

THE FIRST HALF-CENTURY OF RANDOLPH, KANSAS,
AND COMMUNITY

by

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B. M., Bethany College, 1941

A THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of History and Government

KANSAS STATE COLLEGE
OF AGRICULTURE AND APPLIED SCIENCE

1954

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PREFACE

The purpose of this thesis is to present in historical fashion the backgrounds of the development of Randolph and community and also the attitudes, contributions, and influences of the people who settled and lived there during the development of the community. The majority of the settlers in the area were of Swedish and German descent.

The writer of this thesis has had a particular interest in this community, especially the Mariadahl settlement, because his father, a Swedish Lutheran minister, had both direct and indirect association with it. The writer as a boy participated in the gathering of funds for the support of the Children's Home.

The principal sources of information regarding this subject have been public records, history books, church histories and family sketches, and periodical and newspaper articles.

The writer acknowledges his indebtedness to Doctor Homer E. Socolofsky, of the department of History, Government, and Philosophy, for his constructive criticism and his suggestions which made this thesis possible. His guidance has been most valuable in the organization of this material. The writer also wishes to express his gratitude to Mr. and Mrs. John Holmstrom for their efforts and cooperation in making available valuable information concerning the early pioneers of the Blue Valley. Gratitude is also expressed to my wife, June, for her helpfulness, interest, and encouragement in these months of preparation of this paper.

CHAPTER I

THE ORIGIN AND SETTLEMENT OF RANDOLPH

Randolph is located in a fertile agricultural region of the Blue Valley of Kansas which embodies the broad expanse of the Blue River bottom--a valley edged by bluffs, the rims of which are outlined by a blue haze and are marked with outcroppings of limestone. The Big Blue River originates east of Grand Island, Nebraska, flows east and south into Kansas, and empties into the Kaw River just below Manhattan. The Little Blue River, a tributary of the Big Blue rises south of Hastings, Nebraska, and empties into the Big Blue at Blue Rapids, Kansas.¹

The area of Randolph is sort of a peninsula; formed by North Otter Creek on the east, and Fancy Creek on the west and south which flows east to the Big Blue River. The original plat contained five blocks; Whitson's addition of nine blocks was located to the north, and Beckman's addition was located a few lots south and west of the original plat. The town contained eleven acres in 1863 and was located on the south part of the southwest quarter of southeast section 33, Township 7.²

In 1855, Gardner Randolph with his family came from Illinois to the area that is now called Randolph.³ They staked out their

¹ The term "blue" probably arose from the reflection of the Kansas skies in the clear water of the river.

² A. T. Andreas and W. G. Cutler, History of Kansas (Chicago, 1883), p. 1302. Township 7 is Jackson Township.

³ The town was originally called Waterville. See p. 4.

claims along the Blue River and around the mouth of Fancy Creek. Randolph was a native of North Carolina. As a consequence of this fact when the status of Kansas statehood came up, the Randolph family threw all their influence in favor of Kansas becoming a slave state.⁴ In carrying out their policy of settlement, they scattered their claims and also tried to dictate who should make claims in the adjacent territory. Gardner Randolph was a typical town site boomer and had laid out two other towns both of which were failures.⁵ These ventures had not discouraged him, however, and his third attempt was carried on as he had planned. The town company proceeded to erect hewed log houses in different parts of the town; they were located one-third of a mile west of the present center of town. One of the buildings was designed as a blacksmith shop (in order to comply with the unwritten law of these early times, that three smokes and a blacksmith shop constituted a town) one was for a private dwelling, and the third, larger than the others, was to be a church. Randolph was assisted in this project by a Mr. Pease and other men. Shortly after Randolph and his associates had established themselves, Solomon Secrest, Edward Secrest, and Henry Shellenbaum came from Indiana and proceeded to take their claims within the area claimed by Randolph. John Fryhofer also staked a claim

⁴ As far as is known they had no slaves in this area. Interview with Mrs. Minnie Frederick, in Randolph, Kansas, May 24, 1954. Interview with Mrs. Katie Kunze, near Randolph, Kansas, May 25, 1954. Interview with William Secrest, in Manhattan, Kansas, June 3, 1954.

⁵ One was in Tennessee, the other in Illinois.

in this area in 1857. This, of course, stopped the plan of Randolph and family to monopolize the area surrounding and adjoining the town site, and finally merge it into a great plantation. However, Randolph and Pease had already built several log houses on the present site of Randolph.

About the time the houses were completed, J. K. Whitson and John Kress arrived and resolved to "jump" Randolph's town site then being held down by Pease and his family. This resulted in a lively claim contest in the United States land office at Ogden in 1859, when it was decided that neither party had complied with the law and that the tracts reverted to their original status, and the claimant who first made settlement would be recognized as the owner. Then "there was hurrying to and fro and mounting in hot haste" and a race as between life and death between two rivals, Whitson and Randolph, ensued.⁶ The two fierce racers kept some distance apart but nearly parallel to each other. Ogden was twenty-seven miles from Randolph, as the crow flies, and of course, much depended upon the endurance, wind, and going qualities of the horses. They had no blooded or graded speed animals then, in fact, there were fewer horses in the county in 1860 than there were in the smallest township by 1900.

Randolph rode the divide west of Mill Creek. Whitson crossed the breaks and stony bluffs of Wildcat and Mill Creek and turned out of his course to the home of his friend, John Kress, who lived one mile up the creek from what is now Stockdale. Here he

⁶ The Randolph Enterprise, March 12, 1891.

changed horses and pressed northward over bluff and through ravine toward his goal. After leaping from his foam-flecked horse he immediately plied his ax for a half hour in cutting down a tree for a house log. On looking up he beheld his antagonist approaching on his jaded nag, looking woe-begone and crestfallen. The young abolitionist had won the race, the day, and his home. Whitson married and moved into the house vacated by Pease which stood where the Randolph public square is now located.⁷

In the fall of 1860, the father of the Secrest brothers joined his sons. Mr. Condray bought out Randolph in the fall of 1864. In the fall of 1863, William Fryhofer joined his brother John, and in the following year, the father of the Fryhofer brothers came. Peter Heller and family also came in 1863.⁸

In 1856 when the town of Randolph was first laid out, it was called Waterville. Whitson was the promoter. Not until 1866 did Gust L. Ruthstrom open the first business house. The postoffice was first kept at the house of Randolph but was later moved to the town site; the town then took the name of the postoffice.⁹

In 1859 the town site of Waterville, as Randolph was then called, was surveyed and plotted by Whitson. Soon after the close

⁷ Ibid., September 13, 1906.

⁸ Historical Flat Book, Riley County, Kansas (Chicago, 1881), p. 26. Hereafter cited as Historical Flat Book.

⁹ Frank W. Blackmar, Cyclopedia of Kansas State History (Chicago, 1912), 2: p. 549. Interview with Ed Ruthstrom, near Leonardville, Kansas, May 25, 1954.

of the Civil War, in 1869, when the Central Branch of the Union Pacific Railroad was built and had a terminus near the mouth of Coon Creek, another town sprang up named Waterville. Since it was a railroad town and had great possibilities for growth and development, the people of the original town of Waterville were fearful that their town would lose its identity. This caused a great deal of confusion and led the people to clamor for the restoration of the name of Randolph. The name was changed to Randolph in 1876 in honor of Gardner Randolph.¹⁰

Randolph continued to grow and prosper until, in 1886, the population had reached 300. A petition for incorporation, signed by L. W. Hudson, Jas. H. Dow and others, was presented to the board of county commissioners; the town was then duly incorporated by order of the board January 8, 1886, as a city of the third class. East Randolph, which is about a half mile east of the original town site, began in 1886. This addition was a result of the Union Pacific Railroad building its line through this area and locating its depot there.¹¹

The early settlers that came to the valley found game to be plentiful; big game animals were the buffalo, elk, deer, and antelope. The last buffalo was killed near Randolph in 1857.¹² The predatory animals found there were the wildcat, lynx, wolf, and

¹⁰ Session Laws of Kansas, 1876, p. 197. Appendix, p. 70. History of Kansas Newspapers, Kansas State Historical Society and Department of Archives (Topeka, 1916), p. 375.

¹¹ The Randolph Enterprise, September 17, 1953.

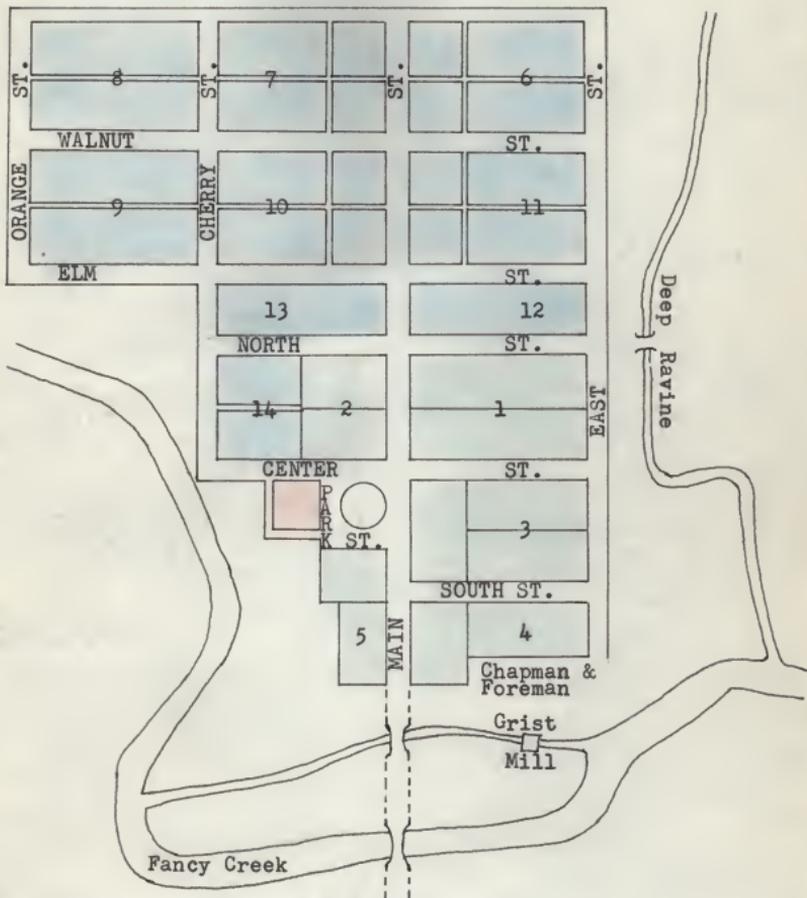
¹² Ibid.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE I

This map gives the boundaries of Randolph as they were in 1881. It was taken from the Riley County Plat Book of 1881.

Original Plat, Blocks 1 to 5 inclusive	Green
Whitson's Addition, Blocks 6 to 14, inclusive	Blue
Beckman's Addition, the remaining area	Red

PLATE I



Scale: 400 ft. to 1 inch

coyote. There were cottontails and jackrabbits in great numbers and in the woodlands were squirrels, raccoons, and opossums; the banks of the rivers and creeks were alive with beaver, otter, and muskrats. Game birds, including turkeys, prairie chickens, and quail, were in abundance. Besides the great number of various animals and birds as a source of food, this wildlife also provided an ideal situation for hunters and trappers. Fish were plentiful and provided a source of food for the pioneer. The waters of the Big Blue and its tributaries were very clear which enabled the settlers to spear fish or kill them with rifles. The area also contained a lot of trees and stone both of which could be used for buildings and fences. The hills were an excellent grazing place for cattle and the bottoms for growing crops.¹³

There were three good trading posts within thirty miles of this early Blue Valley settlement; they were: Manhattan, Marysville, and Fort Riley. For additional needs the pioneer went to Leavenworth which was 110 miles away.

