

PIIONEER LIVING IN KANSAS AS PORTRAYED IN
KANSAS LITERATURE

by

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study has been to discover the conditions under which the pioneers lived as portrayed by the authors who used the state of Kansas as a setting. Only facts and incidents have been used that deal with Kansas and that cover the period from 1850 to 1890. Because there was no more free land, 1890 marks the end of the pioneering period. All the details and incidents given in this thesis are those used by authors, who have used Kansas as a setting.

An unlimited amount of material about Kansas has been woven into romances. A majority of the novels begin with the period before the Civil War. The history of the state during the time preceding the Civil War is especially important, for the admission of Kansas as a free or slave state was the turning point in the balance of power between the North and the South. After the Kansas-Nebraska bill was passed, pro-slavery and anti-slavery elements streamed into the state each determined to make Kansas slave or free; consequently the state became the battle ground for these two factions and became known as "Bleeding Kansas". Border ruffians came into the state plundering homes and destroying lives. The New England Emigrant Aid Society was responsible for the emigration of many anti-slavery groups from the East.

The missionaries interested in the spiritual welfare of the Indians preceded the settlers into the state. Nearly all the missions were established in eastern Kansas and were used as

places of worship by the early settlers until they could establish their own churches.

In 1862 the Homestead law was passed and became responsible for the greatest flow of emigrants into the state. These settlers often had difficulties with claim jumpers and land speculators.

In the literature studied were found many incidents portraying life in the pioneer home. These authors gave many details in regard to the food, clothing, and shelter. The women had practically no conveniences to lighten their work in the home. In western Kansas many times it was a problem to find fuel to use for cooking and for heating the poorly constructed houses.

The homes were often frequented by tragedy. There were a great deal of sickness and very few doctors. Following the Civil War when the great influx of settlers arrived and the Indians realized they were being driven out, the Indians began ravaging homes and killing men, women, and children.

The authors have shown in their writings that the pioneers were interested in social affairs and the education of their children. Schools were soon established although there was no means of support from the state.

It was one continuous struggle for the pioneer farmer to care for his land and livestock. Many seasons after he had labored putting in crops, he saw all his efforts destroyed by droughts, grasshoppers, or prairie fires. Thousands of farm animals died during blizzards because of lack of protection and

scarcity of food.

The farmers and ranchers were harassed by horse thieves and cattle rustlers. The ranchers, who were being driven off the range by the homesteaders, made homesteading difficult. The ranchers felt that the nesters had no right to settle on their range; therefore they used every means to keep them out.

The courageous spirit of these pioneer farmers and their ability to work together made it possible for them to survive these hardships.

INFLUENCES AFFECTING THE SETTLEMENT OF KANSAS

The study of pioneer life in Kansas literature shows a number of important influences in the settlement of the state. The most important of these influences was the Homestead law of 1862. This law entitled any person who was the head of a family or twenty-one years of age, a citizen of the United States, and who had not borne arms against the United States, to one quarter-section of public land. After he had filed claim on the land, the homesteader was allowed six months to make improvements. He was required to live on the land five years from the date of the first papers, and then at the end of seven and one-half years after filing he could take out the final papers. Following the passage of this bill, immigrants began pouring rapidly into Kansas. Most of them encountered many difficulties coming from their homes to the wilderness out on the prairies. On their journey westward, they often stopped at other pioneer homes that had been established earlier. These immigrants were taken in by the hospitable settlers. Frequently this hospitality was a hardship for the settlers, for all the immigrants were not honest; and sometimes after they had taken leave early in the morning, it was discovered too late that they had stolen provisions or bedding and in return left bedbugs and fleas.

After the settlers had taken out claims, they learned that their troubles were just beginning. They had to contend with the claim jumpers, and then the land sharks became interested in

the land and began taking it from the settlers through mortgages and sharp practices.

Pro-slavery and anti-slavery factions were early influences in the settlement of Kansas. After the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, emigrants who were against slavery, came from the North and East to make Kansas a free state; and others came from the South determined to make it a slave state. At this time the New England Emigrant Aid Society was organized to encourage the emigration of anti-slavery groups to Kansas. An organization known as the Blue Lodge was formed in the South to drive the free state settlers out of Kansas. The struggle between the anti-slavery and pro-slavery groups developed a bloody warfare, from which the state derived the name, "Bleeding Kansas". An anti-slavery group called the Jayhawkers went into Missouri and helped negroes escape into Kansas. The pro-slavery people retaliated by coming into Kansas and destroying lives and homes. Those who destroyed property and lives were known as border ruffians, of which Quantrill was one of the boldest leaders.

The election in 1855 for a territorial legislature is a never-to-be-forgotten incident in the history of Kansas. Most of the voting places in the territory were in the hands of armed men from Missouri. The fraudulent voting by the southerners who came to Kansas just for the day of election put into power a bogus legislature.

Freedom, liberty, equal opportunities, and the rich soil of the prairies attracted many immigrants. While many of these people came from European countries, others came from different

sections of the United States.

The missionaries were the first to influence the settlement of the state. They came among the Indians, established missions, taught them Christianity, and gave them industrial schooling. Two of the early missions were the Osage, located near Neosho in southeastern Kansas, and the Delaware in Wyandotte County. The missions not only served the Indians but also the white settlers as well. During the early settlement of Kansas, churches had not been established; therefore the white settlers came for miles to the missions on Sunday. It was not long before the settlers began to hold services in their homes, in the hotels of neighboring towns, and in the school houses until they could build churches, which were of sod or hewn logs. Often the people of the community were bound together by their religious beliefs.

In their trek westward, the pioneers encountered many difficulties. This is revealed in A Wall of Men by Margaret Hill McCarter. The pro-slavery groups did all in their power to discourage the great influx of northerners into Kansas. The immigrants met opposition when entering the state through Missouri. Transportation from St. Louis to Westport, which was on the Kansas border, was denied the immigrants or rates were beyond their capacity to pay. Many times their baggage was destroyed and their lives threatened.

In The Boy Settlers Noah Brooks mentions that the free-state immigrants coming into Kansas were charged high tolls to cross the Missouri River by the pro-slavery people, and sometimes the

border ruffians killed the immigrants before they could reach the Kansas side of the river.

Anna Matilda Carlson in her novel, The Heritage of the Bluestem, pictures the stampeding buffaloes as a menace to the ox-drawn caravan of wagons crawling across the plains to the place of settlement. When the immigrants saw the seething, black mass of buffaloes coming toward them, they avoided the stampeding herd by taking shelter into a grove of trees.

George Ogden in Wasted Salt tells of the Campbell family coming to Kansas in two covered wagons. While crossing a stream, one wagon became stuck, and Jim Campbell had to dump one of his barrels of salt into the water in order to make the load lighter. He did not seem to mind the loss since the barrel of salt cost only two dollars, and he still had two other barrels left. Other pioneers claimed that Jim's hardships through life were caused by the spilt salt.

In The Price of the Prairie Margaret Hill McCarter tells of a family coming to Kansas from Rockport, Massachusetts, in a covered wagon pulled by an ox team. On the day they started the long journey, Kansas became a territory, and it was many days later when they and their tired oxen safely reached Neosho.

Margaret Lynn, the author of The Stepdaughter of the Prairie, a story about a child's love for the Kansas prairie, describes the hospitality of the settlers toward the immigrants coming into Kansas. They supplied them with shelter and provisions when it was not always convenient to do. During a storm the "stoppers" begged to stay at the home of the prairie

daughter with whom the story is concerned. The house was overcrowded, and many of them had to sleep on the kitchen floor. The next morning the cook had to step carefully in preparing breakfast on the scale of a barbecue for the hungry mob.

In Sod and Stubble John Ise reveals that some of these immigrants did prove to be a burden upon the settlers because some of them stole food and clothing and many times left bedbugs and fleas to worry the more meticulous pioneer women.

In spite of the fact that they had little, the settlers were hospitable folk. In Days of My Life Flo V. Menninger says,

One of the fine features of the people in the West, in that early day, was their friendly hospitality. Nobody had very much of anything, but what little they had was willingly shared. We did have trouble getting enough to eat the first six months we were in Kansas, but our neighbors, one, two, three and four miles away — Hursh, Miller, Walker and George — gave us potatoes, sauerkraut and other things they had, and so we got along.¹

Bliss Isely describes in Sunbonnet Days an organization, known as the Fairview Community Chest, which helped the poor, the sick, and strangers. When a neighbor became ill, others came in and did the farm work. Whenever a baby was born, several women went into the home and helped as long as they were needed. One woman, during her time in the neighborhood, bathed twenty-five new babies. The author brings out in the story that a true pioneer always took in strangers on the road. During those days there were very few hotels, and even if there were the strangers did not have any money to pay hotel bills.

1. Flo V. Menninger, The Days of My Life (New York, c.1939), p.176.

The Homestead Law

Following the passage of the Homestead law, many immigrants began taking up claims in Kansas. In Sunbonnet Days Bliss Isely mentions some of these provisions. After the settler took a claim, he had to live on the land, make improvements, and pay the government \$1.25 an acre. Mr. Dubach, one of the main characters, had 160 acres for which he paid \$100 for the relinquishment, that is a right to a claim given up by the first settler.

In The Desert's Hidden Wealth, the life story of William M. Wells as a frontiersman, is found the following claim provisions:

Land was cheaper as one went farther west. Still farther west homesteads could be had for \$14.00 to place homestead papers on 160 acres of government land. Then, by building a house and improving and living on the homestead for five years, one could make proof and secure a patent to the land. One could also take what was called a preemption and get 160 acres more by paying \$1.25 an acre, and also take 160 acres called a timber claim by planting ten acres of timber on it and cultivating it. Any person over twenty-one years of age could do this.²

In The God-House Frontier 1854-1890 Everett Newfon Dick gives true historical facts about the undesirable newcomers to Kansas, especially the professional squatters whom the author pictures convincingly in the following:

2. William M. Wells, The Desert's Hidden Wealth (Los Angeles, c.1934), p.55.

First of all there was the professional squatter, a migratory type who lived without labor. He might be called a small scale speculator. Squatting became a trade or business pursuit. This type would take a claim, sell, move on, select another tract, and sell again: He got control of the valuable points such as mill sites, fords, the best land, and then induced the real homemaker to buy. This the homemaker was obliged to do or leave the country, for the squatters organized for the protection of their mutual rights.³

Mrs. Mary A. Humphrey, the author of The Squatter Sovereign, pictures in her novel the struggles the settlers had in holding their claims and preventing trespassing. A pro-slavery group persuaded Carr Withers that he had a claim right to cut timber and to take the lime from the kiln on the claim of Arthur Fairchild, against whom he held a grudge. Arthur then sent a notice to Carr asking to meet with him before both pro-slavery and anti-slavery arbiters to whom he would give evidence that he had a right to hold the land under the unwritten law of squatter's rights. After Carr would not pay any attention to the notice and kept taking timber, Arthur went to the justice of the peace for help. He feared that this procedure would be hopeless since the justice was chosen by the opposing legislature. After his attempt in trying to get redress for damages done, he found a notice from the pro-slavery group warning him to leave Kansas within ten days; otherwise his life would be forfeited.

In Sod and Stubble John Ise mentions the struggles the early settlers had with claim-jumpers.

3. Everett Newfon Dick, The Sod-House Frontier 1854-1890 (New York, c. 1937), p. 32.

Margaret Hill McCarter in The Winning of the Wilderness

reveals the methods the shrewd land sharks used in trying to get the claims of the settlers. Darley Changers, a shrewd business man and a promoter of boom towns, tried to get control of the land along Grass River through mortgages or by persuading the settlers to sell. Just before the grasshopper invasion, he offered to advance to the settlers, whose land was heavily mortgaged, money on all their claims, and to assume the mortgage in return for the rights to the claims. Asher Aydelot, the main character of the novel and one who was determined not to mortgage or sell his land, persuaded the settlers not to give up their claims. Most of them listened to Asher, but a few did give up the equities on their claims for enough money to get back East. Since Darley Changers failed in this attempt, he then tried to bribe Asher to get all the settlers to sell their claims and leave Grass River.

In A Certain Rich Man William Allen White gives a realistic picture of the farmers losing their land to shrewd speculators. John Barclay, the certain rich man and a shrewd schemer, organized the Golden Belt Wheat Company and sold stock to eastern investors for enough to raise eight dollars on every acre that he secured. Then during the panic of 1873, John capitalized on the hardships of the farmers. He loaned the farmers money and held mortgages as security. The farmers were desperate, and since John had some ready money he could bargain with the farmers as he desired.

Kate Stephens in Life at Laurel Town compares the methods of the land shark with those of the feudal system of medieval Europe. The old feudal system was practiced in Kansas after the Civil War in the late sixties and early seventies. The comparison is brought out in the conversation of a minor character:

"Just as in old countries the baron, or rich man, gobbled small lands and demanded service from the free holder, so now 'Big Interests', railways and other corporations, swallow little businesses, crowd to the wall few-acre independent farmers and small traders, starve them into selling out, and force them to gain support in dependencies and offices of their employ." 4

Victor Murdock mentions in "The Legislature", a sketch from his book Folks, that the farmers mortgaged their land in order to obtain ready cash. Then they hoped to pay off the mortgage and acquire wealth, but these farmers did not foresee the disasters of droughts and grasshoppers.

In The Story of a Country Town Edgar Watson Howe tells that the men mortgaged their possessions and then thought themselves rich. They were finally caught by bankruptcy.

Mr. and Mrs. Haldeman-Julius in Dust tell about Mrs. Wade and her son mortgaging their growing wheat crop at twenty percent for enough money to buy seed corn and a plow.

