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A HISTORY OF THE PAXICO COMMUNITY,
WABAUNSEE COUNTY, KANSAS

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PREFACE

As partial requirement for my Master's Degree at Kansas State College, I have undertaken the task of preparing this report of the History of the Paxico Community. I believe the work presented here is the only organized report on this particular subject that has been attempted. It is my purpose in this report to give the reader some insight into the basic factors that influenced the growth and development of the Paxico Community. The cultural elements and institutions of a local community form the fundamental basis for the total culture of American society. This report presents the culture of one small community, thereby contributing to a better understanding of the total culture of our nation. The study is presented in four chapters, each dealing with a different phase of life and times of the community.

The small success I may have had in achieving my goal is due in a large sense to the cooperation and helpful advice of the citizens of the community. The officials of the city of Paxico and Wabaunsee County were also extremely helpful, especially in making their records available for this study.

And last I want to say that Dr. Verne Sweedlun and my wife, Virginia, are the people to whom I am most grateful. Their willingness to squander time over typescripts and their constant encouragement are the only reasons that this paper is in print and not in ashes.

CHAPTER I

THE GEOGRAPHIC AND CULTURAL SETTING OF THE PAXICO COMMUNITY

"History lies not near but in nature."¹ Certainly this statement is well substantiated by the history of Paxico and its related areas. Situated in the Mill Creek Valley in the northeast corner of Wabaunsee County, this community has flourished for three quarters of a century amid scenes of great natural beauty. Indeed some enthusiastic observers have advanced the theory that the original garden of Eden was located in the Mill Creek Valley. Be that as it may, even the most casual observer is struck by the natural advantages that have been so influential in the growth and development of this area. Not in the least of these is Mill Creek itself, so called because of the many mills erected along its banks by enterprising German settlers.²

This beautiful stream, together with its tributaries, drains the entire northern half of Wabaunsee County. It reaches sizeable proportions, however, for only 25 miles before it flows into the Kaw River a few miles below St. Marys, Kansas. Its banks are well wooded with oak, cottonwood, mulberry, dogwood and locust; this asset in the relatively treeless area made the valley a distinct attraction for settlers from the earliest territorial days.

Another attraction offered by Mill Creek was the bountiful supply of fish and game that inhabited its waters and roamed its banks. From the days of the fabulous Coronado, whose ill-fated expedition explored the west branch

¹Quoted by Mary W. Williams, People and Politics of Latin America (New York: Ginn and Company, 1945) p. 1.

²Interview with Carl Glotzbach, April, 1950. Mr. Glotzbach is a merchant of Paxico and was born and raised in the community.

of Mill Creek in 1541, the area has been noted for its wealth of animal life.³ The valley teemed with deer, buffalo, antelope, and elk which found the grass of the flint hills fully as desirable as do the cattle herds that now graze in that area. Besides these vast hordes of large game, the thickets and grasslands of Mill Creek Valley sheltered numerous varieties of smaller animals and wild fowl, such as rabbits, squirrels, prairie chickens, turkeys and quail.⁴ Beaver and mink were taken from its waters in addition to the great numbers of fish. Hence, such a wealth of natural resources was naturally coveted by both the red and white men.

The flora and fauna were not alone responsible for the unique attraction of the community under observation. The climate was also very desirable and adequate rainfall was not often lacking. For instance, a total failure of crops did not occur in the Paxico area of Mill Creek Valley during the 15 year span from 1874 to 1889, and ten of the 15 years yielded full crops.⁵ The soil is productive, exceptionally so in the Mill Creek heart land, in comparison with the rest of Wabaunsee County. Although the average yield in Wabaunsee County was 30 bushels of wheat per acre in 1889, most fields along Mill Creek yielded 40 bushels.⁶

In addition to good wheat crops year after year, excellent yields have been obtained from corn, oats, and vegetables of every kind. Both Irish and sweet potatoes have been raised in great quantities. Particular success has been attained with fruit crops and every farm of the German settlers had many acres planted with apple, peach, and cherry trees.

³Scrapbook of newspaper clippings of the Quivera Historical Society, Alma, Kansas. This scrapbook is now in possession of the County Clerk of Wabaunsee County.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Wabaunsee County News, November 7, 1889.

⁶Ibid.

Perhaps the most valuable asset to the territory under observation was the almost unlimited possibilities for cattle raising. Few areas in Kansas, or for that matter in the entire country, offered greater advantages to persons engaged in the cattle industry. The thousands of acres of grazing land, together with adequate supplies of good water and close proximity of the markets, were early seized upon by enterprising German and English settlers to augment their income. Alma, which is only some ten miles from the Paxico Community, became the headquarters for the grazing district of the Mill Creek Valley.⁷ Served by the Manhattan, Alma, and Burlingame Railroad after 1880, this remarkable town was a source of great revenue for communities farther up the Valley, such as Newbury and Paxico.

The geography as well as the topography of the Paxico Community tended to isolate it from the main traveled roads of Kansas. Particularly was this true before the coming of the Rock Island Railroad in 1886, and even then the community was off the beaten track since it lay between the military road on the north bank of the Kaw River and the Santa Fe Trail in the extreme southern part of Wabaunsee County.⁸ Even after the Pottawatomie Reservation was opened for settlement, the Paxico Community remained quite isolated in spite of the fact that Topeka was less than 30 miles away and St. Marys only about five miles away.⁹ Although the latter place was only a short distance away, an unbridged river made travel difficult, and floods made the fords uncertain at best. The terrain also was quite rugged and prowling Indians

⁷Matt Thomson, Early History of Wabaunsee County, Kansas, (Alma, Kansas: Matt Thomson, 1901) p. 92.

⁸Ibid., p. 5.

⁹Wabaunsee County Record, August 16, 1896.

were a menace for many years. As previously stated, the Paxico Community lies in the northern flint hills, and those hills, although affording fine grazing possibilities, served as a barrier to extensive contacts with southern areas where similar isolated communities sprang up along the various streams and tributaries of Mill Creek. The early town of Newbury and later Paxico were naturally located to receive much of the trade from farm lands along these streams. Having traveled over most of the territory, the writer has observed at first hand the excellent location of Paxico and Newbury in relation to the upper Mill Creek Valley trading area. Especially after the coming of the railroads was this favorable economic position evident. Surrounding farmers brought their products to the mill and elevators of Paxico after 1886, and not until the 1920's did Paxico begin to lose its place as a trading center.¹⁰

Thus, the influence of nature and of natural resources in the history of the Paxico Community is apparent. Few communities were able to combine such favorable natural advantages with human resources capable of utilizing these advantages to the fullest degree.

These human resources were not always available for the development of the territory for various and sundry reasons. As a part of the "Great American Desert", that myth created by Pike and others, the Mill Creek area was not early to be settled. In fact "The first settlers in Wabaunsee County did not arrive until 1854 and there were only 18 settlers in the entire original Newbury township in 1870 when the Pottawatomie Reservation, which embraced this territory, was opened".¹¹ Thus, as late as 1870 most of

¹⁰Carl Glotzbach Interview, April, 1950.

¹¹P. H. Moser, "The Early Settlement of Newbury", Topeka Journal, n.d., 1911. (Clipping.)

the community under discussion was virgin territory insofar as the penetration of the white man was concerned.

J. V. Brower, however, in his volume on "Quivera", which is in the Minnesota Historical Society Museum, attempts to offer conclusive proof that Coronado with 30 horsemen explored the west branch of Mill Creek and that hunting parties from his band followed the Mill Creek to the Alma vicinity and possibly as far east as the present site of Paxico.¹² This shadowy tale is full of romantic possibilities, and the inhabitants of the Mill Creek Valley believed the area to be the southern boundary of the nebulous province of Quivera. Needless to say, the scope of this paper prevents any inquiry to refute or confirm the "Coronado episode". The tale, however, does afford an atmosphere of romance to this study, which is quite interesting to contemplate.

In addition to more or less confirming the presence of Coronado in the area, in 1897 Mr. Brower discovered an ancient village site near Alma, in Mill Creek Valley. From his studies of arrowheads, knives, and other such materials taken from the ruins, he, together with Judge J. T. Keagy, arrived at the conclusion that these were the same Indians visited by Coronado in 1541.¹³ These interesting discoveries could actually place the first white men but six miles from the present site of Paxico, thereby adding to the rich cultural heritage of the area.

The influence of the Indian has been significant in the history of the Mill Creek Valley in general and in the Paxico Community in particular. Prior to 1833, the country embracing this area belonged to the Kaw or Kansas Indians. In 1846, a treaty was made between the Kaws and the United States

¹²Scrapbook, Quivera Historical Society, 1901.

¹³Thomson, op. cit., p. 315

government in which the Pottawatomies were granted a tract of land 30 miles square comprising a part of the counties of Wabaunsee, Pottawatomie, Jackson and Shawnee. This tract adjoined the Shawnee Reservation on the south and the Delaware Reservation on the east, and lay on both sides of the Kansas River. In 1847, the "Pottawatomies of the Woods" and the "Mission Band" numbering about 1500 located in this tract. Most of these Indians were removed from the Iowa and Wisconsin areas, and in 1850 they were joined by a band of Michigan Pottawatomies numbering about 650.¹⁴

The Indian treaty of 1854 that ceded all land between the 37th parallel and the 42nd, 40 minutes parallel to the United States included both present day Kansas and Southern Nebraska.¹⁵ On May 13, 1854, Kansas became a territory, and in 1855 the territorial legislature created Richardson County.¹⁶ The main body of the Pottawatomie Tribe was located in the northeast corner of this county. Later in 1859, the legislature changed the name of the county to Wabaunsee and slightly enlarged it on the west side.¹⁷ The location of the Pottawatomie Reserve was an unfortunate circumstance in the early development of the Paxico Community. It cut through the heart of the Mill Creek Valley and made settlement of the area virtually impossible.

On November 15, 1861 a treaty was signed at Rossville, Kansas, by which the Mission Band was allotted lands in severalty while the Prairie Band elected to continue tribal relations.¹⁸ This arrangement proved to be

¹⁴Loc. cit.

¹⁵Robert Reigel, America Moves West. (Henry Holt and Company, 1947) p. 419.

¹⁶Thomson, op. cit., p. 316.

¹⁷Loc. cit.

¹⁸Loc. cit.

the turning point in the history of Mill Creek because the Santa Fe Railroad was given the right to buy all unallotted land on the reservation and by 1870 had purchased almost the entire reservation. Most of the Mission Indians moved to Indian Territory in Oklahoma in 1870 while the Prairie band was given twelve square miles in Jackson County, Kansas. All of the Indians did not immediately leave the reservation but remained in the area for several years, often passing through Newbury and Paxico on their visits to other tribes. A band of 100 Pottawatomies passed through Paxico and Alma as late as 1888 en route to visit friends in the Indian Territory.¹⁹ To recount the numberless stories of Indian raids and battles that are a part of the heritage of the Paxico Community would be an impossible task. Many residents of the area recall vividly the colorful pageantry of Indian life as it unfolded among the hills and valleys of Newbury township. Scarcely less thrilling are the accounts of the struggle of the earliest white pioneers to establish themselves along the edges of the Pottawatomie reserve, often encroaching upon it for timber and water.

These intrepid settlers constructed their first homes along lower Mill Creek as early as 1855, using wooden pegs for nails. One such structure remained in use until 1890.²⁰ The first attempts to settle the edges of the Pottawatomie Reserve often ended in misfortune for the homesteaders. For example, the winter of 1855-56 was one of the coldest experienced in Kansas, and three years later on June 28, 1858, most of the mills along Mill Creek near Alma were destroyed by a terrible flood.²¹ Most of these mills were grist mills although some saw mills were also built. A grist mill built in

¹⁹Wabaunsee County Herald, October 3, 1888.

