

Every community needs a sense of its roots. If the history is not kept up, it will be lost. The Young Historical Library is preserving the history of Little River and the surrounding area and making it available to the community as well as to people all over the United States who have roots in this area.

The library contains photographs, documents, books and records from Little River and the surrounding areas from the 1870's to the present. It is home to records of Bean, Forest Home, Andover, Windom, and Union cemeteries, plus all small Rice County cemeteries. The library stays in contact with Jackie Ramage and Norman Crandall (Bean Cemetery sexton) to keep the information updated.

It also houses records listing all businesses in Little River since 1881, family genealogies, information about Little River Public Schools as well as early area rural schools, nine church history books, and sixty family history books donated by families.

These items, as well as microfilm of The Monitor since 1886, need to be kept in a stable controlled temperature.

Visitors come to look at photos, check for wedding and birth announcements, obituaries and other news items for their personal family records and in turn, leave information with us to be added to the library records.

# About Little River

Don Young

Benjamin L. Bean, a Civil War veteran and member of the Grand Army of the Republic — GAR — was an early settler in Rice County. He and his family filed a claim on a quarter north of what was later to be the town of Little River.

He died May 24, 1879 at age 55 years. His family buried him near the southeast corner of his farm. His widow offered to donate about 4½ acres of ground for a community cemetery. An association was formed and the cemetery was named Bean Memorial Cemetery.

Like many of these cemeteries, maintenance and care was a problem. Items in the Monitor often were a plea for help or money. This item dated December 31, 1908 was typical — "The cemetery board appeals to all lot owners and others interested, to contribute to the cemetery fund. John Vanschoyck has done a fine job as caretaker, but here at years end we lack \$75 of having enough to pay him."

In the early 1920s the Kansas legislature passed a law allowing townships to own and maintain cemeteries. The cemetery board and the township board reached an agreement, and Bean Cemetery is now owned and run by the township.

When more space was needed, the

township road was re-routed to the west and two additions were made on the east. Bean Memorial Cemetery is now one we can all be proud of.

The addition of the memorial marker by the Clan MacBean adds one more reason to be proud of what we have here.



THIS STONE marks the grave of Benjamin L. Bean. He was buried in the S.E. corner of his homestead. This later became Bean Memorial Cemetery.

Photo by Don Young

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## Letters

10 Jan 1991

Editor,

Mrs. Benjamin Bean, born Bertha Campbell in Virginia in 1821, and died in 1888 in Little River, Kansas. She gave 4½ acres in the southwest corner of their farm to bury her husband, Benjamin Bean, a Civil War veteran. She donated the ground for a Community Cemetery and placed a marker on his grave.

An association was formed and the cemetery was named Bean Cemetery.

No marker is at the grave of Bertha Bean.

Before Don Young died he thought a stone should be placed for Mrs. Bean.

A cemetery fund could be started. There are many improvements that should be made. The entrance gate is in bad shape and needs to be rebricked.

Don and Nellie Young gave the city the new Memorial Library and Doris Cory is the librarian.

Any contributions to Bean Cemetery could be sent to the Historical Library, Box 55, Little River, KS 67457.

Ruth Perry

### SOME ADDED INFORMATION ABOUT BEAN CEMETERY

From The Little River Monitor

Aug. 18, 1910 - The present Board took charge of Bean Cemetery in 1906.

They found the place in deplorable condition. There were few records and many unmarked graves.

Bean Cemetery was transferred to Union Township in April 1913.

Mar. 10, 1910 - A fee of \$5.00 is now charged for burial in Bean Cemetery.

Mrs. Bertha Campbell - Bean 1821 - 1888, wife of Benjamin is buried in Bean Cemetery beside her husband. There was no marker on her grave in 1983.

About 1904 the first addition was made. It was at this time that the Township road was re-routed around the cemetery

Bertha Bean has a marker

To Mr. Weld  
25th Nov 1880

## THE HISTORY OF LITTLE RIVER

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This is the first of a series of articles written by Mr. Weld. All dates and figures etc. are the information that Mr. Weld has been able to obtain and this paper does not accept any responsibility for their accuracy. We do think it is good reading and Mr. Weld has gone to a great deal of work to gather this information. Let him know how you like it.

By GEO. H. WELD

In the time of the first settlement Rice and McPherson counties, it was doubtless foreseen, by the A. T. and S. F. Railroad Co. that there was a strip of very desirable country laying between their main line on the South and the Union Pacific railroad on the North, which was not adequately served by any railroad, and also that they were in the most favorable position to occupy this territory, as a consequence, we have the line of road laying from Florence to Ellinwood, known as the M and M branch of the Santa Fe system.

This railroad crosses the Little Arkansas river near the Eastern border of Rice County and it was decreed that at this point a station should be established.

It is very supposable that this decision was reached, for the three fold reason that this point was about midway between the County seat towns of Lyons in Rice County and McPherson, in the County of that name also because the County in this vicinity, especially the river valley, appeared to be potentially desirable for farming purposes and for the further reason that here ready for the using was a plentiful supply, of soft water, for use in locomotive boilers. The name of the station "Little River" was doubtless adopted from the fact that it was located in the beautiful valley of the Little Arkansas River.

This name as adopted by the R. R. Co. was perhaps logical and appropriate for the station, but it has been considered by some in after years, that as the name for a town it did not carry as much dignity and prestige as is desirable, and perhaps should be changed, however no steps have been taken to that end.

perhaps it were well to pause at this time and invest our narrative with a bit of sentiment, which most people enjoy, in some form or another not excepting the red man of the plains and his daughter, who once trod the ground of which we are writing.

There is abundant evidence that if we could trace history backward, sufficiently, we would find that in the near vicinity of the town, the Indian had his dwelling place and perhaps often looked with a feeling of reverence upon the work of nature, and nature's God the Great Spirit, whom he worshiped as it was displayed in these parts, which are so familiar to us.

Of the many beautiful spots in this wonderful State of Kansas, probably there are but few, where a more attractive view is presented to the lover of Nature and her works, as shown in a prairie country, can be found, than this valley, as viewed from the higher ground which skirts its windings in the vicinity of our town.

The planning, platting and selling of the town lots, was in the hands of the Santa Fe's land agency, known as the Arkansas Valley town and Land Company.

To them, it may be, is due the mistake of laying out the streets of the town, at right angles with the railroad track, which at this point, lay in a slightly Northwest-Southeast direction instead of with the section lines and which has always been more or less a source of annoyance to the residents.

This error may possibly be accounted for by the fact that the headquarters of the Town and Land Company, were in Boston, Mass. of which City it is said, that its streets were originally laid out to follow the cow path which led in and out of the town; which legend is very plausible to a stranger who passes within its gates.

Apparently in this case of first things, it was necessary for the railroad to come first, so that the town might know where to plant itself, and so in the Spring of the year 1880, construction work having been "put through" and a station built, the first train from Florence to Ellinwood, went through Little River on the first day of June in that year, with C. E. Holbrook in charge of the station, as the first station agent. And such was the beginning of another town on the map of Kansas.



# WHITE EAGLE SERVICE STATION

good line of oils and grease.  
H. Gas and Mobil Oil, Candy,  
Tires and Tobacco.

We sell Roy Carlton's Milk

Come in and see us.

**J.A. MYERS**

One Price to Everyone.

# WANT ADS

any-A-Word-A-Time  
MINIMUM TEN CENTS)

—A locket with U.S.N. on it,  
night. Valued as keepsake. If  
sent collect to Mrs. C. E. Mer-  
ox 134, Lorraine Kansas.

SALE—Pre-war baby carriage.  
ent condition, \$15.00. Earl Ris-  
1-47p

LING AND CRATING—Have  
that may help your needs.  
on Imp. & Hdwe. Co.

OWED—Pipe wrench. Please  
Hodgson Imp. and Hdwe. Co.

FOR YOUR CHICKS TODAY  
SPRING OF 1945 — Every  
from an outstanding egg-line  
flock, 100% U.S. Approved  
um Tested Chicks that live and  
Order at once. 34tf  
S HATCHERY, Lyons, Kansas

SALE—Roan Shorthorn Bull,  
of milk stock. Julian Swen-  
392tp

WE WILL BE—A car of Soy  
Meal on the track next week.  
any all kinds of field seeds. Hen-  
Feed Store.

TED—Orange Sumac African  
let.—Community Feed & Seed,  
Ash or 506 W. Kan., McPherson  
30tf

SALE—Good used Coal Range,  
line Range, Coal Heater, Gaso-  
Heater. Hodgson Implement &  
ware Co.