Several Indian tribes that were in this region were the Pottawatomie, Kansa, Otoe, Kiowa, and Pawnee. Although there was a great number of Indians that hunted and fished in the Valley, they did not harm the early settlers but made a nuisance of themselves by taking anything they could lay their hands on.¹⁴ The powerful nation of Indians called the Pawnees, which had once held almost undisputed sway over the country, had, previous to the arrival of

¹³ The Randolph Enterprise, September 17, 1953.

¹⁴ Ibid.

the white men, given place to a tribe of Indians known as the Kaws, and this was the tribe with which the pioneers of this community had most dealings. The Indians' greatest outrages in this country, which was gradually being taken over by the white men, were an occasional theft, a profane tongue, a perservance in begging, and his most terrible greed was focused on tobacco and "fire-water".¹⁵

There were various and individual reasons why this area was chosen for a place of settlement. Randolph came to Kansas for the avowed purpose of making it a slave state and tried to gain control of as great an area as possible. The Blue River Valley was rich in soil and was suitable for establishing a large plantation. Contrary to Randolph's purpose, Whitson, an abolitionist, was interested in making Kansas a free state.

Edward Secrest, Solomon Secrest, and Henry Shellenbaum came to this area in 1856. They were so impressed by the beautiful scenery of the region that they decided to make it their future home. Others who settled the area were told about it by earlier settlers. The main reason that the settlers were attracted to this area was because of its beauty and the richness of its soil.¹⁶

¹⁵ Historical Plat Book, op. cit., p. 15. The survey of the Blue River Valley north of Manhattan by the Smithsonian Institution in the fall of 1952 located 119 Indian sites; 16 of these sites were found in the area of Randolph and community.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 26.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND AND REASONS FOR IMMIGRATION OF THE SETTLERS OF RANDOLPH AND COMMUNITY

Most of the people who settled near Randolph, Kansas, in the Fancy Creek Valley on the Blue River were of Swedish or German origin. Some of these immigrants came directly from their homeland, while others migrated from previously settled areas in Illinois, New York, Indiana, Pennsylvania, and other parts of eastern United States. Fancy Creek Valley was settled by some of the best farmers in this country, who were either Swedish or German.¹

These immigrants came to this area for various reasons. Those immigrants who came directly from their homeland came because of social, economic, and religious causes. During the 1850's, emigration from Sweden averaged 1,690 per annum. In the following decade it had risen to 12,245 yearly.² The economic crisis of 1864-1865 was an important cause for Swedish emigration to America. During this crisis banks failed, landowners went bankrupt, and production of industries reached a new low. There was a great amount of unemployment and turmoil; dissention became prevalent. Free trade also contributed to the cause of unemployment, lower wages, heavy taxes, and poverty. The finished products of

¹ A. T. Andreas and W. G. Cutler, op. cit., 1302.

² Florence E. Janson, Background of Swedish Immigration (Chicago, 1931), p. 1.

England flooded the Swedish markets.³

The Swedes looked to the young, industrial, advancing, and liberal America as the "promised land" for a new start in life, as a chance to escape poverty, and as a place for security.⁴ At the same time of the economic crises there also occurred a great famine.

Another great cause for emigration and prevailing dissention was the custom of passing the entire estate to the eldest son of the Swedish family. Other children were forced to seek a source of income and livelihood when the property was inherited.⁵

Many people, especially the younger generation, moved to the larger Swedish cities in hope of earning the necessary amount of money needed for their passage to America. A great many of these, when they had the desired amount of money, emigrated to Paxton, Illinois, which was one of the main collecting points of Swedish emigrants who desired to homestead in the West. Many Swedes, elated over the great humanistic movement in America, made plans to start life anew in that "land of equality", because widespread social reform did not begin in Sweden until 1930.⁶

The following quotations from letters depict the social system of Sweden:⁷

³ Ibid., p. 38.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., p. 127.

⁶ Ibid., p. 294.

⁷ Ibid.

If I should come to Sweden now and come into a store, I would have to take my cap or hat in my hand and bow ceremoniously, calling a simple bookkeeper "Herre" etc.; while in America a workman and bookkeeper are of the same rank. Yes, our honored President Roosevelt, himself, does not despise me if I take off my hat or not when I speak to him.

I am a citizen of the United States, and my vote is worth as much as a millionaires in the elections. This is a country ruled by the people; in Sweden wealth rules. Here is equality. If I talk to a high official, I do not need to stand with my hat in my hand and with shaking knees, not knowing what title to address him, for it is only the simple greeting, "Goodday, Mr. Klintberg", or what ever his name is, and after such a greeting I use only his first name, it may be Peter or Paul, during the conversation, and "you", and then one feels like a comrade. He speaks to me in the same manner.

Religion was also a great factor in the Swedish emigration movement. The great desire for individualistic thinking in religion, the right to worship as each person chose, and the desire to follow other patterns of religion than those stressed by the State Church created an impetus which gave rise to a non-conformist movement. This movement produced dissenters who later emigrated to America.

At no other time in Sweden's history were ministers needed more greatly than they were during the crisis of the nineteenth century. People looked to the ministers for spiritual guidance and moral encouragement. However, the clergy failed to live up to the people's expectations. They failed to listen to the pleas of the congregations, and the actions of their everyday lives produced an attitude of disgust, distrust, and a sense of unreliability in themselves.⁸

⁸ Ibid.

With these combined grievances and with the information of America's religious freedom burning within them, these dissatisfied Swedes looked to America as a land of Canaan. Sweden experienced approximately the same reaction during this crisis as Germany did during the reformation. Rather than conform to the statutes of the State, these pious followers of free religion chose to leave their native land in search of true religion.

A most influential stimulus for emigration was the letters written by former Swedish emigrants to their families and relatives. These letters usually portrayed the finer parts of America rather than the unfavorable. Often the letters contained money which caused idle talk concerning the richness of America as compared to the poorness of Sweden. Frequently money for passages was included as well as a promise of a job in America. The popularity of the "America letters" had its beginning during the early part of the 1840's, when early immigrants stressed the greater possibility of securing a decent livelihood in America. As industry developed in the western part of the United States in the 1880's, the "America letters" became still more popular. Railroads, manufacturing companies, and other industries who sought cheap labor encouraged employees to write letters promising positions.

The "America Fever" spread rapidly throughout Sweden, especially affecting those who had very little success in life within the country.⁹ Letters to Sweden often stated that the climate in

⁹ Letter from Gustaf Nyquist, June 24, 1953.

America was more healthful and more invigorating, that there was no class distinction, no "title sickness", and no large estates as existed in Sweden. One Swedish-American wrote that in America there were no large estates whose owners could take the last sheaf of wheat from their tenants and turn them out to beg.¹⁰

Another Swedish immigrant wrote:¹¹

I can tell you that we are living in America planting corn, for we have sixty acres. I sit and ride on a machine which we plant with, and the oats and wheat and barley stand green and beautiful. I have planted seventeen acres of wheat, fifty acres of oats, and four acres of barley, and today we have planted potatoes. You ask how much rent I give for an acre of land. I pay three dollars an acre, and I can tell you that here we do not live frugally, but here one has eggs and egg pancake, and canned fish and fresh fish and fruits of all kinds, so it is different from you who have to sit and hold herring bones.

America wanted immigrants very much at this time, especially those that were honest and sincere. During the administration of President Lincoln the government of the United States adopted the policy of encouraging immigration. The duties of the Commission of Emigration, an office created in 1864 under the Secretary of State, were to gather full and reliable information about soil, climate, minerals, agricultural products, wages in various parts of the United States, means of communication, and the need for labor, and to spread this information in a popular form in all parts of Europe.¹² A Federal Immigration Commissioner was appointed and a Federal Superintendent of Emigration was located in New York to

¹⁰ Carl Wittke, We Who Built America, (New York, 1940, p. 103.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Janson (quoting Hemlandet, July 13, 1864), op. cit., p. 261.

aid emigrants to find homes and employment. The Immigration Law of 1864 permitted the formation of contracts by which an emigrant might be brought to the United States and allowed to work off his passage by one year of labor.¹³ The Commission on Foreign Immigration was confident emigrants could be persuaded to come to the United States by thoroughly advertising the great opportunities offered in the new country. Among the inducements cited were:¹⁴

(1) The high price of labor and the low price of food, compared with other countries, (2) Our land policy, giving to every emigrant after he shall have declared his intentions to become a citizen, a home and a farm, substantially a free gift, charging him less for 160 acres in fee-simple than is paid at the annual rental of a single acre in England, (3) political rights conferred upon persons of foreign birth, (4) our system of free schools, melting in a common crucible all differences of religion, language, and race, and giving the child of the day laborer and the son of the millionaire equal opportunities to excel in the pursuit and acquirement of knowledge. This is an advantage and a blessing which the poor man enjoys in no other country.

Since Sweden was an agricultural nation, the Swedes were more interested in the open ranges offered to them in the West than in the highly-populated and industrialized East. In Sweden pamphlets were issued which stressed the picture of large virgin farmlands which were "just waiting" to be prepared for seed. These pamphlets greatly influenced many Swedes to come to America and settle in the West. Information concerning emigrant guidebooks, money exchange, emigrant hotels, American clothing, and other necessities concerning life in America, was published in Swedish newspapers. One very popular guide which was advertised throughout Sweden was

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 262.

compiled by an author named Bojesen. It was entitled "Till Amerika", translated "To America", which described conditions in Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, and Texas.¹⁵

With the great migration from Sweden during the 1850's and 1860's, Swedish immigration companies flourished in the United States, reaching their peak after the Civil War. Agents were sent to Sweden for the purpose of opening offices and collecting points for emigration to America. Transportation of emigrants to the United States had become a profitable business. The most popular companies were: the Western Migration Agency, with headquarters in Chicago; The American Emigrant Company; and the American Aid and Homestead Company, all of New York. These emigrant companies were closely connected with steamship lines and often made contracts for selling tickets to prospective emigrants. Many of these companies, such as the American Emigrant Aid and Homestead Company of New York which had a capitalization of five million dollars, had great financial backing and became extensive corporations.¹⁶ This corporation had many activities other than that of a steamship navigation for emigrants. They operated a land department for the purpose of purchase and sale of farms, a banking department, loan and savings division, a money exchange division, and an employment department.¹⁷ Most emigrant companies performed

¹⁵ Janson (quoting Skanska Posten, Kristianstad, March 31, 1869), Ibid., p. 264.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 236.

¹⁷ Ibid.

similar functions.

Agents in Sweden were paid on a commission basis. They knew no scruples or principles in securing emigrants. They made house to house canvasses, called meetings, organized emigration societies, published newspapers which contained huge advertisements of land companies, railway companies, steamship companies, and all other types of agencies needing laborers in America.¹⁸

The emigrant companies and steamship agencies were not responsible for the beginning of the Swedish emigration to America; but their presence during the lowest ebb of Sweden's economic, social, and religious period contributed greatly to those seeking new opportunities in life. They also became another stimulant for emigration to America.

The strife over the slavery issue was undoubtedly an important factor in keeping many Swedes from coming to Kansas in the 1850's; however, individuals in the territory urged their countrymen to join them. Late in the summer of 1856, an unknown Swede writing in the newspaper, Hemlandet, described the advantage of Kansas.¹⁹ It was a beautiful and productive land. He realized that the calm in the state's political life might be of short duration and that the future of the state depended upon the North. He predicted that if Fremont were elected president, Kansas would be free, but if Buchanan were the victor, it would be necessary to

¹⁸ George Stephenson, The Religious Aspect of Swedish Immigration, (Minneapolis, 1932), p. 110.

¹⁹ Emory K. Lindquist, "Swedes in Kansas Before the Civil War", Kansas Historical Quarterly, 1951, 19: 256.

fight for freedom. The editorial policy of the influential Swedish paper Hemlandet encouraged Swedes to come to Kansas. It was suggested that immigrants should take the land route through Iowa and southern Nebraska in order to avoid the difficulties caused by the struggle over Kansas.