²⁰Wabaunsee County Herald, March 30, 1878.

²¹Thomson, op. cit., p. 320.

1858 by Christian Hankammer was typical of the earlier enterprises in the general vicinity of Paxico and Alma. It could grind eight bushels of grain a day by getting an early start.²² Most of these early mills were run by old-fashion wooden water wheels and resembled those of Germany at the time. Often in time of drought they could not be operated especially on the lower Mill Creek Valley.

As early as May, 1855, Ernest Honeke laid out the first townsite in the county on the west edge of the Pottawatomie Reserve. This place was called Humboldt City. He was among the first representatives in the legislature. Mr. Honeke built a still in 1855 and sold whiskey to the nearby Pottawatomies. The Indians would come for miles and fill their bottles drop by drop from the five gallon capacity still, then return to the reservation.²³ Most of these earlier pioneers were of German extraction as were many of those who settled the Paxico and Newbury Communities a few years later. They were not the transient hunters or traders of earlier decades, but they were the true pioneers seeking new homes out of the "Great American Desert". These men and women stood on the threshold of the Mill Creek Valley from 1855 to 1869 enduring Indian raids, floods, drought and cold, and in 1870 with the passing of the Red Man their opportunity finally came. Into an area populated by several hundred Indians and only a handful of white men they came to build their homes and towns for the future.

²²Interview with Mrs. Katherine Meinhart, April 21, 1950. Mrs. Meinhart is a resident of Paxico, having lived there all her life. She is 87 years of age but her memory is quite good. Most of her statements were corroborated by her children.

²³Thomson, op. cit., p. 317.

The material in the subsequent chapters presents the history of two of these small towns and the surrounding area. This community study constitutes a case approach to the basic elements which make up the culture of the United States.

Chapter II

THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEWBURY

The history of the Paxico Community begins with the now defunct town of Newbury, which was located on a hill about a mile northwest of the present site of Paxico proper. Newbury never gained the reputation of Dodge City or Abilene, and no fighting marshall was needed to clean up its outlaws; yet in the development of Kansas it was Newbury and hundreds of towns similar to it that eventually contributed to the culture now enjoyed in Kansas.

Generally speaking, the history of Newbury began in 1868 when an act of the Federal Government enabled the Indians on the Pottawatomie Reservation to sell their land. At the same time the government had given the Santa Fe Railroad Company a grant of land to extend its lines south to Emporia. In August, 1868, the Santa Fe purchased 338,766 of the 576,000 acres contained in the Pottawatomie Reserve for one dollar an acre; this purchase included the entire Newbury township.¹

The Santa Fe was vitally interested in settling the newly acquired territory and in starting towns to promote and develop business for the railroad. The policy of the Santa Fe was to sell the land for five dollars an acre and as a railroad was planned through the territory this price seemed quite reasonable. Yet from August 1868 to the spring of 1869, not an acre was sold either to individuals or to town companies.²

At this time, the Catholic Church entered the scene and introduced the

¹D. W. Wilder, Annals of Kansas, (Topeka, Kansas: Dwight Thacker, Kansas Publishing House, 1886) p. 483.

²Business Directory and History of Wabaunsee County, (Topeka, Kansas: Kansas Directory Company, 1907) p. 37.

two dominant cultural elements into the culture of the entire upper Mill Creek Valley--the Catholic religion and the German immigrant. The policy of the Catholic Church, with headquarters at St. Marys, was to send the German Catholics south to Mill Creek and the Irish Catholics north to Wells Creek near Lillis. This policy explains the dominant German influence in the Mill Creek area.

The chief architect of Catholic infiltration of the Newbury area was Father Joseph F. Remele who was attached to the Jesuit Mission at St. Marys. He was quite a publicity agent for Newbury township as well as the entire state of Kansas, and his articles appeared in many Catholic newspapers throughout the country. Chiefly through his efforts the history of Newbury, and indeed of the Paxico Community, was but an echo of the history of the Sacred Heart Parish for which he was responsible.

Actually the history of the Paxico Community, which includes Newbury and Paxico, began when Martin Muckenthaler came from Minnesota to St. Marys in the spring of 1869.³ Mr. Muckenthaler had suffered much from the severe winters of that northern area and was seeking a place where the climate was milder. His attention had been drawn to Kansas by an article by Father Remele that he read in a Milwaukee Catholic paper in the winter of 1869.⁴ When Mr. Muckenthaler arrived in St. Marys, he immediately contacted Father Remele who took him to inspect a level tract of land in the Newbury Township. In order to get to the tract, the pair had to ford the Kaw River and walk eight

³Interview with Reverend Albert Wietharn, Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Newbury Township. Information taken from records of Sacred Heart Church, April 21, 1950.

⁴Wietharn interview.

miles to the west bank of Mulberry Creek at a point about a mile before it flows into Mill Creek. Mr. Muckenthaler was impressed with the country and bought 160 acres from the Santa Fe Railroad Company for five dollars an acre. Most of this land is now priced at \$100 an acre or better. Returning to Minnesota, he at once made preparations to bring his family to their new home. He brought them as far as St. Joseph, Missouri, and then proceeded to make preparations for their arrival on the new farm. About the middle of July in 1869, Mr. Muckenthaler brought his family to Newbury Township. On September 25, a daughter was born; she was the first white child born and baptized in Newbury Township.⁵

Upon his second arrival in Kansas, Mr. Muckenthaler met Joseph Glotzbach and John and Valentine Mock who were heading west from Wisconsin. These three men were impressed by Muckenthaler's accounts of the new territory and decided to accompany him to his new home. After seeing the fertile Mill Creek Valley, they too bought farms in the vicinity of Mulberry Creek.⁶ At this time no white men lived within five miles of the place. These men bought land a mile or more from Mill Creek proper in order to keep away from flood water. The Indians were influential in the selection of the farms because they had marked the extent of the flood in 1858 and the newcomers wished to be outside the danger zone.⁷

In spite of the efforts of the Santa Fe Railroad Company and the

⁵Wietharn interview.

⁶Interview with O. J. Glotzbach, March, 1950. Mr. Glotzbach is the grandson of Joseph Glotzbach and was born and raised in the Paxico Community.

⁷Ibid.

Catholic Mission at St. Marys, only a handful of settlers inhabited Newbury Township by 1870. The Township was then comprised of what is now Maple Hill and Kaw Townships as well as present-day Newbury. The township had been formed April 12, 1870, and divided into two voting precincts. Fewer than 25 white men lived in this entire area of some 500,000 acres. Those who were identified in the area were John Mock, Martin Muckenthaler, and Joseph Glotzbach on Mulberry Creek; Benjamine Hoskinson and James Burgoyne on Snokomo Creek; Christian Kuenzli on Kuenzli Creek; Allen Phillips and Mr. Ralston on Dog Creek; Henry Michaelis on Spring Creek; Martin Ellison on Turkey Creek; John Winkler at Maple Hill; Henry Fauerbach and John Durham on Dry Creek; Peter Redding, James Cass, W. G. Wyker, and the Williams brothers in present day Kaw Township; and Gotlieb Breymeyer on Wells Creek. In addition to these men, two unidentified persons were living in the township. Of the above, only nine were located in present-day Newbury Township, and only four of those were in the vicinity of the town of Newbury.⁸

The plan for Newbury town proper was originated by Colonel Allen Phillips of Newbury Township, D. H. Horne, Major Henry Bartling, who was later Mayor of San Francisco, D. R. Lakin, and E. P. Kellam, all of Topeka. D. H. Horne was elected president of the town company, and Major Henry Bartling was elected secretary and treasurer. The Santa Fe owned half interest in the town which was comprised of the whole of section 22 of Newbury Township.⁹ As far as can be ascertained the town was called Newbury after one of the officials of the Santa Fe Company.¹⁰

⁸Moser, op. cit.

⁹The Wabaunsee County News, July 26, 1896.

¹⁰Wietharn interview.

The Santa Fe Railroad Company furnished the land and gave every other lot to the town company for promoting the scheme. The company was incorporated as the Newbury Town Company.¹¹ The town of Newbury was located on the west bank of Mulberry Creek at a point about two miles from where Mulberry Creek flows into Mill Creek. It is 30 miles from Topeka, nine miles from Alma, and eight miles from St. Marys.

The Town Company laid out all of section 22 into lots. One hundred sixty acres in the center of the section were laid out into small lots; and the remainder into lots of five or ten acres each.¹² The Town Company expected the railroad to be extended up the Mill Creek Valley and planned the town on a large scale with wide streets and a public square containing eight acres. The square was to be the site for a courthouse which they hoped to obtain in the near future.

The Newbury Townsite was actually settled by an Ohio and Pennsylvania Colony in the spring of 1870, the first settler on the scene being P. H. Moser who arrived on March 25, 1870.¹³ At the time Mr. Moser arrived, D. R. Alden of Oberlin, Ohio, and J. M. Matheny of Alma were surveying the townsite. No one was living on the site proper, but R. J. Stephenson, a sailor, was camping on Mulberry Creek only a short distance away. He was engaged in obtaining lumber for nearby settlements.¹⁴ Mr. Moser bought his lumber from Stephenson and obtained several carpenters from Topeka to build his home at Newbury.

¹¹Moser, op. cit.

¹²The Wabaunsee County News, July 26, 1896.

¹³Moser, op. cit.

¹⁴Loc. cit.

On April 24, less than one month after his arrival, Moser moved his wife into the new home. She was the first white woman to sleep in a house on the townsite at Newbury. Furniture for the home was freighted in by Moser from Topeka.¹⁵ Then came a great rush of home seekers, lasting for a period of about two months. Mr. Moser reported that he entertained 20 to 30 persons every night for several weeks at the height of the rush.¹⁶ By June, 11 houses had been built with two or three families living in each. Also, there were two stores, one hotel, and a blacksmith shop.¹⁷ Early builders in Newbury proper were A. A. Foster of Wisconsin, Everett Foster of Medina, Ohio, C. C. Stalker, and R. J. Stephenson. D. R. Alden started the first general store in the spring of 1870, together with a drug store and photography shop. In the summer of 1870 Goldstandt and Cohen from Alma set up a second general store at Newbury. Robert Guth operated a trading post and had a large trade with the Indians, chiefly in whiskey.

A post office was established at Newbury in 1870, and P. H. Moser was appointed postmaster. For the first few months, Newbury had no regular mail service, but mail was delivered from St. Marys by any reliable citizen. In the fall of 1870, a mail route was established from Silver Lake to Alma, and Newbury was a part of the system. This arrangement lasted for only one year, then the route was changed from Topeka to Alma. New post offices were established at Valencia, Post Creek, and Maple Hill, all of which were supplied by the new route. Newbury retained its postal service until 1886 when the post office was moved to Paxico.¹⁸

¹⁵Loc. cit.

¹⁶Loc. cit.

¹⁷Wietharn interview.

¹⁸Moser, op. cit.