SALE—Baled and loose alfalfa  
first and second cutting. Ross  
38t3p

SALE—Two shorthorn milk  
to freshen soon. Guaranteed  
Elton Brayton 38t3p

loaned value on Sudan 6c.—  
unity Feed & Seed, 211 N. Ash  
W. Kansas, McPherson. Phone  
r 281. 30tf

CTIONS WANTED—We col-  
notes, judgments, accounts, or  
large. Anywhere. 38 years ex-  
perience. References. Write us fully.  
C. Valentine Co., Marshalltown.  
29tf

SALE—300 bushels Flynn Bar-  
—Hensley Feed Store. 35tf

# THE HISTORY OF LITTLE RIVER

—By GEO. H. WELD

In the year of 1878, there came to  
Kansas from Hampton, Iowa, Alex. C.  
Walker with his family, consisting  
of his wife, Sarah J. Walker, two  
daughters: Ida M. Nixon and Olive M.  
Walker, now Mrs. George H. Weld  
and one son, Charles A. Walker.

After sojourning for brief season  
After sojourning for a brief season  
in Sterling, Lindsborg and in the  
Shapereck territory of McPherson  
County, they came with a team of  
mules hauling their personal property  
to the site of the town of Little  
River, where they established their  
permanent home at some time in  
the early part of the year 1880.

With lumber hauled from Sterling,  
by these same mules, Mr. Walker,  
being a very good carpenter, built the  
first building in Little River.

This building served both as a  
home for his family and a store,  
in which he soon had a small stock  
of general merchandise for sale to  
supply the increasing demand from  
the settlers in the vicinity; in fact  
the demand was so urgent, that H.  
W. Rose, one of those settlers,  
insisted that a box of tobacco be  
opened, to supply his need of some-  
thing to chew, before it could be  
taken into the store.

This building was located on lot 11  
block 4 (now occupied by the drug  
store) and altho it was of the crude  
construction of many new town build-  
ings, not being covered with even  
weather boards, it stood for a long  
time as a land mark and was  
not finally demolished until the year  
1910.

In the mean time it served as a  
general store, post office, Doctor  
office millinery shop, ice cream  
parlor, court room and last but not  
least for Church Services.

On November 18, 1880, Mr. Walker's  
step daughter, Ida M. Nixon, was  
married to George W. Russ, who had  
a small stock of goods at what was  
known as Lookout, a point a few  
miles North of Windom, these goods  
were moved to Little River and the  
firm of Walker and Russ was known  
as the Pioneer Grocery, which indeed  
they were.

About Midsummer of the year  
1880, there were four or five rural  
post offices in this vicinity which  
were discontinued; these included  
those at Lodianna, River View, Fair  
Point and Voyles.

In place of these a post office was  
W. Crawford who had been the post-  
master at Ladonia, was appointed as  
the first postmaster, with T. H. Wib-  
le as assistant.

Mr. Crawford continued to live on  
his farm at Lodianna, until the follow-  
ing spring 1881, when he moved with  
his family, consisting of his wife, two  
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his family, consisting of his wife, two  
daughters, Fhebe and Hester, (who  
later married W. G. Greenbank) and  
one son, D. H. Crawford, to Little  
River. Where they became promi-  
nently identified with the business,  
social, religious and political life of  
the community.

Among the first buildings erected  
in the new town, which was probably  
began in March (1880) is the one  
located on lot one block 4, built and  
occupied by the D. J. Fair Lumber  
Co. of Sterling.

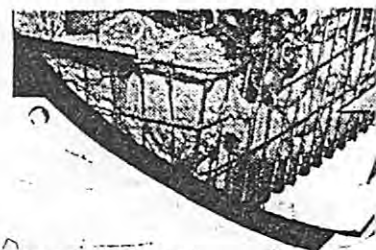
This building holds the unique  
distinction of being the only one built  
at that time, which is still standing  
and has been continuously occupied  
(altho in a more or less changed  
form) by the same line of business.

As originally constructed, it cov-  
ered one lot and had two stories, the  
upper one being a hall; in this hall,  
which was used for a time for union  
Church and Sunday school meetings,  
(the first meeting was held on March  
20) while the hall was in an unfin-  
ished condition, and within its walls,  
was held the first Christmas service  
in the new town; following this it  
was used for many years as a lodge  
hall by the Masonic Fraternity. And  
now follows a bit of history which  
may be a surprise to many of our  
older citizens.

There is some rather obscure evi-  
dence to the effect that there were  
religious meetings held in March and  
April of this year 1880, one of them  
at least in Fairvs Hall, which was  
completed at this time and was the  
upper story of the corner building,  
now occupied by the T. M. Deal Lbr.  
Co. and which has since been moved  
after having been occupied for sev-  
eral years by the Masonic Fraternity  
as a lodge hall

This is quite reasonable, where it  
is known that many of the pioneer  
citizens were religiously inclined, if  
not deeply religious, and it would not  
be long until their convictions would  
be demonstrated by a gathering for  
mutual edification, and an attempt to  
in some degree, impress upon the  
community, the benefits of Spiritual  
life in their midst.

(Continued next week)



FOR VITAMIN A  
GREEN TOP  
**CARROTS** 9c  
BUNCH

AVING

OYSTERS 1 Red Point  
SARDINES 4 Red Points  
In Tomato Sauce  
PEANUT BUTTER CRUNCH  
GRAPE JAM Lee  
Pure

TASTY M



PORK  
Small Lean  
Shoulders—4 p

SIRLOIN STEAK 11 points  
HOME RENDERED LARD  
SLICED BACON SQUARES  
SALT LAKE FISH

**CURED  
HAMS**

SMALL HOME CURED

3/4 or  
Whole—6 points **36c**

## THE HISTORY OF LITTLE RIVER

By GEO. H. WELD

There had been Missionary work done by Rev. J. B. Schlichter of Sterling in the neighborhood, North East of the town site, and as a result, a Church had been organized in November 1876, which had adopted the name of North Fork Congregational Church. Pursuant to a resolution adopted by this organization on July 31, 1880, its home was moved to the new town of Little River, and its name was changed to the Little River Congregational Church. For a time its meetings were held in the Railroad station

## WANT ADS

Penny-A-Word-A-Time

(MINIMUM TEN CENTS)

WANTED—23 or 24 inch horse collar. Melvin Knackstedt. 41-1p

FOR SALE—Coales Hot Blast heater. One 16-hole Van Brunet drill. Reo Myers, Windom, Kans. 41-1p

FOR SALE—4 Room house, plenty garden ground. Amos Miller, 229 E. 4th. Lyons, Kansas. 41-1p

WANTED—Washings. Mrs. Glenn Kite. 41-2p

KINDLING AND CRATING—Have some that may help your needs. Hodgson Imp. & Hdwe. Co.

BORROWED—Pipe wrench. Please return. Hodgson Imp. and Hdwe. Co.

FOR SALE—200 pound anvil. Ben Wedel, Little River, Kansas 41-1p

ORDER YOUR CHICKS TODAY FOR SPRING OF 1945—Every chick from an outstanding egg-line breeder flock, 100% U.S. Approved. Pullorum Tested Chicks that live and lay! Order at once. 34tf WELLS HATCHERY, Lyons, Kansas

FOR SALE—Roan, Shorthorn Bull, comes of milk stock. Julian Swenson 392tp

THERE WILL BE—A car of Soy Bean Meal on the track next week. Will buy all kinds of field seeds. Hen-bley Feed Store.

WANTED—Orange Sumac African Millet.—Community Feed & Seed, 211 N. Ash or 506 W. Kan., McPherson. 30tf

FOR SALE—Good used Coal Range, Gasoline Range, Coal Heater, Gas-

and the home of A. C. Walker, until the D. J. Fair building was completed, when the hall was rented by the Church, and the first meeting there was held on April 3, 1880.

The first Sunday School in Little River, which was a union school, was organized on July 4, 1880, with officers as follows, A. C. Walker, Supt. T. H. Wible, assistant-George W. Russ, Secretary and Chor. Ida M. Nixon, Treasurer A. Hope, Librarian (the memo book in which this bit of record is found was presented to the Supt. on the first Christmas tree, and is now the property of Mrs. George H. Weld who is the daughter of the aforesaid Mr. Walker.)

At some time in the earliest part of the town's history, a small church building was built upon the Southeast corner of block 22, by an organization of the United Brethern Church, and for several years was more or less regularly occupied for Church and Sunday School services.

It's pioneers, pastors, and preachers were the Rev. F. M. Wolfe and J. G. Leeds both of whom were resident settlers.

The first Methodist Episcopal class was organized in the year 1881 and it is probable that their parsonage was built in the same year, during the pastorate of Rev. B. F. Edwards, who was pastor from March until October of that year, and was followed in December by Rev. G. W. Akers, who served the church until the year 1883.

Mr. James A. Zent is credited with being the first and oldest member of the church.

In the list of members of the first official board, we find such well remembered names as J. W. Lane (a local preacher) John W. Kemp, E. G. Ebright, J. W. Waller, and I. W. Reeves.

As the Fair hall was taken over by Corner Stone lodge in May 1882, thus disposing the Congregational people, it is probable that the religious meetings in the town, were of a more or less union nature for the following twelve months, and were held in an upper hall of what was known as the Cooper building, situated in about the middle of block 3, on the east side of main street.

The Methodist Episcopal church in its first form was built in the year 1886.