The pioneer farmers lost through investments in boom towns. This is revealed in The Winning of the Wilderness by Margaret Hill McCarter. All the farmers, except Asher Aydelot, of Grass River invested money in the new boom town of Cloverdale in Grass

4. Kate Stephens, Life at Laurel Town (Lawrence, Kansas, c.1920), p. 190.

River Valley. Many of these farmers mortgaged their farms in order to invest. They learned their lesson too late when two years later the town fell.

Anti-slavery and Pro-slavery Elements

Many of these pioneer farmers, who lost their land to mortgage companies and other crafty business concerns, came to Kansas to help make it a free state, and they had suffered and paid dearly for this land. T. B. Ferguson, the author of The Jayhawkers, tells in this novel of the hundreds that came from the North to save "Bleeding Kansas". Men of all types of professions such as doctors, lawyers, ministers, and farmers came from the Middle Western states and the New England states to take part in the fight to save Kansas from slavery. The author mentions that with the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill the last barrier to the extension of slavery was destroyed. According to the provisions of the bill the territory of Kansas would become slave or free as the people of Kansas should decide by ballot. Mr. Ferguson shows struggles between the anti-slavery and pro-slavery factions. He tells that many farmers were shot down while working in their fields because they were free-state men and had voted against slavery at the territorial election. The author adds to the plot of the novel when Reverend Kamman and his daughter were held prisoners by the pro-slavery citizens of Calhoun because they were accused of harboring runaway slaves at the Osage Mission. Reverend Kamman was tried for treason and was found guilty and sentenced to hang, but he was rescued

by his daughter's friend, Albert Kingsley.

Mrs. Mary A. Humphrey, author of The Squatter Sovereign, relates in this story that the New England Emigrant Aid Society was an organization to encourage anti-slavery emigration to Kansas on a large scale. This society was very helpful to the pioneers in securing reduced passenger rates on trains and steamships. The society also furnished capital for the building of mills and hotels.

The organization of the Blue Lodge to help drive all the free-state holders from Kansas is also told in this novel by Mrs. Humphrey. She mentions that many free-state homes were destroyed by Blue Lodge members. The border ruffians came to destroy homes and property of the settlers. At two pioneer homes where the ruffians had burned the partly built cabins, they left notices on a pole, decorated with hemp, that they would dispute possession with anyone who tried to take the claim.

Although Home Fires in France by Dorothy Canfield Fisher is a story of French and American personalities and experiences, it has one chapter entitled "A Little Kansas Leaven", which tells of a family migrating from Lawrence, Massachusetts, to Lawrence, Kansas, during the struggles between the North and the South over Kansas. In 1854 Peter Boardman, a prosperous grocer, sold out and took his family by the caravan route to Kansas. Previous to his action he had heard that if there were enough free-state settlers to vote against slavery, they would defeat the pro-slavery elements at the polls. He left Massachusetts for only

one purpose, and that was to help make Kansas a free state. Later Peter met his death at the hands of Quantrill's men.

Helen Clark Fernald, the author of Smoke Blows West, relates that Doctor Neale with eight friends came from Powhatan, Ohio, to Neosho, Kansas, for the sole purpose of saving Kansas from slavery.

In Harvest of the Wind Mrs. Sarah Louisa Sweeny indicates that the Gilmore family moved from Kentucky to Kansas to help make it a free state. After they were settled in their Kansas home, they used their house as a meeting place for the free-staters to plan their campaigns. In this novel the author also mentions the border ruffians and how they destroyed homes and killed free-state men.

Mrs. Adela E. Orpen, author of The Jay-Hawkers, pictures the Jay-Hawkers going into Missouri and carrying off the slaves into Kansas. This caused the southerners to come across into Kansas to avenge the wrong done them. The bushwackers, reckless men known as Missouri scum, gathered in bands and crossed into Kansas to catch the runaway slaves. These men would do all the destruction they could to the people who they thought protected the slaves. The author describes very vividly Quantrill's raids in Kansas.

Winter and summer, day and night, as far down as Fort Scott, Quantrill was known to lead his furious raids, gathering up negroes and destroying houses as he passed. He never ill-used the women or molested young children - that is white women and children, but had a short sharp way with men, even white ones, which often ended with a rifle bullet.⁵

Nancy Overton, the heroine of the novel, was a southerner; but believing that slavery was wrong, moved to Kansas and gave her slaves their freedom. She settled with her slaves, who would not leave her, at Carthage, which was nothing more than a group of log cabins. A year or more after Nancy had moved to Carthage, her cabins were all sacked and burned by Quantrill's men and her slaves driven back into Missouri.

The author of this novel describes the sacking of Lawrence. James Harte, a southerner in love with Nancy Overton, is Quantrill in the story. He promised not to destroy Lawrence if Nancy would marry him, but she refused. This made James Harte angry, and during the raid Nancy was carried off by him and his men. Several of the men, who were drunk, tied Nancy to a raft and floated it down the river. Nancy was rescued by Heaton, whom she later married. The story tells of the killing of many citizens and the burning of many homes.

In her autobiography, Memories of the Old Emigrant Days in Kansas, 1862-1865, Mrs. Adela E. Orpen mentions incidents of Quantrill's August 21, 1863, raid on Lawrence. After the town was sacked, all was left in blackened ruins between Winthrop

5. Mrs. Adela E. Orpen, The Jay-Hawkers (New York, c. 1900), p. 205.

and Warren streets and along Massachusetts street.

Noah Brooks, the author of The Boy Settlers, tells in this story why the pro-slavery element from the South came to Kansas.

Missouri and Arkansas, being the States nearest to Kansas, and holding slavery to be a necessity, furnished the largest number of immigrants who went to vote in favor of bringing slavery into the new territory; but others of the same way of thinking came from more distant States, even as far off as South Carolina, all bent on voting for slavery in the laws that were to be made. For the most part these people from the Slave States did not go prepared to make their homes in Kansas or Nebraska; for some went to the adjoining Territory of Nebraska, which was also ready to have slavery voted up or down. The newcomers intended to stay just long enough to vote and then return to their own homes.⁶

Noah Brooks also relates that the men in Kansas who were against slavery sent papers and pamphlets to other Middle West states and the Eastern states advertising all the advantages of the territory west of the Missouri River.

In the story, Bryant and Howell with their sons left Illinois and came to Kansas for the purpose of helping it to become a free state. They continued on their journey through Manhattan to Junction City, where they thought it suitable to settle. They later learned that it was not agreeable when they had difficulty selling their produce to the army at Fort Riley where the pro-slavery element was stronger.

Time and Chance by Libert Hubbard reveals the fraudulent voting carried on in Kansas by the pro-slavery men who came across the border armed with knives, pitchforks, and guns. The

6. Noah Brooks, The Boy Settlers (New York, c. 1891), pp. 5-6.

author shows the unlawful practices in the following:

One month before election Governor Reeder had caused a census to be taken, and the actual number of voters in the Territory was found to be 2305. At the election 6113 votes were cast; 1400 of these were anti-slavery.⁷

Margaret Hill McCarter, the author of A Wall of Men, a novel about the struggles in making Kansas a free state, tells of the unlawful methods used by the pro-slavery voters in trying to make Kansas a slave state. She indicates that many of the invaders who came across the eastern border had only one purpose and that was to control the political elections by violence if necessary. After the territorial election it was discovered that three-fourths of all the votes cast were by men who never intended to settle in Kansas or become citizens of the state. They came to Kansas for only the day of election to put into power pro-slavery men, and then they returned to their own state. Mrs. McCarter describes the brutality of the border ruffians in this novel. These raiders burned homes, killed men, women, and children.

For Major Buford had come hither with this brutal gang to drive out or assassinate all Free-State men; and if outraged, branded women and naked starving children, robbed of husbands and fathers, and plundered of all their possessions, should be left beside the smoking embers of their cabin homes, it mattered nothing to him.⁸

Major Buford told how one of his men swore to kill an abolitionist man, and if he could not kill a man, he would kill a woman and if not a woman a child. When the home of the Wrenns

7. Elbert Hubbard, Time and Chance (New York, c. 1901), p.294.

8. Margaret Hill McCarter, A Wall of Men (Chicago, c. 1912), p. 276.

was attacked by the border ruffians, Patty Wrenn escaped with her shawl and pillow and spent the night up in a tree. The novel tells of the killing of Mr. Dow, a free-state settler, by a pro-slavery man, who sought refuge from Governor Shannon and Sheriff Jones. Jones was postmaster of Missouri and sheriff of the region around Lawrence. He was described as an assassin, a coward, a drunkard, and a braggart. The author gives a horrible picture of the sacking of Lawrence. Quantrill's guerrillas attacked a camp of twenty-one boys in soldiers uniform. They killed these boys by shooting or trampling them to death under the feet of their horses. After the raiders left Lawrence, the town was in ruins, homes were destroyed, and dead bodies lay among the ruins. One hundred and fifty men and boys were ruthlessly killed. Eighty women were left widows and a great many children homeless.

Kate Stephens in Life at Laurel Town tells of Quantrill's raid on Laurel Town. These desperadoes nested in the Smi hills near Kansas City. After their plunderings, they raced back to the banks of the Blackwater River and to the Smi and the Blue. Quantrill's men resented and hated Laurel Town because of its free-state activities. The settlers had to come in from their farms to help the people guard the town.

In Free Soil Margaret Lynn relates that the pioneer farmers had to drop their work and rush to help protect the towns from border ruffians. When Lawrence was threatened, the settlers in the surrounding region left their farm work and went to the town to build fortifications and to drill. John Truman, a free-state

farmer, joined John Brown's group at Osawatomie. In this way he hoped to do his part in helping to drive out the border ruffians and to stop the pro-slavery element from entering Kansas. Miss Lynn shows the hardships which the pioneers underwent at the hands of the border ruffians. At one home the ruffians threw filth and refuse into the well, and there was not any safe drinking water for the family within a mile. At another home the border ruffians raided it at night and wounded a pioneer farmer. The author also tells in this novel that many southerners came to Kansas to vote and not to settle. During the election for a territorial legislature, less than three thousand men lived within the borders of the state; but 6307 votes were cast. Only one anti-slavery delegate was elected in the territory. Many anti-slavery men who tried to get to the polls to vote were waylaid by the pro-slavery men. After the Topeka Legislature was in session, the author says, "Free State men had already proclaimed that the pro-slavery administration was a bogus one - 'bogus' laws, 'bogus' legislature - elected at a bogus election."⁹

In Over the Border Ruth Cowgill tells of the border ruffians burning the Fenton's home. The family escaped to the creek and then walked to Lawrence, where Nathan Fenton later built a shake cabin on the edge of the town. All of their belongings were destroyed so they were almost destitute. The author relates in one incident how the border ruffians tarred and feathered Nathan Fenton because he had taken part in a free-state

9. Margaret Lynn, Free Soil (New York, c. 1920), p. 126.

meeting. When Sheriff Jones of Missouri was killed, the free-state settlers were accused of the deed and were arrested and cruelly tortured by the pro-slavery groups.

Thomas Allen McNeal, the author of When Kansas Was Young, a series of sketches on pioneer life and characters in Kansas, gives an interesting account of the settling of Victoria in Ellis County. A railroad company then known as the Kansas Pacific sold its land at fifty cents an acre in order to encourage settlement. George Grant, a Scotchman who purchased the land, promised the railroad company that he would bring a large group of aristocratic Englishmen with money to settle on the land and raise blooded horses, cattle, and sheep. The railroad company advertised that a British nobleman, knighted by the queen, had purchased the railroad land. Of course, this attracted many aristocratic Englishmen to Kansas. They founded Victoria, and at one time over two thousand British people lived in this colony.

William Allen White in his novel, In the Heart of a Fool, mentions that the pioneers came to the virgin prairies of the new West to find equal opportunities. He is referring to Kansas, for the setting of this story is at Harvey, Kansas, the settlement of which the author describes vividly.

T. B. Ferguson in The Jayhawkers tells that many of the pioneers came to Kansas to build homes on the broad prairies where there was liberty and freedom for all.

Kate Stephens, the author of Life at Laurel Town, writes,

In years succeeding the Civil War, we say, fame of the opulent and idealistic soil of Kansas — the state's fight for freedom, the state's abounding lands — circled the earth and brought many from afar. Bohemians in colonies. Mennonites from Russia, too, men of rough, austere faces, and stalwart forms clad in sheepskin coats and high boots.¹⁰

Missionaries

The missionaries who helped influence the settlement of Kansas and the missions are mentioned briefly in a few of the novels. T. B. Ferguson, the author of The Jayhawkers, brings into the plot of this novel the work of a missionary, Mr. Kazman, who came with his daughter, Anna, from Vermont to Kansas to work among the Indians. He and Anna lived at the Delaware Mission. The buildings of the mission were of unhewn logs covered with bark and earth. The home of the missionary, the chapel, and the school room were in the same building. Back of the buildings were a few farms which the Indians were taught to cultivate.

In Cleanings From Western Prairies Rev. W. F. Youngman tells that J. J. Box of the Society of Jesus instructed and baptized over two thousand Osage Indians. The Osage Mission was founded near Neosho in 1849. Since no churches were established then, the settlers and ranchers came as far as fifteen miles to the mission on Sunday. This mission is also mentioned in Smoke Blows West by Helen Clark Fernald, and by Margaret Hill McCarter in Vanguards of the Plain and Price of the Prairie.

10. Kate Stephens, Life at Laurel Town (Lawrence, Kansas, c. 1920), p. 225.

Mrs. McCarter in The Winning of the Wilderness indicates that the pioneers had church in their homes; for Asher and Virginia Aydelot, the main characters in the novel and Jim Shirley, their only neighbor within miles, always kept the Sabbath in the Aydelot home, which was known as the "First Methodist Church of the Conference of the Prairies". As the community in which the Aydelots lived grew, a sod school house was built and church services were held in this crude structure. The school teacher served as minister. Since the school house was too small for all, the children had their Sunday School classes out of doors in the shade of the trees.