Settlers continued to come into the town of Newbury and Newbury Township during the fall of 1870 and the following spring. Among these newcomers were Cornelius Anderson, W. E. Castle, and Jeremy Kinne. Also, in the spring of 1871 a "variety" store was built on the northeast corner of the square by C. A. Stringham and W. L. Mahon.¹⁹

Times were hard in the Newbury settlements in 1870 and 1871. The settlers for the most part were German immigrants who had spent most of their capital either for a farm near Newbury or a business on the town site. Most of their clothing consisted of overalls and calico. Food was plentiful but plain, consisting chiefly of products produced on the land. All shipments of essential commodities were brought across the Kaw River ford near St. Marys until February, 1872, when a bridge was completed at St. Marys.²⁰

In addition to the problems of transportation and the providing of essential necessities, the Indians were a constant nuisance and often a distinct menace. Several hundred Indians were living in Newbury Township when the town site of Newbury was settled. Many of them lived along Kuenzli Creek, Snokomo Creek, Mulberry Creek, and the Mill Creek Valley. They were also present in great numbers in the vicinity north and west of St. Marys. The great majority belonged to the Pottawatomies, although some Kaws were also in the area. These Indians proved to be a detriment to rapid settlement of both the township and town for several years.

Only five months after the town of Newbury was established, it experienced its first and only Indian scare. The Kaw tribe, which was traveling

¹⁹Wabaunsee County News, July 26, 1896.

²⁰Thomson, op. cit.

to visit the Pottawatomies in Jackson County, suddenly appeared on the horizon one August evening. Newbury residents were quite excited and set out pickets armed with rifles and revolvers. The Kaw Indians camped for the night on Mulberry Creek but disappeared by morning. This incident did not result in bloodshed, although there was a great deal of petty thieving by the Indian "raiders".²¹ Such Indian migrations as these continued to cross and recross Newbury Township in the vicinity of Newbury for 20 years after it was established.

In November and December of 1870, the Pottawatomies recieved payment from the Santa Fe Railroad for the sale of their reservation land in 1868. The payment was made at St. Marys and amounted to approximately \$500,000 in United States greenbacks. The money was paid to the Indians by a United States paymaster. Gamblers, crooks, and confidence men from all over the country were there to fleece the Indians whenever possible. Also, familiar to the streets of St. Marys about this time were William Cody and "Wild Bill" Hickok.²² St. Marys was at this time the railroad town which served Newbury and it was the trading center for the Indians from both Newbury Township and Jackson County. Its streets and saloons were always full of Indians who provided much of the economic prosperity of the town. In the winter of 1870-71, St. Marys and Newbury merchants enjoyed unprecedented prosperity.²³

The Indians of Newbury Township added a lot of color and excitement to the early settlement at the Newbury Townsite as well as contributing to

²¹Moser, loc. cit.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

trading activities. Typical of such activities was the mammoth dance on Mulberry Creek in the spring of 1871. Several hundred Kaws and Pottawatomies gathered for ceremonies that lasted more than a week. Early residents of Newbury were interested spectators at such events; although at times they were quite apprehensive when large numbers of Indians were involved. The presence of the Indian in the Newbury vicinity was disquieting at best and tended to discourage a more rapid settlement of both the Township and Newbury proper. In spite of this problem, however, the new town at Newbury was making some progress toward civilization.

On June 20, 1870, School District 31 was created by T. M. Allen, the county superintendent, in order to prepare for the educational needs of the growing community. The first meeting of the school board took place at the residence of C. C. Stalker in Newbury.²⁴ There was little public support, however, and no bonds were issued for the erection of a school house in the Newbury district. The major reason for the lack of public support was the predominance of German Catholics in the school district. These people were not in favor of publicly supported education and were looking toward establishing their own parochial school. The Methodist Circuit, located at Alma, finally erected a small school house in Newbury near the residence of Martin Muckenthaler.²⁵ This structure also served as a Sunday School and Church for both the Methodist and Congregationalist denominations until these churches were moved to Paxico in 1886.²⁶

The first teacher in the school was Fred Meyer who in addition to his

²⁴Thomson, op. cit., p. 66.

²⁵Interview with Mrs. M. M. Carroll, May, 1950. Mrs. Carroll is the publisher of the Alma Signal Enterprise, Alma, Kansas.

²⁶Ibid.

regular duties gave lessons in both voice and stringed instruments.²⁷

No record exists of Catholic educational activity in the early efforts to provide schooling for the Newbury residents of School District 31. The Catholic children recieved little formal education until the fall of 1891 when Father Joseph Hohe started the first Catholic school in Newbury.²⁸ The first teacher was August Schulte who had the rather unique job of teaching four months in the public school and five months in the parochial school. Most of the Protestant residents of Newbury, however, had moved to Paxico by 1891; hence for all practical purposes the public school at Newbury was entirely parochial after that date. School was held in the old frame church, built in 1874, where 100 children of all ages were crowded together and taught by one teacher.²⁹ Both Mr. Schulte and his successor, Mr. Stadtler, directed the Catholic Church Choir while acting as teachers in the school.³⁰

Why education was largely neglected in the Newbury vicinity is not difficult to understand. In a basically frontier environment, formal education had no place in the minds of most of the frugal German immigrants. School houses meant more taxes and book learning was of little use on the farm. After 1891, when the Catholic Church began to promote education, interest in education was more wide-spread among the Germans. The Church managed to get the young children to attend school, but few got past the sixth grade before they dropped out and even fewer were graduated from the

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Wietharn interview.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid.

eighth grade. German primers were used in the Newbury schools until well after 1900, and German children starting to school as late as World War I could speak no English at all.³¹ Environment, language, and lack of interest all combined to retard the growth of education, especially during the early history of Newbury and the Paxico Community.

The lack of interest in education was more than compensated for by the zeal for religious activity. Both Protestants and Catholics alike were devoutly religious and drove miles each Sunday to attend services. For the two Protestant sects, Methodist and Congregationalist, Sunday was entirely devoted to religious services. Sunday School and Church were attended at the school house in Newbury in the morning, and then in the afternoon the churchgoers traveled to the stone church near Maple Hill.³²

During the summer of 1870, the first Protestant services in Newbury were held at the home of C. C. Stalker by Reverend Harvey Jones. Reverend Jones was a Congregationalist minister from the town of Wabaunsee.³³ Also in the summer of 1870, the Methodists organized a church and shared the use of the school house with the Congregationalists. Martin Ellis served as minister for the Methodist Church. The Methodists maintained a church at Newbury until they moved to Paxico in 1887.³⁴

Also in 1870, Newbury became a mission attached to the Alma Catholic Church, where Father Remele had raised \$400 to build a new church.³⁵ The Jesuit Fathers of St. Marys looked after the spiritual needs of the Catholics

³¹O. J. Glotzbach interview.

³²Carroll interview.

³³Moser, op. cit.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Weitharn interview.

at Newbury and Mulberry Creek. Father ReMele held Mass on special days at the homes of Martin Muckenthaler and Joseph Glotzbach.³⁶

The cultural advances in the town of Newbury and vicinity were accompanied by other events which were important to the welfare of Newbury. In 1872, a major shake-up in the stockholders of Newbury Town Company took place chiefly because Newbury lost in its attempt to win the election for the county seat. The original town company had offered to erect a court house and to donate the use of the court house for county purposes for five years without charge, in return for the county seat. In addition, they agreed to deed the court house square containing eight acres, in the exact center of Newbury, to the county in case the county seat should be moved to Newbury.³⁷ Eskridge, with its one house, was also an aspirant and offered similar inducements. Alma, which had been the county seat before the controversy arose, met the situation by the offer of a stone court house, the title to which would be turned over to the county after 20 years.³⁸

In the ensuing election, held on February 7, 1871, Newbury received 217 votes for the county seat; Alma, 369; Eskridge, 256; and Wabaunsee, 2. This vote gave none of the places a majority so that another election was called on February 21, 1871, with the two towns having the highest total vote in the preceding election as the contenders. Newbury as the third town on the list was not in the race, although it opposed Alma as bitterly as if it were still a contestant. Of 97 votes cast in Newbury only 12 were for

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Thomson, op. cit., p. 75.

³⁸Loc. cit.

Alma, and a long time ensued before the bad feeling between the two towns was diminished. Incidentally, Alma won the county seat struggle with 465 votes to 429 for Eskridge. Actually, Newbury benefitted from the Alma choice, because it was only nine miles away and was easier to reach than Eskridge which was about 20 miles distant.³⁹

In addition to the discouraging effect of the county seat defeat, Newbury was having difficulty obtaining sufficient water to meet increasing needs. These two factors had combined to undermine the confidence of several of the stockholders of the original town company. In 1872 when the Newbury Town Company was reorganized, P. H. Moser bought out D. H. Horne and C. C. Stalker bought out E. P. Kellam. Major Henry Bartling was elected president and P. H. Moser secretary and treasurer of the new Town Company.⁴⁰

Soon after the reorganization of the Town Company in 1872, an attempt was made to get the Santa Fe to build a railroad along Mill Creek. A railroad meeting was called at Newbury, and the Santa Fe was represented by Sidney Clark and Senator E. G. Ross. Senator Ross was the most famous man to visit Newbury, although at the time of his visit he was the most unpopular man in Kansas. His unpopularity stemmed from the fact that he had voted against the impeachment of President Johnson, but in spite of this stigma he won many friends in Newbury.⁴¹

The efforts to obtain the railroad were unsuccessful, and the next two years were uneventful ones in Newbury. The town was quite prosperous during this period chiefly as a result of trade with the new settlers who were

³⁹Loc. cit.

⁴⁰Moser, op. cit.

⁴¹Ibid.

entering the territory. Revenue was also gained from nearby farms that were producing cash crops, such as wheat and corn. In the summer of 1874, however, the hardy pioneers of Newbury and the Paxico Community were dealt a severe blow by the invasion of the grasshoppers. They appeared at Newbury about three o'clock one afternoon and by the next morning had caused widespread destruction to crops of all kinds.⁴² One five acre field of corn was devoured, cobs and all, to within six inches of the ground in a single night.⁴³ The grasshoppers devoured every green thing in sight, even the leaves of the trees; the only vegetation not to their liking was tomatoes and prairie grass.⁴⁴ Their excrement falling into the streams poisoned the fish, and many cattle died from drinking the water. Other cattle were poisoned by eating the remains of fodder which had been partly devoured by the grasshoppers.⁴⁵

The grasshoppers laid millions of eggs in the area, and in the spring of 1875 the ground was covered with the pest. It was feared that the destruction of the preceding summer would be repeated, and many schemes were devised to combat the "menace". Fortunately, the threatened destruction failed to materialize because as soon as they were able to fly, the grasshoppers disappeared as mysteriously as they had appeared the previous year.⁴⁶

The severity of the grasshopper "plague" was further enhanced by a

⁴²Carroll interview.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Moser, op. cit.

⁴⁵Thomson, op. cit., p. 330.

⁴⁶Loc. cit.

severe drought in the summer of 1874 which destroyed the few crops that survived the insects. In spite of these disasters to the economy of the Paxico Community, it continued to expand. By 1878, there were 575 persons in Newbury Township, and only one year later there were 766 persons living there.⁴⁷ Although life in Newbury and its surrounding territory was a pretty grim struggle during its early years, it compared very favorably with most frontier communities.

The railroad was only eight miles away, and after 1872 the bridge across the Kaw at St. Marys made the railroad easily accessible in good weather. Mail service was quite good and contacts with other towns were frequent. The area also provided several recreational possibilities. People from other places came to fish for pleasure and some local people fished for a living. Hunting was excellent, and game of all varieties found its way to the tables of the early settlers. Dancing, however, was the most popular pastime; the completion of a new home or chicken house was celebrated by a dance. The Fourth of July was also the occasion for a dance; in fact the first dance in Newbury Township occurred July 4, 1870 on Mill Creek about two miles from the town of Newbury.⁴⁸ Another favorite pastime, especially among the German population, was music. Almost every German household had a musician of sorts within its ranks, and many fine performances were heard by the residents of the Paxico Community both at the dances and at concerts. The Catholic Church was very active in the promotion of music and on October 1, 1883, organized the Newbury Philharmonic Band. This band was the oldest

⁴⁷The Alma News, May 28, 1879.