In the spring of 1883, during the pastorate of the Rev. Samuel Dilley, the Congregational church was erected and dedicated on July of that year.

Free use of the building, on each alternate Sabbath was offered to the Methodist people and accepted by them.

Welding • Brazing • Soldering • Forging  
Threading • Machine Bolts • Machine B  
Fan Belts • Grease Fitt

Your Patience Appreciated • We

BYARD'S Welding & M

We strive to conduct a  
and dependable ma

Let us look forward

BURKE GRAI

LITTLE RIVER, KANSAS

A War  
LENTEN  
FOODS

CORN Jack Sprat Golden.  
Whole Kernel



Hodgson Imp. & Hdwe. Co.

**BORROWED**—Pipe wrench. Please return. Hodgson Imp. and Hdwe. Co.

**FOR SALE**—200 pound anvil. Ben Wedel, Little River, Kansas 41-1p

**ORDER YOUR CHICKS TODAY.**  
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**WELLS-HATCHERY**, Lyons, Kansas

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**FOR SALE**—Good used Coal Range, Gasoline Range, Coal Heater, Gasoline Heater. Hodgson Implement & Hardware Co.

**FOR SALE**—Baled and loose alfalfa hay, first and second cutting. Ross Frye. 38t3p

**FOR SALE**—Two shorthorn milk cows to freshen soon. Guaranteed good. Elton Brayton 38t3p

**TOP** loaned value on Sudan 6c.—Community Feed & Seed, 211 N. Ash or 506 W. Kansas, McPherson. Phone 301 or 281. 30tf

**COLLECTIONS WANTED**—We collect notes, judgments, accounts, or no charge. Anywhere. 33 years experience. References. Write us fully.—R. C. Valentine Co., Marshalltown, Iowa. 29tf

**FOR SALE**—300 bushels Flynn Barley.—Hensley Feed Store. 35tf

**FOR SALE**—Registered Polled Hereford bulls and females. Roy Colle, 7 miles south and west of Little River. 35t8p

## RITZ THEATRE

Little River

We Invite as Our Guests  
Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Rose, to see  
John Garfield and Paul Henreid in

**BETWEEN TWO WORLDS**

Also

**HARE FORCE**

(Rabbit Cartoon in color)

Fri.-Sat., Feb. 16-17

In the list of members of the first official board, we find such well remembered names as J. W. Lane (a local preacher) John W. Kemp, E. G. Ebright, J. W. Waller, and I. W. Reeves.

As the Fair hall was taken over by Corner Stone lodge in May 1882, thus disposing the Congregational people, it is probable that the religious meetings in the town, were of a more or less union nature for the following twelve months, and were held in an upper hall of what was known as the Cooper building, situated in about the middle of block 3, on the east side of main street.

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Free use of the building, on each alternate Sabbath was offered to the Methodist people and accepted by them.

In the following year 1884, the Congregational parsonage was built.

November 16, 1884

The newly appointed board of trustees, of the Little River Catholic Church, consisting of C. C. Moll, James McAnary and P. M. Donnelly met at Little River and organized with C. C. Moll as chairman of the board.

On the following December 18, at a meeting of the board, a request was sent to the Rev. James Hartman, who was at that time pastor of the Mission that he obtain a transfer of Church property from Bishop L. M. Fink to the local board of trustees.

It is evident that a beginning was made at this time toward the erection of a church, for at a board meeting held on December 27, inspection of progress of the building is noted.

On April 20, 1885, while the building was damaged by a windstorm, but fortunately it was insured against a loss of this kind, and the damage was soon repaired.

The building was accepted from the contractor, H. L. Canfield on May 16, and was dedicated by the Rev. J. A. Sheridan, on July 26, 1885.

Like the average church structure of those days, it was very "plain", both within and without, but in the years following, it has been enlarged and beautified, making it very attractive in appearance.

(continued next week)

Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Miller of Lyons

# A War LENTE FOODS

**CORN** Jack Sprat Golden 3  
Whole Kernel  
**CHILI BEANS** In Chili Gravy  
1-lb. can  
**SWEET POTATOES** Lee  
**RICE** Clean  
White  
**RAISINS** Plump & Meaty  
Seedless  
**BEETS** Lee  
Diced

## CHECK THESE MON

**FLOUR** W-R  
Enriched  
**SAL-SODA** Arm &  
Hammer  
**PIGS FEET** Armour's  
**PORK AND BEANS** Armour's  
Tall Can  
**DILL PICKLES** H. G. F.  
**APPLE BUTTER** Jack  
Sprat  
**FRESH FROM THE SUN**  
**RADISHES**  
**HEAD LETTUCE**  
**POTATOES** Red  
Triumph  
**WINESAP APPLES**

The town of Little River was created after the Santa Fe Railway Company found a good piece of ground running from Florence to Ellinwood. Train tracks were laid across the Little River Arkansas River. A camp for the workers was made near the crossing where some of the workers stayed. Some workers boarded at a ranch on the hill just west of the town site – that's behind Sandstone Heights Nursing Home now. At the ranch house there was large wooden block in the yard that was used as a wash stand for the men and also as a butcher's block where buffalo meat and beef was cut and pounded for the kitchen.

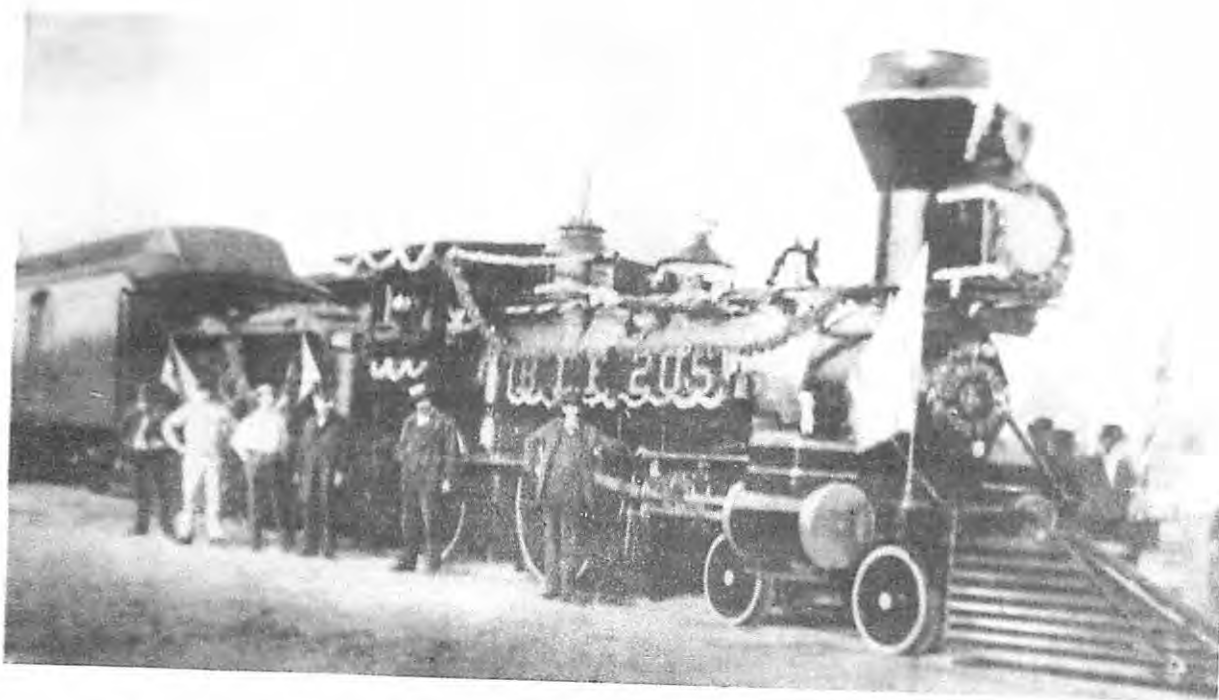
In the spring of 1880 construction of the railroad was complete and a station was built and named Little River.

The Ark Valley Town and Land Company, owned by the Santa Fe Railroad, laid out the plat for the new town and made the streets follow the railroad tracks instead of the roads so that's why the streets don't run straight north and south or east and west.

The first train from Florence to Ellinwood went through Little River on June 1, 1880. Dr. C. E. Holbrook, the first doctor in Little River was the first station agent. The post office in Little River also began on June 1, 1880.

- #5 Pic of old depot — destroyed by fire in July 1909
  - #6 Pic of new depot — completed 1910
  - #7 Coal chute
  - #8 train w/ coal car
  - #9 white depot
  - #10 white depot
- Stereo about depot

church services held in depot  
before churches were built



This picture of Santa Engine #1 and the cars with it are very similar to the first train to come to Little River in June 1880.

# Little River

When the Marion & McPherson Branch of the Santa Fe Railroad reached McPherson in 1879 the officials of the railroad decided to extend the line to Ellinwood. A land company was formed and the town of Little River was laid out on land the railroad owned. It was laid out with the streets parallel to the railroad rather than the government surveyed section lines. Because the town was near the crossing of the Little Arkansas River the town was named Little River.