In A Wall of Men Margaret Hill McCarter tells of church services being held in the hotel of Palmyra. The settlers, hungry for a Sabbath day, came from miles around to hear the preacher, who was stopping there for only a few days. The unpartitioned upper story of the new hotel was used for the services.

Richard Cordley, author of Pioneer Days in Kansas, a series of sketches illustrating early times in the state, tells about the organization of the first Plymouth Church in Lawrence. The only place that could be found to hold services was the hotel, called the Pioneer Boarding House. The author describes it as a sort of hay tent built by placing two rows of poles twenty feet apart. The rows were slanted toward each other and were brought together at the top. The sides of this pioneer hotel were thatched with prairie hay and the ends built up with sod. There was a door at one end of this fifty by twenty foot

room. During six days of the week this served as a hotel, and on the seventh day for a church. Several trunks were used as a pulpit; the seats were the beds and the boxes and baggage of the boarders.

Anna Matilda Carlson in The Heritage of the Bluestem mentions the building of a church with its lower walls of sandstone and the upper walls of sod. The people of this church had a rather odd custom. During the morning services, the janitor passed up and down the aisles with a bucket of water and a long handled dipper. In this novel Miss Carlson also tells of the strict religion of the Scandinavian Lutheran community of Pilgrim Valley near Lindsborg. The Lutherans were similar to the puritans in that their church rules were strictly enforced. This caused many people to break away from the church. Others were tried as heretics and excommunicated. These people formed their own religious group and were called Separatists. Their religious disputes often caused difficulty in the community.

The antagonism of these religious differences was carried into the social and economic structure of the community. Stores owned by Lutherans employed clerks of like faith. The Separatists did the same. People patronized those of their own creed, and lives were closely drawn. Inter-marriage between the young people of two factions was unthinkable.¹¹

The influences which encouraged the settlement of Kansas are based upon historical facts concerning the state. The

11. Anna Matilda Carlson, The Heritage of the Bluestem (Kansas City, Mo., c. 1930), p. 43.

authors have used these facts in portraying the struggles of the early settlers. With the passage of the Homestead law came the greatest influx of settlers into Kansas. The struggle over the admission of Kansas as a free or slave state brought anti-slavery and pro-slavery people into the state. Preceding these settlers were the missionaries who came to teach the Indians. The Indian missions were used for church services by some of the early settlers until they could establish their own churches. Other settlers held services in their homes or any place that was available.

LIVING CONDITIONS IN THE PIONEER HOME

The home life of the pioneers as portrayed in Kansas literature was a long series of hardships since they had none of the present day conveniences. In the central and the western part of the state the common homes of the pioneers were the dug-outs and the sod-houses. A few log cabins and stone houses were found in the central section, but they were more prevalent in eastern Kansas. As it was impossible for these primitive homes to be well constructed, snakes and insects found easy access into them.

When the pioneers settled in Kansas, there was an abundance of wild life which they could depend upon for food. There was not as great variety in the western part of the state as in the eastern, but the early settlers in the western part were not wanting in meat because of the great herds of buffaloes and the many antelopes and prairie chickens. It was not many years until all the buffaloes and antelopes were ruthlessly killed. Then the pioneers of central and western Kansas had to struggle for what scanty food they could obtain.

Most of the clothing of the pioneer families was hand made, especially in the central and the western part of the state, where the pioneers suffered greater hardships in making a living from the soil.

The settlers of eastern Kansas had all the fuel they needed, but in the western part of the state there was no coal

and few trees. Buffalo and cow chips were known as the native coal of the plains. Cornstalks, hay, and corn, when it was too cheap to sell, were used as fuel.

The pioneer men could not have conquered the prairies without the help of the courageous pioneer women, many of whom gave up comfortable homes in the East to come out to the plains of Kansas, where their task was not an easy one. They managed the homes with practically no conveniences whatever. Many times they were left alone to protect the homes when their husbands were away fighting the border ruffians or gone to a distant town for provisions.

The death toll among the settlers was great because of the constant exposures in the poorly constructed houses and the lack of a doctor's care. The pioneers often used home remedies. When a death occurred, the kind neighbor women laid out the body as there were no undertakers, and the task of making a coffin fell upon the men.

Although diseases took a great many lives, there were also the Indian massacres to add to the death toll. The settlers suffered untold hardships from the Indian raids, the largest percent of which occurred after the Civil War.

Along with all their struggles and hardships, the pioneers did devote some of their time to simple social affairs. They had their log raisings or house warmings, husking bees, berry gatherings, and literary societies. The early settlers in western Kansas enjoyed buffalo hunts and spent several days of celebration after wantonly butchering herds of them.

The settlers were interested in educating their children; and since there were no school houses during those early days, they held school in the homes. They soon saw the need of organizing schools and built the first school houses of sod and hewn logs. The people of the community furnished the labor and the necessary equipment, and the children's tuition, which was paid in cash or with farm products, served as the teacher's salary.

Eastern educators, desiring to plant their ideals among the pioneer farmers of the prairies, began establishing colleges in Kansas as early as the building of territorial towns. Because of speculation on the part of the trustees and the lack of funds, it was a struggle to maintain some of these colleges.

Types of Houses

The most primitive home of the early pioneers was the dug-out, and was most prevalent in central and western Kansas. In fact, most of the houses were dugouts. This is brought out in John Ise's Sod and Stubble with the setting near Downs, Kansas, in Osborne County. Henry, John Ise's father, brought his young wife from Holton, Kansas, to Downs in 1873. When near their destination, they noticed that there were very few log cabins, and occasionally they saw a stone hut or frame house. The author says;

Nearly all the houses were sod dugouts, most of them scooped out along the banks of creeks and draws, with sod walls rising two or three feet above the ground, with sod roofs, and protruding above each, a chimney, perhaps also of sod, or few inches of rusty stove pipe. On a few of the roofs, gravel had been thrown, to fill the cracks between the strips of sod; and on the roof of one of the sod houses Rosie saw flowers planted — wild verbenas, prickly pears, and portulaccas.¹²

The Nachowitzs, a Bohemian family, lived in a dugout with a sod roof, resting on straw, which was in turn supported by small willow switches laid across beams.

Anna Matilda Carlson in The Heritage of the Bluestem gives a picture of pioneering near Lindsborg, Kansas, in the early sixties. She tells of a young couple living in a dugout. August Berling, the husband, made a stove pipe for the dugout out of the tops of a pair of his old sea boots.

Margaret Hill McCarter mentions the dugout in two of her novels, The Cottonwood's Story and A Master's Degree. Since The Cottonwood's Story has its setting in eastern Kansas, evidently dugouts were also found in this section. This story is of a shiftless family who came from Missouri into Kansas. The author says, "They burrowed into the earth and made a home for themselves, and covered it over with prairie sod and called it a dugout."¹³ In A Master's Degree the author mentions briefly a dugout probably in central Kansas.

12. John Ise, Sod and Stubble (New York, c. 1936), p. 3.

13. Margaret Hill McCarter, The Cottonwood's Story (Topeka, Kansas, c. 1909), pp. 8-9.

In Days of My Life Flo V. Menninger says of her neighbors, "They had lived in a dugout for several years, and they told us many queer things about it."¹⁴

In Mrs. Mary A. Humphrey's The Squatter Sovereign, with its setting near Lecompton in 1850, dugouts are mentioned as very common among the pioneers who came from the South and Southwest. They dug a space in the side of a ravine or hill, closed the front, and left a small opening for the door. Families of six or seven lived in these small dwellings.

One can readily realize why the dugouts were so prevalent. It cost nothing but labor to build them, and they proved to be the best of protection during the winter. In The Trampling Herd, which is history rather than fiction, Paul I. Wellman says, "The dugout, most primitive of western dwellings, proved the best of refuge in the great blizzard of 1886."¹⁵

The sod house was found mostly in central and western Kansas. In Wasted Salt George Ogden tells that the general run of houses in central Kansas were of sod. They were the most comfortable and economic home for the pioneer in that country of strong winds and fierce storms. Everett Newfon Dick in his The Sod-House Frontier 1854-1890, a history of pioneer life in Kansas and Nebraska, gives the advantages of a sod house in the following quotation:

14. Flo V. Menninger, Days of My Life (New York, c. 1939), p. 183.
 15. Paul I. Wellman, The Trampling Herd (New York, c. 1939), p. 306.

It was cool in summer and warm in winter. There was no fear of the wind blowing it over and no danger of destruction by prairie fires. Neither was there danger of fire from a faulty fireplace. A fireplace was safely built of sod.¹⁶

The author has this to say in regard to the laying of the walls;

For the first layer of the wall the three foot bricks were placed side by side around the foundation except where the door was to be made. The cracks were then filled with dirt and two more layers were placed on these. The joints were broken as in brick laying. Every third course was laid crosswise of the others to bind them together.¹⁷

In The Winning of the Wilderness Margaret Hill McCarter describes vividly the bleakness and loneliness of living in a sod house out on the prairies. In the story Virginia and Asher Aydelot, who moved to Kansas in 1869, began housekeeping in a sod house of one room with two windows, one faced the east and the other the west with one door on the south. The walls of this house were nearly two feet thick and were plastered inside with gypsum. This gave an ivory finish, smooth and hard as bone. The sod house had no floor only the bare earth.

P. H. Pearson in Prairie Vikings describes the sod house in the following:

On the prairie plateau the typical dwelling of the settler was the sod cabin. Its walls were two feet thick, and built from slabs of sod stripped from the turf on the premises. The chinks in the walls closed up of themselves, for grass grew from the sod blocks and matted the structure together. One load of timber from the creek sufficed for ridge pole and rafters, the framework of the roof, which was then covered with slough grass. A partition of

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16. Everett Newson Dick, The Sod-House Frontier 1854-1890 (New York, c. 1937), p. 115.
 17. *Ibid.* p. 113.

cloth or boards divided the cabin into two rooms: kitchen and bedroom. The latter was either white-washed or hung with calico prints like the arras of the Elizabethan homes. The floor was the native earth strewn with coarse sand.¹⁸

Sodde House sent by Helen Clark Fernald has its setting in the Neosho valley about 1849. The author mentions the sod house as being deserted by pioneers who became destitute and went back East.

In White Roads George Ogden says that a few small sod huts were to be seen near Cottonwood Bend. The largest in all that section was on Johnson's ranch. This sod house was sixty feet long with shorter flanking wings. When this was first built the roof was of sod.

Mr. Ogden in Shenandoah Trails describes the ranch house as being a gloomy sod affair, which was little more than a hut, with a lean-to of vertical planks slammed hit-or-miss up against one end. A family of seven lived in this one room hut. All ranch houses were not as dismal as this hut, for the author tells in this story of a single-storied comfortable house consisting of two parts, an older part of cottonwood logs and a newer part of weather board.

Victor Murdock in Folks mentions one type of sod house as being built in against the bank of a draw.

The log cabins were the common homes of the early pioneers of eastern Kansas. They were also found in the central and the western part of the state. The Squatter Sovereign by Mrs.

18. P. H. Pearson, Prairie Vikings (East Orange, N.J., c. 1927), pp. 24-25.

Mary A. Humphrey describes the log cabins of free staters who lived at Warsaw near Lecompton. The cabins were one room with cottonwood floors, a fireplace, and a loft reached by a ladder. In building their cabins the pioneers had a day for the "raising" of their cabins. After the logs were hewn and everything ready, friends came in to help raise the ponderous walls.

In Sunbonnet Days by Bliss Isely, a pioneer family settled its claim in Doniphan County in the eastern part of the state in 1856. They lived in a log cabin, which had one room downstairs with a fireplace, and a loft upstairs, reached by a ladder nailed to the wall.

Over the Border by Ruth Cowgill tells about a Quaker family who moved to a homestead near Lawrence in the early sixties. There they spent their first night with strangers who lived in a one room cabin ten by twelve feet. The Pentons, the Quaker family, built a house of two rooms. Mr. Penton was a carpenter, and that, no doubt, accounted for the spacious home. The two rooms were ten by twelve and twelve by sixteen feet. The larger room was called the parlor although it served for bedroom and sitting-room, and it had a floor consisting of cross sections of logs four or six inches in length, placed firmly and compactly together upon the ground. This floor was considered an extravagance. The sides were of "shakes", a new style of lumber in vogue then because it was the only kind obtainable. It was made by splitting the logs smoothly with an ax.

T. B. Ferguson's Jayhawkers, with its setting in eastern Kansas before the Civil War, shows that all log cabins were not as spacious as some described by other authors. The log cabin which Joseph Skidmore built for his wife was ten by twelve feet with clapboard roof, mud chimney, earthen floor, and a hole for a door.

The fact that log houses were typical of eastern Kansas is shown in Kate Stephen's Life at Laurel Town. An insurance salesman describes a home where he had stopped,

"The log-house was typical — two separate rooms about ten feet apart set in a grove of honey-locusts. One roof covered both rooms and the passage between them; then, without change of pitch, reaching down to a row of posts, sheltered a porch or gallery. The shingles had been hand-riven and shaven, logs and posts of the house squared by a broad axe, and floors of rooms and gallery made of oak puncheons."¹⁹

Log cabins with dirt floors were more common in central and western Kansas than in the eastern part. It was too great an expense for the pioneers to get wood sawed and hauled for floors. In Sod and Stubble by John Ise, the log cabins are described as one room with dirt floors. Very few cabins had wood floors, and those were of cottonwood.