Many Swedes turned toward Kansas in spite of the uncertainty of the future. In April, Hemlandet observed that "immigration to Kansas is much stronger than in any other direction", a correspondent had assured the editor that four-fifths of the residents were free state men. He was certain that his countrymen would never regret coming to Kansas, but he urged them to do so in large groups, in order that they might maintain their identity.

The background and reasons for settlement of Randolph and vicinity would not be complete without a short biographical sketch of some of the earlier settlers.

Gardner Randolph, as was previously mentioned, was a native of North Carolina; from there he had gone to Tennessee to establish himself. He was there only a short time and then went on to Illinois; here he established a business point and postoffice named Randolph Grove. He didn't stay long, because other settlers began to move in close around him. Randolph and his family including his grown sons and daughters, sons-in-law, and grandchildren came to Kansas in 1855 and pre-empted a large claim of land, the center of which was the mouth of Fancy Creek on the Blue River. They came for the avowed purpose of making Kansas a

slave state.²⁰

Among the Swedish settlers were John A. Johnson, N. P. Johnson, C. J. Dahlberg, C. V. Dahlberg, and S. P. Johnson. John A. Johnson settled one mile east of Randolph in 1855. He was considered the first Swedish settler to locate permanently in Kansas. A brother of John Johnson, N. P. Johnson, came the next year; his son was the first boy of Swedish parents to be born in Kansas. The mother and other members of the Johnson family came in 1859.²¹ In 1854 C. J. Dahlberg came to America and lived in the eastern part of the United States for several years. Because of ill health, he sought drier climate. In 1857 he came to the Blue River and purchased 160 acres of land where he was the third Swedish settler on the Blue, and the first Swedish settler in Riley County. He served for a short time with the State Militia. His son, C. V. Dahlberg, has written several accounts of the pioneer days in this vicinity.²² In 1858 S. P. Johnson came to Kansas and lived in Butler County until 1864 when he came to the Blue River. Later, in 1886, he laid out the town of East Randolph; he also operated a store and a bank there.²³

Another group that settled here were of the German-Swiss origin. In this group was Solomon and Edward Secrest, Henry Shellenbaum, and Jacob Fryhofer. The Secrests and Shellenbaum came to this area in 1856. They located a few miles up Fancy

²⁰ The Randolph Enterprise, January 18, 1891.

²¹ John G. Christensen, The Johnson Family of Mariadahl, Kansas, (n. p.), 1939, p. 10.

²² Portrait and Biographical Album, op. cit., p. 685.

²³ Ibid., p. 630.

Creek. The first stone house on Fancy Creek was built in 1864 by S. Secrest. He was an orderly sergeant in Captain Niehenke's Company of Kansas State Militia; this group was used in a campaign against the Indians. From 1869 to 1873 he was one of the Justices of the Peace for Jackson Township. In 1879 he began his mercantile business in Randolph.²⁴ Edward Secrest worked for Chief Matthew Mudeater, of the Wyandotte Indians for about a year before settling in this area with his brother and Shellenbaum. They were so charmed with the country that they decided to make it their future home. Secrest joined the Union Army in the fall of 1862 and was mustered out in July 1865. He was elected to the office of County Commissioner in 1867 and was reelected in 1869. He resigned this position to become a representative to the State Legislature. He was first elected to this position as a Republican and was reelected in 1879 as an independent.²⁵ Henry Shellenbaum came to the United States in 1854. In 1856 he came to the Fancy Creek area with the Secrest brothers and homesteaded. This land had previously been claimed by Gardner Randolph in the name of his minor son. Therefore a dispute had to be settled at the land office. Shellenbaum won by arriving at the claim before young Randolph.²⁶ The last settler of this group was John U. Fryhofer who came to the Fancy Creek area and settled in 1857.

²⁴ Riley County Plat Book, op. cit., p. 32.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ William E. Connelly, A Standard History of Kansas and Kansas (Chicago-New York, 1918), 4: 1768.

He was known to be a Republican and a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church.²⁷

The German group settled the upper part of Fancy Creek. Some of these early settlers were August Winkler, Otto Bucheim, Richard Burke, William Gugenhan, and Rudolph Niehenke. August Winkler had learned the milling trade in Germany. He established a mill known as Winklers' Mills in this area which served a large area for milling flour.²⁸ Richard Burke had received an education and practical experience in business and general merchandising. He came to Fancy Creek in 1863 and bought land and followed farming until 1871. At this time he engaged in the mercantile business at Winklers' Mills until 1883.²⁹ Otto Bucheim came to the United States in 1883. He traveled and worked along the west coast for several years and then returned to Germany in 1886. He stayed only a few months after which he emigrated directly to the Fancy Creek region and established a store at Winklers' Mills in 1886.³⁰ In 1863 William Gugenhan took up a homestead in the Fancy Creek area.³¹ Rudolph Niehenke came to America in 1847. He enlisted in the United States Army and fought in the Mexican War. In 1857 he pre-empted land on the Upper Fancy Creek region. He was a captain in the State Militia.³² Niehenke enlisted in the

²⁷ Riley County Plat Book, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

²⁸ Portrait and Biographical Album, *op. cit.*, p. 567.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 715.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 600.

³¹ Ibid., p. 730.

³² Ibid., p. 521.

Union Army in 1862 and was mustered out in 1865. He was a staunch Republican, from 1872 to 1875 he was clerk of Jackson Township; in 1874 and 1875 constable, and township trustee from 1876 to 1880. In 1880 he was elected county commissioner.³³

Several physicians who located in Randolph in its early days were Francis Pepper, Isaac Mayfield, and Owen E. Edgerton. These men were native born Americans. Mayfield located in Randolph in 1878 where he operated a drug store and practiced medicine.³⁴ Pepper established his practice in Randolph in 1871. In 1880 he and Mayfield owned the drug store as partners. This partnership was dissolved four years later.³⁵ Edgerton established his practice in Randolph in 1885.³⁶

In 1879 P. B. Lewis came to Randolph and established a law practice. In 1882 he started and edited the newspaper The Randolph Echo and continued as its editor for six years.

³³ Riley County Plat Book, op. cit., p. 32.

³⁴ Portrait and Biographical Album, op. cit., p. 567.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 672.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 577.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 576.

CHAPTER III

HOW THE PEOPLE WORKED AND LIVED

The construction of homes was one of the first tasks that confronted the early settlers upon their arrival in the Blue Valley. However, if they came during the planting season, their chief concern was to get some crops planted for use during the next year. Therefore, they lived in their covered wagons and cooked on an open fire out-of-doors until their homes were built. The first dwellings were made of logs or stone. Usually there was a great amount of cooperation among the neighbors in helping to build a newcomer's home. Neighbors at that time were few and included anyone as far away as ten miles.¹

A description of the building of a home in the early Randolph community was given in the following words:²

Neighbors were called on and soon the four walls of the modest frontier home loomed up in the valley. The roof was formed of clap boards about three feet long, split or riven out of some straight grained oak. In the absence of nails the boards were weighted down by weight poles. Openings were saved for doors and small windows. Rough boards were secured at some distant saw mill for doors; after they were ripped with whip-saws. The windows came from the Missouri river one hundred miles away. Many settlers came without cooking or heating stoves so they built wide fire places out of native undressed lime-stone. Some of the people lived for years on a dirt floor, while others made puncheon floors, broad slabs of some easy splitting wood, four to six feet long, roughly dressed on the upper side and laid on sleepers.

¹ Interview with Mrs. Katie Kunze, at Randolph, Kansas, May 25, 1954.

² The Randolph Enterprise, September 13, 1906.

Some of the men who were handy with tools made most of the primitive furniture such as the bedsteads, trundle beds, tables, benches, and shelves. The ambition and aim of many of the early settlers was to own a quarter section of land in a free Kansas, where, they hoped, slavery would never exist and where the land would be forever dedicated to human freedom and the inalienable rights of men.

After the building of a home had been completed the settlers' next chief concern was to plant crops and cultivate the land. The main crops that were raised at this time were wheat, corn, and barley. The soil of the valley was dark, loamy, friable, and easily worked which made for an ideal farming country. Finding this fertile land encouraged the settlers, strengthened their faith in Kansas, and made them more optimistic of her future possibilities. Some of the frontier farmers checked the corn ground with a home-made marker, then used hand planters to plant their corn. Others followed the eastern style, furrowed out the ground, planted the seed by hand, and covered it with a hoe.

The implements used at this time were very crude and relatively inexpensive but served the purpose very well. The plows used were of two kinds; the single shovel (bull tongue) to stir the soil, and the double shovel to cultivate the soil. The latter one was brought from the Illinois prairie to Kansas by an enterprising Swede, Louis Hanson. This implement had features of a double shovel plow and the modernized two-horse cultivator. This plow consisted of a wooden frame to which were attached two double-shovels, one on each side of the corn row. Fastened to

the frame was a short coupling pole connecting it to the front part of a wagon. Two common plow handles guided the plow.

In 1858 and 1859 spring wheat was introduced as a crop. The people were getting tired of eating corn bread and mush and other foods made from it, therefore, they welcomed the variety that white flour would add to their diets. The first wheat crop turned out quite well, and was harvested in the following manner:³

A hickory limb was bent into a bow and fitted into holes bored in the heel of a common scythe. Then the grain was cut, bound and stacked. An area about 30 ft. in diameter was cleared and in the center a stake was driven. The wheat was then spread in even layers overlapping each other. A pair of oxen were then yoked to the stake and were driven around the circle to thresh the wheat. The wheat was then taken to Manhattan and ground into flour; therefore by using the wheat flour a variation in the diet was realized.

Stock raising was developed rather early and was given its first impetus by August and Fred Winkler. They brought in a herd of cows and heifers as well as hogs from Missouri; and later they brought sheep into the valley.⁴ The returns and profits contributed greatly to the prosperity of those who went into livestock raising. In the Mariadahl settlement the Johnson brothers also recognized the importance and value of the livestock development. As a result of greater crop yield and increased surplus of corn, many farmers turned to hog raising. This seemed to be the best and most practical solution to their problem of surplus corn, but it did not always prove to be smooth sailing for the

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

industrious people. For example, at the outbreak of the Civil War, the Johnson brothers with others hauled their bacon, hams, and shoulders to Leavenworth a distance of 120 miles and sold the meat for two to three cents a pound.⁵ The Chester White breed was the first breed of hogs to be raised in this area. They were known for their frequent and prolific litters and general good health.

Half-bred horses were common. While many of the settlers brought fairly good horses, large numbers of light teams bred from crossing the cheap Indian Pony with scrub stallion prevailed for a long time. They were hardier, easier kept and acclimated while eastern horses frequently sickened and died.

There was some fruit growing, but early Kansas just as parts of Missouri and Illinois, proved to be a poor fruit growing country. The old settlers made the mistake of bringing eastern varieties of fruit trees with them. Much to the disappointment of the settlers these fruit trees did not grow well in Kansas. Many of the trees died and those that survived were barren for many years. As soon as home nurseries were begun and Kansas grown trees of western varieties were propagated, this situation changed. However, it was a long time before the rooted belief that Kansas was not a fruit state was eradicated. During this time the people took advantage of such wild fruits as grapes, plums, and wild strawberry. The prolific tomato was christened the "Kansas Apple."

⁵ The Randolph Enterprise, September 13, 1906.