The town began to grow as soon as the location was platted. Several area postoffices were closed by June 1, 1880. One of these was at Lodiana, on the Santa Fe Trail south of Little River. James W. Crawford was postmaster there and he moved to Little River to be the first postmaster at Little River. The first train (much like the one above) on June 1, 1880 brought the first mail to town.

Most of the history of the town included in this book came from the Little River Monitor. This paper was founded in 1886. There had been three other papers started but they didn't last. Many of the pictures in this booklet were copied from photos taken by Baxter Studio. Other photos were loaned by many people in Little River and vicinity.

Little River came into being because of the railroad and for the first forty years of its existence the town activities, outside of horse and buggy range, centered and depended on the railroad. The branch to Galatia was built in 1887 and for a time local people thought a Roundhouse would be built here. That never happened, but as the hub for the two branch lines there was a very heavy traffic. For a time two passenger trains went each way morning and evening. You could go to McPherson or Lyons in the morning and come home that evening.

The coming of cars and trucks changed all this. The post office quit using the trains for mail. The passenger service dwindled. The branch line to Galatia was torn out. Freight service has continued for grain and other carlot material. Local freight comes by truck. Little River has changed as the railroad changed, but it is still almost the same population as it was during most of the 100 years.



## THE OLD HOME TOWN

The first known homesteader in Rice County was Theodore Sternburg in 1867. His brother was a doctor at Ft. Harker.

Other early settlers were the Carlsons, Lindells, Petersons and Johnsons. In the Spring of 1870, Mr. George Hodgson (Irvin Hodgson's Grandfather) came to this area. In November, 1871 George's brother, Clay (H.C.), his wife and baby and a sister came from Virginia.

A little later a negro, Charlie Brown, staked a claim. He was called Darkie Charlie. He had been a slave in the Hodgson household when they lived in Virginia.

In 1871 Mr. and Mrs. Charles Moll and family came from Kentucky. These were the grandparents of Bud Moll.

In 1878 Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Walker, two daughters and a son, from Iowa, came in a covered wagon pulled by two mules. They brought with them their household goods. Mr. Walker drove his team and wagon to Sterling and brought back supplies with which to build the first building in what was to become later--Little River. This building was where the Haydon building is today. The family lived in part of this building, the other part had a small grocery store. After the town was started, a doctor had his office in the Walker building. The Post Office was here, court sessions and church services were also held in the Walker building. In 1880 when Mr. Walker's son-in-law came with supplies, they were added to the store and it was called "The Pioneer Grocery."

## SANTA FE RAILROAD

The building of the Santa Fe Railroad through Little River afforded a faster means of transportation for people and goods.

The government had given land grants to railroads as a source of getting money to build their lines west. If you would check your abstract you might find that your property

was once Santa Fe land. The railroad had been built from Florence to McPherson, then on to Little River, Lyons, and Ellinwood. The railroad was completed in 1880. At the same time the station (depot) was completed, Dr. C. E. Young was the first depot agent. The first train ran June 1, 1880. The Arkansas Valley and Land Company laid out Main Street to run perpendicular to the railroad, and then the other streets were parallel to Main Street. The Land Company also plotted the city into blocks and lots which were sold to individuals.

In 1878 Mr. William Clark rode horseback into this area and staked a claim of 160 A. south of the cemetery. He built a sod house for his bride who came a few months later from Pennsylvania. The Clarks were the grandparents of Marjorie Stowe. Mr. Clark became the first section foreman out of Little River. He served in this capacity for many years. Mrs. Clark bought the first pair of shoes sold in Little River.

At the time the railroad was built there was a camp set up where the railroad crossed the river east of town. Here is where the railroad laborers ate and stayed at night.

#### D. J. FAIR COMPANY

In 1880 the D. J. Fair Lumber Company of Sterling built a hardware store and lumber yard on the place where it stands today. The Hardware Store had an upstairs called a "Hall." The first Christmas service held in Little River was held in this Hall. There was a Union Sunday School that met here in 1880-1881. The officers were: Supt. A. C. Walker, Assist. Supt. T. H. Wible, Secretary and Chorister George Weld, Treasurer Ida Nyhon and Librarian A. Hope. The Mason Order held its meetings in this Hall and church services were held here at different times.

The Hardware Store holds the unique distinction of being the only one built in 1880, still standing, and has been continuously occupied by the same business. The D. J. Fair Co. also built the first bank building and the building south of the hardware store. These buildings were built of stone that was quarried at the Charlie Wilson farm. The building south of the hardware

store had an upstairs called "The Opera House." Fun things and the High School Graduations were held in the Opera House. The lower part of the building was used for offices.

#### BANK

The first bank cashier was J. W. Pulliam. The bank had capital stock of \$35,000. One year it did nearly two million dollars worth of business.

#### HOTELS

Across the street north of the Hardware Store was built a hotel named "The Commercial Hotel." It was changed and called the "Cottage House." By 1887 it had been made much larger, two stories high with eleven guest rooms on the second floor. On the first floor were some guest rooms and living quarters for the operator. The name was changed to "Tremont House." Mr. Levitt was in charge of the new hotel. The builder was J. H. Freshel. After a few years it was sold to Bill Beougher (Emma Weaver's father). An epidemic of smallpox broke out and the hotel was quarantined. The city decided there should be some place to put these people, so they established a "Pest House" east of town. I have asked several "Who took care of them?" but no one seemed to know, so maybe they took care of themselves. After awhile the Pest House was no longer used. One day a tornado blew it away. The Beougher Hotel was sold to W. H. Burke in 1921. The Tremont House was cut in half. The back half was moved back across the alley. Here the Beoughers lived until their deaths.

North of the hotel was a small building where the newspaper was printed. The first paper was "News" printed by W. E. Fosnot. On farther north was the Baxter Studio, Neal Baxter's Barbershop, and an eating place. Iowa Baxter worked with her father and later moved up into the next block into the building where Roy Jacks had a jewelry store with dishes and notions. Neal also moved to the place where Zelene Baxter now lives.



Across the street east was the Santa Fe Hotel and a small eating place. A Livery Stable was where the old hospital building now stands. The Livery Stable faced Kansas Avenue.

#### POST OFFICE

The first post office was established in 1880 in the Walker Building. J. W. Crawford was the first postmaster. The Crawford home was where Pauline Smith lives. They had two children--Dan and Hester. Dan served as the south mail carrier out of Little River for several years. Dan was also a barber with Jim Saylor and their shop was on the east side of Main Street. Hester taught school in the early years of Hope School. She later married Grant Greenbank. The mail carrier for patrons north of town was Arthur Snodgrass. There were two area post offices before the one in Little River was established. One was at the H. C. Hodgson farm and one at the Ted Lundstrom farm.

#### LIVERY STABLES

The livery stables were among the most thriving businesses in the new town. The first one was built by George Russ across the street from the old hospital building. It was replaced by a larger one. There was one on the north side of Kansas Avenue where the old hospital building now stands. Another one was located west of the Tremont House. After a few years it was decided that Main Street wasn't the place for Livery Stables so they were moved. One was moved east of where the liquor store now stands, and the other one a block east. They were kept near the alleys. The last one to be in operation was the Blue Front Stable. Some of the operators of these livery stables were Will King, Bill Beougher, Clarence Cassingham (Harold's father), and Jeff Dunham.



## WATER WELLS

There were two dug wells that supplied water for people and animals. One was on the northeast corner of the hardware building. There was also a watering trough near. The other well was in the intersection a block south. If one crosses from the Home State Bank across to Jerry Fry's office one can easily see where the well had been.

In 1901 the people living here were so sure cane would be a leading industry, they promised to raise 10,000 acres for the factory.

## HITCHING POSTS

There were hitching posts on both sides of the block starting with the hardware store. Many people rode or drove horses to town so they were tied to these posts. The street was dirt and ruts grew deep. Together with the manure, rain and snow, the street became a good breeding place for flies and bad odors. The city decided the posts should be moved. A circus came to town with an elephant. While in town the city fathers decided to make use of the elephant and he was used to pull the hitching posts. The posts were reset on the side street, starting at the bank corner west. This street was called "Hitching Post Street." After cars became the mode of travel and were parked in front of the stores the rutted street after a muddy spell made it difficult to back. Eventually, it was decided to put in pavement which was started in 1923 and completed in 1924. It is now over fifty years old and still in pretty good condition.

## CITY INCORPORATED

On November 8, 1886 Little River was incorporated as a city. The first city officials were Mayor Dr. R. E. Bragg, City Clerk George Weld. The Treasurer received one dollar per year, payable semi-annually.

George Weld played a very important part in the early beginning of Little River. He married one of the daughters of A. C. Walker--Olive. You all remember Ollie and George. Their home was where the Alber Funeral Home now stands.