The Boy Settlers by Noah Brooks has its setting near Junction City, Kansas, a few years before the Civil War. The homes mentioned by the author are log cabins. One log cabin was one room with two windows, one at the end of the cabin and the other opposite the door, which was in the middle of the

19. Kate Stephens, Life at Laurel Town (Lawrence, Kansas, c. 1920), p. 161.

front of the cabin. This cabin had a floor of puncheons split from oak logs. These were laid on rough hewn joists and rattled considerably when anyone walked over them. In one end of the cabin was a fireplace of stone laid in clay. The low loft over the room was reached by climbing up strong pegs, driven into the logs.

Mrs. Adela Orpen in her novel, Perfection City, tells about a prairie settler coming to his claim in the spring and camping in his wagon until his cabin was built. He considered himself fortunate if he had a log hut, fourteen by twelve feet, built before cold weather began. The settler's cabin then was a kitchen, parlor, and bedroom all in one.

The Heritage of the Bluestem by Anna Matilda Carlson describes the struggles of a pioneer father trying to establish a home for his family. After he had built a cabin and sent for his family, the cabin burned before the family arrived. The straw from his harvested wheat saved the day. He hauled out saplings and trees to his claim. There he drove stakes and built a frame-work covering it with straw. The family spent the winter in this makeshift house of straw. In the spring they moved into their new cabin.

Elbert Hubbard relates in Time and Chance of John Brown and his sons establishing homes near Osawatomie. They built four log cabins where the four corners of their claims came together. Three of the houses were small with dirt roofs. The other cabin was described as a respectable building for a log house.

P. H. Pearson in Prairie Vikings tells of the method used by the settlers in establishing sites for their homes so that they could keep close together. The settlers selected a rectangular block of 640 acres and divided it into quarters. Then they drew quarters by lot. The man who drew the less desirable quarter was compensated by having his sod broken and planted into corn or by having a well dug by the others free of charge. The settlers each built a cabin where the four corners of their farms came together.

A few settlers lived in shag houses, which Margaret Lynn describes in Free Soil as being roof-houses with eaves resting on the ground. This type of home was found near Lawrence, Kansas, the setting of the story.

A few stone houses were built by the early pioneers. Mrs. Sarah Louisa Sweeny in Harvest of the Wind tells of the Gilmore family making mortar for their new stone house. The mortar was made by adding sand to lime, which had been made from rock burned in a great bonfire. The rock, which became brittle, could be crumbled into lime. The setting of this novel is near Lawrence between 1850 and 1862.

In Sod and Stubble John Ise speaks briefly of the few stone huts found in central Kansas.

There were very few frame houses built during the early pioneer days. It was too difficult and expensive hauling lumber from distant saw mills to build the houses. Most of the frame houses in the early sixties were found in eastern Kansas. The setting of Mrs. Adela Crpen's Perfection City is probably in

eastern Kansas, for she lived near Mound City in the early sixties. This novel is concerned with a young couple, the Westons, who lived in a four-room frame house, which was considered a luxury by the prairie people. Their home consisted of two lower rooms, a kitchen and bedroom, and two rooms in the loft. The house had only one door which was on the south, with a window on each side. Above these windows were two others about half their size.

Mrs. Orpen in her biography, Memories of Old Emigrant Days in Kansas, 1862-1865, describes their home near Mound City in the following:

The frame-house had all its timber squared, and in itself it was square to the last degree of ugliness, accurately set by the compass facing south, it had a door in the middle with a window on each side and half sized window overhead.²⁰

According to Mack Cretcher in The Kansan, frame shacks were found in western Kansas in the late sixties. This novel has its setting at Bison City in the late sixties. The author tells about Mrs. Brandon and her son Jim living in their covered wagon while their frame shack was being built.

Dust by Mr. and Mrs. Haldeman-Julius relates the struggles of a mother and her son to procure a roof over their heads. Mrs. Wade and her son, Martin, hauled a one-room shack from Missouri to their farm near Fort Scott. They obtained some hand cut shingles for their shack by trading a horse collar for them.

20. Mrs. Adela E. Orpen, Memories of Old Emigrant Days in Kansas, 1862-1865 (London, c. 1926), p. 16.

In Flamethrowers Gordon Friesen tells about the building of the houses in a Russian settlement near Wichita in the early seventies. These houses, called dorps, were built like those in Russia with bricks made of clay, mud, and straw. The roofs were bundles of slough grass.

The pioneers were greatly annoyed by snakes, especially those pioneers who lived in dugouts and sod houses, for the snakes could easily crawl along the brush and logs of the sod roof and drop down into the room. Floyd Benjamin Streeter in Prairie Trails and Cow Towns says,

Bull snakes were able to crawl up the wall of a sod-house and in hot weather enjoyed the protection from the sun afforded by the cool wall. While changing positions the snake sometimes lost his balance and fell. It is needless to say that everyone was startled and the settler and his family were mortified when they and their guests were seated at the table enjoying a Sunday dinner and a bull snake toppled off the wall and landed in the gravy.²¹

Mr. Streeter tells of the many rattlesnakes found along the trails, and they often bit mules and oxen. The mules would die or become useless after being bitten. The author relates that freight and emigrant trains came upon dens of these reptiles where hundreds, if not thousands, were coiled and crawling in every direction. Many times a farmer, while stacking wheat, found fifteen or twenty rattlesnakes under the shocks. There were times when the housewives were startled by seeing a rattler peering up through the cracks in the floor. Many of these deadly snakes were killed by the settlers who staged snake hunts.

21. Floyd Benjamin Streeter, Prairie Trails and Cow Towns (Boston, c. 1936), p. 58.

In Sod and Stubble John Ise tells that there were many rattlesnakes and often children died from being bitten. On one occasion a family living in a dugout were just sitting down to dinner when they heard a rustling in the straw above, and a bull snake flopped down on the table.

A similar incident is told by Flo V. Menninger in Days of My Life. She says,

They had just been seated and were about to dish out the soup with a big dipper, when keraplash! Something went into the soup, and the dipper his mother was holding went to the bottom in a hurry. Before they could jump from their seats, the big snake — for that was their uninvited guest — raised its head out of the soup, crawled over the top of the kettle onto the table, dropped to the floor and made for the door.²²

The author mentions another snake incident that occurred when she taught her first term of school. A family living in a dugout waked one morning to find a three-foot snake in bed with them, dead. The family presumed it had fallen from the brush in the roof, and they had rolled on it and killed it while they were sleeping.

In The Heritage of the Bluestem Anna Matilda Carlson indicates that there were many snakes in central and western Kansas. One farmer who had been working in Fort Riley for several days returned to his cabin, and there found six rattlesnakes. The author tells of one incident when a snake crawled up in front of the pulpit while the minister was giving his sermon.

22. Flo V. Menninger, Days of My Life (New York, c. 1939), p.184.

Ruth Cowgill in Over the Border tells about a snake being found in the middle of the bed when Sarah Fenton started to put her small sister Belle to bed.

Snakes were not the only pests, for in Harvest of the Wind Sarah Sweeny tells about the black rats which came up from the woods along the Kaw River and invaded the homes of the pioneers. They kept quiet until the dead of night, and then they came from their holes and dragged heavy articles such as shoes across the floor, frightening the sleepers.

Food

It was not until a large percentage of the wild life was killed off, and the agricultural products were destroyed by grasshoppers and droughts that the pioneers began to suffer for want of food.

In The Kansan Mack Cretcher shows that there was an abundance of wild life in western Kansas in the late sixties. The Brandons, who had just settled near Bison City, could hear the drumming of the prairie grouse every morning. On the ridges could be seen deer, antelope, and buffalo; and quail actually made their nests in the corner of Mrs. Brandon's garden. The prairie chickens mixed freely with the domestic animals in the barnyard. By winter nearly every home had a supply of dried venison and buffalo meat, dried elderberries, and canned sand plums. The author says that there was a supply of rye which was parched and made into "plains coffee" familiar to all pioneers.

During a house warming the neighbors feasted on elderberry pie, wild plum preserves, wild grape jelly, sorghum gingerbread, fried prairie chicken, and baked antelope. Mr. Cretcher indicates that wild life, especially the buffalo, was ruthlessly killed by hunters and settlers. He says that the prairie ran red with blood, and for miles the prairie was dotted with stiffening carcasses. The men who killed the buffaloes were followed by the butchers and skinners whose work it was to save the meat and skins.

Anna Matilda Carlson in The Heritage of the Bluestem gives a vivid picture of the slaughtering of the buffaloes, and says that the destruction of them started with the arrival of the railroads when transportation was made easier, and hunters flocked to the plains.

Elbert Hubbard in Time and Chance writes that game was plentiful; for while the buffaloes had pushed on to the West, deer, wild turkeys, prairie chickens and water fowl were to be had in abundance.

In Free Soil Margaret Lynn says that the John Trumans, who came from New England, were good providers. They had stored many provisions such as prairie chickens, venison, and buffalo meat for the coming winter.

Bliss Isely in Sunbonnet Days relates that during the early pioneer days, wild animals and fruit were plentiful in eastern Kansas. The settlers could get fish, squirrels, possum, quails, prairie chickens, and rabbits, whenever they desired. The wild fruits were strawberries, gooseberries, mulberries,

blackberries, elderberries, chokecherries, plums, grapes, and hackberries. Nettles, lambs-quarters, and mushrooms were used as food. Wild hops which grew in the timber were dried and brewed for yeast.

Food was not always this plentiful, for in the early seventies the grasshoppers devoured everything in their path. Mr. Isely tells that after the invasion the food of one family consisted mainly of pork, bread, potatoes, pumpkins, a little sweet corn which the grasshoppers did not get, and a few tomatoes. The supply of wheat and potatoes was shared with the horses, cattle, and chickens. The food was divided into portions sufficient to last until spring. Because of the unsuitable diet for the cows and chickens, there was very little milk and few eggs. The housewife cooked wheat and potatoes every way possible. Coffee made from roasted wheat tasted very much like modern postum. The author tells that the children of two pioneer families learned to like shorts and were especially fond of wheat kernels, boiled whole like rice.

Mr. Isely describes the making of cheese by a Swiss family. Rennet was taken from the inner lining of the dried stomach of an unweaned calf. After a calf is grass fed, the rennet loses the properties which are necessary in cheese making. Six gallons of milk were heated in a boiler on the stove and was tested now and then with the hand. When the temperature of the milk was the same as that of the hand, the milk was taken from the stove; and the rennet which was dissolved in water overnight was poured into the contents. After this mixture had stood half an

hour, it was then heated to blood temperature. During those days pioneer women did not have thermometers to use in cooking. After the milk had been removed from the stove and the solid particles worked into a ball, the cheese was placed in the ripening press.

The author relates that one pioneer farmer drove a team and wagon from Brown County to St. Joseph, Missouri, after some apples. Although wild fruit was plentiful, the family was hungry for apples and knew that the apple trees along the river near St. Joseph were loaded with fruit, for which there was no market. This pioneer family had no money, so the mother sent fourteen seven-pound cheese and three ten-pound jars of butter, which the father traded for a wagon bed of apples, a sausage cutter, a krautcutter, and a raincoat.

During the pro-slavery and anti-slavery struggle in Kansas, many families were left destitute and hungry when their homes were destroyed. This is shown in Over the Border by Ruth Cowgill, who tells that all the food and clothing of the Fentons were destroyed when their home was burned by the border ruffians. During that winter most of their meals consisted of cornmeal and hot water.

In Perfection City Mrs. Adela E. Orpen mentions that the early settlers learned from the trappers to make dried beef by drying salted raw beef in the sun until it was like leather. It was then cut across the grain into thin slices; otherwise the stoutest teeth could not chew it. Mrs. Orpen in Memories of the Old Emigrant Days in Kansas, 1862-1865 tells of the making of

pemmican.

It is lean meat cut in long thin strips when quite fresh, and hung in the sunshine and wind to dry. It looks like ungainly shoe leather of enormous thickness, but in reality it is perfectly preserved meat with all the juices dried into it, and when cut across the grain in thin slices the most satisfying food.²³

Mrs. Orpen mentions that her aunt made powdered milk by boiling the milk in a large boiler for days until a crumbly yellow substance was obtained. This was kept in bottles and was later used when there was a shortage of milk.

Noah Brooks in The Boy Settlers emphasizes the fact that hog and hominy were the diet of the country surrounding Junction City just before the Civil War.

Mrs. Sarah Louisa Sweeny in Harvest of the Wind says that hominy was made by boiling corn in lye water.

It was not very often that these pioneers could enjoy a delicacy such as cake. The women made what was known as the pioneer cake. Mrs. Mary A. Humphrey in The Squatter Sovereign tells that this cake was made with one egg, and cornmeal was used if there was no flour.

In Sod and Stubble John Ise pictures the pioneer food as being very plain during the seventies. They very seldom enjoyed meat, green vegetables, or deserts. Their main food was milk, cornbread, wheat, and hominy. Sometimes they made their own molasses which was a delicacy. They had to deny themselves cookies, jelly, and fresh fruit. One time Rosie bought three

23. Mrs. Adela E. Orpen, Memories of the Old Emigrant Days in Kansas, 1862-1865 (London, c. 1926), p. 75.

bananas, two of which were given to a sick neighbor, and the other was divided among the children, Rosie, and Henry. There were green vegetables in the summer if the gardens were not dried up by drought or taken by grasshoppers. The author says that at different times Rosie was tempted to buy foods that were a luxury, but she had to be practical and purchase only the very necessary things. On one occasion when she was buying supplies with the butter and egg money, she was hungry and was tempted to buy some cheese and crackers. Rosie was very fond of cheese and had not had any for a long time. Just as she was ready to purchase a nickel's worth, she remembered that she needed a spool of thread for patching, so she had to do without the cheese and crackers.