⁴⁸Loc. cit.

in the county and was composed entirely of German Catholics. It was organized by Reverend Hundhausen, with Ferdinand Hermann of Alma as director. The members bought uniforms and a band wagon and often held concerts in the square at Newbury.⁴⁹ Thus, the cultural life of early Newbury and the Paxico Community kept pace with the growth in population and economic well-being.

The residents of the Paxico Community and Newbury were also quite active in the field of politics. Their interest in the county seat question has already been noted. Newbury proper had the dubious distinction of losing every political controversy it engaged in while it remained in existence. As an excellent example, in addition to the county seat question, an attempt was made to defeat the bond issue for the Burlingame, Alma, and Manhattan Railroad which was proposed in 1879. Newbury, and the Paxico Community in general, thought that a road should be built west from Topeka to Mill Creek and along Mill Creek to the west instead of from Burlingame to Manhattan. They argued that the proposed railroad through Alma would never be profitable and would be a loss to the county. As it turned out, the road never did prosper and most of it was abandoned in the summer of 1898.⁵⁰ Underlying these arguments was the continued dislike of Alma and the reluctance to see the neighboring town get further ahead by acquiring a railroad.

Newbury and the Paxico Community were aided in their fight against the project by the Union Pacific Railroad Company. Both men and money were sent to the area by the Union Pacific in an effort to defeat the bond issue.

⁴⁹Loc. cit.

⁵⁰Moser, op. cit.

Andrew Wilson, a wealthy cattle baron of the Mill Creek Valley, also gave support to Newbury. Other allies of Newbury in its fight against the new railroad were the Indians of the community. The Indians had supported Newbury in the county seat struggle in spite of attempts by Alma to gain their votes. Now in the bond issue even more serious attempts were made by Alma to win the vote of the Indians from Newbury. Henry Schmitz, S. H. Fairfield, and G. W. Watson all came to the Newbury Community and tried to get the Indian vote but were unsuccessful. In spite of all these allies, Newbury lost the fight. The towns of lower Wabaunsee County, such as Eskridge and Harveyville, supported the bond issue and together with Alma and Wabaunsee managed to get a small majority.⁵¹

In other than elections of a local nature, such as the ones just mentioned, Newbury and the Paxico Community followed the pattern set by most other Wabaunsee County communities. They consistently voted the Republican ticket in the national presidential elections until the election of 1892 when they deserted the Republican Party. The vote that particular year was 133 for Harrison, the Republican candidate, and 191 for Weaver, the Populist candidate. Incidentally Bidwell, the Prohibitionist candidate, did not get a single vote. The lack of support for a Prohibitionist candidate is easily understandable in a German Community where beer was indispensable.⁵²

The trend away from the Republican Party was pronounced after 1890 and was closely correlated with the number of Catholics present in the Community as well as with the rise of the Populist movement. This trend was quite

⁵¹Loc. cit.

⁵²Thomson, op. cit., p. 192.

noticeable in the election returns from 1874 to 1894 in the Newbury voting precinct.⁵³

In strictly local elections, party lines meant very little in most of the townships and towns, including Newbury. People voted for their favorite son regardless of his politics. A good example of this tendency was apparent in the election of 1884. Newbury gave Blaine, the Republican candidate, 134 votes to 89 for Cleveland, the Democratic candidate in the presidential election, while Matt Thomson, a democratic candidate for the office of County Superintendent, was given 139 votes and his Republican opponent, E. Newby, received only 84 votes.⁵⁴

The political and economic failures of Newbury as personified by the defeat in the county seat question and in the railroad bond dispute were very discouraging to the Town Company. Its chief officers were unable to attract new business to the town site. Especially was this true after it became obvious that the Santa Fe did not intend to build a railroad through the town. Discouraged by these failures, the Town Company sold out to Michael Hund and Martin Muckenthaler in 1882.⁵⁵ For all practical purposes, this move was the death knell for the town of Newbury; it did, however, make one last desperate bid for survival in 1884.

The Rock Island Railway Company was planning a railroad to run west from Topeka up the Mill Creek Valley. The road was to parallel Mill Creek about a mile south of the Newbury town site. Once again Newbury sought to check the inevitable by the Town Company offering land to the Rock Island in

⁵³Ibid., p. 173-194.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 184.

⁵⁵Moser, op. cit.

order to get the route changed to run to the town. It was the same story of too little and too late, and the Rock Island refused the offer. The major factor in the decision was the more attractive offer of land from the land owners along Mill Creek.⁵⁶ When the railroad was constructed in 1886, most of the business houses had already moved to a new town on Mill Creek called Paxico. Shortly afterward, the Newbury town site was declared vacated by the County Commission. Thus, Newbury died fighting to the last. The town was the victim of unfortunate location, for although the floods of Mill Creek never reached her streets, neither did the railroad and without a railroad there was no chance for survival.⁵⁷

Newbury remained in existence for 16 years as a political entity. During this time it suffered one set back after another in its political, social, and economic activities. In direct contrast to this state of affairs was the remarkable growth of the Catholic Church. From the time it was established as a Catholic Mission in 1870, it was successful. The devout German settlers sacrificed much for the success of their church. On October 9, 1874 a meeting of all Catholic families was called for the purpose of building a new church. An organization was formed with Michael Hund as chairman and treasurer and John Mock as secretary.⁵⁸ Permission to build the church was obtained from Reverend Louis Mary Fink, Bishop of Leavenworth, and the work began immediately. The lot for the church was donated by the Newbury Town Company, and an acre of land was given by Martin Muckenthaler

⁵⁶Weitharn interview.

⁵⁷Moser, op. cit.

⁵⁸Weitharn interview.

for a cemetery. A small frame church was erected, 24 by 42 feet, at a cost of \$614.84. This structure is still standing today having been used as a school house long after its utility as a church had passed.

At the time the church was built, only nine Catholic families lived in and near Newbury. They were Martin Muckenthaler, Joseph Glotzbach, Henry Michealis, John Mock, John Stitz, Michael Hund, Gerhard Nuttman, John Nuttman, and Robert Guth. The building of the church was a community project, as lists show that non-Catholics of the town aided this small group materially in providing money for the new church.

After the church was completed, services were only permitted on the fifth Sunday of those months having five Sundays. The first Mass was said in the new church on November 29, 1874; then on January 31, May 30, August 29, and October 31, 1875. All these Masses were said by Father Van Den Bergh. In 1876, Masses were said once a month on the condition that the offering should be 10 dollars for each service.

The first church was built in the fall of 1874 after the terrible drought and grasshopper damage. This act attests to the devotion and courage of the German settlers in and around Newbury. Also, as the congregation grew the Church was improved. In the summer of 1876, a lightning rod was added to the church at a cost of \$14.50, and in the fall \$202.05 was spent for finishing the interior of the church.⁵⁹ The next major addition to the church was an organ which cost \$136.50, enabling the Newbury congregation to have a fine choir and further promoting interest in music. In 1878, other improvements, such as the fencing of the cemetery plot and the purchase of a bell, were added.

⁵⁹Loc. cit.

By 1880, Mass was being celebrated in Newbury every two weeks by Father Frances Hundhausen. Newbury was still a mission, attached to Alma, at this time. In 1882, at the time the town company was selling out, the church was actually expanding. The lots adjoining the frame church were purchased for \$40.00 for the purpose of building a new church. The cornerstone of the new Rock Church was laid on June 13, 1884, and the structure was soon completed at a cost of \$8,410.⁶⁰ The Sacred Heart Parish then consisted of 35 families and was growing steadily, although Newbury as a town was being liquidated. A town was dying, but its two basic elements of culture, religion and nationality, survived to continue the history of the Paxico Community and its basic cultural development.

⁶⁰Loc. cit.

Chapter III

THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE PAXICO SETTLEMENTS TO 1900

The original settlement of Paxico was not promoted by a railroad as was the settlement of Newbury. Before 1884 little hope existed for a railroad to be built any closer than Newbury. In spite of this rather unpromising outlook, Paxico grew and flourished for almost ten years with little assistance from railroading activities.

The first settler to locate at the original settlement was a young Scotsman named Gilbert Stewart. Mr. Stewart was influenced to come to Kansas after viewing the Kansas exhibit at Philadelphia Centennial in 1876. He settled on Mill Creek, close by the original site of Paxico.¹ Here he opened a meat market from which he supplied meat to the scores of Pottawatomies that lived nearby as well as to the settlers at Newbury. About two years after Mr. Stewart's arrival, J. H. Nuttman opened a drug store and aided Jack Pride, a Negro, to set up a blacksmith shop.² This was the extent of the Paxico settlement in 1879 when Robert and Will Strowig appeared on the scene.

In the late 1870's, the Strowigs had moved to the Mill Creek Valley from near Circleville, Kansas. They were excellent millers and were interested in the possibilities of starting a mill in the area. After looking over the territory, they moved to the Paxico settlement and in 1879 purchased a mill site from the Pottawatomie Indians. The site was located on the south bank of Mill Creek where the lodge of the old Pottawatomie Medicine Man, Pashqua, had once stood. The old Indian had left for Oklahoma Indian

¹Topeka Journal, March 19, 1936.

²Loc. cit.

Territory in 1870. The Pottawatomie tribe, however, had retained possession of the site. In fact for several years after the mill was built, the last remnant of the prairie band of Pottawatomies lived in two wigwams within 200 yards of the structure.³

The mill, one of the finest in Kansas, was run by water power and a small steam engine. The steam engine was used to operate the mill when the water was insufficient, usually during the months of August and September. The mill contained one sifter, two purifiers, two centrifugal rolls, a smutter, and separators. The capacity of the mill was 75 barrels of flour a day and 50 barrels of meal.⁴ This business enterprise was highly successful and greatly stimulated the advent of new settlers into the area.

Most of the new settlers settled on the north bank of Mill Creek, opposite the holdings of Stewart, Nuttman, Pride, and the Strowigs. A bridge was built connecting this mill site with the growing business district, and in the winter of 1879 John Copp built a store on the north end of the new bridge. Also in the winter of 1879, a post office was established at Strowig's Mill. It was called Paxico in honor of the former owner of the site, "Chief" Pashqua, and the entire settlement soon became known as Paxico.⁵ Hereafter in this report, this settlement will be referred to as the old Paxico settlement.

The old Paxico settlement, with its mill, post office, stores, and blacksmith shop was ideally located for future growth. It was situated in the heart of the wheat producing belt of Wabaunsee County and had adequate

³Thomson, op. cit., p. 312.

⁴Loc. cit.

⁵Topeka Journal, op. cit.

stores of timber and water to meet its needs. These economic advantages were quickly reflected in the success enjoyed by all who settled near Strowig's Mill.

The Catholic influence, although very extensive, was not dominant in the first ten years the original Paxico settlement remained in existence. Most of the German Catholics tended to choose their farms near the town of Newbury, leaving the Paxico area for the Methodists and Congregationalists. Paxico, however, was a part of the Sacred Heart Parish and its Catholic population attended Mass at Newbury. The Methodists and Congregationalists held church services at the "Mill" school in the old Paxico settlement until after 1886.