Some of the early ordinances were interesting. Recreational Halls paid a fee of \$50. per year. If in operation less than six months it was two dollars per day and the closing time was 10:30 p.m.

The peddlers were "Hawkers" who paid a fee of \$5. a day.

All males between the ages of 21 through 50 were assessed \$1. per year. The ordinance was in effect from 1874-1894.

Sidewalks were wooden. If anyone was caught driving a horse or cow over the sidewalk he was fined \$10. plus court costs. If the animal stepped on the sidewalk the damage had to be paid. After 1906 sidewalks had to be made of brick.

If a person received a fine he could work it out at the rate of fifty cents a day.

By 1887 there were on the average of three buildings going up per week. A news item Jan. 13, 1887 told of a supper given by the Congregational Ladies and it netted them \$19.50, which was used to plaster the parsonage. One news item Jan. 6, 1887 told of a carload of Studebaker wagons and buggies being received by Watson and Crawford and were offered for sale. On Jan. 6, 1887 a carload of horses and mules had been received by G. M. Hoffman. These were for sale for cash or secured notes and were in the Hoffman Feed Lots north of town.

#### 1898 FIRE

In 1898 a fire destroyed all of the block that touched Main Street on the east side of Main.

About in the center of the block the Todd family lived. (Ethel Ramage's parents) Ethel is 93 years old today and she still has a wonderful memory. She vividly recalls this story of the fire. She had a friend staying with her for the night. She heard a crackling sound and saw flashes of light across the window. When she got out of bed and went to the window, it was too hot to touch. The fire was burning from the South to North.



The family was able to escape without injury but everything on the block burned. To the south of the Todd home about where the grocery store now stands was a two story building with the top story filled with broom corn. It was always thought the fire was set by someone because it was in the upper story where the fire started.

Little River at one time had a small broom factory.

After the fire the east side of Main was rebuilt.

On the south corner Dr. Ward had his office. Around the corner south and to the east was another office that other doctors used. North of Dr. Ward's office was the Drug Store. Where Fuller's Market is today a second-hand store was run by Arthur Snodgrass. Farther north was a jewelry store, doctor's office, eating place, post office, barber shop owned and operated by Dan Crawford and Jim Saylor. Ted Watson had a car agency about the center of the block, with a gasoline pump out in the street in front of his agency.

The bank on East Main was not of long duration. It closed at the beginning of the Depression when so many banks closed. A Bank Receiver was here in 1932.

The north part of the Williamson building was Kneeland Grocery. A Meat Market was located where the Washeteria is today. There was a Racket Store (like Duckwalls) and a Produce House. On the corner was Dunsford's Furniture and the upper story was the Masonic Temple built and furnished by the Masons. The Masons and Eastern Stars met here until it burned.

The Kneeland Store about 1902 advertised various staples as tea for 25¢ per pound, syrup--50¢, crackers--70¢, 1 dozen clothespins--1¢, 15# bucket Jelly--60¢, 2# coffee--25¢, 1# box axle grease--10¢.

On the west side of Main Street: At the south end was a Mens' Clothing Store run by John Patterson. Going North, the cafe covered more space north and south than it does today. It included the post office. On the southeast corner next to the clothing store was a small room which was used by Mr. Sherill (Mable Moore's father) for a popcorn machine. He sold a big sack of delicious popcorn for 5¢ and later he raised his price to ten cents. Dr. Saunders had his dental office where

the barber shop is today. Iowa Baxter was next. At one time the two John girls operated a beauty shop in the north part of her shop. Later Mrs. D. J. Grimes had a Ladies' Ready to Wear Store in the same area. Neal Baxter's Barber Shop was north of Iowa and the Bakery, run by Bake and Maude Smith, was next. You could buy a very delicious loaf of bread for ten cents-- freshly baked. They also sold a big dip of ice cream on a cone for five cents. If you had a dime you could sit at a table and get a big dish of ice cream and a glass of ice water. Gene Baxter's cafe was next, and later it was operated by Rosewurm. Now we come to the stairway that led up to the Sunshine Apts. When Dr. Beyer first started to practice he had his office in these apartments. Later, his office was moved over on the East side of Main Street. Dr. Beyer was not married when he first started to practice medicine in Little River. After he married he bought the home where Mildred Strohm lived for years. Mildred's father bought the house from Dr. Beyer. A school teacher, Clayton Powers, lived one school term in the Sunshine Apartments and they have been used off and on for years as rentals. North of the stairway was the Mercantile Store (last run by the Stephensons), Farmers Union Store, later run by Percy Perry, also Winklers and others. The large store north of this was run by Bliss Bright for many years. The Bright, Mercantile, and Kneeland stores were general merchandise stores. They all sold groceries, fresh fruits and vegetables in season, dry goods, men and women's wear garments, shoes, boots, rubbers, and galoshes. If you lived on a farm and had extra cream, it could be churned into butter and sold at the stores. It was all dumped into a wooden bucket or keg in the back room. When it was full, it was sealed shut and shipped out.

In 1919 Kneeland sold out and Dunsford Furniture moved into the Kneeland building. The two other grocery stores continued to do business. It was customary for farmers to charge groceries during the year, and pay up after harvest. By 1930 the Depression had started, plus poor crops, these stores were in trouble because they couldn't collect what was on their books, so were forced out of business.

The block south of Dr. Ward's office was a prairie for several years. The first building on that block was used for a barber shop (George Edwards, the negro). "Niger George" who liked the bottle quite well, would play a tin horn when he had too much to drink and his customers knew that it wasn't the best time to get a hair cut.

The Hodgson Buildings were built much later.

Farther south was an eating place, fire department building, city light plant, blacksmith shop, which has been closed for many years.

On the corner the Majestic Theatre, under the management of Clara Jennings, operated. She opened the business in 1919. The school no longer used the Opera House and began to use her theatre for plays and graduations.

Crossing Main Street west on the corner was a filling station, run by Ernie Thompson, and later by Tute Folck. It was called The White Eagle Station, and Tute's wife, Irma, still has the white eagle in her yard.

Farther north where the city shop is now was Oscar Strohm's International shop. He sold tractors and machinery and had a repair shop.

Mark Ramage had a planing mill next to Strohms and a tin shop was next to it. Jacob Kaufman ran the tin shop and built a merry-to-round which actually ran. Thompson Produce did a big business for years in the building now owned by Youngs.

Bert German had a coal business, with bins on both sides of his lot to the alley, in the location where the Library now stands. Coal was shipped in by the railroad. Hodgson across the street also sold coal.

After the trains began to run, there was a dray system in Little River. Some man with a strong sturdy team of horses and a wagon would haul freight and express from depot to the stores. He charged a fee for his service. When coal came in, usually several men were hired with their teams and wagons to haul the coal.

When the stores began to use their own trucks to deliver groceries and to haul their own freight and express from the depot, the dray was put out of business.



North of the German Coal office was Elam Fuller's Shoe Shop. In 1927 he moved into a small building east of the Hodgson Hardware Store. This small building has been used by Dave Armstrong for his real estate business.

A new red brick theatre building was erected where the shoe shop stood. Clara Jennings was the owner and moved here in 1927. Talkies came in about this time and a "talking machine" was bought. The newer shows cost so much they couldn't be afforded. People began to go to other towns for newer pictures; eventually the dwindling audiences caused the theatre to be closed. The building was sold to Donald Miller.

In 1903 telephone lines in Little River were put up. It became known in 1905 as The Mutual Telephone Company.

By 1902 there were twenty-one businesses and tradesmen in Little River.

In 1904 the city park was designated. I can remember my greatest delight was to be able to spend one week with my Grandmother, in the summer, and attend the Chautauqua held in the park.

In 1905 a city Fire Department was established and seven hundred dollars was spent for equipment. They were badly handicapped for the lack of water. In 1913 the city water system was put into operation.

The Volunteer City Fire Department was organized in 1915.

The city owned its own light plant in 1916. Electric lights were better than the old coaloil lamps, but the plant was not perfect. In 1920 it was sold to Kansas Power and Light for fifteen thousand dollars.

By 1919 an ice plant had been built by W. H. Burke and Ed Stephenson next to the Grain Office. It had storage capacity of four hundred tons of ice. Free ice delivery was started in the city. Cards were placed in windows with the number of pounds of ice wanted and the deliveryman would leave that amount. An ice book of five hundred pounds cost two dollars and seventy cents. Jim Dick ran the ice plant for several years.

Saturday afternoon was a busy part of the day. Friends met friends for visiting and trading produce for groceries, or just buying them outright. When cars came into greater use, Saturday

evenings were really "gala affairs." People came to town early to get a parking space in front of the stores. Some ate their evening meal at the cafe. The kids went to the picture show. Ladies sat in cars or in the stores, for visiting after their shopping. Men had their recreational parlors. Stores were open until midnight. By the late forties and fifties these gala affairs began to dwindle. People began going out of town to shop, and TV was coming into use.