The social life of the people of the Randolph community was of a cordial, paternal, and neighborly spirit. There were frequent exchange visits across the divides and between the creeks and the river. Neighbors at this time lived far apart. The following description indicates sparse settlement of the region:⁶

There wasn't a sign of human life along the road from lower Fancy Creek to the mouth of Coon Creek, a distance of sixteen miles. The same was true between Randolph and the head of Wildcat Creek, a distance of sixteen miles and then twelve miles to Governor Harvey's. As late as 1861 you could mount your pony at or near the mouth of Fancy Creek and steering a little southwest, you could ride twenty miles as a crow flies without a sign of life, save perhaps the prowling coyote or the sudden noise of a flock of prairie chickens rising out of the waist high grass, or an inquisitive antelope encircling the passing stranger in graceful leaps to get to windward of him until you pulled rein on or near the forest fringed banks of the Republican River near the present site of Clay Center.

There were no marked roads and early settlers simply loaded the family into an ox cart or lumber wagon and headed for the next settlement using the sun to keep their direction.

There was no shoddy aristocracy, no money master, no privileged princes of wealth, no money madness on the frontier, no greed, grab and graft--it was a true democracy. There was no exclusiveness, pretentious hypocrisy or class rule. They lived a simple life and took advantage of what nature provided for them.⁷

The Swedes who came to the Blue Valley in the 1850's were devout and pious people.⁸ They held informal religious services in various homes; the services consisted of hymn singing, reading

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Emory Lindquist, op. cit., p. 256.

of the Bible and Martin Luther's book of sermons and prayers. They also assembled for the traditional festive early morning Christmas Service (Julotta). Later on the people organized singing schools, debate societies, and literary societies.⁹ Corn husking and wood cutting bees were also part of the early community social life.¹⁰

Early settlers had to contend with floods, prairie fires, grasshoppers, unfavorable weather conditions, tornadoes, and some menace from the Indians. During years and seasons of heavy rains, the rivers and the creeks went out of their banks and caused property and crop destruction and sometimes loss of human life. Prairie fires were also a hazard because of the tall grass that grew wild, it was easy for a fire to race across a large area in a short time. Every time one of these fires occurred, the settler worked as hard and as fast as possible to protect himself and his property. He did this by plowing a furrow or several furrows around his house and other property. If time permitted he would build a back fire to stop the oncoming fire. Indians were sometimes blamed for starting prairie fires but the greatest menace from the Indians came from contact while they camped in the area and hunted and caught fish. Once in a while the settlers would be bothered by the Indians begging food from them. On one occasion some Indian wanted to make a trade with a white settler

⁹ Interview with Mrs. Minnie Frederick, at Randolph, Kansas, May 25, 1954.

¹⁰ Interview with William Secrest, at Manhattan, Kansas, June 3, 1954.

for her baby girl.¹¹

Some of the unfavorable weather conditions during those early times have been described by C. V. Dahlberg who came with his parents to the Blue Valley in 1857.¹² He wrote that before they had time to complete their house it had rained so much and so hard they had to seek shelter under the table, but this did not help since the roof leaked so badly that it was dripping on them and there were several inches of water on the floor. In 1860 the opposite climatic situation existed and Kansas suffered from a severe drought. Many of the settlers were forced to go back to their folks in the East, but the majority stayed and survived this discouraging and depressing act of nature.

The grasshopper invasions at various times were of great destruction.¹³

The grasshopper invasion of 1864 came like a good sized snow storm or a regular Kansas blizzard. We were on our way to Ft. Riley, each with a load of corn, father and I, and toward 10 A.M., it began to get quite dark, although it was clear and warm. We began to look around and happened to turn our faces skyward to study the upper air, and lo, and behold, the sun was completely obscured by a rapidly moving mass not unlike snow indeed, was being driven straight toward the south. Whatever it was it was driving fiercely ahead as if impelled by a strong wind, though there was not a breath of air stirring below. Soon small objects began to detach themselves from the mass so that the eye could distinguish separate particles which looked not unlike scraps of silver driven with terrified force from the tail end of some gigantic machine. Drawing our hats down over our faces for protection, we again looked up. The whole

¹¹ Interview with Miss Ellen Johnson, at Salina, Kansas, May 18, 1954.

¹² C. V. Dahlberg, Settlement of the Blue Valley in the Vicinity of Randolph (n.p., 1921), p. 24.

¹³ Ibid.

moving cloud had lowered to a distinguishable distance. 'Why they are grasshoppers we exclaimed almost at the same time' /sic/, and indeed, so true was our observation and so rapid were the grasshoppers settling that we did not know which way to turn to shield our faces from the storm. Our horses, also annoyed by the myriads of insects settling upon them, began to move restlessly swinging their heads from side to side, while they whipped their flanks with their tails and were almost unmanageable and had it not been for the heavy loads they were pulling would have gotten away. The ground and road and everything was soon covered several inches deep by the hoppers and on inclines where we would go a little faster they could not get away quick enough and were crushed by the wheels to such an extent that it made it muddy so the wheels slid sideways if it leaned over a little. Terror-stricken as we were we drove on to the Fort and unloaded and camped for the night. We started back some time the next day and found out that everything along the road had been devoured by the pests. Numberless scissors-like mouths were gnawing on sticks of corn stalks near the roadside, the tassel was gone, the edges of the leaves were eaten away, and line of hungry insects could be seen clinging to the center ribs of the blades. It was a desolate world to behold in midsummer. The trees, no matter how large, were stripped of their leaves, and every vestige of green ear eaten to the ground, which in turn was covered with a mass of offensive smelling substances almost unendurable. Although the pioneers were faced with these hardships through their determination they endured them and survived to take advantage of the many good things that presented themselves.

Gust Ruthstrom, Randolph's first merchant, built the first business house and had a very good country store for that time. The third stone house was erected by O. Johnson which was later occupied by Dr. Mayfield's Drug Store. He located here in 1879.¹⁴ The first mechanic and cabinet maker, A. Wikander, built his place of business in 1870. In 1861 H. Condray and Whitson as partners added one of the most influential factors of civilization in the village, in the shape of a saw and grist mill run by the dammed-up

¹⁴ Portrait and Biographical Album, op. cit., p. 567.

water of Fancy Creek. Condray was a man of considerable mechanical skill so he served as his own millwright.¹⁵ This mill ground slowly, but ground a very fine flour. It was soon abandoned because it was not practical. The first hotel was kept by Miles Reed in the H. Condray house. Mr. Grall set up the first blacksmith shop in 1868 and G. Daugherty built and operated a livery stable in 1879. In an 18 x 20 frame shanty, John F. Joy was the first dispenser of pills, quinine, and plantation bitters. In 1876 R. C. Walter was the first real estate agent and Attorney-at-law. John Chelander, in 1879, established a furniture manufacturing concern, and later he with his son operated an undertaking business in connection with the furniture store. The first harness shop was operated by E. King and son.

In 1881 A. A. Chapman and Milton Foreman, carpenters and millwrights, put their three-story wood and stone gristmill in running order. The mill was run by a turbine wheel of forty horsepower. It was located in the south part of town, and the water which furnished its power was taken from near the bend of Fancy Creek and was conveyed through a canal to the bulkhead. In 1879 S. Secrest & Sons opened a general merchandise store. John F. Beckman had established his store in 1870.

A Foster Lumberyard was established in Randolph in 1879.¹⁶

¹⁵ The Randolph Enterprise, September 13, 1906.

¹⁶ Benjamin B. Foster, 75th Anniversary, Foster Lumber Company 1879-1954, (n.p., 1954), p. 69. Interview with John Chelander, at Randolph, Kansas, May 24, 1954.

John McCullough Foster, after traveling through Kansas for about six weeks in a covered wagon, looking for a place to locate, decided that the town of Randolph had the best possibilities--and there in April 1879, the first Foster retail yard was opened in Kansas. All the lumber and material was hauled from Irving, the railroad terminal, to Randolph, a distance of 17 miles, and stacked in the open until sheds could be built. The office was just a shelter against the elements--most dealings were on the cash basis and there was little or no bookkeeping problems.¹⁷

By 1882 the population of Randolph totaled 300. The town had a lumber yard, a millinery establishment, a livery stable, a jewelry store, a tin shop, a cabinet shop, a drug store, two harness shops, three blacksmith shops, three hotels, and three physicians. Its attorneys were P. B. Lewis and R. C. Walters. The stores owned by J. F. Beckman and Brothers and A. Wikander had the largest stock of goods.¹⁸

The State Bank of Randolph was started as a private Bank in 1885, by F. W. Peterson. The bank was taken over by John A. Johnson in 1887. This bank was incorporated as a State Bank in 1900. Other private banks were started about the same time. One was begun by a Mr. Dow, and one in East Randolph by S. P. Johnson and Frank Peterson. The Citizens State Bank was chartered in 1905.

Among other businesses started at a later date were a bakery

¹⁷ The Foster Lumber Company in 1954 owned 73 retail yards in the States of Kansas, Colorado, Nebraska, Wyoming, and South Dakota.

¹⁸ A. T. Andreas and W. G. Cutler, op. cit., 1302.

begun in 1886 by a Mr. Carr, a drug store established by the Newman brothers in 1894, and a shoe repair shop operated by John Holmstrom, Sr. Holmstrom's shop was on the corn of Main and North Street. He also sold stock foods and stock remedies.¹⁹

Table 1 lists the businesses and occupations, the origin of the proprietor, and the dates of settlement in and around Randolph.²⁰

¹⁹ The Randolph Enterprise, September 13, 1906.

²⁰ Historical Flat Book, op. cit., p. 36.

Table 1. Early businesses in Randolph.

Name	Nativity	Date of settlement	Business
Beckman, John F.	Hanover, Germany	1869	Dealer in everything
Chapman, A. C.	Racine County, Wisconsin	1879	Miller
Chapman & Foreman	Racine County, Wisconsin	1878	Proprietors of Randolph Flour Mill
Daugherty, George	Coshocton County, Ohio	1867	Proprietor of Livery, Feed, and Sale Stable
Hungerford, George	McHenry County, Illinois	1877	School teacher
Haller, G.	Switzerland	1867	Proprietor of restaurant
Lewis, P. B.	Wyandot County, Ohio	1879	Attorney at Law and Loan Agent
Marine, George	St. Joseph County, Indiana	1870	Constable
Reed, Miles	Geauga County, Ohio	1870	Proprietor of Randolph House
Wikander, A.	Wermland, Sweden	1870	General merchant
Zuber, Jacob	Switzerland	1880	Proprietor of Billiard Hall and Cigar Store

Table 2 is a list of farmers, with the nativity of the farmer and the dates of settlement in and around Randolph.²¹

²¹ Ibid., p. 37.

Table 2. Early farmers of Randolph community.

Name	Nativity	Sec- tion	Date of settle- ment	Occupation
Condray, John	Jackson County, Indiana	14	1855	Farmer
Fryhofer, John	Switzerland	3	1857	Farmer
Heller, Peter	Dukedom Nassau, Germany	4	1863	Farmer and Stock Raiser
Lund, Charles	Skane, Sweden	9	1866	Farmer
Nelson, Martin	Skane, Sweden	8	1866	Farmer and Stock Raiser
Secret, S.	Switzerland	4	1856	Farmer and Merchant
Secret, Edward	Switzerland	10	1856	Farmer
Shellenbaum, Henry	Switzerland	10	1856	Farmer
Wood, Curtis	Hawkins County, Tennessee	23	1869	Farmer and Stock Raiser
Woods, George C.	Jo Daviess County, Illinois	26	1869	Farmer and Stock Raiser
Wiesendanger, H.	Canton Zurich, Switzerland	5	1861	Farmer and Stock Raiser

CHAPTER IV

COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORTATION

Soon after the development of Randolph and community, progress was made in the fields of communication and transportation. A weekly mail route had been established between Fort Riley and Marysville by the way of Randolph as early as 1856. The post office was in the home of the Randolph family. Around 1858 a very "lively man" who had come from the East carried the mail on foot for a year or so. Throwing the mail bag over his shoulder he would walk across the uninhabited prairie from the Fort to Randolph, following the river from Randolph to Marysville.¹ It was said that he lost fewer trips and was more prompt than some who succeeded him who rode horses. In 1860 the post office was moved to the town of Randolph, and Whitson was appointed postmaster. For a number of years mail received at Randolph was carried over a stage line running from Manhattan to Irving. A rural route of twenty-six miles was established in 1904. The postmasters of Randolph up to and including 1906 were as follows: G. Randolph, J. K. Whitson, S. P. Johnson, G. L. Ruthstrom, John F. Beckman, A. Wikander, J. W. Nelson, Thomas Leach, Rev. J. H. Colt, John Kay, F. B. Vawter, and Edward Shellenbaum.²

The following is a description of the post office at Randolph's house.³

¹ The Randolph Enterprise, September 13, 1906.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

There being as usual but one room in the primitive house the gable end of it was reserved for some home-made shelves for crockery on one side, and a few rough shelves for mail matter on the other side, and between both spread the ample open fireplace built of limestone.