The ethnical composition of old Paxico was far different from that of Newbury and the Community in general. The most significant difference was the presence of the Negro. As has been noted, Jack Pride, a Negro blacksmith, was an original settler at Paxico. He proved to be the vanguard of a fairly extensive Negro migration to the new settlement. In addition to the Negro population, German and English elements made up the ethnical composition of the community and were in the majority.⁶

The coming of the Negro to the Paxico community was due chiefly to the influence of J. H. Nuttman. Mr. Nuttman had lived on the south bank of Mill Creek near the site of the Paxico settlement since 1871 and, as noted previously, was one of the first to build a business at the old Paxico settlement. In 1878, he induced Jack Pride to set up a blacksmith shop at the site of the future settlement. Mr. Pride, a former slave, had come to Kansas

⁶Moser, op. cit.

from Nashville, Tennessee, in 1878 and had settled at the old Beecher Bible Colony at Wabaunsee.⁷ In the fall of 1878, he heard of the need for a blacksmith at the Paxico settlement and moved there to set up his shop.

Mr. Pride and those who followed him to the Paxico settlement were a part of the Negro "Exodus" which started in 1877 with the end of the Reconstruction Period in the South. This movement of the Negro from the South was to the North and West.⁸ Kansas, in particular, was the choice of thousands of these colored migrants. Generally, the movement had no organization or defined purpose although the reasons for its occurrence from 1877 to 1882 are clear. The Negro had lost political power in the South with the ending of the Reconstruction Period and was being oppressed by the return of white supremacy. Also, unscrupulous politicians in the northern and western States were inducing the Negro to leave the South in order to get their votes.⁹ Closely tied in with the politicians were the land speculators in the new states west of the Mississippi River. The report circulated among the Negroes that each family would receive 40 acres and a mule. Many of the Negroes believed this report but most of the Negro migrants did not receive anything from the land sharks and were often left stranded in dire circumstances.

The chief cause of the movement to Kansas and other points west and north, especially between 1879 and 1881, was the partial failure of the cotton crop in the South. The plantation laborers were without work, and the lure of free land to the west was very powerful. In the spring of 1881,

⁷Interview with Hattie Pride, March 1, 1951. Miss Pride is the daughter of Jack Pride. She still resides at Paxico with her mother.

⁸Cyclopedia of Kansas History, Vol. II. (Chicago Standard Publishing Co. 1912) p. 339.

⁹Loc. cit.

the rising tide of migrants rose to its height as thousands of Negroes flocked to the trans-Mississippi States. This migration brought scores of Negroes to the Paxico settlement. Most of the interest in the Paxico Community had been aroused by communications sent by Jack Pride to his friends in Tennessee.¹⁰

The first friend of Pride to respond to his messages was Scy Nickols, also an ex-slave, who came from Carthage, Tennessee, in 1881.¹¹ Mr. Nickols was aided in his journey to Kansas by a settlement company located at St. Marys. He was accompanied by his wife and his sister and settled with them on a small farm about a mile west of the original settlement of Paxico. Incidentally, this location was near the site of the new settlement and today lies within the city limits of Paxico.¹² The Negro settlers continued to settle in the vicinity of Paxico for the next ten years. Most of them were farmers until after the Rock Island came through in 1886, when most of them moved into Paxico proper and became section hands on the railroad.¹³ These colored settlers were an interesting and valuable asset to the Paxico Community. Most of them were Baptists or Methodists, and it is reported that their church services could be heard for a mile.¹⁴ They used the "Mill" school house for church services until the original settlement was moved to its present location.

No evidence can be found that the presence of the Negro settlers in the Paxico Community was opposed by the white settlers. They generally

¹⁰Pride Interview.

¹¹Interview with Jim Nickols, March 1, 1951. Mr. Nickols is the son of Scy Nickols and still lives in the original home site of his father.

¹²Nickols' Interview.

¹³O. J. Glotzbach Interview.

¹⁴Moser, op. cit.

settled to themselves in their own groups, and this practice was a matter of choice. Little segregation was evidenced in such matters as harvesting and railroad work where they shared equally with the whites. They also attended the same schools, but church services were held separately.¹⁵ In proportion to their number, the Negroes were not influential in the affairs of the Paxico settlements either before or after 1886.

During the years between 1879 and 1886, while new settlers both white and Negro were coming to old Paxico in increasing numbers, the settlement was growing in importance. Its economy grew and flourished as the surrounding wheat lands began to produce grain for the new mill. Old Paxico made no attempt to enter the county seat struggle, but it vigorously opposed the Manhattan, Alma, and Burlingame Railroad in 1879. Old Paxico, like Newbury, had hopes that the Santa Fe would build a road west from Topeka up the Mill Creek Valley. As has been noted, such was not the case; hence for almost seven years the little settlement at old Paxico shipped its flour and other products to St. Marys. In spite of distances involved and lack of good roads, old Paxico prospered chiefly at the expense of Newbury.

In addition to economic growth, the Paxico settlement had taken an interest in social and cultural progress. School District 59 had been formed in 1879 by Matt Thomson and held its first meeting on September 6 of that year.¹⁶ On November 15, 1879, \$500 in bonds was issued and a snug stone school house was constructed. It was known as the "Mill School" and also served as a church.¹⁷ A lodge hall was constructed for social gatherings, and dances were held there frequently. These attempts at social and cultural

¹⁵Loc. cit.

¹⁶Thomson, op. cit., p. 57.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 65.

development were meager but were quite an achievement for such a small settlement.

In March of 1886 a railroad company was formed at Topeka called the Chicago, Kansas and Nebraska Railroad.¹⁸ This event was of great significance to the Paxico Community in general and to the old Paxico settlement in particular. The Chicago, Kansas, and Nebraska began construction of its road west from Topeka in the summer of 1886. In July, Newbury township and three other townships in Wabaunsee County, through which the railroad was to pass, voted decisively for the railroad bonds. The vote was 690 for and 29 against the issue.¹⁹ The proposed route for the railroad was scheduled to follow the Mill Creek Valley, but both Newbury and the Paxico settlement at Strowig's Mill were by-passed. Newbury and old Paxico both attempted to influence the road to change its plans but were unsuccessful. The railroad company finally agreed to compromise by placing its proposed station at a point on the north bank of Mill Creek about one-half mile west of Strowig's Mill and a mile southwest of Newbury.²⁰ This location was made the basis for a new townsite and the town was laid out in the winter of 1886. It was called Nuttman's Addition.²¹ This name was selected because the land purchased for the town site by the Topeka Town Company had belonged to G. A. Nuttman. An attempt was made to change the name to Newbury after the old town site of Newbury had been vacated, but this maneuver was defeated by the Paxico interests.²² When the town charter was granted on December 29,

¹⁸Seventh Annual Report of Kansas Railroad Commissioners for 1889.
(Topeka: Kansas Publishing House, 1889) p. 277.

¹⁹Wabaunsee County Herald, July 17, 1886.

²⁰Topeka Journal, March 19, 1935.

²¹Business Directory and History of Wabaunsee County, op. cit., p. 38.

²²Loc. cit.

1886, it stated that the company would be called The Paxico Town Company.²³

Most of the business places at Newbury had moved to the new town site before it was formally laid out. John Copp moved his store from the Mill Creek bridge, and the post office was also removed to the new town.²⁴ Mr. George Anderson of St. Marys, who was a member of the Paxico Town Company, built a hotel and the largest general store in Paxico. Incidentally, the original store building is still standing and is the largest building in town serving as a general store. It is now owned by the Glotzbach Brothers, having been in the family since 1900.²⁵ The town continued its growth through the winter of 1886 and 1887. The first dwelling house in town was constructed by A. R. Strowig in the winter of 1887. He also built a large hardware store and engaged in the buying and selling of wheat and cattle.²⁶ Real estate values climbed steadily as new businesses were established and private residences were constructed. G. A. Nuttman plotted the first three blocks in Paxico in April, 1887, and sold two lots on the main street to Joseph Brandt for \$100.00.²⁷ During the following summer, Mr. Brandt sold these lots to George W. Watson of Topeka for \$150.00, and one year later George Watson sold the same two lots for \$400.00 to Fred Frey of Paxico.²⁸ These transactions were typical of the speed in which Paxico was growing, both in wealth and prestige.

The first newspaper, The Paxico Courier, was published on August 30, 1888, by L. E. Hoffman. It was entirely a local institution and was dedicated to the advancement of local affairs. The subscription price was

²³See Appendix.

²⁴Topeka Journal, op. cit.

²⁵Carl Glotzbach, Interview.

²⁶Thomson, op. cit., p. 300

²⁷Paxico Courier, August 30, 1888.

²⁸Loc. cit.

\$1.50 per year, and the first year's issues were to be devoted to the task of telling the world about the future of the city of Paxico.²⁹ At the time the Courier was established, Paxico seemed to be the city of the future. Mr. Hoffman, who had been in the newspaper business in Alma, firmly believed that Paxico was destined to be a large and populous town. The Paxico Improvement and Development Society had been formed in the summer of 1888 and met monthly. In its report of August 30, 1888, the Society reported that Paxico wanted its coal prospects developed as coal out-croppings had been discovered nearby and prospects appeared bright for an important new industry. Drilling was already under way at nearby St. Marys and the Rock Island had proposed to build a branch line from Paxico to St. Marys.³⁰ This venture was never attempted because the coal deposits were not as extensive as first estimated. In 1888, however, this project was being urged by the people of the community with great enthusiasm.

The Society also called attention to the need for someone to operate a stone quarry and to establish a creamery and cheese factory. In an effort to attract capitalists, the Society put out the following advertisement:

Paxico is destined to be a large and populous town. It is beautiful and healthful in location, and serves a rich territory. The people here are energetic and hard-working. Now is the time for investments and business openings.³¹

The optimism of the Improvement Society was well grounded in September of 1888 as Paxico was enjoying a constantly increasing trade from the surrounding area. The town by this time was more than 18 months old and showed

²⁹Loc. cit.

³⁰Paxico Courier, September 7, 1888.

³¹Loc. cit.

little sign of slowing down its progress toward becoming a first-class city. In spite of its rapid building program, Paxico needed two dozen or more dwellings in September of 1888. Other improvements, such as an implement repair shop and a bank, were also needed. These improvements were largely taken care of in the fall and winter of 1888. The incorporation of Paxico was urged on November 1, 1888 in the Courier by Mr. Hoffman and in every issue thereafter but to no avail. Too much opposition to the idea developed from elements in the town who thought taxes would be increased.³²

In the summer of 1888 the first sidewalks in the town were laid by Dr. Dargatz between his drug store and the meat market. Private citizens continued to build private sidewalks until the town was incorporated in 1914. In addition to being urged to build sidewalks, the people were asked to cut the weeds in its streets, and it was a matter of civic pride to get them cut. Even after incorporation, several weed ordinances were passed and were recorded in the city books. In spite of weeds, mud, and lack of housing, Paxico greeted the new year of 1889 with confidence and prosperity.

The leading business firms advertising in the Courier on January 17, 1889, were as follows: Dittman and Fry, blacksmithing and horse shoeing; Anderson and Company, a general store dealing in all types of merchandise; Guth and Strowig, a general store; Dargatz and Nuttman, drugs and medicine; Boyer Brothers, Paxico Lumber Yard; Anderson and Company, Hotel Paxico; A. C. Kunzle, City Meat Market; and J. H. Meyer, City Barber Shop. The town also had two doctors, D. H. Hazard and H. C. Dargatz. Mr. Hoffman reported that all of these enterprises were successful and making money in the winter

³²Paxico Courier, November 1, 1888.

of 1889. This report is well substantiated by the Paxico Market report for the week of January 17, 1889. Wheat, which was the life blood of the Paxico Community, was selling at 89 cents a bushel.³³ Other commodities, such as corn, oats, eggs, apples, onions, butter, and flour, were also bringing top prices. By late spring of 1889, Paxico was doing more business for a town its size than any town in eastern Kansas.³⁴ Its businessmen seemed determined to make Paxico the leading town in the county. In the summer of 1889, Paxico was shipping more grain than any other station in the Kansas area, on the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad, which was the only railroad serving the community as it had absorbed the Chicago, Kansas and Nebraska Railroad on June 13, 1888.³⁵

The prosperity of the town did not bring much money into the coffers of the Courier in the spring and summer of 1889. Subscriptions were slow to come in and although advertising was quite good the paper lost money. In June, 1889, Mr. Hoffman leased the Courier to Oscar Rose who published it until September 1, 1889.³⁶ An error in the lease agreement enabled Mr. Hoffman to break the contract. On September 1, 1889, he sold the paper to Matt Thomson, who removed the Courier from Paxico and set it up in Alma as the Alma Signal.³⁷ The Courier was the only paper to be published in Paxico until after 1900. Some reports indicate that a paper called the "Paxico Picayune" was started about 1914 but no records of such a paper have been

³³Paxico Courier, January 17, 1889.