The millinery and dressmaking shops were quite popular during the early beginnings of Little River. Mrs. Todd (Ethel Ramage's mother) and Mrs. Will Frankenburger were both dress-makers, who worked in their own homes. There were also dress-makers, who worked in the millinery shops.

#### DRAG RACING

One day Mrs. John Troy and her brother were coming to Little River with a team and wagon. As they came over the hill by the cemetery, they noticed a young man with a team and wagon below the hill, along the side of the road. After they passed him, he started after them. It was a race, side by side, or one a little ahead of the other, until they reached the railroad tracks. The Troy wagon was a little too far to the side and when the wagon hit the railroad track and overturned, this put an end to the race.

#### CHURCHES

The United Brethren Church of Sterling built the first church in Little River in the 1870's on the southeast corner of the block across the street west of the Catholic Church today. Reverend Fred Wolfe was the first minister. He was the great-grandfather of Ruth Perry. Rev. Wolfe's son, A. G. Wolfe, was the first teacher for the school in the newly organized District 28. Board of Trustees for the new church included: Thomas Day, Henry Clark, Wm. Patrick, and J.B. Hope. When it was no longer used for church the school used it for classes for several years.

After a few years the Church of Sterling decided to go back to Sterling; there were no longer church services held in it. The building was sold to Mr. D. H. Heinly, father of Clarence Heinly, who moved it one and one-fourth miles south of Little River. He made some changes in it and it was used several years as the family home.

In 1876 a missionary (J. B. Schlichter from Sterling) came to the Northfork community and the people established the Northfork Congregational Church. Meetings were held monthly. On July 31, 1880, it was voted to change the name to Little River Congregational Church and move the church into town. A church was completed in July, 1883. A parsonage was built in 1889. This church was used by the Methodist people on alternate Sundays until the Methodist Church was built.

After clearing many details it became possible to build a Catholic Church in Little River. It was completed in May, 1885. It was dedicated July 26, 1885. The Most Rev. J. L. Spalding of Peoria dedicated the building July 26, 1885.

The Methodist Church was organized from a class that was organized at the time when Little River was at the head of a Circuit. The parsonage was built in 1881 and the church in 1886. The Methodists have always held Revivals. In the earlier days they often held them in a tent. One year a tent was set up on the Deeds' farm, where the Gene Deeds used to have their house, close to the river. In the afternoon two drunks were in town making brags they were going out to break up the camp meeting. Someone overheard their remark, so several set out, on horses, to warn the people the drunks were coming. When they got to the Deeds place, no one was there. There had been a flash flood up the river, and the river was going out of its banks. The people had left, but the drunks got in the water and received a good baptizing before they got out of it.

The Christian Church was built one block east of the Catholic Church. There was five thousand five hundred dollars to build the church. Some of the members included: Ed Stephenson, Jim Jackson, the Saunders family, and Mr. and Mrs. William Clark who were charter



members. After the congregation dwindled, the church was sold to Dr. John Saunders. It was torn down and a new home was built. The Leland Young family now live where the church stood.

All these churches have their Women's organizations. The Congregational and Methodists have strong youth and Men's organizations. All three churches have been replaced with new buildings, and are attractive and beautiful. One of the greatest facts is that we have no religious discrimination here in Little River--something about which we can all be proud.

### SCHOOLS

On March 19, 1879, a meeting was called by the county superintendent. District 28 was set up. It was three miles square; this included what was to be Little River and the territory north and west. The schoolhouse was to be sod and located North and West of Ferne Alton's farm. The first term began November 19, 1879. Mr. A. G. Wolfe was the first teacher. His term was three months and his salary was thirty dollars. The Spring term began May 23, 1880, and the teacher was Mary Webb and she taught two months for twenty dollars a month. Would you call that discrimination? Since there were more children in town, the Church of Brethren was rented and used for the town children and the sod schoolhouse used for the country children.

In 1882 two bonds were issued and twenty-seven hundred dollars was to be used to build a two room building in Little River and also a new building North and West of the sod schoolhouse. June 1892 District 28 was divided in half; the East half became District 28. The West half was named Hope after a pioneer resident of the District 98. Mrs. J. W. Porter taught the first Winter term and Lottie Johnson taught the Spring term. An item on the first supply list to be purchased was five gourds, to be used as drinking cups.

In 1892 J. J. Caldwell was employed as Superintendent. A regular High School of two years was established. June 25, 1893, the first graduation was held for Harley Snodgrass and George Morehouse (two years) and the exercises were held in the Opera

House. The program was: Singing by the school children, Readings and Dialogues, Orations by Harley and George. Diplomas were presented by George Weld, who also gave some advice to the graduates. Mr. J. J. Pulliam was Treasurer of the Board and J. J. Caldwell was Superintendent. Both added their bits of advice to the graduates.

In 1896 Mr. Caldwell resigned to become County Superintendent. Mr. I. C. Meyer was hired to be the Superintendent.

In 1891 a third room was added to the school in town. In 1898 and 1899 a fourth teacher was added and more added to the building--to the north and rear. W. H. Burke was a member of the 1896 class. No class graduated in 1898. A third year of High School was added in 1906 and a fourth in 1907.

The first graduating class with four years of High School was Frances Mary Louis (Ramage), Lulu Vastie Frankenberger (Hodgson), Edna Ellen Miles (Ramage). All three are still living, the first two are residents of Sandstone Heights.

In 1907, under I. C. Meyer, the High School was now accredited by the state. Also in 1907 a meeting was called to issue bonds for a new schoolhouse. There was opposition, so a lawyer was hired (Sam Jones of Lyons) to find something illegal. He found nothing illegal and charged ten dollars for his fee. Bonds were issued in the amount of six thousand nine hundred and fifty dollars for a building fifty-seven feet by fifty-seven feet, two stories high, of red brick. There wasn't enough money for a basement, so men donated their time, labor, supplies and equipment to put the basement under the building. Mr. Godfrey Hoggerson was the contractor and Supt. I. C. Meyer, the surveyor, who donated his labor. The old frame building was sold to Mr. Shank, who had enough lumber to build his house and barn from the used lumber.

In 1914, as the school grew larger, a west wing was added to the square structure. In 1915 a football coach was hired. He had a winning team that year and the next year. In 1918 Domestic Science and Art was added and two years before, 1916, Manual Training was started. The school was closed for weeks in 1918-1919 due to the flu epidemic. In the twenties rural school districts

were added to District 28. Wilbur Dean Williamson made the remark that he was a member of the last class to graduate from The Little Red Schoolhouse. High School graduations were held in the Opera House until the Theatre was opened in the late teens, and graduations were held there as long as the red brick building was used.

I would like to make a few comments about school in the "Red School Building." The year I was a senior I took a Normal Training Course. Each day one class member went down to the first and second grade room to help with the teaching of the slow learners. There were twenty some children in this room. The school desks were the old kind, fastened to the floor. In the back of the room, on two chairs, sat two children, chubby little girls, with red swollen eyes, runny noses, mouths open, and with bad odors. Many of you know the teacher, Mildred Hatfield German. She loved children, but she had trouble with these two slow learners. How much different it is today.

The skating rink was used for basketball practice and games. The girls had a team. All players had to suit up at the schoolhouse. The girls wore long, full, black bloomers that came to their knees, long black hose which went under the bloomers, and long sleeved middies. Going to and from rink to schoolhouse, they wore long coats to cover the uniform. One day one of the girls made a quick dash into a store without the coat, and of course she was seen, reported to the school board and superintendent. A good lecture and threats of being taken from the team resulted. What do you think the dear citizens might think today if they could see how girls dress for athletics today?

The other item is the Study Hall of the last period of the day. The room had school desks fastened to the floor. Two rows were double seats. In all, probably one hundred twenty-five could sit in the Study Hall. The students in Athletics or Music were out, but all the other students were in here. The Study Hall teacher was a short man, with a very soft voice. In this day, fountain pens were used, so ink bottles were on the floor being kicked back and forth. The teacher tripped after them, but he did well to get two or three collected each trip.

"Stink Bombs" were often set off by the boys, and itching powder was put down the neck of the person in front of the mischevious student. Some of the girls liked to sit with their shoes off, and if a boy could get them, out the window they would sail. Sometimes books and notebooks were thrown out the open study hall windows. When the noise reached a high peak, Mr. Adel Throckmorton, Superintendent, would come in. It became quiet immediately. The minute he left, "bedlam" broke out again. I sometimes wonder how he ever kept from having a nervous breakdown.

In the fall of 1938 school started in the new building. It was one of the newest and nicest buildings around. Do you remember the District Tournaments being held here? A. R. Mann and company were the architects and Foy & Sons were the contractors. A. O. Duer was the Superintendent; Paul Perry was High School Principal; Lynn Canfield, Music; Milton Kohrs had Vocational Agriculture; Lee Haun was coach; Thelma Bradshaw Meek was English teacher; Mildred Peterson had Home Economics.

The Principal and teacher in the seventh and eighth grades was William Hudson; Lillian Clough, fifth and sixth grades and Music; Mildred Downing Strohm had third and fourth grades; Elizabeth Avery taught first and second, and Marion Sherrard taught the Kindergarten.