Mr. Ise mentions that refreshments served at parties were inexpensive. Many times cornbread and black coffee, or fried cakes were served. Sometimes the coffee was made of browned rye.

The author relates that soon after Rosie and Henry moved to their farm near Downs, Kansas, they set out fruit trees, which were later destroyed by the grasshoppers. Rosie made all the plum butter that she could since the plum trees bore a great deal of fruit. The butter was canned in jars, jugs, and kegs. Glass jars were almost unknown then. Sometimes the plum butter fermented and blew the bungs out of the kegs. On one of these occasions, Henry took the butter out to the hogs, and it was not long until the smaller pigs showed signs of intoxication and wobbled unsteadily about on their feet. Others became bellicose and chased the dog out of the pen and up to the kitchen door.

The ducks, after eating the butter, went on a spree and tried to fly and sing.

The Wind Before the Lawn by Bell H. Munger tells of the scarcity of food after the drought and the grasshopper invasion. The author says that the family food consisted largely of bread and slabs of thin meat, with a sort of coffee made from browned rye. For guests there was a scanty supply of sweet corn, dried before the drought had cut the crop short. There were no eggs, because the chickens had sickened from eating grasshoppers in the fall and nearly all had died.

Not all pioneer coffee was made from browned rye and wheat, for William Allen White in A Certain Rich Man mentions that the women made coffee from parched corn during hard times.

In The Heritage of the Eluestem Anna Matilda Carlson says that there was a scarcity of food the winter following the grasshopper invasion. The settlers lived largely on bread and meat. There were very few chickens to eat as most of them had died from eating grasshoppers. In bad times when the settlers had little money to spend, coffee was made from a mixture of wheat and rye. In this novel Miss Carlson says that the people of Pilgrim Valley were very fond of wine, which was made from wild grapes growing along the river. Almost every home had wine, and a small glass of it was inexpensive and a good substitute for coffee when serving refreshments to unexpected guests.

Clothing

The clothing of the pioneers was simple and usually hand made. This is revealed in Sod and Stubble by John Ise, who says that Rosie made shirts, mittens, jackets, and overalls for her husband, all her children's clothing, and her own by hand without the aid of a sewing machine. One time she made a tiny baby dress out of one of her own white skirts and used lace from her white polonaise to trim it.

In The Heritage of the Bluestem Anna Matilda Carlson pictures the desperate straights of the poverty stricken pioneers by their clothing. She says that patches became a mark of aristocracy. Many made their clothes from gunny sacks in which relief grain was sent to Kansas.

Kate Stephens in Life at Laurel Town shows that women were wearing hoop skirts in the early sixties. She tells of an interesting incident about Mrs. Tisdale, who was staying at the Eldridge House at Laurel Town when it was sacked by Quantrill and his men. Mrs. Tisdale saved all her husband's valuable papers and those of another man by binding them with twine to the inner side of the steels of her hoop skirt.

Mrs. Adela E. Orpen in Memories of the Old Emigrant Days in Kansas, 1862-1865 tells a humorous incident about a woman in hoop skirts fighting a prairie fire. While fighting the fire, she took off her calico skirt and hoop. The woman must have forgotten to put her hoop skirt back on or was frightened away

by the fire, for the next morning a farmer found the blackened wires of the hoops and a little heap of blackness where the skirt had burned. He rushed home in alarm and reported that a woman had been burned in the prairie fire.

One cannot picture a pioneer woman without her sunbonnet, and Bliss Isely relates in Sunbonnet Days that the sunbonnet was worn by the women on all occasions, and that it was the badge of the American farm woman.

Fuel

The settlers of western Kansas had difficulty finding fuel to burn. Many times they had only cow chips. Anna Matilda Carlson shows the value placed upon this type of fuel when she mentions in The Heritage of the Bluestem that the settlers considered them a God-send the first year they settled at Pilgrim Valley. Fuel was also needed for the church, and the men went on cow chip hunts with oxen and wagons. This fuel was called the native coal of the plains.

Before the grasshopper invasion the pioneers used cornstalks and sunflowers for fuel, but after these had been devoured by the hungry horde the pioneers had to return again to the use of cow chips.

Dell Munger in The Wind Before the Dawn tells that during hard times the pioneers used buffalo chips, stubs of cornstalks, and rosin weeds for fuel.

In The Trampling Herd, a story of the cattle range in America, by Paul I. Wellman, one learns that not all settlers opposed cattlemen leaving their herds of cattle on their farms overnight. The author says,

It is interesting that settlers often requested that herds be bedded down on their property. This was because a large herd of cattle would leave a quantity of "cow chips" which, when dried, was the traditional fuel of the plains. One Kansas nester estimated that a single herd, in one night, left him five hundred pounds of "chips"—almost enough for his winter's fuel supply.²⁴

Kate Stephens relates in Life at Laurel Town that the pioneers kept warm during a severe snowstorm by burning cornstalks and hay. Their burners were large enough to burn a bale of hay, and three bales lasted one day. The author also mentions that corn was used for fuel when it sold so cheap that it was not worth selling.

The Pioneer Woman, Her Courage and Ingenuity

The pioneer women who went silently about their tasks and suffered incredible hardships will always be remembered for their dauntless heroism. Although their names remained unknown, their courage equaled that of the famed characters of old. This fact is mentioned by Anna Matilda Carlson in The Heritage of the Bluestem when she says that no finer courage was shown by the martyrs of history than by the quiet, unpretentious women pioneers of Pilgrim Valley, who came with the men they loved to a far country, where they gave birth to many children without the

24. Paul I. Wellman, The Trampling Herd (New York, c. 1939), pp. 124-125.

aid of a doctor or nurse. The author also says that this valley would not be what it is today if it had not been for the women, and that the men could not have got very far alone.

Helen Clark Fernald pictures the patience of the pioneer women in Smoke Blows West by telling that when Jim Hartley found it hard to be patient, he looked at his wife who had come, uncomplaining, from a comfortable house to this cramped and inconvenient cabin. Mrs. Hartley never spoke of the hard living, nor of the constant danger from roving bands of Indians.

The women did their duty during the struggle to make Kansas a free state. This is revealed by several authors in their novels. Margaret Hill McCarter in A Wall of Men mentions that the pioneer women, through all the settlements, protected the homes while the husbands and fathers were in Lawrence building fortifications and fighting the border ruffians. Not all women stayed home, for Mrs. McCarter tells of two who were sent to a claim to get ammunition which was hidden there. The men knew the women could get through with the ammunition, for they were not as apt to be waylaid by the pro-slavery men as the free-state men would be.

In Time and Chance Elbert Hubbard relates the story of one woman molding bullets while she sang her baby to sleep.

Margaret Lynn in Free Soil shows that the women were fearless. They managed their farms alone when the husbands were away helping to protect the free-state towns from the pro-slavery groups. They lived in fear of their homes being raided by border ruffians. It was necessary for them to know how to use

a pistol, for that was their only protection. Miss Lynn says that the only lights the pioneers had were candles made by the women. In The Stepdaughter of the Prairie she speaks of a pioneer family having a leach, from which trickled lye for the making of soap.

John Ise in Sod and Stubble says that the furniture of his parents was very meager when they began housekeeping near Downs in north central Kansas in 1873. Boxes were used for tables and chairs. Rosie had no rugs for the floors, no oilcloth for the table, no bureau, no cupboard, no clock. Later she made floor mats by braiding corn husks. Corn husks were also used to fill the bed ticks. Lye made from wood ashes was used to soften water and to make hominy. In 1880 Henry bought Rosie two luxuries, a can of lye and a mop.

It was rare for the early pioneer women to have access to a well near the house. Mr. Ise mentions that Rosie, when living at home near Holton, had to carry water from the creek, which was a quarter of a mile from the house. At her new home near Downs, she had a well just a few steps from the house. This was considered a luxury.

Bliss Isely in Sunbonnet Days says that the pioneer family had to carry all its water in barrels from the Missouri River, and then it was allowed to stand until the mud settled. He describes the utensils of a pioneer woman in eastern Kansas as consisting of an iron kettle hooked to a crane at the top of the fireplace and a dutchoven. This woman had to be quite skillful in preparing meals in these two utensils. Potatoes and vegetables

were first baked in the dutchoven, which was placed in the hot coals and completely covered. As soon as these vegetables were done, they were placed in dishes and kept warm on the hearth. A pie and biscuits were then baked in the oven; and after they were done, a corn pone, made with yellow cornmeal, water, and seasoning was baked. Meat was boiled in the other kettle. The women made lye by placing clean ashes in a hopper and pouring water over them. Soap was made in a sixteen-gallon iron kettle, placed over a fire in the yard. This Swiss family did not have lamps but used candles made from tallow and beeswax. The beeswax was found in the trees out in the woods. Sometimes the wicks were made from native hemp fibres.

Mrs. Sarah Louisa Sweeny in Harvest of the Wind tells about Louisa Gilmore, a pioneer mother, making her own candles. Mrs. Gilmore also made lye from ashes of the wood fires. The ashes were placed in the lye barrel, which stood upon two legs on the open porch dividing the kitchen and the living quarters. Underneath the barrel was a large pot, which caught the water that was poured over the ashes. This water, containing the drawn off alkali and potash from the ashes, was used in making soap.

In Perfection City Mrs. Adela E. Orpen describes the Westons' furniture as being somewhat primitive. There were no chairs, but nail-kegs and boxes served the purpose. There was a large stove with two large iron pots on it. On one side of the kitchen was a large wooden table and on the other side shelves. Hanging on one wall were two large saws and a horse collar.

Mrs. Orpen in her autobiography, Memories of the Old Emigrant Days in Kansas, 1862-1865, says that it seemed as though they had practically nothing in their house. Nail-kegs and packing cases were used for chairs. They had no ordinary china plates and dishes but used tin plates and mugs. The silverware consisted of iron spoons, two pronged forks, and a serviceable knife. The only utensils were two large pots, a frying pan, and a boiler.

Ruth Cowgill in Over the Border tells of an occasion when the Fentons first came to Kansas and stayed over night with a family. Twelve of them slept and ate in a one-room cabin. They ate breakfast on a board nailed to the wall. On this makeshift table were set a small paper of salt, a tin cup containing a scanty supply of sugar, one cup, which everyone used, one knife, two spoons, and a bowl of mush. This consisted of all the food and all they had to use in eating. There were no chairs for them to sit on. Miss Cowgill mentions that Sarah Fenton made curtains for their parlor windows out of one of her white aprons.

The Boy Settlers by Noah Brooks gives a picture of the furniture found in a settler's log cabin. In one corner was built a bedstead, two sides of the bed being the two walls of the cabin, and the other two sides were made by driving a stake into the floor and connecting this by thongs of buffalo hide to the walls. Thongs of buffalo hide were also used for the bottom of the bed. The other furniture consisted of the home-made table, a few stools and short benches, and a set of rude shelves for a pantry.

Sickness

John Ise in Sod and Stubble says that the settlers suffered greatly from sickness, for during those early times they did not have proper medical care. There were very few doctors, and those knew practically nothing about medicine. The pioneers had their own home remedies such as skunk oil and coal oil for colds and mud and bluing for bites. If there was any honey, it was mixed with the coal oil. The author says that diphtheria was the dreaded disease of the prairies. Other diseases were typhoid fever, malaria, hydrophobia carried by the mad wolf, and pink eye. Mr. Ise shows that many pioneer women went through childbirth without a doctor's care. Usually some kind neighbor woman came in for a few days to help. When a death occurred, the neighbors prepared the body for burial because there were no undertakers. During warm weather, if there were no ice to place around the body, the burial had to be soon after death. The coffins were made by the neighbor men, and the women helped to line them with whatever material they could find. The author relates that when Rosie and Henry's first baby died, they buried him in a home-made coffin. Wilson Athey, a neighbor, made the coffin of cottonwood boards, scraped smooth with glass. Rosie made a lining for the coffin out of one of her white undershirts.

Over the Border by Ruth Cowgill speaks of Nathan Fenton making a pine coffin for his small daughter Belle, who died of pneumonia.

Many deaths could have been prevented if there had been better means of transportation. Before the doctor could reach the home out on the desolate prairie, the patient was beyond help. This is shown in The Winning of the Wilderness by Margaret Hill McCarter. When the Aydelots' first child was born, the father had to walk several miles to get a neighbor to summon the doctor. By the time the doctor reached the Aydelots, the baby was dead.

Mrs. McCarter in A Wall of Men reveals the kindness of neighbors during time of illness. When the son of a free-state settler was ill with pneumonia, Mrs. Wrenn, a neighbor who was known for her kind deeds, rode horseback over roads infested with border ruffians to the town of Palmyra for medicine.

In Great Riches Mateel Howe Farnham mentions the hardships of the grandparents of the heroine in the novel. Sarah and James, who lived in eastern Kansas, had been married six years and had three children when James had to go to Tennessee on business. While he was gone, a wandering Indian brought to the community the dreaded diphtheria, which was one of the most fatal diseases of the early settlers. Sarah's children contracted the disease, and since she could not get in touch with her husband for a number of days she was left alone to care for them.

Reverend W. E. Youngman in Gleanings From Western Prairies, sketches of pioneer life in Kansas, tells of the suffering endured by one who had pleuro-pneumonia and spinal-meningitis. Spinal-meningitis was treated by placing hot white leaves of boiled cabbage every half hour or hour to the invalid's spine in order to keep the blistered part open and make it draw well. Very few ever recovered from this disease.