³⁴Ibid., May 9, 1889.

³⁵Seventh Annual Report of Kansas Railroad Commissioner, 1889, Loc. cit.

³⁶Thomson, op. cit., p. 360.

³⁷Loc. cit.

discovered.³⁸

In the two and one-half years the town of Paxico had been in existence, it had contributed greatly to the Paxico Community, both economically and culturally. The advent of new settlers into the Community had been greatly facilitated by the success enjoyed by the town.

Thus the dawn of the "gay nineties" was greeted with enthusiasm by the intrepid pioneers of a community that seemed destined to surpass even the eulogistic predictions of the Courier. Indeed the only business failure in Paxico up to 1890 was the Courier, which as mentioned before had failed to prosper in the midst of the Paxico boom.

The growth of economic activity was more than matched by the religious and educational advances during the decade of the nineties. The Methodists who had long been zealous in both religious and educational affairs had constructed a large church and rectory in Paxico by 1892.³⁹ At Newbury during this period, the Catholic Church was also very active especially in the field of education. As noted before, the Catholics had completed their church in 1887 but had done little in the field of education. In 1891 under the leadership of Rev. Joseph Hohe, however, a parochial school was started and grew considerably during the next few years. Its first enrollment totaled 54 pupils in 1891 and by 1900 had grown to more than 100. These pupils were crowded into the old frame church which had been abandoned after the new church was built in 1887.⁴⁰ The school was not only crowded but also only one teacher handled the instruction for the entire school.

³⁸O. J. Glotzbach, Interview.

³⁹Alma Signal, August 27, 1892.

⁴⁰Weitharn, Interview.

His salary averaged about \$43 a month at this time.

The school year consisted of four months at the Catholic school and five months at public school District No. 31. In this way, the pupils of Catholic parents attended nine months of the year while Protestant children only attended the five month term. The practice was for the Catholic pupils to move all their equipment to the public school for the five month term.⁴¹

In 1904 a significant change took place in the school at Newbury. Rev. August J. Wieners, who succeeded Rev. Hohe, was able to obtain the services of the Benedictine sisters of Atchison for teaching the school. Sister Etheltreda and Sister Philamena arrived in 1904 and taught for a year in the old church. In 1905, a rock school was constructed opposite the church and still serves today as the grade school for Newbury's Catholic population.⁴²

The growth in the cultural aspects of the Paxico Community as evidenced by the new churches and schools was in keeping with the spirit of the inhabitants. The backers of the town and community continued their hopes of building a flourishing community by developing a balanced economy based on industry as well as agriculture.

The coal deposits that had been so promising had failed to materialize and the coveted Santa Fe spur line was lost. These setbacks however, did not dampen the enthusiasm of the community, and to offset these misfortunes a flourishing building industry based on its timber resources was developed.⁴³ The flour mill was expanded and made into an even more efficient plant during this period.⁴⁴ In spite of these and other endeavors, however, by

⁴¹O. J. Glotzbach, Interview.

⁴²Wietharn, Interview.

⁴³O. J. Glotzbach, Interview.

⁴⁴Loc. cit.

1900 Paxico had not fullfilled the promise of its early boom years.

A subtle change was taking place in the development of the town, and this change was to be a decided influence on its subsequent growth. This is not to say that it had reached its peak of economic, social, and cultural progress, yet the new faces in Paxico were not new at all but were the old settlers of Newbury moving to town to invest the profits from their farming enterprises.

Such men as the Glotzbachs, Muckenthalers, and Michaelis began to replace the Boltons, Cohens, and Goldstandts. Thus, as the new century began new influences were being introduced into Paxico proper. In the next chapter, these influences are described and evaluated as they relate to the history of the Paxico Community from 1900 to the present.

Chapter IV

THE PAXICO COMMUNITY, 1900-1950

The first decade of the new century was important in the history of Paxico and the surrounding community. By 1910 the character of the town had changed almost completely. One of these changes was in the religious aspect of social relationships. The Catholic influence gained a stronger foothold than previously at the expense of the Methodist and Congregationalist groups. Both the Protestant and Catholic members of the community had always been German so no new nationality traits were introduced with the change of ownership of most of the business places. As mentioned before, the new city fathers of Paxico were not new in the history and development of Paxico Community. In fact, the men who were now prominent in Paxico proper included the very first settlers in Newbury township.

The leaders of the vanguard of new business men into Paxico in 1901 were C. J. Glotzbach and Frank Muckenthaler, both familiar faces on the Newbury and Paxico scene.¹ C. J. Glotzbach purchased the town's largest general store, which had been built by Anderson and Company in 1887, from the Bolton brothers early in 1901. He also purchased the wheat elevator as a part of the deal for the store. Furthermore, the undertaker's establishment which had been run by the Boltons was obtained by Mr. Glotzbach, and he became the town undertaker. Frank Muckenthaler opened a hardware store and lumber yard shortly afterward. Several other Catholic families invested in Paxico business and commercial enterprises. By 1907, the following businesses were located in Paxico: State Bank of Paxico, Joe Hund; blacksmiths,

¹O. J. Glotzbach, Interview, and others.

Jesse Davis and O. J. Pride; barbers, George Woodey and J. H. Snyder; cobbler, H. Knoebber; druggist, J. H. Nuttman; grocery, Oehms and Louis Palenski; general merchandise, C. J. Glotzbach and C. Thomson; hardware and lumber yard, Muckenthaler; harness, Louis Palenski; physicians and surgeons, Dr. Menard and Dr. W. J. Richardson; wagon works, S. Shoyner; and restaurant, J. C. Phipps.² Most of the new investors were successful farmers who wished to "retire" to an easier life in the city. They were the best of the thrifty, hard working German immigrants who had made a financial success in the community. Basically, they were conservative and cautious business men, reflecting their maturity and Catholic training. No new innovations marked their advent to the Paxico scene, the hard times in the 1890's had not spared even the thrifty German farmers. They were not gambling on unsafe investments again. Many of them had been taken in by the golden promise of cool speculators and some had lost quite heavily.³ Although no record was found of these so-called shady deals, some evidence of them seemed to be presented in interviews with numerous natives. Particularly, some frauds in the coal development scheme apparently took place.

The atmosphere that pervaded Paxico from 1900 to 1910 was one of cautious optimism. The wild enthusiasm of the eighties and early nineties was gone as the town, sobered by its setbacks and dominated by conservatives, settled down to a rather stodgy existence. In searching for a reason for the rather sudden change in the tenor of life in Paxico, the writer believes that the failure of the town to become the junction of the Rock Island rail

²Business Directory and History of Wabaunsee County. (Topeka: The Kansas Directory Company, 1907) p. 40.

³O. J. Glotzbach, Interview.

lines was the biggest factor. When the Rock Island made the first survey in the late 1890's for a location for a junction of the northwest and southwest lines, Paxico was decided upon.⁴ A later survey in 1900 proved disastrous to Paxico. Officials of the railroad decided that the heavy fills required to build the junction in Paxico, which were necessitated by building in the Kaw River Valley, were too costly. After many new surveys and plans the junction was located at McFarland, and Paxico was left four miles off the main route.⁵ This action cost the town a lot because the Rock Island eventually built a roundhouse in McFarland as well as other shops and a large hotel. This unfortunate turn of events was in the opinion of the writer, the beginning of the end for real permanent growth of Paxico in an economic sense. The little community did not fade away over night, yet to the impartial observer the future of Paxico was logically to be limited to a less spectacular growth than before.

Prosperity did not desert the Paxico area with the loss of the junction even though it was a severe blow. The new leaders and business men of the town began to advocate anew the incorporation of Paxico as a third class city. Since 1889 when the first issue of the Paxico Courier had beat the drums for incorporation, strong sentiment both pro and con had been expressed on the subject. The controversy grew particularly bitter in the summer of 1908. On July 6, James Russell, John Lieurance, and Mary E. Mock filed a protest with the board of County Commissioners against the incorporation of Paxico.⁶ These people were non-residents who objected to the increased taxes they believed that incorporation would bring. Several instances of such opposition

⁴Alma Signal, October 30, 1913.

⁵Loc. cit.

⁶Records of the City of Paxico, Office of County Clerk, July 6, 1908.

occurred and the fight continued all during the first decade of the 1900's. As the second decade of the new century approached, life in Paxico was disturbed only by the continuation of the battle for incorporation.

Little change took place in the social or political forces in the community from 1900 to 1910. The population of Paxico was between 300 and 350, of which 150 were Negroes. By this time, most of the Negroes had ceased farming operations and worked almost exclusively as section hands on the railroad. After 1900, many more Negroes came to the Paxico area, especially after the building of the junction at McFarland. They were employed to work on the coal chutes and to do all the dirty work around the railroad yards.⁷

The colored population was a valuable asset to Paxico, and the merchants often attended their church services to win their friendship. Mr. Otto Glotzbach, son of C. J. Glotzbach, was in frequent attendance at the two Negro churches, Baptist and Methodist, although he and his family were life long Catholics. He reports that the preacher would interrupt the service and give the Glotzbach store a boost from the pulpit as soon as the family would enter the church. Of course, when the collection plate was passed the preacher got his reward, so to speak.⁸ Times were not always good for the Negro churches, and it early became the practice to hire one preacher for both the Methodist and Baptist Churches. In the warmer weather, the windows of both churches were removed so that the preacher could be heard by both congregations at the same time. The sermons reportedly could be heard for half a mile on a clear day and were a colorful part of the life of

⁷O. J. Glotzbach, Interview.

⁸Loc. cit.

Paxico. This practice was retained until the early 1930's when most of the Negro population drifted away to the larger cities of Topeka and Kansas City.⁹

Today only one Negro preacher and a small Methodist church remain but the zeal of the remaining few offsets the lack of numbers. At the present time, the Negroes of Paxico still work primarily on the railroad. A colorful celebration which was enjoyed by both the Negro and white population of Paxico early in the 1900's was the Emancipation celebration which took place on August 3 of each year. It was a gala occasion and usually was attended by several hundred persons. In the early days of the celebration, a merry-go-round was the feature attraction. It was a horse drawn affair and quite crude but served the purpose just the same. Paxico was also famous for its Fourth of July celebrations which were gala affairs attracting many hundreds. The usual procedure was to spend the day "out in the timber" where beer, barbeque, and baseball were the order of the day for men, women and children, both black and white.¹⁰ These German immigrants and former slaves were really enthusiastic about the "freedom days" of their country.

Colorful religious ceremonies were also a part of the life of the German Catholics, who in spite of their new environment, practiced their faith much as they had in the fatherland. All of the ceremonies of the homeland were carried out faithfully. On Rogation Day the Litany of the Saints was chanted as the congregation marched through the streets. On Corpus Christi the streets of Newbury were decorated with boughs of trees and garlands of flowers. Three or four altars were erected where the

⁹Loc. cit.