The School Board for the new building: Director, Dr. J. C. Saunders; Clerk, C. C. Shumway; Treasurer, Leslie Alton. Custodian could have been Forrest Folck.

The school was dedicated August 31, 1938. W. H. Burke was Master of Ceremonies. One thousand three hundred and seventy-five people signed the guest book.

Our building has been added to, on the side and the back; according to modern structures, it is lacking someways in beauty, but the important thing is what goes on inside. We all know we have a good school system. What small town has sent basketball and football teams to state tournaments and come back with more trophies? Now, we have a national champion athlete.

We have had many people graduate from our high school who have gone out into areas of work as: Military, Agriculture, Business, Law, Teaching, Medical (Sandra Rhodes is in the Pacific

area now), Entertainment, and Politics. Mr. W. H. Burke was a candidate for Governor and Mildred Strohm was a delegate to the Republican Convention and served on the State Board of Education.

Possibly you can think of other areas where our students work, but can you think of a high school graduate who has ever spent any time in the reformatory or prison?

#### ORGANIZATIONS

There are many organizations in Little River, and I will give the date of organization and the first president, if known.

Masonic Lodge No. 219 chartered Feb. 22, 1883--Worshipful Master, Harry McQuade; Cornerstone Chapter of Eastern Star No. 310 chartered May 14, 1908--Worthy Matron, Sadie Davenport--Worthy Patron, Ray Farne; Domestic Arts Club, June 30, 1906--President, Miriam Kruse; Mothers' Club, 1942; Woman's Study Club chartered April 9, 1935--President, Ferne Alton. Charter members still living around Little River are Ferne Alton and Ruth Perry. American Legion, Dwight Lampson Post #258, chartered August, 1921; American Legion Auxiliary, reorganized and chartered, 1944--President, Tina Trego; IOOF (Odd Fellows) and Rebeccas met where Masons and Stars now meet. Attendance became so few in members, all records and membership moved to the Lyons Chapters.

Country Pals, oldest 4-H Club in Rice County, organized in 1930, chartered 1932--Leader, Nellie Hodgson, President--Elrae Carlson. Some of the first members of the club were Evelyn Koons Oswalt, Bud Olander and Irvin Hodgson; Pleasant View 4-H organized 1945--Leader, Irl Ramage and Dorothy Donnelly Banister, President--August Freund, Jr.; Busy Homemakers, February 9, 1925--President, Alta Smith; Friendly Neighbors, 1938--President, Ethel Ramage; Evening Belles, 1957--President, Cora Farver; Odessa Homemakers, 1939 or 1940; Lions Club, 1938--President, Will Donnelly; City Library, opened Oct. 15, 1932, in front of City Hall--Founder, Mrs. E. H. (Zella) Hodgson; WCTU--No date or officers. Some members were: Martha Kenyon, Mollie Thomison, Minnie Thompson, Blanche Poole, Inez Smith, Blanche Spriggs; Klu Klux Klan--met in the late 20's in a pasture south of Charlie Wilson's farm.



## HOFFMAN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

The first Hospital Board of Directors was: Dr. J. H. Powers, J. L. Folck, Ed Stephenson, Theodore Sohlberg and W. H. Burke. They were elected for life; to be replaced after death, by the remaining directors.

The Hospital was built in 1915 and opened in 1916. The city voted bonds, but lacked enough money to build, so Mr. Hoffman furnished the needed amount. He set up an endowment of \$60,000, the interest to be used for the upkeep of the hospital. The hospital was named for him. Doctors were Dr. Powers and Dr. Davis; Matron Mattie Mattier; R.N.'s Anna (Griebel) Blakey and Erzella (Somers) Hodgson; Student Nurse Verna Fall. The hospital had a Nurses' Training School for fifteen years.

The first patient was Katie Holler, and she was the last patient taken out when the transfer was made to Sandstone Heights Nursing Home.

The first baby born was Blaine Hoffman Barritt.

The custodian and jack-of-all-trades was Jake Miller.

## DOCTORS

Little River has had many doctors over the years. Some of the early ones were: Dr. C. E. Holbrook, Dr. R. E. Bragg, Dr. E. G. Young, Drs. Mr. & Mrs. Hoyt and Dr. C. E. Ward.

Dr. Ward had a lady, Mary Metz, who went with him as a nurse's aide. When she couldn't go, Mrs. Ward went. One Sunday they were having company for dinner. Mrs. Ward had her table set with her best cloth and china. They lived south of my house, only the old house to the east was in the place of the new house presently occupied by the Peters. The family left for Sunday School and Church. Charley was a small boy and after Sunday School he always sat with his folks in church. When he saw they weren't in their accustomed pew, he became worried and ran home. Near home he could smell chloroform. When he opened the door, there on the dining table lay a young man (Oren Gregg). When the Gregg boys decided to stay home from Sunday School and church and ride their horses, one was trampled on the head by the horse and suffered a concussion, bruises and lacerations. The Greggs lived where the Burns house now is. Mrs. Ward had never

removed her hat with plumes. She had a sheet over her church clothes. The doctor operated and the patient recovered.

Other doctors have been Dr. Flavie Smith; Dr. L. J. Beyer who had his first office in the Sunshine Apartments; (A teacher, Clayton Powers, also lived here.) Dr. Price; Dr. Cramm; Dr. Meek; and Dr. Schmidt. Little River was very fortunate to have doctors for many years.

#### DENTISTS

Little River had three hometown boys who became dentists. Dr. Reidy and Dr. Saunders practiced for many years and later after Dr. Reidy died Dr. Glenn Shumway practiced. Dr. Walter Jones from McPherson came once a week for several months.

#### VETERINARIANS

The old-time veterinarian was Dr. Hagan. Dr. Mock (his wife was a Clarke girl) practiced medicine for many years. They lived in the home now occupied by Ted and Margaret Smyres.

#### SALT PLANT

A company was formed and bought equipment to mine coal, but salt was found instead. Standard Salt Co. of New York secured mining rights from the City of Little River. At first it was a shaft mine. Dynamite was used to blast out the salt. Some young man or men got some of the dynamite one Halloween night in 1910 and set it off in the Walker Building. The building was blown into bits. The shaft mine was sold to Morton Salt of Hutchinson in 1927 and shortly after that it was closed. A great many people were without jobs. The Allams and Tregos were some of the employees of the Salt Plant. All houses and buildings were either moved or torn down. Today, the old salt mine is used to store gas. Ferrell Gas Company bought land around the old mine and has a thriving business in operation.

## FLOUR MILL

In the late teens a flour mill, located near the railroad tracks, east of the elevator, was opened and operated by J. W. Bean. Flour was made from home grown wheat. Brands of flour sold were: Little River Best, Cottage Home, and Tower Brand.

## GRAIN OFFICE

The grain office and storage bins have been at the same locations for many years. They have all been enlarged and modernized several times.

## FEED LOTS

Across the railroad north of the depot were two feed lots. The one east and next to the road was run by a Mr. Craighead. The one west of Craighead's was G. M. Hoffman Feed Lots.

One afternoon a group of boys and men gathered on the feed lot grounds. A revolver was discharged and the bullet hit young George Edwards. (He was a son of George Edwards, the negro barber.) Dr. Smith dressed the wound. He was carried home and a Dr. Hall, McPherson, helped remove the bullet, but the young lad died.

## NEWSPAPERS

The first paper in Little River was published by the Fosnot Brothers, with W. E. Fosnot, editor. The paper was known as The News and started November, 1880. It was later called Rural West. A newspaper called The Comet, edited by Holmes, but owned by Wilcox and Holmes, folded in July, 1886. The Rural West and The News was in operation only two years. In 1888 E. B. Pulliam bought the paper and had W. G. Greenbank as editor. He sold the paper to Grant Greenbank November 17, 1889 and he ran it fifty years until his death. Grant's slogan in each issue of the Monitor was "Drive to Little River--A Good Place to Trade," and "It takes two to make a boot-legger--the buyer and the seller."

One item from the Monitor: Dave McCutcheon brought to the Monitor Office the biggest, reddest, and juiciest cherries he had ever seen. They measured two and three-fourth inches in circumference.

#### CITY FAIR

This was really a Community Fair for many farm families brought to the exhibits and several farmers were officers of the fair board. These fairs were held in the twenties. A large carnival, with many rides was brought in. Local organizations had booths of food and drink for sale. The carnival rides and stands covered two city blocks. The old skating rink was used for exhibits, both for the ladies' foods and fancy work. The fair lasted for several days and brought in large crowds. The men had livestock exhibits and won money as prizes. One year of the fair, the last day, Saturday, ended in tragedy. It had been raining off and on all evening and the pavement was wet. Bertie Sims, a young woman in her teens, stepped from a merry-go-round onto the wet pavement and was electrocuted. There was a short in an electric cable. She had a niece, Bernice Sims, in her arms, but she was not hurt. Frank Sims, Bertie's father brought a suit against the city and carnival company and he collected some money.