Anna Matilda Carlson in her novel The Heritage of the Blue-stem describes a pitiful and yet humorous situation. One pioneer woman had given birth to a child without the aid of a doctor. She became unconscious; and the neighbors, thinking her dead, began to make arrangements for her funeral. The grief stricken husband was finally persuaded by the neighbors to give his motherless baby to a childless wife. The poor mother, who was not dead at all, although unable to move or make a sound, heard all the arrangements being made and could not make any protests. Since there were no undertakers in those days, several of the women washed the young mother and prepared her for burial. While waiting for the settlement carpenter to make a coffin, the body was laid on a wide board, placed on two barrels in front of the windows in the parlor. One woman while cleaning the house, tried to wash the front windows without having the barrels with the body moved. The chair on which she was standing slipped, and she fell against one of the barrels knocking it over. When the woman scrambled to her feet, she found the supposedly dead mother sitting up. The neighbor woman, thinking she was seeing

ghosts, rushed from the room in great fright. The fall restored the young mother's power of motion. She lived to raise a family of nine.

Mrs. Adela E. Orpen in Memories of the Old Emigrant Days in Kansas, 1862-1865 tells that many settlers contracted malaria, which they called ague. They thought it was caused from the early morning dew because it seemed as if mostly men and young boys who went out in the early mornings contracted the disease.

Bliss Isely in Sunbonnet Days mentions that the pioneers dried hops found in the timber, and used this for poultices in relieving sarache and toothache.

Indian Raids

The pioneers suffered from Indian raids after the Civil War until the late seventies. Thomas Allen McNeal tells about the last Indian raid in Kansas in his book When Kansas Was Young, a group of sketches picturing pioneer life and characters in Kansas. This raid occurred on September 17, 1878, at Salt Fork on the Cimarron River in the southwestern part of Comanche County under the leadership of Chief Dull Knife of the Cheyennes. In this raid two persons were instantly killed, a baby mortally wounded, and two other persons seriously wounded.

In The Price of the Prairie Margaret Hill McCarter relates that the Cheyennes led by Black Kettle raided the homes of the unprotected settlers, killed the children after they had scalped and tomahawked the fathers, and carried off the women. They did

not always take all the women with them, for on one occasion they left two young mothers of a few months, who were unable to endure the hardships, staked out on the prairies under the hot sun. Mrs. McCarter says that a confederacy was planned to unite the tribes of the Southwest against the Union frontier. They planned to band together the Indians and border ruffians. Although this caused some trouble, their plans were not fully completed, luckily for the settlers; otherwise they would have been caught between two hostile forces.

Although Vanguards of the Plain by Margaret Hill McCarter does not picture Indian raids on the homes, it does tell of the Kiowa Indians' attacking a wagon train at Pawnee Rock.

Several novelists have used for their plots the kidnapping of children by the Indians. Helen Clark Fernald complicates the plot in Smoke Blows West when Tom Stonebridge's little daughter is stolen by the Pawnee Indians.

Anna Matilda Carlson in The Heritage of the Bluestem gives a picture of the horrible cruelties endured by the pioneers at the hands of the Indians during their raids. While August Berling went in search of two of his children who had gone to the plum thicket, Indians came to his dugout and carried off his wife, Anna, and their infant baby daughter. The first night out the mother's feet and hands were tied with thongs, and she was staked to the prairie sod. Three days later when the mother became too weak to ride any longer, the Indians left her out on the prairie to die. Here August and the guards found her still alive, but the Indians had escaped

with the baby girl, whom the parents did not see until sixteen years later.

The Kansan by Mack Cretcher tells about Indian raids on homes near Bison City in the late sixties. During these raids, the settlers fled to Bison City, which was fortified, leaving their homes to be destroyed and burned by the Indians.

Not all Indians who came to the homes of the early pioneers were bent on murder and burning the homes. This is shown in an event related by Bliss Isely in Sunbonnet Days. When a pioneer family by the name of Joss first came to Brown County, it was all unplowed prairie; and two Indian tribes, the Sac and Fox, and the Kickapoos, still roamed and hunted over the prairie in this section of Kansas. One day while Mr. Joss was in Leavenworth, which was eighty miles away, two Kickapoo Indians entered the home without knocking or saying a word. The children were frightened and so was Mrs. Joss, but she pretended as if she were accustomed to unexpected visits by the Indians and began stirring up a huge mixture of cornmeal to bake. Then she fried a side of fresh pork. After the Indians had eaten and dozed awhile by the stove, they happened to notice the rifle on the wall above their heads. Mrs. Joss had been slyly watching their movements all this time, and now she was frightened as she thought of the Indian massacres. She knew that the Kickapoos were known to be friendly, but this thought did not lessen her fright. The Indians took down the rifle, went outside, and shot into the air; then they entered the house, laughing, and left the mother and children unharmed.

"My Mother", a sketch from Folks by Victor Murdock, pictures another harmless visit of Indians to a pioneer home. Three children had been left home alone, and when they spied the Indians riding toward their house, they locked the front door and rushed desperately out the back door, where they met the Indians face to face. It did not take the children long to understand that they wanted food. Sarah, the oldest of the children, fearing that the Indians would kill all of them if their appetites were not fully appeased, cooked all the food in the house which was to have lasted them for sometime and gave it to the hungry Indians.

Social Life

Although the pioneers worked hard and suffered many hardships, the literature reveals that they had moments to spare for social affairs. They enjoyed log raisings, husking parties, berry gatherings, literary societies, and Fourth of July celebrations.

In The Squatter Sovereign Mrs. Mary A. Humphrey tells that families had log cabin "raisings" after the logs were hewn and carried to the site for the cabin. The women spent a great deal of time in preparing food for the occasion. The laughing and joking of the men and women revealed that they enjoyed these social affairs.

Mack Cretcher describes a house warming in his novel The Kansan. The neighbors who helped with the raising brought baskets of food and celebrated the occasion. These people were

friendly and generous, and were all on a common level. Snobbery and false pride were not found among these people. Mr. Cretcher also tells of a celebration following a buffalo hunt. Groups of men killed the buffaloes, and they were followed by the butchers and skinners whose work it was to save the meat and skins. Some of the settlers took part in the killing of the buffaloes. For several days they celebrated the big hunt in Bison City.

On rare occasions a few pioneer women had the honor of entertaining ladies from the city. This is revealed in Free Soil by Margaret Lynn. Ellen Truman was nominated as social representative to entertain ladies from New York City in Lawrence. Ellen was worried about her dress and hair style, for she had not had access to a Godey's Ladies' Book for many months.

In Sod and Stabble John Ise indicates that the people of the neighborhood in which Rosie and Henry lived were very sociable, for they had granger parties and taffy parties, which both men and women could attend. Frequently they had literary society meetings in the school house. The women had their quilting and sewing parties. The author pictures the amusements of the children in the home. He describes their toys as being stilts, corn stalk fiddles, sunflower spears or javelins, bows and arrows, shingle darts, whistles made from maple or willow twigs, yarn balls from outworn socks, and merry-go-rounds made by nailing a plank to a tree stump.

The pioneer farmers going into Pilgrim Valley to celebrate the Fourth of July are pictured in The Heritage of the Bluestem by Anna Matilda Carlson. The settlers from many miles around left early in the morning in their wagons for Pilgrim Valley, and that noon they enjoyed barbecued ox. Near the railroad had been erected seats and a platform, where a statesman from Washington spoke. While he was giving his address, the locomotive whistle of the first train to arrive in town was heard; and the whole audience rushed to the station leaving the speaker addressing empty seats. Miss Carlson mentions that the people of Pilgrim Valley attended literary societies, where they discussed mostly prohibition.

Reverend W. E. Youngman in Gleanings from Western Prairies tells of the husking parties which the young people enjoyed during pioneer days. Even the older folks enjoyed them too. In husking the corn, the young and old sat in a circle and shelled the grain by rubbing two ears together. The grain was piled in the center of the circle.

In Harvest of the Wind Mrs. Sarah Louisa Sweeny gives a realistic picture of neighbors getting together and going to the Kaw River to pick berries. The author describes the enjoyable time they had on this excursion in the following:

The party drove out at three in the morning, their wagons filled with tubs, churns, pans, and buckets for the fruits, and baskets of food for the picnic dinner. They were a gay, laughing crowd, their troubles for the time forgotten. Among them was a group of popular singers, the Hutchinson family, five brothers and two sisters, from New Hampshire. They planned to entertain the company later with songs and recitations.²⁵

Black Cherries written by Grace Stone Coates is a series of sketches and stories picturing the development and growth of a girl on a western farm in Kansas. The author tells of families getting together to go plumming. On one occasion Mr. and Mrs. Slump with their family and three neighbor women with their children went to the Niniscaw, fifteen miles away, to pick wild plums. These people took bedding and stayed all night.

Education

In the early pioneer days there were no school districts, as the government was too busy with the slavery question to organize them. This is shown in Sunbonnet Days by Bliss Isely, who says that during the early Kansas territorial days the government was in such constant turmoil over the slavery question that almost nothing was done toward organizing school districts. The initiative for school organization was left to public-spirited farmers in each community. The people of the community held a meeting and decided that a school house was a necessity, but there was no way to levy taxes to build the school house; therefore the people of the community furnished

25. Mrs. Sarah Louisa Sweeny, Harvest of the Wind (Caldwell, Ida., c. 1935), p. 88.

the material and labor. After choosing a site for the school, they met early one morning and began building a log school house. They were organized into groups, and those who were experienced in masonry built the fireplace; some cut down trees while others squared and notched them. A puncheon floor, seats, and a desk for the teacher were made. Since there was no tax levy with which to pay the teacher's salary, they decided to charge one dollar a month tuition for each child. Those who could not pay the teacher cash paid in farm produce. The wife of the community doctor was chosen as teacher. Mr. Isely indicates that teachers sometimes had difficulty finding a place to stay. He tells of one teacher in Brown County who had to sleep in the pantry of the house where she stayed because there was no other room.

In The Price of the Prairie Margaret Hill McCarter mentions that children were taught in the homes before school houses were built. Sometimes this teaching fell upon the shoulders of one pioneer woman in the community who used her living-room as a classroom.

Over the Border by Ruth Cowgill tells of the organizing of schools in the homes. Sarah, the daughter of Nathan Fenton, organized a school in their log cabin, where many children, whom Sarah had never seen before, came for knowledge. One family of children lived six miles away, and their father brought them in a borrowed wagon.

Mrs. Sarah Louisa Sweeny in Harvest in the Wind mentions that Mrs. Gilmore taught her own children at home.

In Sod and Stubble John Ise says that the first schools were in dugouts and in log cabins. The author gives a vivid picture of school in the rustic log school house in the following quotation:

The floor was full of holes, and under it were mice, snakes, and rabbits that the pupils sometimes watched more intently than they attended to their lessons. To serve as desks, there was a line of cottonwood slabs running around the room, resting on sticks driven into holes bored in the log walls. For seats, there was another line of slabs on legs — really a line of benches. All the pupils sat on benches and held their books and slates in their hands — if they had any books and slates. All the pupils faced the wall, and of course the light was poor; but that did not make much difference, for they studied very little anyhow. The main purpose of the school was that they should learn discipline.²⁶

In The Heritage of the Bluestem Anna Matilda Carlson tells that in the Scandinavian schools in Pilgrim Valley the opening program was Bible readings and prayer. After the long drought, the people believed they were not spending enough time on religion, so classes were dismissed and the afternoons were spent in prayer meetings.

Several authors mention the establishment of colleges in Kansas. Margaret Hill McCarter in A Master's Degree, a novel based on the founding of a college in the state, tells that Dr. Lloyd Fenneben, a graduate of Harvard, came to Walnut Valley as Dean of Sunrise College when it was established at Lagonda Ledge, Kansas. Dr. Fenneben encountered many difficulties in his educational pursuits. After the college was established,

26. John Ise, Sod and Stubble (New York, c. 1936), p. 145.

the money loving trustees of the college sold it to a boom town farther west, and Dr. Fenneben found himself in a large frame barrack in the middle of the new town. This town was then advertised by the real estate dealers as the literary center of Kansas. The lots across the prairies were advertised as college flats within walking distance of the university. After the failure of the town, Dr. Fenneben moved his equipment to a small frontier town, where his college flourished until wiped out by prairie fire.

Margaret Hill McCarter mentions in A Wall of Men that while territorial towns were being built, Baker University was established beyond Palmyra, which is the setting of the novel.

Flo Menninger in Days of My Life shows that the professors of Campbell University at Holton, Kansas, in the early eighties carried a heavy load. Flo's husband taught a variety of subjects during his time at the university. The author says that through the years he was there he taught music, telegraphy, penmanship, algebra, geography, history, geology, bookkeeping, physiology, natural philosophy, chemistry, German, photography, and botany.

Kate Stephens in Life at Laurel Town tells of the university when it was very young and of the ideals upon which it was founded. The university was founded by Anglo-Saxon pioneers on Anglo-Saxon puritan ideals. The author speaks of the struggles of the college in the following:

Academic life which now stamps the town had not evolved. The university was a small institution struggling with legislature after legislature for its very breath, and with no appreciable influence on the social will. Still, even then Laurel Town was what a professor of Harvard University twenty years after told me he found it; "A New England town set in a western environment."²⁷

The literature written about this pioneer period in the state indicates that these early settlers faced many hardships. They lived in poorly constructed houses and had practically no household conveniences. They suffered untold tragedies from sickness and Indian massacres. But their courage and persistence even in the face of almost unsurmountable difficulties enabled them to establish homes, erect schools, and build colleges. It was these pioneer people who laid the foundation of the social structure for the generations that followed.

27. Kate Stephens, Life at Laurel Town (Lawrence, Kans., c.1920), p. 74.

PIONEER FARM LIFE

The pioneer farmer had but the crudest implements with which to till his soil. Many times he planted corn with a hatchet.