¹⁰Loc. cit.

Benediction was given in the course of the procession through the little town.¹¹ A very impressive ceremony was conducted on June 8, 1909, when Father Weiners celebrated the silver jubilee of his ordination to the priesthood. High mass was celebrated by Father Weiners, and Father DeSemdt of St. Marys was master of ceremonies.¹² The sermon was preached in both German and English, which in itself was an indication of the cultural and social aspects of the Paxico community.

The following years were a succession of routine work in the life of the priest and the parishioners. On January 17, 1921, however, a major calamity befell the Newbury Congregation. The church was completely destroyed by fire. The fire started in the flue and, fanned by a strong northwest breeze, soon was out of control. No fire fighting equipment was at hand and very little water, which made control of the fire virtually impossible. It was at this time that the vitality of the Newbury Parish, which included most of the Paxico Community, was most clearly demonstrated. The ashes of the church were hardly cool before the parishioners were planning a new church larger and finer than the old.¹³

The corner stone for the new church was laid on April 22, 1922, by Father Kuhlmann of St. Marys. H. W. Brinkman of Emporia was the architect and Mont Green of Manhattan the general contractor. The stone work was done by F. Schilling and sons of Paxico, the heating and electric wiring by William Gibhart of St. Marys. The members of the parish contributed the labor and the concrete for the foundations and hauled all the building materials.

¹¹Loc. cit.

¹²Loc. cit.

¹³Loc. cit.

When finished, the church was 54 feet wide and 129 feet long. It was built of tapestry brick with limestone trimming at a cost of \$45,000. With its two large towers surmounted by golden crosses and its red tile roof, it dominates the whole western end of the Mill Creek Valley. The first mass was said in the new church on Thanksgiving Day in 1922.¹⁴

The next ten years were arduous ones for the parish and Father Weiners. The good father preached his farewell sermon March 20, 1932 and on the following Monday night was stricken by apoplexy. He died on Tuesday morning, March 22, 1932 and was buried in the Sacred Heart Cemetery at Newbury. A remarkable personality had passed from the Newbury and Paxico scene.

Father Weiners was replaced by Father Jacobs in April 1932, who served until February 24, 1934, when he was replaced by Father Florian J. Reichert. This was the sixtieth year of the founding of Sacred Heart Parish, and on Thanksgiving, November 29, 1934, the anniversary was celebrated. Fifteen pioneers, some of whom were children when the first mass had been offered, were given a place of honor in the church. These oldest members of the parish were Henry Michaelis, Michael Hund, Leopold and Joseph Muckenthaler, Valentine Mock, Barney Nuttman, Joseph and Valentine Glotzbach, Mrs. John Zeller, Mrs. T. H. Seeling, Mrs. Moritz Hund, Mrs. A. B. Hesse, Mrs. Frances Meinhardt, Mrs. John Wahl and Mrs. Joseph Muckenthaler.¹⁵ These pioneers were now the leaders of a thriving community and could look with pride on the past sixty years of achievement by the German Catholic and his church.

¹⁴Loc. cit.

¹⁵Loc. cit.

About three years after the big sixty-year celebration, a church census by Father Reichert indicated that the parish consisted of 83 families and 453 members. Also, 106 children were in the grade school at this time.

The 1930's were trying times even for so devoted a group and often the interest on the church debt of \$10,000 was difficult to obtain. Yet in spite of the difficulties, repairs were made on the church, rectory, Sister's home, and the school. In 1941, gifts by Frank and Mary Hesse reduced the church debt to a nominal sum and one year later it was completely written off. Father Reichert served the parish for fourteen years. Although his parish lost more than 100 people during his last few years, the church was left debt free and flourishing.

When Father Weitharn succeeded Father Reichert in 1948, the parish consisted of 79 families but totaled only 342 persons. This was a loss of more than 100 members in ten years. In spite of the loss of numbers, the church was entirely redecorated for the diamond jubilee celebration held in 1946.¹⁶ This celebration was a fine tribute to the indomitable spirit of the German Catholic who has contributed so much to the culture of the Paxico Community. The church was thriving and is still a driving force in the Paxico Community.

The success of the church from 1910 to 1950 was hardly shared by the town of Paxico whose citizens were so much a part of the Newbury Parish. By 1910, the economic transitions within the town had been completed. The major enterprises had been left in the hands of the German Catholics headed by C. J. Glotzbach and Frank Muckenthaler. Perhaps this situation explains in part the success of the church at Newbury for now its parishoners controlled most of the economy of the community and could support the church in its time of need.

¹⁶Loc. cit.

After the consolidation of the economic power of the Glotzbach clan, which involved much of the business life of Paxico, the movement for incorporation grew stronger. Most of the newer business men were active in the controversy over establishing Paxico as a third class city. In the spring of 1914, the forces favoring incorporation won out and accordingly petitioned the Wabaunsee County Commissioners for permission to go ahead with the plans to incorporate. The petition stated that a majority of the electors of the unincorporated town of Paxico favored the move, and that as the population exceeded two hundred no reason existed for the request not to be granted. Actually, the petition stated that the population of the proposed town was more than 350. In the Topeka Capital of July 5, 1914, or about four months later, the population of Paxico was stated to be about 400 when it was made a third class city. In part, the terms of the petition for incorporation were as follows:

Beginning at the established corner stone at the Northwest corner of the Northwest quarter ($\frac{1}{4}$) of the Southwest quarter ($\frac{1}{4}$) of section twenty-six (26) Township eleven (11) Range eleven (11) in Wabaunsee County and the state of Kansas thence East Eighty (80) rods, thence West Twelve Hundred and Sixty-five (1265) feet, thence South Seventeen Hundred and twenty-five (1725) feet, thence West Seven Hundred and Fifty-six (756) feet, thence South Seven Hundred and Thirty-five (735) feet, thence East Seven Hundred and Sixteen (716) feet, thence South about One Hundred and Fifty (150) feet to a point due west of the place of the beginning.

That a majority of the taxable inhabitants of the said town are in favor of incorporation and we therefore pray that the said town of Paxico may be incorporated as a city to third class by the name and style of "The City of Paxico".¹⁷

The petition containing the above data was presented in March and was considered at the regular April meeting of the Wabaunsee County Board of

¹⁷Records of City of Paxico, County Court House, Alma, Kansas.

Commissioners. The Board was favorable to the petition and on April 7th instructed L. B. Burt to notify A. R. Strowig of his appointment as Clerk for the first election of city officers to be held in the city of Paxico on April 27, 1914. This election was to be held pursuant to the order of the Board incorporating the town of Paxico in compliance with the laws of the State of Kansas. Mr. Strowig accepted the commission, and the notice for election of a mayor, five councilmen, and a police judge for Paxico was posted on April 17, 1914. The election was to be held at the Woodman's hall, on lot nineteen, main street in the city of Paxico. The judges of the election were to be C. J. Glotzbach, C. Thomson, and Jesse Davis. The clerks were F. Muckenthaler and A. R. Strowig, and the board of canvassers consisted of L. F. Palenske, G. Brewer, and F. Breitenstein.¹⁸

The nominations for the city officials were made at a town meeting on April 20, virtually no campaigning was carried on, and the candidates were elected on April 27.¹⁹ The first city council meeting was held on May 5, 1914, having been called by the first mayor of the city, Frank Muckenthaler. The new councilmen attending this meeting were J. C. Phipps, F. Thomson, George Wilson, Carl Glotzbach, a son of C. J. Glotzbach, and L. F. Palenske; the city clerk was W. E. Lund.²⁰

The first ordinance passed by the new council was to approve officially the Alma Signal as the official city paper.²¹ On May 19, 1914, Dr. C. E. Menard was appointed city treasurer and bonded for \$1000.²²

¹⁸Loc. cit.

¹⁹Carl Glotzbach, Interview, 1951.

²⁰Minutes of City Council of Paxico, May 5, 1914.

²¹Loc. cit.

²²Ibid., May 19, 1914.

At the second meeting of the city council on May 28, 1914, the first real legislative ordinances were passed. These ordinances dealt with many questions of social relationships, chiefly misdeameanors and punishments. A five to one hundred dollar fine was imposed for assembling a group of people for unlawful purposes. Fines were also levied for disturbing a lawful meeting and for fighting and using profane language. A speed limit of ten miles per hour was placed on all vehicles in the city limits with no racing of horses or autos in the city. The council neglected to appoint a marshall to carry out its orders. Therefore, on May 29, 1914 at a special meeting of the city council, Jesse Davis was appointed city marshall at a salary of \$7.50 a month and was bonded at \$250.²³

On June 16, 1914, a committee to investigate the building of a jail and to choose its site and location was appointed. At the same time, the new city marshall was ordered to care for the street lights and was also given a list of unpaid poll taxes to collect.²⁴ A special meeting of the city council was called on July 14, 1914, for the purpose of creating a board of health. The board was established a short time later and consisted of two members, Dr. W. F. Richardson and R. C. Waldern, who were appointed for two years. Other business at this meeting was to raise the speed limit to twelve miles an hour. This ordinance, however, was not to apply to doctors on emergency calls.²⁵

These first attempts at governing the new city are interesting, especially when contrasted with our present day society. Yet, they were quite an experience for these old German settlers many of whom spoke the German language

²³Ibid., May 29, 1914.

²⁴Ibid., June 16, 1914.

²⁵Ibid., July 14, 1914.

more fluently than English.

In April, 1915, Frank Muckenthaler was again elected mayor, receiving a total of fifth-three votes. F. H. Wilt was elected police judge, and Tom Pride, a Negro, received one vote for police judge.²⁶ Nineteen-fifteen was the "year of the sidewalk" in Paxico. The first ordinance concerning sidewalks was passed on April 28, 1915, and subsequent council meetings dealt with some phase of their construction. On November 19, 1915, the council passed an ordinance that compelled the owners to build sidewalks within 15 days after notification or have the city build them and add the cost to taxes on property.²⁷ Property taxes in Paxico at this time were two and one-half mills on each dollar of evaluation. This rate was for general tax purposes for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1916.²⁸

Routine matters were handled by the city fathers in these early years without many political or social implications. With the exception of the physical appearance in the matter of sidewalks and compulsory weed cutting, life in the town was not altered to a great degree as its new government continued to function. Some grumbling was directed at the new taxes and various regulations, but times were good and the war in Europe overshadowed local problems.

The community was completely loyal to its new mother country and no evidence of active opposition to America's entry into the war was found. Many citizens of Paxico and Newbury fought in the American Expeditionary Forces. Among them was Ben Glotzbach who was severely wounded in France

²⁶Minutes City Council, April 7, 1915.

²⁷Ibid., November 19, 1915.

²⁸Ibid., July 21, 1915.

in 1917.²⁹ Most of the German-Americans in Paxico and vicinity had come to America to escape German militarism, and they were not at all interested in aiding its success now by opposition to American intervention in the war.

The community was prosperous during the war years as its farm commodities brought top prices at the Glotzbach elevator. The town had deposits of more than \$150,000 in its local bank, and business was booming.³⁰ The decade from 1910 to 1920 was the most prosperous in the history of Paxico. This observation is based on the receipts of the wheat elevator operated by Ben Glotzbach and on the volume of business done by the Glotzbach Brothers' store.³¹ The various facilities of the town were improved during this period. The streets and alleys were widened, and bridges, culverts, sewers were built or improved. An additional mill levy was made in 1919 for these improvements. By 1920, Paxico was a prosperous rural town with several features of a modern city.