The first community newspaper was the Randolph Echo founded in 1882 by P. B. Lewis. He soon moved to Leonardville and continued his paper as the Leonardville Echo. The paper was moved back to Randolph in 1886 and resumed its original name. In 1888 Lewis sold the paper to T. B. and Chas. S. Lewis who changed the name to the Randolph Enterprise. Two other papers were started, but were of short duration. The Randolph Leader founded in 1889 by Atkins and Hudson, and the Spirit of the Valley founded at Randolph in 1896 by Albert Havermale. The first one of these consolidated with the Randolph Enterprise in 1890, and the other consolidated with it in 1896 with Isaac Moon as the editor.⁴

The first telephone was used sometime in the late 1870's. It was a homemade telephone made by Albert and Sam Foreman.⁵ The first telegraph came in 1887 when the Union Pacific Railroad laid its line through the Randolph community and built a depot.⁶

The general mode of travel was on foot or horseback. There were no roads to begin with so the settlers followed the streams, Indians, and buffalo trails or took a short cut to their

⁴ The Manhattan Mercury-Chronicle, October 31, 1948. History of Kansas Newspapers, Kansas Historical Society and Department of Archives, Topeka, 1854-1916, p. 275.

⁵ Interview with Miss Ellen Johnson, at Salina, Kansas, May 18, 1954.

⁶ Interview with William Secrest, at Manhattan, Kansas, June 3, 1954. The depot was at East Randolph.

destination. In 1857 the legislature established a road running along the banks of the Big Blue between Marysville and Manhattan.⁷

The first railroad accessible to the Blue Valley was the Kansas Pacific (now the Union Pacific). Ground was broken for the railroad at Wyandotte (now Kansas City, Kansas) in 1863; it ran to Lawrence by 1864, by 1865 to Topeka, to Manhattan in 1866; and by 1867 to Abilene, and 1870 to Denver.

Another early railroad affecting the Valley was the Central Branch of the Union Pacific built in 1867 west from Atchison. The Panic of 1873 killed the hope of a railroad for Randolph until 1885-86 when what is now the Blue Valley branch of the Union Pacific was built.⁸

Randolph had a unique ferry in the early days. It was different from any other on the river, because it was a community-owned ferry instead of a privately-owned one. The charter, filed with the Secretary of State, read:⁹

We, the citizens of Riley County, Kansas, assembled on the third day of June, 1878, do organize ourselves into a ferry corporation to be known as the Randolph Ferry Company, for the purpose of legally holding any real estate or other property that may come into its possession for the use of said company.

⁷ The Manhattan Mercury-Chronicle, October 31, 1948. Kansas Central

⁸ Ibid. The Leavenworth Kansas & Western Railroad came through Olsburg in 1881, but it continued south through Garrison and west to Leonardville instead of going through Randolph. Interview with W. H. Sikes, at Leonardville, Kansas, May 25, 1954. Interview with Carl Fernstrom, at Randolph, Kansas, May 25, 1954.

⁹ Ibid. No information was found that a ferry existed at Randolph before 1878.

The corporation was chartered for twenty years. Trustees named included Milton Foreman, John Chelander, John W. Nelson, Axel Axelson, and William Pierson. Capital stock was sold to the extent of five hundred dollars. The company was organized for the purpose of operating a "ferry across the Blue River, at, or as near as possible or practical to Randolph."

Whether the community ferry was a going concern or not was never revealed. However, on November 12, 1881, Elijah Holden was granted a license for a ferry near the town of Randolph where the road from Randolph to Olsburg crossed the river.

In 1884, a new license was issued to Elijah Holden and Joseph Hays for a ferry. In 1885 and 1886 these men published rates as follows: footmen, five cents; man and a horse, ten cents; two-horse team, twenty cents; and loose cattle, five cents a head. The ferry continued to change hands, with Peter Jacobson being granted a license in 1887 and N. S. Bergman in 1888.¹⁰

A move for a bridge across the Big Blue at Randolph was started during the summer of 1889. Bonds were voted, materials ordered, and work was started the same fall. The bridge was completed and opened in May 1890, and it continued in operation until it was damaged by the flood in 1903.¹¹

In 1903 the county board agreed to make a donation of two hundred dollars for the erection of a ferry boat to be located

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

over the Blue River at Randolph. They further agreed to pay fifteen dollars per month for the running of the boat after February 1, 1904, until such a time as the bridge could be repaired.

CHAPTER V

RELIGIOUS, EDUCATIONAL, CIVIC, AND POLITICAL ATTITUDES AND ORGANIZATION

Historical accounts differ as to when and where the first religious meetings were held in Randolph. One account states that the first religious services of any kind were held in the various homes of the people throughout the area. The first service was held at Gardner Randolph's home as early as 1856 by minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church South. Later, religious services were held at H. Condray's home about 1861 or 1862 by Rev. M. Robinson, and in 1864 by Rev. W. Marlatt.¹

Another source gives a slightly different account of the first religious services. It states that the first preaching in the Fancy Creek vicinity was in the spring of 1858, by Rev. R. L. Hartford, at the home of Mr. Mitchell, later at the home of George T. Polson. In 1860, Rev. Robinson, of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, conducted services at the home of Henry Condray, on the present site of Randolph. The ministers during 1863 were Rev. A. J. Coe and Rev. Marlatt, of Manhattan. During that year the first quarterly meeting was held on Fancy Creek by Rev. N. Taylor.

The ministers who served this church between 1864 and 1881 were Rev. Barrack, Rev. W. Marlatt, Rev. West, Rev. Knipe, Rev. L. Briggs, Rev. C. Minear, Rev. R. Zimmerman, Rev. A. J. Coe, Rev. J. H. Green and Rev. C. K. Jones. On the 4th day of April, 1875, a

¹ A. T. Andreas and W. G. Cutler, op. cit., p. 1302.

Sabbath school was organized, with William Fryhofer as Superintendent. A church was erected in 1878 and was dedicated on the 20th of June. Previous to that time, meetings had been held in the schoolhouse. On the 30th of May, 1879, the church was completely destroyed by a tornado; but by the 29th of February, 1880, it had been rebuilt, and on that day it was again dedicated.²

A Swedish Mission Society was organized in 1875, and in 1878 the Swedish Mission Church was built. A special meeting for the purpose of organizing a church had been announced. Reverend C. J. Lundahl had come from the Brantford Community to give his assistance in bringing about an organization.³ Reverend Lundahl was appointed temporary chairman and J. E. Bodin, temporary secretary. There was also a temporary board composed of C. Welin, chairman; M. Holmley, secretary; F. Palmquist, G. Gustafson, and M. Hanson which was elected to serve three months. There were several intervening meetings held and on April 4, 1875, the permanent organization was established and a new board of C. Welin, chairman; F. Palmquist, vice chairman; A. Wikander, secretary; and F. Palmquist, treasurer, was elected.

In 1888 a Swedish Baptist Church was established with a membership of twenty-three persons. Reverend A. J. Bengston, a pastor from Leonardville, had begun to hold services in Randolph

² Historical Plat Book, op. cit., p. 18.

³ Evangelical Mission Covenant Church; 60th Anniversary, Randolph, Kansas, 1874-1934, p. 36.

in 1886.⁴ This church was disbanded in 1900 to give preference to the American Baptist Church.

The United Brethren people built a church in 1892; C. J. Stark was the minister. They continued to hold services in the church until 1895, when they disbanded; and on June 27, 1895, the church building was turned over to an adult class of the Methodist Church, at which time this group also assumed the debt of about \$1,000 against the church. This Methodist class had been organized in 1891 with Rev. Knoke as pastor. Until this time they had held their meetings in Hudson's Hall, which was used for all public gatherings, and is now the present Pfuetze building. They were on the Waterville circuit, which was made up of Cottage Hill, Fancy Creek, and Randolph.⁵

Protestant Christianity predominated in this area. However, a Catholic Church was established in East Randolph sometime in the 80's or 90's but was of short duration.⁶ There was also a Swedish Lutheran Church for a short time.⁷

The Blue Valley Band was organized on August 18, 1890, and continued until 1900. The members of this organization were J. W. Johnson, V. E. Johnson, August Johnson, Otto Johnson, Albert Johnson, Theodore Johnson, Henry Johnson, August Peterson,

⁴ P. Lovene, History of the Swedish Baptist Churches of Kansas and Missouri, 1869-1927, p. 70.

⁵ The Randolph Enterprise, May 6, 1929. Interview with Mrs. L. V. Johnson, at Randolph, Kansas, May 25, 1954.

⁶ Interview with Mrs. J. J. Weisendanger, at Salina, Kansas, May 18, 1954.

⁷ Interview with Miss Ellen Johnson, at Salina, Kansas, May 18, 1954.

George Christensen, Emil Johnson, and Anton Johnson. The leader was D. W. Johnson. They were very active in playing for various occasions such as Fourth of July celebrations and old settlers' reunions.⁸

Prior to 1863 the people of Randolph had not had time or opportunity to devote attention to education. The next few years, however, witnessed a change. The first attempts to organize a school district were in 1863.⁹ The first school house in Randolph was built in 1868 by voluntary labor and money.¹⁰ A Miss Towner was the first teacher of the school. As time went on, the educational facilities were rated excellent. A high school was established in 1902.¹¹ The schools of Randolph have made it possible for all who resided within reach of them to enjoy the best educational advantage. In comparison to other schools of its size, it ranked very well.

When the population of Randolph reached 300 in 1886, a petition for incorporation signed by W. Hudson, Jas. E. Dow, and others was presented to the board of county commissioners. The town was duly incorporated by order of the board January 8, 1886, as a city of the third class.¹²

⁸ Interview with Anton Johnson, Randolph, Kansas, May 25, 1954.

⁹ Interview with Mrs. Madge Secrest, Manhattan, Kansas, May 18, 1954. Appendix, p. 71.

¹⁰ The Randolph Enterprise, September 13, 1906.

¹¹ Interview with Mrs. John Holmatrom, at Randolph, Kansas, May 24, 1954.

¹² The Randolph Enterprise, September 13, 1906.

The first city election was held in the Randolph School House, District No. 9, July 26, 1886. The judges were L. W. Hudson, J. M. Crauder, and M. Fremon; and the clerks, George Marine and John Kay. Joseph H. Dow, C. A. More, and Orson King canvassed the returns. The mayor elected was J. F. Joy; Dr. I. Mayfield, Thomas Leach, R. D. Heath, and F. M. Pepper, councilmen; and L. W. Hudson, police judge. The new council appointed Jas. H. Dow as city clerk, John F. Beckman as treasurer, and Edwin Irwin, marshall. After books were purchased, ordinances were adopted and Randolph had a complete municipal government as a third class city.¹³

The Swedes in America in the 60's flocked to the banner of the Union, in the Civil War which was then raging.¹⁴

They were by nature, so to speak, on the right side. The Swedes of Kansas, as a class, had worked hard for prohibition and that a good Republican—because every Swede is born a Republican and will remain such if no unforeseen accidents overtake him.