There was a great deal of helpfulness and cooperation among the settlers. They willingly loaned their possessions or helped one another at every opportunity. They formed clubs and worked together. This cooperation among the farmers finally developed into the grange movement, which swept the Middle West in the late sixties and the early seventies. This strong organization, which brought the farmers together in one forceful body, provided for them education, business advantages, and social opportunities.

The farmers' work was one long struggle. During the troublesome years of the droughts and the grasshopper invasions, the settlers received aid from the East. The cattlemen of western Kansas suffered the greatest loss during the blizzards when thousands of cattle starved and froze to death. The tick fever carried into Kansas by the Texas cattle was disastrous for the cattlemen.

The cattlemen were eventually driven from the range by the homesteaders or nesters as they were called, but before they disappeared they tried different ways to discourage and drive out the homesteaders.

There were very few buildings found on the homesteads of the early pioneers. The stables in which the livestock was kept were of the most primitive type. These facts are emphasized in several books.

Farming

George W. Ogden in Wasted Salt describes the stables as being dugouts in the hillsides with roofs of prairie hay. Sometimes one could see holes in the roof where the hungry livestock had eaten away the hay from between the brushwood and poles.

In Sod and Stubble John Ise pictures the shelter for the livestock as being straw stables with wheat straw thrown over logs and saplings. The chicken houses were made of sod. This book reveals one of the most primitive methods used in planting sod corn. The farmer used a hatchet to dig a hole in the sod in which a few grains of corn were dropped. This author shows that the livestock suffered from diseases. In 1885 almost all the hogs died of cholera. Hydrophobia was spread rapidly over the prairies by mad wolves. Many times livestock died from bites of wild animals having this disease. The farmers often had to sell their crops for less than it cost to produce them. Mr. Ise says that in 1885 the price for corn was so low that the pioneers used it for fuel. In 1896 prices reached their lowest level. Wheat was thirty-five cents a bushel, corn eleven cents, oats ten cents, hogs two and a half cents a pound, eggs five cents, and butter eight cents.

Mrs. Adela E. Orpen in Perfection City tells that corn planting was done by hand since there were no corn planters. They did have a drill with which furrows could be made. Then the corn was dropped by hand three grains at a time.

In The Boy Settlers Noah Brooks mentions that at Quindaro, which was in the Delaware Indian territory near Lawrence, the Bryant and the Howell boys saw their first sod plow, which had a long, flat, sharp share. This great heavy implement was drawn by oxen.

Mr. Brooks relates that these two families, who settled not far from Fort Riley, used a dibble in planting corn. This farm implement was made of tough hickory. The staff was long enough to come to a boy's shoulder. It was thick and pointed at the end, and the upper end was whittled into a handle. The lower end was shaped like the convex sides of two spoons put together; the lower edge was sharp. Above the thickest part of the dibble, a hole was bored at right angles through the wood and a peg was driven in until it stuck out on both sides, so that one could press his foot on the peg to force the sharp point of the dibble into the soil. Attached to the dibble was a corn dropper, made out of two old boots cut off above the ankles with wood fastened in the lower end. These families had their difficulties, for in one season their crop of corn was ruined by a herd of stampeding buffaloes. Another year the corn was so cheap that the settlers used it for fuel.

Flo V. Menninger writes in Days of My Life that on the 160 acres which they homesteaded there was no place to plant crops, so they cut holes in the sod with a hatchet and dropped seeds in by hand. She describes breaking the sod with a plow, having a very sharp end to cut all roots. When the prairie sod was first turned, it was left to rot before anything could be done with it.

Mrs. Mary A. Humphrey in The Squatter Sovereign tells that in the spring the settlers broke the sod with plow and oxen.

In The Heritage of the Bluestem Anna Matilda Carlson says that there was no sod corn after the grasshopper invasion. The farmers did have wheat and other small grain which had been harvested before the invasion. The livestock which could not be carried through the winter was killed.

Dell Munger in The Wind Before the Dawn mentions that there was not enough grain for the livestock the winter after the grasshopper invasion; therefore the animals were fed straw. The farmers had some small grain which was harvested before the invasion.

William M. Wells in The Desert's Hidden Wealth writes, "After crop failures of 1872, 1873, and 1874 many people were destitute in this western country. Not having vegetables, many became sick with what they called scurvy and died." 28

28. William M. Wells, The Desert's Hidden Wealth (Los Angeles, c. 1934), p. 155.

Cooperation Among the Settlers

Anna Matilda Carlson's The Heritage of the Bluestem reveals how the pioneer farmers worked together. Anyone who owned a yoke of oxen was considered wealthy. Those who were not as fortunate pooled their money to buy oxen, and then they took turns in using them. The men exchanged work and implements. They helped one another in the lean years and rejoiced in one another's prosperity when the good years came. Miss Carlson tells of two farmers who went together to purchase a hen for three dollars from a neighboring farmer. There were very few chickens among the pioneers. These two farmers planned to share equally in feeding the hen and in the egg output. The hen was kept at the home which had the better conveniences for her. The wife of the farmer who sold the hen decided her husband had charged too much, so she made amends by taking a dozen eggs to the new owners. At this time the hen wanted to set; this was the beginning of a large poultry flock.

In Sunbonnet Days Bliss Isely mentions that the pioneers of a community formed a club. During butchering time they helped one another; then they divided the meat among them.

Dust by Mr. and Mrs. Haldeman-Julius tells of the hardships a mother and son had in planting their crops. They had to borrow a plow, a harrow, and an extra team in order to get in the crops. They then repaid the loan with the use of their own horses and wagon. The mother was able to get some potatoes by

trading a hatching of chickens for them.

In the late sixties and early seventies the farmers were banded together in a strong organization known as the grange. Everett Dick in The Sod-House Frontier shows the benefits of the grange to the farmer in the following:

The grange brought together the isolated farmers, welded them into a powerful unit with bargaining power, and in a short time, made of them a force to be reckoned with. Furthermore, the grange advocated a 'pay-as-you-go policy', educating its members to save a sum before purchasing and thus escape the clutches of the money lenders and middle-men. Three major functions of the grange were education, business, and social life.²⁹

Kate Stephens in Life at Laurel Town says that in the late sixties and early seventies the granger movement strengthened, and became an outstanding protest of the American pioneer against developments and complexities he could not meet; his organized declaration against gradual enchaining -- in fact, the first united agriculturists' voice in the now world-wide cry for the emancipation of the workers' life.

"The Torch", a sketch in Folks by Victor Murdock, tells of the revival among the farmers of the old grange movement which was called the Farmers' Alliance.

Anna Matilda Carlson in The Heritage of the Bluestem relates that the Populist party arose in the early nineties after a great national agricultural depression. The farmers lost faith in the old political parties because of their discouragement

29. Everett Newfon Dick, The Sod-House Frontier 1854-1890 (New York, c. 1937), p. 305.

over hard times and unpaid mortgages, and they supported the Populist party.

The fact that the farmers organized for protection against diseases among their cattle is shown in Prairie Trails and Cow Towns by Floyd Benjamin Streeter. The Ellsworth County farmers organized a Protective Society, the purpose of which was to stop the spread of disease among native cattle and to stop the driving of Texas herds promiscuously over the farms as had been done the previous year.

Grasshopper Invasions

Most of the books of this period mentioned the hardships of the farmers caused by the grasshopper invasion of 1874, but the invasion is emphasized only in a few of these.

Margaret Hill McCarter in The Winning of the Wilderness gives one of the most vivid pictures of the grasshopper invasion of 1874.

Truly, life may be made miserable in many ways, but in the Kansas homes in that memorable grasshopper year of 1874 life was wretchedly uncomfortable. Out of doors the cloud was a disaster. Nor flood, nor raging wind, nor prairie fire, nor unbroken growth could claim greater measure of havoc in its wake than this billion-footed, billion-winged creature, an appetite grown measureless, a hunger vitalized, and individualized, and endowed with power of motion. No living shred of grass, or weed, or stalk of corn, or straw of stubble or tiniest garden growth; no leaf or bit of tender bark of tree, or shrub, escaped this many-mouthed monster.

In the little peach orchard where there were a few half-ripe peaches, the very first fruits of the orchards in this untamed land, the hard peach stones, from which the meat was eaten away, hung on their stems among the leafless branches. The weed-grown bed of Grass River was swept as by a prairie fire. And for the labor of the fields, nothing remained. The cottonwood trees and wild plum bushes belonged to a mid-winter landscape, and of the young catalpa groves, only stubby sticks stood up, making a darker spot on the face of the bare plains.

For three days Saint Bartholomew of vegetation continued. Then the pest, still hungry, rose and passed to the southeast, leaving behind it only a honey-combed soil where eggs were deposited for future hatching, and a famine-breeding desolation. ³⁰

Mrs. McCarter tells that the grasshoppers shut out the sunlight, making it appear as an eclipse. The few chickens, thinking it evening, went to roost. The grasshoppers chewed through the mosquito netting which was at the windows, chewed linen and cotton articles which were not protected, and they fell in every dish and pot that was not covered.

In Sunbonnet Days Bliss Isely mentions that after the grasshoppers had devoured all living vegetation, they flew east to the Missouri River, where they lit and were drowned. According to Mr. Isely the state legislature passed a grasshopper law during these trying times. The legislature was taken in by an inventor of iron pans, who claimed that all the grasshoppers could be destroyed if the farmers would drag the pans, which were eighteen feet long, four feet wide, and four inches deep, filled with coal oil, across the fields. The grasshoppers would fly into the oil. After the pan was filled

30. Margaret Hill McCarter, The Winning of the Wilderness (New York, c. 1914), pp. 99-100.

with hoppers, then they could be burned. The legislature believed the inventor's story, so it passed a law requiring all townships to buy these pans. It proved unsuccessful, for as many grasshoppers hopped to safety as did into the pans.

Mack Cretcher in The Kansan describes the grasshoppers as remaining but a few brief hours, then moving, leaving in their path destruction such as pioneers had never encountered before. Far and wide on every hand, not a living stalk of vegetation was left. Every growing crop was consumed by the ravenous horde.

In The Heritage of the Bluestem Anna Matilda Carlson pictures the awful devastation left by the grasshoppers. The country everywhere appeared as if it had been burned by a prairie fire. The trees were stripped of every vestige of foliage, and the crops had disappeared. Not a blade of grass remained, and the fertile valley, which a few days before had given promise of bountiful crops, was a barren waste.

Dell E. Munger describes vividly the invasion in 1874 in The Wind Before the Dawn. Elizabeth Frenshaw, the main character of the story, was herding cattle when they were stampeded by the grasshoppers that swarmed over the land. The author says that the teeming cloud of insects was a pest equal to that of the lice of Egypt. They overflowed the Kansas prairies like the lava from Mount Vesuvius, burying vegetation and causing every living thing to flee from their path.

Sod and Stubble by John Ise and A Certain Rich Man by William Allen White mention the invasion.

There was an early invasion in 1868 which is mentioned by Kateel Howe Farnham in her novel Great Riches, which has its setting at New Concord along the Missouri River in Kansas.

Droughts

The greatest suffering during the pioneer years was caused by droughts. The drought of 1859 and 1860 is especially emphasized in the literature.

Margaret Hill McCarter relates in A Wall of Men that a terrible drought fell upon the West which lasted from midsummer of 1859 until November 1860. The valley in which Palmyra was located was barren after the drought. In The Peace of the Solomon Valley she makes brief mention of the drought.

Sod and Stubble by John Ise tells of the terrible drought of 1860 when Rosie was living in Holton. There was no rainfall from May until November. During the drought settlers moved back East.

In Memories of Old Emigrant Days in Kansas Mrs. Adela E. Orpen says that there was a terrible drought in Kansas two years before they came to the state, and they came in 1862. Many of the settlers left, and they tried to persuade Mr. Orpen not to settle in Kansas.

In The Jay-Hawkers Mrs. Adela E. Orpen speaks of the drought and famine of 1860. This year was the driest known in the short-lived history of Kansas. The people of the East spoke of it as the year of famine in Kansas, but the pioneers did not consider it such as there was still wild game.

Anna Matilda Carlson in The Heritage of the Bluestem tells that no rain fell from June until the latter part of October. Many families left Kansas and went to their home in the East.

The Kansan by Mack Cretcher tells of the droughts suffered by the pioneers.

The fact that this drought was one of the worst in the history of pioneer life is revealed in A History of Kansas by Noble L. Prentis. The author states,

Aside from the political strife and anxiety, Kansas witnessed the coming of the direst natural calamity recorded in the country's history, ranking with the flood of '44. From the 19th of June, 1859, until November, 1860, over sixteen months, not a shower fell to soak the earth.³¹

William Allen White in his volume The Real Issue mentions in the stories of "The Story of Aqua Pura" and "The Story of the Highlands" the drought of 1887. In "The Story of Aqua Pura" he also tells that there was no rainfall during the winter of 1890, and cattle suffered and died by the thousands.

Life at Laurel Town by Kate Stephens tells that not many years after the emancipation of the negroes, dust and sand storms were so bad that it was feared the children would lose their way to school.

Helen Clark Fernald's Smoke Blows West describes the wind and dust storms as being so fierce in the early seventies that a person could be buried in a few minutes by the dust and then uncovered the next minute by the strong wind.

31. Noble L. Prentis, A History of Kansas (Winfield, Kans., c. 1899), p. 91.

The farmers were in desperate straits after the grasshopper invasions and droughts, and it was necessary that they receive aid. These facts are shown by several authors.

