enos Glick, D. Barclay and J. C. Brown. The first representative was J. F. Keeney, elected in Nov., 1880.

The poor crops of 1879 brought about a reaction. Settlers who had come with the expectation of raising a field crop were obliged to leave, and they went in large numbers. Those who remained raised stock and were successful. The acreage of field crops in 1880 was 16,047 and in 1881 it was but 10,287. A further decrease occurred in 1882. Hog raising was not found profitable at that time and attention was given principally to cattle and sheep, especially the latter.

Among the incidents of the pioneer days was the Indian scare of 1878, when the Cheyennes were committing outrages in western Kansas. Arms and ammunition were sent to the settlers and a company known as the Trego Home Guards was organized with John M. Keeney as captain; W. H. Fuson, first lieutenant; and C. W. Mulford, second lieutenant. A grand Fourth of July celebration was held in 1879. The governor and 400 people from Topeka were present. There were a big dinner, two bands and a number of the best speakers of the state.

Before the counties of Gove, St. John (Logan) and Wallace were attached to Trego for judicial purposes in 1881 some trouble was caused by thieves and marauders committing crimes in the territory over which no court had jurisdiction. Three murderers and a number of horse thieves were turned over to the sheriff of Trego county, but they had to be set free as there was no authority to try them. A quarrel at Gopher in March, 1882, resulted in a man being killed and caused considerable excitement. Of the two men guilty of killing him and wounding several others, one was killed in resisting arrest and the other wounded. Subsequently he was taken from the sheriff by a mob and his fate is unknown.

In 1884 Col. C. K. Holliday of Topeka sent two prospectors into Trego county to look for mineral deposits. They found traces of zinc and other minerals but not in paying quantities. A great boom was occasioned in 1902-03 by the discovery of an element in the shale of Trego county which was thought to be gold. Expert Fahrig of Philadelphia claimed to have a process by which he could remove the gold from the shale and a company was formed, capitalists being eager

to buy stock. There proved to be no gold in the shale and by 1904 the whole affair had passed into history. (See Gold.)

The general surface of the county is rolling, with some bluffs and broken lands along the Saline river in the north. In the east is Roundmound, an elevation of considerable height, and in the south are bluffs along the Smoky Hill. Bottom lands are from one-half to one mile in width and comprise 12 per cent. of the area. A few small groves containing cottonwood, white-ash, box-elder, elm and hackberry comprise all the native timber. The Saline river enters in the northwest corner and flows east across the northern tier of townships into Ellis county. Trego and Springer creeks are its principal tributaries from the south. The Smoky Hill river flows east across the southern portion, Downer, Castle Hill, Wild Horse and Elm creeks being tributaries. Big creek enters in the west and flows southeast into Ellis county. Magnesian limestone is abundant and a very hard conglomerate stone exists in some localities. Native lime is abundant and chalk and coal have been found to some extent.

The county is divided into 7 townships, Collyer, Franklin, Glencoe, Ogallah, Riverside, Wakeeney and Wilcox. The main line of the Union Pacific R. R. enters in the east near the center and crosses northwest to Wakeeney, thence west into Gove county, a distance of 33 miles.

The number of acres of land under cultivation in 1910 was 338,502. The principal crop is wheat which in 1910 brought to the farmers the sum of \$403,634. Hay in the same year was worth \$212,698; corn, \$193,376; milo maize, \$60,000; sorghum, \$50,000; animals sold for slaughter, \$191,092; poultry and eggs, \$54,502; dairy products, \$54,146. The number of animals was 27,246, valued at \$1,277,671. The assessed valuation of property was \$10,537,344. The population in 1880 was 2,535; in 1890 it was about the same, in 1900 it had increased to 2,722 and in 1910 to 5,398, almost doubling in the last decade.