The people of Randolph were also civic minded. They were very progressive and tried to interest the people of the surrounding area to come to their town and to expand their trade territory.¹⁵

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ C. A. Swensson, "The Swedes in Kansas" Kansas Historical Society Collections, 4: 288.

¹⁵ Interview with Anton Johnson, at Randolph, Kansas, May 25, 1954.

CHAPTER VI

THE RANDOLPH TRADE AREA

Part I

The Origin of the Mariadahl Church

The settlers who came to the Mariadahl settlement were Swedish-Lutherans. The first Swede to come to Kansas was John A. Johnson who came to the Blue Valley, a few miles north of Randolph, on June 20, 1855.¹ Together with his brother, N. P. Johnson and his wife, Mary Johnson, John A. Johnson left Sweden for America in May of 1852. The trip from Sweden to New York took approximately six weeks. On July 30, 1852, they went to Andover, Illinois, which at this time was a well-known Swedish settlement. Johnson worked for a Mr. Shannon, a farmer near Galesberg, Illinois. In 1855 Governor Reeder of Kansas Territory issued a prospectus which outlined the advantage of the area. Shannon and Johnson read the prospectus and decided to take advantage of it. Shannon had gotten into economic reversals and lost some of his land and wanted to get a new start. Shannon and Johnson arrived in the Blue Valley on June 20, 1855.² Johnson was very impressed with the land and its possibilities and decided to stay. He built a simple log cabin which became the first dwelling place in the present Mariadahl Community.

¹ Emory Lindquist, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

² Alfred Bergin, "Swedish Settlements in Central Kansas," *Kansas Historical Society Collections*, 11: 19.

Johnson's brother, N. P. Johnson, and his wife stayed in Illinois where they worked for a farmer near Ontario for a short time, until he found work in Galesberg. The N. P. Johnsons and their baby daughter left Andover, Illinois, for Kansas on April 22, 1856, in a covered wagon drawn by oxen. They took the route by way of St. Joseph rather than by Lexington to avoid the danger from proslavery partisans. They traveled in the company of four other American families to the Vermillion River. From there they went on alone to search for N. P. Johnson's brother, John A.

Toward dusk N. P. Johnson, realizing that they were lost in a strange country, reluctantly left his wife and daughter in a frantic search on foot for his brother. When he was about to give up and return to his temporary camp, he saw a small cabin and a man coming out of it. He was very happy when he found that the man was his brother. They immediately hurried back to Mrs. Johnson and infant daughter. They rejoiced over their reunion and expressed their gratitude to God.

After they had been reunited, the brothers were very eager that their mother, brothers, and sisters come from Sweden and join them. Their father died on February 27, 1858. After several communications with their relatives in America, the family decided to make the trip to the new country. They left their home in Snararp, Pumskulla, Sweden, about June 7, 1859, embarked from the port of Hamburg on July 11 or 12, on the ship Doanu, and arrived in New York on August 24, 1859. They came to St. Joseph, Missouri, by rail but the remainder of the trip was made by

horse-drawn wagons. In the group that arrived in the Blue Valley on September 30, 1859, were Maria, the mother, and the following brothers and sisters of John and N. P. Johnson: David, Gustaf, Victor, Christina, Charlotta, Emma, and Clara. Other Scandinavians who had come to this area within five years after John Johnson had settled were: N. P. Nelson, S. P. Rolander, C. J. Dahlberg, Nels Christensen, Lewis Persson, Peter Carlson, and John Sanderson.

Maria Johnson was not in good health, and the hardships of the journey and the exposure had weakened her as well. The following year, 1860, she died. At this time the pioneers were not organized in any way and had no burial ground. She was buried on the N. P. Johnson farm.

Several years later, the number of Swedes had grown large enough to organize a congregation and set aside a burial ground. When they considered a name for the congregation and cemetery, they thought of Maria Johnson, the first of the immigrants to die in Kansas, so in the honor and memory of her, they named the place Mariadahl which means "the valley of Mary".³

On December 30, 1856, the first child born of Scandinavian parents in Kansas was John William, son of N. P. Johnson and his wife, Mary.⁴ On November 11, 1857, the first girl born to Swedish parents in Kansas was Clara Josephine, born to Mr. and

³ Anniversary Album, Mariadahl Lutheran Church, Randolph and Cleburne, Kansas, 1938, p. 37. Hereafter cited as Anniversary Album. Interview with Anton Johnson, at Randolph, Kansas, May 25, 1954.

⁴ The Lutheran Companion, November 17, 1948, p. 8.

Mrs. C. J. Dahlberg.⁵

The land on which the present Mariadahl Church grounds are now located, had been taken by pre-emption rights by John A. Johnson. This tract of land was bought by the congregation in 1863 for forty-two dollars. The legal transfer of this tract of land was recorded in Pottawatomie County, showing the transfer from John A. Johnson and his wife to the Board of Trustees of the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of Mariadahl.⁶

The hope of organizing a congregation was high among the pioneers of the valley. They had all been associated with a religious background in Sweden and some of them had belonged to Dr. Hasselquist's Lutheran Church in Illinois. The group would go to different homes, and the man of the family in whose home they gathered, served as leader in conducting religious services. Occasionally, ordained pastors were invited to come and preach to the people, but it was difficult to get a pastor to make the trip because the means of travel were so primitive.

The first Lutheran pastor to visit Mariadahl was Rev. John Johnson, of Princeton, Illinois, who came to them and preached and held meetings in the homes of the various families every evening for a period of three weeks in the fall of 1863. These people were devout, and everything indicated that they were spiritually hungry for the word of God. They were still few in

⁵ Anniversary Album, p. 36.

⁶ See Appendix, pp. 72 and 73.

numbers, but their membership soon increased. A meeting was held in the N. P. Johnson home, called for the purpose of organizing a congregation, on October 14, 1863.⁷

Between 1863 and 1867 there was no permanent pastor of the church. During this period various visiting pastors preached and administered to the people. They were Rev. Hakan Olson, Rev. B. M. Halland, and Rev. A. W. Dahlsten.

The first permanent pastor, the Rev. J. P. Lundblad, arrived in the spring of 1867 and remained until June 1, 1869.⁸ The congregation was without a pastor until 1872, but during this period it was served by an Augustana Seminary Theological student and various itinerant ministers, each for short periods. It was during this time that the Rev. S. P. A. Lindahl served, first as a local pastor and then as a field missionary over the widely-scattered Swedish settlements around Mariadahl.

The Rev. John Seleen became pastor in 1872 and remained for four years, during which time, in addition to his services as pastor of Mariadahl Church, he carried on missionary work over most of what is now the Mariadahl District. The congregation of Walsburg was organized by him in 1873, and they shared the same pastor with Mariadahl until 1884.

At the annual congregational meeting in January 1866, they decided to build a church. This was quite a project at this time

⁷ See Appendix, p. 74.

⁸ E. R. De Zurko, Early Kansas Churches, (Topeka, 1949), p. 29.

because they did not have much money. They did, however, have vision and foresight and were both able and willing to work. There was plenty of stone in the hills to quarry. They also made kilns and burned the lime used for masonry. There was a lot of timber nearby but to prepare the raw materials for the building of a church at this time took a lot of enthusiasm as well as intelligence to accomplish it.

The building of the church was begun in 1866 and the auditorium was ready for use the following year, but not completed until 1871. The Mariadah Church was really built in three distinct stages; auditorium, tower, and transept.

The auditorium was begun in 1866 and was partly finished so that it could be used for services the following year. For the first years the congregation sat on planks during services. Carpenters made walnut pews and installed them when the auditorium was completed. The chief carpenter was A. P. Oman, and John Eckblad was the master mason. He had been a stone mason in Sweden before he came to America. The stone for the church was quarried in a nearby hillside. The shingles, frames, trim, and glass came from the east by railroad to Leavenworth and Irving, from where they were hauled by horse or ox-drawn carts to the building site. Most of the lumber was local cottonwood sawed to dimensions in the local carpenter shops. Only the oak beam that supported the auditorium floor joists was axe-hewn.

Andrew Hoff, a lay preacher, designed the tower that was built in 1884. A transept twenty-six feet by twenty-four feet

EXPLANATION OF PLATE II

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mariadahl.
It is claimed to be the oldest Swedish church west
of the Missouri River.

PLATE II



which extended southward was added in 1900.⁹

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mariadahl is a delightful example of a bit of Sweden transplanted in Kansas. It is located in a picturesque valley of farms almost surrounded by bluffs. The claim is made that this is the oldest Swedish church west of the Missouri River.¹⁰

Part II

The Children's Home

These early immigrants being of a very religious nature had a very high concern for children who had become orphaned because of sickness and death of their parents. As a result there was a need of a home for the fatherless and motherless child. This subject was discussed and plans were made for a children's home. In 1878, at a general church meeting, a committee was appointed to study the matter and report their findings.¹¹ About this time a farm in Freemount, Kansas, was given toward the project. After consideration and investigation of the matter, it was decided to buy a farm in Pottawatomie County, east of the Big Blue River, for a future children's home. This farm was the land that had been pre-empted by William Shannon, who had arrived from Galesberg,

⁹ In 1938 a basement was added. The old oak beam was replaced by a steel beam under the auditorium floor. The wood of the old oak beam was used to make the stairway to the basement, and what was left was carved into a baptismal fount and four flower pedestals by J. A. Nordquist, an old woodcarver.

¹⁰ E. R. De Zurko, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

¹¹ Anniversary Album, p. 43.

Illinois, with John A. Johnson in 1855. The first legal transaction to purchase the Shannon farm for an orphanage was recorded in the Pottawatomie County records.¹² The trustees held the deed to the Orphans Home farm in their name until the year 1888.¹³

The home was administered through a board of directors who were elected by the Mariadahl District of the Kansas Conference of the Scandinavian Lutheran Synod. This board hired a person to act as superintendent and caretaker of the home and the farm.¹⁴

Along with the caring for these children, educational facilities were considered necessary and important to their well-being. In 1884 a three-month term of Swedish school was held. In 1890 they had an eight-month term of school, using both the Swedish and the English language.¹⁵ The school at first was held in the main building. In 1892 the board decided to build a school house.¹⁶ The home furnished the public school and the equipment. It also hired and paid the teacher. They tried to get state aid for the school but were not successful until 1894, but this was later withdrawn.¹⁷ For several years the state

¹² See Appendix, p. 75.

¹³ See Appendix, pp. 76, 77, and 78.

¹⁴ This plan continued until 1931 when by an agreement between the board of directors and the Mariadahl Lutheran Congregation it was decided that the pastor of the church also serve as superintendent of the home. The plan for hiring some family or person as caretaker continued.

¹⁵ Anniversary Album, p. 51.

¹⁶ This school was used until 1929 when it burned. A new stone building was built at that time.

¹⁷ A neighboring public school, the Bellegaard district, has hired and paid the teacher of the Home School since 1927.

appropriated money for the public school work at the Home.¹⁸

Efforts were made from the very beginning to raise funds so that the Home would have a continuous income. In 1880 a plan for Sunday School children throughout the Kansas conference was started under which they would be given cards, and then go out and solicit funds for the Children's Home. This plan is still in practice. The farm has proved a good means of support to the Home, and also many products were produced that could be consumed. A dairy herd was always there to provide milk, cream, and butter; a flock of chickens has been kept to supply eggs and meat. A large garden has produced an abundance of vegetables. One to three hundred bushels of potatoes were produced each year. The wheat crops have kept bread on the tables. At one time a small sugar cane crop supplied the large family with plenty of molasses. Besides these means of support, there have been many gifts of money, legacies, and estates that have been given to the Home.¹⁹

Part III

Other Communities

Other settlements made at this time in the region were along Fancy Creek, Swede Creek, and along the east and west side of the Blue River. The Randolph Community comprised such outlying settlements as Winkler, Mariadahl, Swede Creek, and Olesburgh (later

¹⁸ Anniversary Album, p. 51.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 50.