John Ise tells in Sod and Stubble that after the drought of 1860 the farmers of Holton received aid from Atchison. The pioneers were destitute and had nothing to eat. In 1886 after dry weather, Mr. Ise says, "Times were so hard, as the Lowns Times said; 'The Lord's Supper, with original cast, would not draw a full house in any town in the West.'" 32

Edgar Watson Howe in The Story of a Country Town relates that there were cheap lands farther on, where the people raised a crop one year, and were supported by charity the next. In "The Story of Aqua Pura" from The Real Issue William Allen White speaks of families as being put on the poor list without disgrace. It was almost a mark of political distinction. In the little town many devices were in vogue to distribute the county funds during the winter. In "The Story of the Highlands" from the same volume he says that a share of the grain seed was sent to Fountain County by the Kansas Legislature, and the farmers were given groceries. A Certain Rich Man by the same author reveals that representatives of the drought stricken area were sent east to get aid for the farmers. The East immediately flooded the state with flour and beans.

32. John Ise, Sod and Stubble (New York, c. 1936), p. 166.

Margaret Hill McCarter shows in The Winning of the Wilderness that the farmers did not always receive their rightful share of relief supplies because of the evil practices of some distributors. Darley Champers, who was in charge of the distribution of the supplies, refused to give any to the people of Grass River. This was his way of revenge for not being able to swindle the settlers out of their land. The settlers then gathered at the Aydelot home and decided that Virginia Aydelot should go to Mr. Champers at Wykerton and persuade him to give them aid. They thought that Mr. Champers might give in to a woman, but they soon learned that he would not. John Jacobs, a Jewish merchant, loaned the farmers money to buy supplies.

During these hard times the pioneers were able to obtain sustenance from the sale of buffalo and cattle bones. Floyd Benjamin Streeter in Prairie Trails and Cow Towns gives facts, concerning the sale of buffalo bones, from Colonel Henry Inman's The Old Santa Fe Trail in the following passage:

Between 1868 and 1881, the period in which the buffalo were indiscriminately slaughtered for their hides, Inman says that there was paid in Kansas alone the sum of two million five hundred thousand dollars for their bones gathered on the prairies to be utilized by the various carbon works of the country. It required about one hundred carcasses to make one ton of bones; the price paid averaged eight dollars a ton. The above sum of money represented the skeletons of more than thirty-one millions of buffalo.³³

33. Floyd Benjamin Streeter, Prairie Trails and Cow Towns (Boston, c. 1936), p. 189.

Anna Matilaa Carlson mentions briefly in The Heritage of the Bluestem of the settlers gathering up the buffalo bones on the prairies and selling them to companies who shipped the bones east.

"The Scribe" taken from Folks by Victor Burdock tells about the farmers gathering up the buffalo bones and selling them in Wichita.

William M. Wells in his autobiography, The Desert's Hidden Wealth, relates that in 1876 a pioneer farmer spent a week gathering buffalo bones, which were to have been taken to Ellis seventy miles away. There he would have received seven to eight dollars a ton for the bones. But he never reached Ellis with the load of bones, because his wagon became stuck in the middle of the Solomon River, and all the bones were thrown in the river in order to lighten the wagon. The pioneer returned home with neither money nor bones after all his hard labor.

In Cherokee Trails George Ogden writes of the struggles of the ranchmen in trying to make a living after losing most of their cattle. They gathered up the bones of their dead cattle and carried them by wagon to Drumwell, where the bones were shipped east.

Other pioneers of south central Kansas found a means of support by selling timber. This is revealed in When Kansas Was Young by Thomas Allen McNeal, who tells of the pioneers of Barber and Comanche Counties cutting timber -- such as cedar, cottonwood, elm, and walnut -- and hauling it to Wichita and

Hutchinson, where it was sold. Since this timber grew on government land held in trust for the Osage Indians, it was not legal for anyone to cut it for use or to sell it.

Some of the settlers of Barber County who had been appointed deputy United States marshals arrested wood haulers from Harper, Pratt, or Kingman Counties, took their wood from them and sometimes their money with threats that they would have them jailed and fined. The settlers from other counties could do nothing about this form of blackmailing.

Blizzards

A great majority of the authors picture the havoc wrought by the blizzards and prairie fires, but they give more vivid details of the blizzards.

Helen Clark Fernald in Smoke Blows West says that the starting point of the blizzards was at Medicine Hat in eastern Canada. The blizzard would sweep from there down the Missouri River valley and then spread out over the prairies of western Nebraska and Kansas.

Sod and Stubble by John Ise reveals that there was a severe blizzard in 1871 when thousands of cattle starved and froze to death. The winter of 1880 the thermometer dropped to 22 degrees below zero.

Reverend W. E. Youngman in Gleanings from Western Prairies gives a vivid portrayal of the tragedies of the severe snowstorms which the pioneers experienced. Two young ranchers were found in their bed frozen to death. In another incident of

which the author tells, a wagon was found on the borders of Missouri and Kansas with thirteen people lying in it under a tarpaulin dead. The frozen driver was found, holding in his hands the reins of the frozen team.

Rolland Jacquart pictures a terrible blizzard in western Kansas in his short story "Blizzard" in Prairie Lore. He tells that the thermometer fell below zero, and the snow drifted eighteen feet deep. Many homesteaders perished, and all the stock on the range froze to death. One young farmer became lost in the blizzard while trying to save the stock. All that was found of him after the snow was melted were a few bones. He had been devoured by wolves.

Mack Cretcher in The Kansan mentions the severe blizzards in which many cattle perished on the range.

In Pioneer Days in Kansas, a series of sketches illustrating early times in Kansas, Richard Cordley relates that during a snowstorm the snow sifted through the poorly made shake house and covered the bed and floor with a blanket of snow. This house, the home of Reverend S. Y. Lum, was the first one built in Lawrence. During the storm, it was so cold that the women had to wear their winter wraps while cooking over a red hot stove; sometimes water froze on their clothing while at the same time their faces tingled from the heat of the stove.

Ruth Cowgill reveals in Over the Border how badly snow drifted in the house during a storm. Henry, the father, made a snow man out of the snow that blew in the cracks of their

poorly constructed house and stood it in the cold corner farthest from the stove.

In Life at Laurel Town Kate Stephens tells that it was so cold during one snowstorm in the early sixties, fat hogs froze half way down their backs and had to be killed and shipped to a Kansas City soap factory.

Paul I. Wellman has several incidents in The Trampling Herd that gives the reader a picture of the horrors of the blizzard of 1886. One man, who had been in town when the storm struck, returned home to find his flimsy shanty blown down and his family of seven scattered about in the snow. They were all frozen to death. Many other families who were not well protected in their houses met the same fate. At another place along the road, three men were found frozen in a wagon, and the horses were also dead. In one incident the dead bodies of frozen cattle were seen standing erect.

The struggles of the pioneer ranchmen near Druwell in the southwestern part of the state are told in Cherokee Trails by George Ogden. A fierce snowstorm raged over the range, which remained covered with snow for weeks. Thousands of cattle grazing on the range finally starved. Their carcasses, found everywhere over the range, revealed the horrible tragedy which blizzards brought to Kansas. On one ranch not only forty-five hundred cattle perished but also the ranchman in trying to save them.

Flo V. Menninger in Days of My Life says,

Just one mile north of our home farm, in a hollow between two hills, there was and still is -- a great pile of bones. Fred George, who lived down on the creek near Industry, had been a cattle boy and had helped round up cattle. He told us that a few years before, some twelve or fifteen hundred cattle had become so cold and hungry that they crowded together to keep warm. They had either frozen or been crushed to death, and that bone pile was what was left of them.³⁴

The devastation by prairie fires is revealed in Harvest of the Wind by Mrs. Sarah Louisa Sweeny, who tells that a prairie fire destroyed all the crops, haystacks, cornshocks, fences, bins and sheds on the Gilmore farm.

In The Winning of the Wilderness Margaret Hill McCarter mentions the prairie fires that laid waste to the prairies. The Aydelots, with whom the story is concerned, saved their home from the devastating fires by plowing fire guards about the farm.

George Ogden in his novel Blackstorm mentions a prairie fire which swept through the country surrounding Fort Riley.

Bliss Isely's Sunbonnet Days tells of the pioneers protecting their homes from prairie fires by plowing a fire guard around the farm.

Mrs. Adela E. Orpen in Perfection City describes the methods used by the farmers in protecting their homes from fires. The settlers backfired their land to protect it. They had to be cautious about doing this in a high wind, as there was danger

34. Flo V. Menninger, Days of My Life (New York, c. 1939), p.18.

of the backfire getting out of control. The people in and near Perfection City had not been able to get a safety belt burned around their homes because of the strong west wind. When they saw the smoke in the distance, the farmers immediately began to plow furrows across the field which lay between the house and the on-coming fire. The women and children started backfires in front of the furrows and used shingles as paddles to keep the backfire within limits.

Several books reveal that horse thieves and cattle rustlers harassed the pioneers. George Ogden shows in two of his novels White Roads and Cherokee Trails that cattle rustlers and horse thieves stole from the farmers and ranchers, and then escaped with the stolen property into the Cherokee country, called no man's land, where they were safe from arrest and punishment.

Helen Clark Fernald in Smoke Blows West gives incidents where thieves stole horses from the settlers and took them back into the woods, then later moved them across the border into Missouri. These thieves tried to stop the building of the railroad through Neosho Bend, for they knew it would destroy in time their prosperity in this unlawful business.

In The Kansan Mack Cretcher describes how the raiders would round up the settlers' stock during the night and drive them south across the border into the Indian territory. The settlers finally took the law into their own hands and tried to stop the horse stealing.

There were other thieves, the wolves, which were just as great a menace to the farmers and ranchers. Thomas C. Hinkle emphasizes this fact in Tawny, a story of a wild dog living near Junction City during the early seventies when this was a great cattle range, when he relates the many difficulties the ranchers experienced with the gray wolves, which killed many cattle.

George Ogden in Short Grass describes the great loss to the cattlemen because of the Texas fever, which was carried by a tick. Some of the ranchers were practically ruined. No one could explain this disease, but they knew it was carried by the Texas cattle which were immune to the disease. Cattle in Kansas which grazed on the range crossed by Texas cattle, or were within a few miles of the Texas trail contracted the fever and died.

There were no state or federal laws that prohibited or regulated the coming of the Texas herds. The Kansas stockman, not being able to persuade the legislature to aid them, banded together and established, for mutual protection, a quarantine against the Texas trail herds. This quarantine line was fixed at the southern boundary of the state, where they applied their regulation if necessary by force of arms. Not long after this action by the cattlemen, the Kansas legislature passed a quarantine law that kept Texas herds out.

Homesteaders Versus Cattlemen

As revealed in several books, the ranchmen were gradually being driven from the range. George Ogden in his Cherokee Trails says that the cattle industry was disappearing from southwestern Kansas. It was being driven out by the homesteaders, who were appearing rapidly in this section.

In Wasted Salt Mr. Ogden mentions that it was best for the progress of the country that the plow was replacing the branding iron. The farmers made improvements on the land and helped the country to progress, while the cowpunchers helped only saloons and grafters to thrive.

Hal G. Everts in The Settling of the Sage pictures the difficulties between the homesteaders and ranchers that arose because the ranchers were being pushed off the range.

Prairie Trails and Cow Towns by Floyd Benjamin Streeter relates that the cowboy era in Kansas and adjoining states began in 1867 when completion of the Kansas Pacific Railroad to Abilene opened a northern market for Texas' three and a half million cattle. Joseph G. McCoy, an Illinois stock dealer familiar with the need of a market for Texas cattle, conceived the idea of making Abilene the shipping point on the new railroad. Mr. Streeter shows some of the methods used by ranchmen in trying to drive out the settlers. In the spring of 1885 the settlers were coming in so fast that they were driving the cattlemen from the range. The newspaper of Garden City reported

that the cattlemen set fire to the prairies to drive out the settlers. The cowboys of the XY ranch would go to Garden City, get drunk, and then when returning to the ranch they would race their horses passed the settlers' homes, yelling and shooting off their revolvers in order to frighten the women and children and cause the settlers to leave.

These books give a picture of pioneer farm life from the late fifties to the early nineties. The early pioneers in tilling their soil had to fight for existence under perverse conditions. The authors have shown that grasshopper invasions, droughts, blizzards, prairie fires, and thieves made life for the pioneers almost unendurable; but these hardy men and women were not easily discouraged. They worked together and helped one another, and finally achieved their purpose, building homes on the prairies.

SUMMARY

The authors using Kansas as a setting have pictured pioneer living in the state from 1850 to 1890. They have shown in their writings that the following influenced the settlement of Kansas:

1. The missionaries came to teach the Indians.
2. Anti-slavery and pro-slavery people came to encourage the admission of Kansas as a free or slave state.
3. The passage of the Homestead law brought many settlers.
4. The railroads encouraged settlement.
5. Rich soil and equal opportunities were an inducement.

The conditions under which the pioneers lived in the Kansas home as portrayed by the authors in their work are as follows:

1. They lived in dugouts, sod-houses, log cabins, stone, or frame houses.
2. Earlier pioneers found an abundance of wild life for food; but as wild life was used up and crops were destroyed by droughts and grasshoppers, food became scarce especially in the central and western part of the state.
3. Most of the clothing of the pioneers was hand made.
4. There were very few conveniences in the home.
5. The settlers met with many tragedies through sickness and Indian massacres.

6. The pioneers enjoyed social gatherings.

7. The children were educated in the home until schools were organized.

The following facts concerning pioneer farm life in the state have been pictured by the authors:

1. Crude implements were used to till the soil.

2. Dugouts and sod stables were used to shelter the livestock.

3. Droughts, grasshoppers, prairie fires, blizzards, land sharks, and horse thieves made farming very difficult.

4. The controversy between the homesteader and the rancher added to the farmers' difficulties.

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