In 1921, Frank Muckenthaler, who had been elected mayor every year since 1914, retired. His successor was O. W. Schwalm who took office on April 5, 1921.³² Under his leadership, a bond issue for the installation of electric lights was approved by the overwhelming vote of ninety-eight to eighteen on November 16, 1921.³³ Fifty-five-hundred dollars in bonds were issued for a 20 year term, and work on the project was soon under way. Early in 1922, the town used its gas lights for the last time, for now the

²⁹Ben Glotzbach, Interview.

³⁰Joe Hund, Interview.

³¹Ben Glotzbach, Interview, January, 1951.

³²Minutes City Council, April 5, 1921.

³³Ibid., November 16, 1921.

new electric lights were completed.³⁴

Schwalm was again elected mayor in 1922 and also in 1923. The town continued to promote civic improvements throughout these years. Several small bridges were built under the supervision of the street commissioner, Arthur Schilling, and the streets were graveled and otherwise improved.³⁵ The Glotzbachs were also active in Paxico politics during this entire period. Schwalm and Ben Glotzbach had been on the city council since 1919. In fact, Ben was on the council from 1919 to 1943 except for the 1925 term. He and Joe Hund audited the city books in 1923 and found the town to be in good financial condition.³⁶

The early twenties saw Paxico reach its peak in civic achievement. By 1925, when Dr. C. E. Menard was elected mayor, the city had considerably improved its services to the citizens. On August 28, 1925, a new feature was added to the rather impressive list of civic improvements. It was on that date that a volunteer fire department was organized, consisting of a chief, assistant chief, and ten men. The members of the department were appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the city council.³⁷ The chief was to keep all records, such as time, location, value, and insurance that would be involved in a fire. Ironically enough, most of the records burned in the disastrous series of fires that swept Paxico in the early 1930's, thus erasing all data pertinent to them.³⁸ A new speed limit was also a feature of Mayor Menard's administration. In 1927, a speed of twenty miles an hour

³⁴Ibid., February 16, 1922.

³⁵Ibid., September 18, 1923.

³⁶Ben Glotzbach, Interview.

³⁷Minutes City Council, August 28, 1925.

³⁸Richard Glotzbach, Interview, 1951.

was established for Paxico. The new age of speed and more modern transportation was reflected in Paxico by more than a new speed limit during the period of the late twenties and early thirties.

By 1929, the elevator at Paxico was beginning to feel the impact of competition from more distant towns. The trucking of wheat to Topeka or St. Mary's was becoming more common. Also, many citizens of Paxico began to leave for the cities, especially the Negro population. As the depression grew worse, especially in the rural farm areas, more and more Negroes left Paxico for the cities of Topeka and Kansas City. In addition to the business and population losses, Paxico had an unfortunate bank failure in February of 1931, when the Paxico State Bank closed its doors. Unwise speculation in bad securities by a director of the bank was responsible for its collapse. Eventually, the depositors were fully reimbursed by the bank owners, but confidence in Paxico's financial agencies was diminished for several years.³⁹

In 1931, before the full impact of the new economic forces and the coming depression had taken its toll, Paxico's taxable wealth was evaluated at \$170,000. The tax levy was 8 mills for the coming year of 1932, from which most of the revenue to pay for the civic improvements of the "Golden Twenties" was to come.⁴⁰ Unfortunately for Paxico, the "Terrible Thirties", with dust, depression, and drought, were made even more disastrous by a series of fires which occurred from 1931 to 1935. On February 19, 1931, the hardware store of Frank Muckenthaler was destroyed by fire, and in the

³⁹Otto Glotzbach, Interview.

⁴⁰Alma Signal Enterprise, August 13, 1931.

spring of 1935 the largest fire occurred resulting in the destruction of the lumber yard and several other buildings. These business buildings were not replaced due to hard times and a continuing loss of markets to more distant cities.⁴¹

On January 18, 1933, Mayor W. R. Guth applied for federal funds to aid in caring for the unemployed.⁴² By August 14, the funds were made available and Louis Palenske, Ben Glotzbach, and Jerry Sutter were appointed to oversee the expenditure of the relief fund.⁴³ A local poor commission was also set up by the Kansas Emergency Relief Committee to sign up the poor and needy for work on street improvement.⁴⁴ Thus, Paxico sought to weather the storm of depression and unemployment.

The town did not recover economically to a point where buildings or businesses were replaced. After the middle thirties, no new buildings were constructed and most of the business places were damaged by fire. The only major structure that remained completely untouched was the store building of the Glotzbachs. This structure is more than sixty years old and still retains the flavor of the 1890's. The fortunes of most of the citizens of Paxico were greatly reduced by the disasters of the thirties. The Glotzbachs, however, were able to salvage most of their holdings. The elevator business together with their store and farms were saved. Also in 1935, Florial Glotzbach became Postmaster and remained in that post until his death in 1952.⁴⁵

⁴¹Joe Hund, Interview.

⁴²Minutes City Council, January 18, 1933.

⁴³Ibid., August 14, 1933.

⁴⁴Loc. cit.

⁴⁵Otto Glotzbach, Interview.

The period from 1935 to the present has seen Paxico suffer the fate of most rural towns. A continual loss of population and trade to the larger cities has reduced the population to about 150 at the present time. No prospects for further gains in population or economic enterprises are evident for the future. The last hope for a change in the tempo of life in Paxico was lost when State Highway 10 was located one-half mile west of the town. Yet in spite of this latest reversal, there is no evidence that the two basic factors in the history of Paxico are any less vital than they were fifty years ago. The philosophy of hard work and frugal living of the old German immigrant still pervades the Paxico Community and the lofty spires of the church at Newbury offers a source of spiritual strength. Surely if "history lies in nature", Paxico will survive its latest setback as it always has and will remain to serve the citizens of the community.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Documents

Records of Sacred Heart Church located in the library of the church at Newbury Kansas. These records are quite complete and cover the history of the Newbury Parish minutely.

Records of the City of Paxico, County Court House, Alma, Kansas.

Minutes of the City Council of Paxico from May 5, 1914 to August 14, 1933 inclusive.

The original town charter of the "Town of Paxico" as found in the archives of the Glotzbach family.

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Williams, Mary W. Peoples and Politics of Latin America. New York: Ginn and Company, 1945.

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General References

Wilder, D. W. Annals of Kansas. Topeka: Dwight Thacher, Kansas Publishing House, 1886. p. 483.

Cyclopedia of Kansas History Vol. 11, Chicago: Standard Publishing Company. p. 339.

Seventh Annual Report of the Kansas Board of Railroad Commissioners for the Year Ending December 1, 1889. Topeka: Kansas Publishing House, 1889. p. 277.

Interviews

Mrs. M. M. Carrol - Mrs. Carrol is the publisher of the Alma Signal Enterprise Alma, Kansas. As a former resident of Paxico in her girlhood she was a great source of information.

Ben Glotzbach - Mr. Glotzbach, son of C. J. Glotzbach, is a life long resident of Paxico and a merchant there. Until 1953 he ran an elevator in Paxico; he is still in the general mercantile business today.

Carl Glotzbach - Mr. Glotzbach is a merchant of Paxico and was born and raised in the community, a son of C. J. Glotzbach.

O. J. Glotzbach - Mr. Glotzbach, son of C. J. Glotzbach, was a resident of Paxico most of his life. Formerly in business in Paxico, he now resides in Wamego, Kansas.

Richard Glotzbach - Mr. Glotzbach, a cousin of O. J. Glotzbach and mayor of Paxico in 1950, is in the garage business in Paxico at the present time.

Joseph Hund - Mr. Hund is a life long resident of Paxico, a former banker; he was quite helpful in the financial background of Paxico.

Mrs. Katherine Meinhart - Mrs. Meinhart, a resident of Paxico, having lived there all her life. She is close to 90 years of age and her memory is quite good. Most of her statements were corroborated by her children.

Jim Nickols - Mr. Nickols is a son of Scy Nickols and still lives in the original home site of his father. A life long resident of Paxico, he is a worker on the railroad like his father before him.

Hattie Pride - Miss Pride is the daughter of Jack Pride, an original settler of Paxico. She still resides with her mother at Paxico. Her mother also gave some information but mostly corroborated her daughter's statements.

Reverend Albert Wietharn - Reverend Wietharn is Pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Newbury Township.

Newspapers

The Alma News, May 23, 1879.

Alma Signal, August 27, 1892.

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-----, October 3, 1888.

Wabaunsee County News, November 7, 1889.

-----, July 26, 1896.

Wabaunsee County Record, August 16, 1896.

Scrapbook of Newspaper Clippings of the Quivera Historical Society, Alma, Kansas. This scrapbook is now in the possession of the County Clerk of Wabaunsee County.

APPENDIX

CHARTER

of the

The Paxico Town Company

The undersigned, citizens of the State of Kansas, do hereby voluntarily associate ourselves together for the purpose of forming a private corporation under the laws of the State of Kansas, and do hereby certify:

FIRST.

That the name of this corporation shall be The Paxico Town Company.

SECOND.

That the purpose--for which this corporation is formed is the purchase location and laying out of a townsite and the sale and conveyance of the same in lots and subdivisions or otherwise.

THIRD.

That the place--where its business is to be transacted is at Paxson /sic/ Wabaunsee County Kansas.

FOURTH.

That the term for which this corporation is to exist is Ninety nine years.

FIFTH.

That the number of directors trustees of this corporation shall be five, and the names and residences of those who are appointed for the first year are:

<u>George F. Anderson</u>	<u>St. Marys, Kansas.</u>
<u>Clarence D. Brownell</u>	<u>St. Marys, Kansas.</u>
<u>Benjamin Bolton</u>	<u>New Berry, Kansas.</u>
<u>Michael Gehrt</u>	<u>New Berry, Kansas.</u>
<u>W. I. Boyer</u>	<u>St. Marys, Kansas.</u>

SIXTH.

That the estimated value of the goods, chattels, lands, rights and credits owned by the corporation is Thirty six hundred (\$3600) dollars.
 That the amount of the capital stock of this corporation shall be Thirty six hundred (\$3600) dollars,
 and shall be divided into One Hundred and forty-four shares of Twenty five (\$25) dollars each.

In Testimony Whereof, We have hereto subscribed our names, this 29th day of December, A. D. 18 86.

G. J. Anderson
C. D. Brownell
Benjamin Bolton
Michael Gehrt
W. I. Boyer

STATE OF KANSAS,

ss.

Wabaunsee County,

Personally appeared before me, a Notary Public in

and for said County, Kansas, the above-named

<u>George F. Anderson of</u>	<u>St. Marys, Kansas.</u>	<u>35 Shares</u>
<u>Clarence D. Brownell</u>	<u>St. Marys, Kansas.</u>	<u>35 Shares</u>
<u>Benjamin Bolton</u>	<u>New Berry, Kansas.</u>	<u>1 Share</u>
<u>Michael Gehrt</u>	<u>New Berry, Kansas.</u>	<u>72 Shares</u>
<u>W. I. Boyer</u>	<u>St. Marys, Kansas.</u>	<u>1 Share</u>

who are personally known to me to be the same persons who executed the foregoing instrument of writing, and duly acknowledge the execution of the same.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto
 subscribed my name, and affixed
 my notorial seal, this 29th
 day of December, A. D. 18 86

W. I. Bolton
 Notary Public

(My commission expires Feb. 5 1887)

STATE OF KANSAS

Office of Secretary of State.

I, E. B. Allen, Secretary of State of the State of Kansas, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the original instrument of writing filed in my office December 30, A. D. 18 86.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name, and affixed my official seal. Done at Topeka, Kansas, this 30th day of December, A. D. 1886.

E. B. Allen
 Secretary of State.