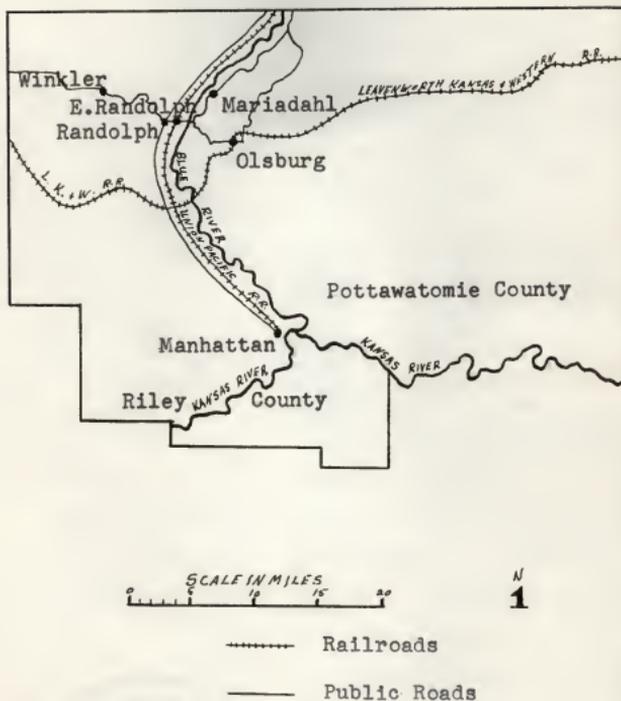


Fig. 1. Map of Riley and Pottawatomie Counties, showing the location of Randolph and community. It also shows the roads and railroads affecting the community.

spelled Olsburg). The German settlers located north and west of Randolph along Fancy Creek, while the Swedish immigrants settled north and east of Randolph along Swede Creek and the Blue River.

Winkler was first settled in 1857 by August Winkler who established a grist mill there and called it Winkler's Mills. Other settlers in the immediate area were G. L. Galey, F. Winkler, and J. J. Meyers. A short time later Rudolph Niehenke, Frank Droll, George Pickett, Fred Schwartz, O. E. Osborne, A. S. Edger-ton, Peter Dicks, and others settled there. Louis Kunze took the last homestead in Western Riley County.²⁰

The first school house at Winkler's Mills was erected in 1867.²¹ Richard Burk established a store in 1872.²² It was later sold to William Gugenhan who in turn sold it to Otto Buchelm. A German Lutheran Church was also erected in 1872.

Swede Creek was named in honor of Peter Carlson, a Swede, who settled on its banks in 1857. In 1858 L. Pierson settled just below the mouth of Swede Creek, and N. Christensen, a native of Denmark, a little farther down the Blue. The same year the Meyer brothers settled there. Others who settled a short time later were Fred Toburen, Herman Toburen, Adolph Toburen, and their parents. The Sanderson and Axelson families came in 1858.

²⁰ A. T. Andreas and W. G. Cutler, *op. cit.*, p. 1302. Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Gust Hagenmair, at Randolph, Kansas, May 25, 1954.

²¹ *Ibid.* Interview with Mrs. Grace Stockwell, near Winkler, Kansas, May 24, 1954.

²² *Ibid.*

A German Evangelical church was erected in 1877.²³

Olsburg was also a Swedish settlement. It had a Swedish Lutheran, Swedish Methodist, and United Brethren church organization. The church services were held in the school house that was built in 1880; two years later it had to be rebuilt because it had been damaged by a tornado. Olsburg had several business houses by 1880. There were three general stores, owned by O. Fagerberg & Bro., Nicholas Bittenger, and Coldsen & Blanry; the druggist was John Johnson; the hotel was managed and owned by George Shehi, and he with his brothers ran a livery. Foster and Sons soon established a lumber yard, and O. Fagerberg was the postmaster.²⁴

The town of Mariadahl was plotted across the road from the Swedish Lutheran Church. It was laid out on April 12, 1871, by John A. Johnson on Section 5, Township 7, Range 7. There was also a Swedish Methodist church there, a blacksmith shop, and a grange store run by J. Williams who also was the postmaster.²⁵

²³ Historical Plat Book, op. cit., p. 26.

²⁴ A. T. Andreas and W. G. Cutler, op. cit., p. 933.

²⁵ Ibid. Interview with Harold W. Johnson, in Randolph, Kansas, May 24, 1954.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The development of Randolph and community was typical of other Kansas towns and communities, especially those that were settled and organized by those people of similar nationalities.

Most of the towns and communities starting at this time had the same types of experiences, both welcome and unwelcome. The hazards that confronted the people here were also hazards to people of other areas and communities, especially the seasonal weather from drouth to flood, tornadoes, prairie fires to fight, grasshopper invasions, problems of communication and transportation, and problems with the Indians. The question of slavery was a factor that was always present during these early days. There were some pro-slave sympathizers among the groups that settled, but in Randolph they were in the minority. The settlers from their experiences in their homeland were interested in the freedom of man and were trying to establish themselves in a land that had been pictured to them as a place where freedom and equality of man would prevail. Through their conviction of this fact, their influence was a factor in the establishment of Kansas as a free state.

Another factor that was typical in Randolph and other developments and settlements at this time was their great concern over their spiritual and religious welfare. Their chief concern after they had made some provision for shelter and food, was to establish some organization for the purpose of worshipping God.

Even before they were able to organize, they would carry on religious activities within their homes and thank God for his guidance and protection. Many references have been made to the pious and devout immigrants that came to Kansas at this time. There was also the common feeling and lonesomeness for their homeland, friends, and relatives that they had left behind.

In all new settlements cooperation was an outstanding characteristic; this was true with both men and women. Just as the men helped each other in building homes and planting crops, so the women worked together in cheese making, quilting, and the weaving of cloth. This same characteristic was predominant in the building of a church in which project much time and labor was donated and freely and gladly given.

Although most towns and communities developing at this time were quite typical of one another, most all of them had one or several aspects that made them unique from the others. An outstanding characteristic of Randolph and community was described as follows:¹

It is near the west bank of the Blue River, on the north bank of Fancy Creek, on the border of a beautiful and fertile valley, surrounded by groves and native timber, making a picture at once grand and beautiful. During all seasons of the year nature appears at her best in this picturesque spot. The verdure of spring with all her buds and blossoms that fill the valley with fragrance: the lazy summers with golden harvest, running water and cooling shades that furnish a rest from the heat and dust and where all nature is at her best: the mild frosty winter with his snowy mantle that covers the hills and valleys and glistens in the sunlight. Nestled

¹ The Randolph Enterprise, September 13, 1906.

snugly here between hill and valley lies the beautiful little town. The ideal spot for a home in all the broad state of Kansas. But Randolph is not all a dream. It was energetic thriving business town, located in one of the best farming and stock centers of the state. The soil is a rich vegetable mold, with a clay subsoil that possesses the peculiar properties to withstand the disastrous results both of drouth and continuous rains. Good average crops have been raised while in many years very large crops have been gathered.

The Randolph community was also the home of the first Swede to settle in Kansas. Soon afterward the first boy and girl of Swedish parents in Kansas were born there.

The resources of the area were principally livestock and agricultural products. Fruit, especially the apples, cherries, peaches, plums, grapes, and berries proved productive. The whole country was dotted with native and cultivated timber so that this part of Kansas was not a treeless plain.

Another feature found in this valley was that the people who settled here transplanted a part of their native country into the new land. This was also true of other communities, but the surroundings and the same natural conditions emphasized it more in this particular community.

A further interpretation of the early day Kansas from the Randolph Community is that the people of this early era were a very conscientious, ambitious, and industrious people. Although they met many hardships and disappointments they did not give up. They possessed those characteristics that made it possible for the development of our civilization as we enjoy it today. They were not a narrow-minded people, but people who followed a very broad pattern of thinking. Their interests were not only in one

field but in various fields, that would eventually lead to the enrichment of all. They made good use of the resources they found and adapted themselves to the surroundings and environment in which they found themselves. Their background in the countries from which they came, made them very appreciative of the freedoms and advantages that were here for them. These early settlers laid a foundation for economic, political, and religious security and through their sacrifices and experiences, their posterity has clung to their establishments of a high moral and Christian-minded people.

By 1906 the foundations of Randolph had been quite well established. The population was largely composed of people of Swedish and German nationalities. Many of the people living there in 1954 are descendants of these early settlers. By 1906, schools had been organized and established, communication and transportation had been developed, and the types of businesses had been organized according to the needs of the people. Randolph people have kept up with the various changes that have come about in all fields.

Randolph is located in and supported by an agricultural economy and is typical of many small rural towns in the United States. As in other towns, Randolph community citizens have enjoyed prosperous times and have experienced the slowing down of economic activity during depression and drought. Another similarity to other towns is that the younger people do not remain but leave for industrial areas or cities. As a result, a large part of the population is made up of elderly people.

Randolph will probably remain with few changes unless some extraordinary incident occurs in the future.

The contribution to America of these devout, pious, and industrious people can never be underestimated and the heritage that has been passed on from their courageous efforts and work should be safe-guarded well and long.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Law Changing the Name of Waterville to Randolph¹

NAMES, WATERVILLE, IN RILEY COUNTY.

An act to, Change the name of the Town of Waterville, in Riley County.

BE IT REMEMBERED, BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF KANSAS.
Section 1: That the name of the town of Waterville, in Riley County, be and the same is hereby changed to that of Randolph.
Section 2: This Act shall take effect and be in force from and after its publication in the Statute Book.
Approved February 25, 1876.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the original enrolled bill now on file in my office, Thomas H. Cavanaugh, Secretary of State.

¹ Session Laws of Kansas, 1876, p. 197.

APPENDIX B

School History, District No. 9, Randolph.²

May 9, 1862 laid out.

May 9, 1862 Notice to Geo. Fickett for first meeting June 30,
at 10 A.M.

July 30, 1862 Letter from Rudolph Niehenke, secretary.

William Pickett	Director
James R. Clow	Treasurer
Rudolph Niehenke	Clerk

Sept. 4, 1862 Town vote sent to the clerk.

Oct. 15, 1862 Report of sec., clerk of district No. 9.

Whole number of children, males 8,
females 8, Total 16.
Vote Received--organization lost
No school begun.

July 24, 1866 Laid out district number 22, altering Districts
12 and 9.

District No. 9.

Jan. 1, 1869 Laid out and first meeting appointed at the
store in said district.

Jan. 19, 1869 Boundaries as follows: commencing at Blue
River on the boundary line between 6 & 7
thence W. to S. E. corner of T 6 R. 5 thence
N. 2 miles, thence W. $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, thence S. $3\frac{1}{4}$
miles, thence W. $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, thence S. $\frac{3}{4}$ mile,
thence S. $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, thence E. 1 mile, thence
S. 1 mile East to the Blue River.

Jan. 14, 1869 Boundary of No. 9 changed by petition from
No. 21 as indicated in the 7 & 8th lines
above.

Board of 1869

John Flood	Director
S. P. Johnson	Clerk
H. Shellenbaum	Treas.

July 3, 1872 The boundary of this District is extended
one mile further north to section 24, 23,
and E. $\frac{1}{2}$ of 22 T. 6 R. 6.

² Riley County, Superintendent of 'Schools' Report, Book I.

APPENDIX C

Legal agreement between John A. Johnson and his wife and the Board of Trustees of the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of Mariadahl.

Know all men by these Presents that John A. Johnson and Emma C. Johnson his wife of Pottawatomie County, Kansas, in consideration of the sum of Forty-two Dollars to them paid by the trustees of the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mariadahl, Pottawatomie County, State of Kansas, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, has sold and by these Presents does grant and convey unto the said Trustees and their successors for Church and burial purposes and Assigns forever: All that certain tract of parcel of land situated in Pottawatomie County, State of Kansas, described as follows to-wit:

Lot Number Eight of Section five in Township seven South of Range Seven East of the Sixth Principal Meridian in the State of Kansas, containing thirty acres and sixty hundredths of an acre.

To Have and to Hold the same with all the appurtenances thereunto belonging unto the said Trustees, and their successors, of said Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church, and assigns forever, and the said John A. Johnson and Emma C. Johnson his wife for themselves and heirs does hereby covenant with the said Trustees and their successors of said Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church and assigns that we are lawfully seized of said premises, that the premises will forever Warrant and Defend the same with the appurtenances unto the said Trustees and their successors and assigns against all lawful claims whatsoever.

In Witness Whereof they have hereunto set their hand and seal this (2nd) second day of November in the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty three.

Signed, Sealed and delivered
in presence of

G. C. Johnson
John Booth

John A. Johnson (Seal)
her
Emma C. x Johnson
Mark

STATE OF KANSAS
POTTAWATOMIE COUNTY

On this third day of November in the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty three before me the subscriber appeared John A. Johnson, to me known to be the same person described in and who executed the above instrument, and he acknowledged the same to be his own free act and deed.

John Booth
Justice of the Peace

STATE OF KANSAS SS:
POTTAWATOMIE COUNTY

On this third day of November in the year one thousand eight hundred and Sixty three before me the subscriber appeared Emma C. Johnson to me personally known to be the same person described in and who executed the above instrument and she acknowledged the same to be her voluntary act and deed and the said Emma J. Johnson on a private examination by me apart from her said husband acknowledged that she executed the same freely and without any fear or compulsion of any one.

John Booth
Justice of the Peace

This instrument was filed for record April 10, A.D. 1864,
at 12 o'clock M.

APPENDIX D

Abstract of the record of the meeting held in the N. P. Johnson home, called for the purpose of organizing a Lutheran congregation, October 14, 1863.

The meeting which had been properly announced, opened with Scripture reading and prayer by Rev. John Johnson. Pastor Johnson was chosen to serve as chairman of the meeting. C. J. Dahlberg was chosen to serve as secretary. The purpose of the meeting was fully explained. A motion was made and adopted that a Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Congregation be organized. The following expressed their willingness to organize and become members: C. J. Dahlberg, N. P. Johnson, John Sanderson, Nels Christensen, Melcher Fallen, and their families.

It was decided to ask for admission to the Augustana Synod, which had been organized in Clinton, Wis., in June, 1860, and it was decided to adopt the constitution of the Augustana Synod Churches.

The following officers were elected:

Congregational secretary: John A. Johnson

Deacons: for three years, N. P. Johnson; two years, N. P. Axel-son; For one year, John Sanderson.

Trustees: For three years, C. J. Dahlberg; two years, John A. Johnson; one year, Melcher Fallen.

John Johnson, Chairman
C. J. Dahlberg, Sec.

APPENDIX E

First legal transaction to purchase the Shannon farm for an orphanage was recorded in the Pottawatomie County records.³

Mary E. Gumm and Festus M. Gumm, John Rodell, J. Selen, Francis Johnson, C. J. Broden and A. W. Dahlsten, trustees of the Orphans' Home of the Kansas Conference of the Scandinavian Lutheran Augustana Synod of the United States of America.

Dated Oct. 2, 1879. Filed for record Oct. 29, 1879.

Consideration \$5,100.

³ Entry No. 10. Warranty Deed Vol. S., P. 349.

APPENDIX F

Minutes of the Children's Home Board meeting held in New Gottland, Kansas, November 26, 1879.

1. Pastor and Dr. C. A. Swensson was elected to serve as secretary protem.

2. Decided that the board of the Children's Home rent out Mariadahl farm to J. Monson of Swedesburg, Iowa, for a period of three years; that one third of the crop be paid in rental.

3. Decided that the board ask J. Monson to take charge of and care for the children that the board receives and takes into the Home. That remuneration for keeping the children of the Home be agreed upon between the board and J. Monson. That these decisions may be changed when found necessary.

4. Decided that the treasurer of the Home be authorized to print ingathering cards.

5. Decided that the ingathering cards be distributed in the congregations during Christmas Holidays.

6. Decided that Rev. H. Olson be authorized by the board to send out and collect the ingathering for the Children's Home and that Dr. C. A. Swensson be asked to go to Mariadahl to assist in this important work.

7. Decided that the board of directors should try to sell the farm in Freemount for \$2,000, that \$500 be paid by March 1, 1880, and \$500 the following year and so on till all be paid.

New Gottland, Kansas, Nov. 26, 1879.

C. A. Swensson,
Secy. Pro. Tem.

APPENDIX G

Deed Conveying Property to Children's Home.⁴

This indenture made this 30th day of April A.D. 1888 between John Rodell, J. Seleen, Francis Johnson, C. J. Broden, and A. W. Dahlsten, Trustees of the Orphans' Home of the Kansas Conference of the Scandinavian Lutheran Augustana Synod of the United States; and John Rodell and Anna C. Rodell, his wife; J. Seleen, and Sophia Seleen, his wife; Francis Johnson and Carolina Johnson, his wife; C. J. Broden, and Anna J. Broden, his wife; and A. W. Dahlsten, and Albertina W. Dahlsten, his wife, of the First Part, and The Orphans' Home of the Kansas Conference of the Scandinavian Lutheran Augustana Synod of the United States, a corporation, of the Second Part:

Witnesseth, that the said parties of the first part, in consideration of the sum of One Dollar, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, so by these presents grant, bargain, sell and convey unto said party of the second part, his successors and assigns, all the following described Real Estate, situated in the County of Pottawatomie, and State of Kansas, To-wit:

The East Half of the North West Quarter; The South West Quarter of the North West Quarter, less the South Ten acres thereof; Lot number Three (or North West Quarter; of North West Quarter); The North East Quarter of South West Quarter; The North West Quarter of South East Quarter; and the West half of the North East Quarter, less the South East ten acres; All in Section number Seven (7) East of the Sixth Principal Meridian, containing Two Hundred and Seventy-one hundredths (281.71) acres, more or less:

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD THE SAME, together with all and singular the tenements, hereditaments and appurtenances thereunto belonging or in anywise appertaining forever;

And the said parties of the first part, for themselves, their heirs executors and administrators, or successors in office, do hereby covenant promise and agree to and with said party of the second part, that at the delivery of these presents they are lawfully seized in their own right, of an absolute and indefeasible estate of inheritance, in fee simple, of and in all and singular the above granted and described premises with the appurtenances; that the same are free, clear, discharged and unincumbered of and from all former and other grants, titles,

⁴ Pottawatomie County, Kansas, Deed Records, Entry No. 11, Vol. 15, p. 185.

charges, Estates, judgments, taxes, assessments, and incumbrances, of what nature or kind soever; and that they will warrant and forever defend the same unto said party of the second part, its successors and assigns against said parties of the first part, their heirs, and all and every person or persons whomsoever, lawfully claiming or to claim the same.

In Witness Whereof, the said parties of the first part have hereunto set their hands the day and year first above written.

John Rodell, J. Seleen, Francis Johnson, C. J. Broden, A. W. Dahlsten.

Trustees of the Orphans' Home of the Kansas Conference of the Scandinavian Lutheran Augustana Synod of the United States.

John Rodell
her
Anna C. x Rodell
mark
Sophia Seleen
J. Seleen

Francis Johnson
Carolina Johnson
C. J. Broden
Anna Josephine Broden
A. W. Dahlsten
Albertina W. Dahlsten

STATE OF KANSAS, MCPHERSON COUNTY, SS:

Be it Remembered, that on this Sixth day of September A. D. 1888, before me the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for the County and State aforesaid, came J. Seleen and Sophia Seleen his wife, John Rodell and Anna C. Rodell, his wife; and Francis Johnson and Carolina Johnson, his wife, who are personally known to me to be the same persons who executed the within instrument of writing and such persons have duly acknowledged the execution of the same;

In Testimony Whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my notarial seal the day and year last above written.

W. A. Granville, Notary Public.

THE FIRST HALF-CENTURY OF RANDOLPH, KANSAS,
AND COMMUNITY

by

FLOYD WENDELL NYQUIST

B. M., Bethany College, 1941

AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of History and Government

KANSAS STATE COLLEGE
OF AGRICULTURE AND APPLIED SCIENCE

1954

This thesis presents the early history and development of Randolph, Kansas, and community. The action of this history covers the period from 1855 to 1905, and takes place in the Fancy Creek, Swede Creek, and the northern Blue River Valley, which is located in the northeastern part of Riley County and the northwest part of Pottawatomie County. At the time the history starts, the area that was to become the Randolph community, was virgin territory as far as the white man was concerned.

In 1855 Gardner Randolph and his family came from Illinois for the avowed purpose of organizing a slave plantation in this valley and to make Kansas a slave state. Very soon after this, settlers of the Swedish, German, and Swiss nationality began coming to this area to settle and stopped the plan of Randolph. The purpose of the writer is to show the influence of these people in developing the area for economic, religious, and political freedom.

The method and procedures that were used to trace the history of the development of the Randolph community were varied. The writer first made out a list of seventy-five questions which he expected the thesis to answer. These questions were placed under seven chapter headings. The field for books and pamphlets on the general area containing the Randolph community, and also on the background of the people, especially the Swedish element, was then investigated. In doing this a profitable source of information was the library and newspaper room of the Kansas Historical Society, at Topeka. The writer then went to the Randolph

community to determine its geographical features and location.

The newspapers of Randolph were scanned for information on the subject. The entire publications of the Randolph Echo, 1884-1888, and The Randolph Enterprise, 1888-1906 were worked and checked. The staff members of the Kansas Historical Society provided valuable aid by making available all newspaper clippings that related to the community. The newspaper sources proved very helpful and extensive, especially the issue of September 13, 1906. This issue was a special story on the fiftieth anniversary of Randolph. Other valuable materials were a pamphlet on the Johnson Family of Mariadahl, The Settlement of the Blue Valley in the Vicinity of Randolph, and also the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the Mariadahl Church and the Children's Home.

The Superintendent of Schools of Riley County and the Register of Deeds of Riley County were also visited. From the county superintendent, additional information of early school records were obtained; at the Register of Deeds, early plat books as well as other records were surveyed.

The writer then interviewed some of the older residents of the community as well as those who were descendants of early settlers. In aiding the writer to accomplish this, Mr. and Mrs. John Holmstrom were very cordial, hospitable, and helpful in securing names of people and also allowing me to stay at their home during the course of my interviews.

The seven chapters of the thesis were further organized. Six deal with different phases of the cultural and economic

development of Randolph and community and the seventh is a conclusion. The first chapter covers the period of origin and settlement, location, people who settled, how they obtained their land, natural resources, and reasons for settlement. The next chapter relates the background of the nationalities that settled here, especially the Swedish group. It also relates some of the influences that caused the immigrant to come to America, and to the Blue Valley Region.

The third chapter portrays how the people lived, how they built their homes, cultivated their land, harvested their grain, their livestock production, fruit development, and hazards that confronted the settlers. This chapter also portrays the social life and occupations and businesses that were established. In the fourth chapter is revealed the growth and development of transportation and communication, which includes early methods and the development of more rapid forms as the people progressed. The fifth chapter covers the religious, educational, civic, and political attitudes of the people. The sixth chapter deals with the Randolph trade area which includes the organization and development of the Mariadahl Lutheran Church and the nearby communities of Winkler, Mariadahl, and Olsburg. The conclusion points out the likeness of the development of Randolph and community to other towns and communities at this time as well as any development that was unique in Randolph and community.