For several years a two day fair was held, and some years a carnival was here and some years without. Now, the Lions Club holds a Labor Day Celebration.

#### PEOPLE OF THE COMMUNITY

The people of this town have experienced many unpleasant and sad events, such as The Grasshopper Invasion in the community close by; The Big Blizzard of the Eighties, other blizzards, floods, tornadoes, droughts, duststorms, hail, suicide, shootings, kidnapping, deaths in two World Wars. The people have risen above these experiences and have enjoyed happiness within the family, church, school and community.

Politically, we have had a man run for Governor of Kansas and almost made it--W. H. Burke. Mildred Strohm was a delegate to the Republican National Convention. She also spent several years on the State Board of Education. We might think of Sandra Rhodes and the good work she is doing in the Pacific Islands. There are many others who have achieved success and happiness in other areas.

We have seventeen members in Study Club. Eleven have been or are teachers. Virginia Cordell and Miriam Kruse are still implanting knowledge in our youth of today. Joanna Miller is our oldest teacher; then we have Ferne Alton, Dorothy Thompson, Ruth Perry, Iris Wilson, Ruie Miller, Esther Myers, Marjorie Stowe and myself--Cleo Downing. Evelyn Cobb steered our Post Office very effectively for many years. Freda Rhodes is deserving of a big debt of thankfulness for her efficient guidance of Hoffman Memorial Hospital. As a result of her guidance it was able to stay open until the opening of Sandstone Heights Nursing Home. Edith Hayes has done much work within the Sunday School and Church, and is church treasurer at the present time. Lillian Moll, Marie Nelson, and Evelyn Oswalt have held offices within Sunday School and Church as well as taking part in civic activities.

One summer Jan Stansel and I drove for three weeks to McPherson College for a college class. On our return each day, as we came over the rise about one-half mile west of the Carl Lundstrom place, she would always exclaim, "Oh, look at that beautiful valley." She would then pick out one thing and elaborate on the beauty of it, such as the lovely green trees, the stately water tower, etc. If you have never thought of Little River being in a valley, think of it the next time you come from the East. One can almost visualize the covered wagons of our early settlers, coming through the valley. As for myself, after I have been away and leave the highway and turn North, I always think it is so nice to be coming back to THE OLD HOME TOWN.



## AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF

### LITTLE RIVER

The first white residents in the Little River Community were doubtless those who built and lived at the Stone Corral Crossing. This location is in the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  S 13-20-6. The Corral was built in 1856 by a man named Wheeler. Troops of the 7th Cavalry were stationed there in 1866. A Theodore Sternberg took a ranch (claim) there in 1867, and William Mathewson - the original "Buffalo Bill" had a trading post there at about this time. But this is part of another story.

The first train travelled the just completed M & M Franch of the Santa Fe Railroad from Florence to Ellinwood on June 1, 1880. On November 15, the Ark Valley Town & Land Co., a Santa Fe Agency, laid out a plat for the town of Little River - so named because of its proximity to the point where the railroad crossed the Little Arkansas River. Incorporation was completed in 1886.

The first building in town was erected by A.C. Walker in 1880, with lumber hauled from Sterling. Mr. Walker and his son-in-law opened the building for business as "The Pioneer Grocery, Walker and Russ, Proprietors". The location was on the present site of the Post Office. Incidentally, with the coming of the railroad, the post offices which had served the community in several convenient locations were consolidated into the Little River Office. Thus Lodianna, Fairpoint, Voyles, Cooperville and River View (the Clay Hodgson home, now occupied by his great-grandson, Edward Hodgson and Wife, Cathy), slipped into history.

The first school to serve Little River was organized at the home of Henry Clump, on March 19, 1879. The District was three miles square, and the building was a "soddy" located just north and west of the Mrs. Lee Alton home. A.G. Wolfe, a great, great uncle of Lee Alton, was the first teacher. The term began on November 17, 1879; was three months in length; and the teacher received \$30.00 per month. After the town was established, school was first held in the United Brethern Church building and in 1882 bonds in the amount of \$2700 were voted to

erect the first school building in Little River which was on the present school site.

The first hotel, the Santa Fe, was erected just north of the site of the present Hoffman Memorial Hospital Building. Operator was Jim Gregg. Soon another hotel, the Tremont House, was built on the present site of the Burke Hotel (now Owned and operated by Raymond Alber as a furniture display warehouse). Built by J.E. Wisel, it was later operated by Herb Levitt, then by Bill Reougher, then sold to W.H. (Bill) Burke, who built a modern brick structure on the site in 1921. Across the street, south, D. J. Fair, of Sterling, built a hardware store and lumber yard in 1880. This has been operated as a hardware and lumber yard to the present day, under various owners, including T.C. Sohlberg, and the present T.M. Deal Company. In earlier days the second story, a hall, was used for Union Church meetings, other community gatherings, and for some time was the home of the Corner Stone Chapter of the Masonic Lodge.

Livery stables, along with hotels, were important in early days. The first was built and operated by George W. Rouse and faced Kansas Avenue in the block just east of Main Street, at the present site of the hospital. The last one, the Blue Front, was one-half block west of Hayden's Sundries. Operators of stables and of drays include such names as Jim Long, Herb Levitt, Bill German, Leo Smith, Will King, Clarence Cassingham, Bill Reougher, Bert Perry, Jim Bolin, Jeff Dunham, Jil Joy, and George Masterson (Pat's brother, and brother-in-law of George Hoffman).

The entire east side of the main business block was destroyed by fire in 1898. There are a number of ordinances on the books of the city council following this calamity regulating construction and specifying fire walls between buildings. Fifteen years later in 1913 bonds were voted for a city water system. A well was dug on the river bottom north of town and a tower and distribution system was installed. This system was enlarged as required and in 1940 and 1941 wells were drilled three miles north into the Dakota Sandstone formation to secure a more plentiful supply of softer water.

Early streets were, of course, unpaved, and sidewalks, where there were any, were made of wood. In 1925 Main Street and Kansas Avenue West, and a six block section east of Main were paved with brick.

In 1903 telephone lines were put into operation and in 1905 the Mutual Telephone Co. leased a lot and erected a Central Office. This company replaced the old battery operated system with modern dial phones in 1967.

A City Electric Light and Power Plant was erected in 1919 but the direct current generators were already being replaced by the more adaptable alternating current generators, and the system was sold to Kansas Power and Light Company in 1924. The Drillers Gas Company brought natural gas to the city in 1936 and 1937.

In 1907 a franchise was given to the Standard Salt Company of New York, to mine salt and other valuable minerals from beneath the town. Several such permits are on record preceding this date, but financial or other difficulties apparently precluded the development of actual mining operations. This plant employed a number of families and resulted in something of a building boom for a time. However, in 1927 the Morton Salt Company acquired the facility and soon closed it because salt was more economically secured in their evaporative plants elsewhere and the rock salt mining days were over for Little River. This change stopped the all-time largest industrial payroll for the community.

In 1936 the city bought land west of town on which the sandstone bluff known as "Spriggs Rocks" was located. With government help through the WPA a dam was built across the creek and Little River Lake was formed. This was enthusiastically received by people of the area as a fishing and recreation spot. Maintenance and supervision, however, became too expensive and the land and improvements were sold to Paul Thompson in 1948.

With money from a similar government agency, the Public Works Administration, the school district built a modern brick schoolhouse on the site of the old building. This building, with some additions is in use at the present time. It was built in 1937 and 1938.

Clara Jennings built a theater building on the site of Joe's Texaco Station in 1915 and later built a new theater where Donald Miller's shop now stands. For years these were the entertainment centers of Little River. Movies were shown four nights each week and on other nights other entertainment, including all school plays,

operettas, etc. were presented. Improved roads and the automobile hurt this business as it did many others in small towns and television dealt it the death blow in the early '50's.

A tract of land was given to Union Township by the widow of Benjamin Bean in 1879. Mr. Bean was the first to be buried there, and it has served the community in this capacity since that time. It has been enlarged twice and the Union Township Board has always maintained it in a fashion not equalled by the governing bodies of most small town burial spots.

Of necessity, this little history must omit many items of interest and importance. It must omit mention of many of the outstanding leaders who helped the town grow and develop. George Hoffman deserves additional mention, however, for he travelled this country before the earliest settlement as a "bullwhacker", guide and scout for wagon trains. When he settled in town he acquired much good river bottom land, fed and shipped numerous cattle and hogs, built the local elevator and grain business, built and endowed the Hoffman Memorial Hospital and established a student loan fund to help deserving students gain an education. He was also the largest stockholder in the Citizens State Bank.

W.H. (Bill) Burke, who worked closely with Mr. Hoffman for a number of years, was also a superior businessman. When Mr. Hoffman was gone, he took over most of his enterprises and was a leader and promoter of everything which was good for the Little River Community. Upon his death, the grain business was purchased by Mr. J.R. Miller, Southwest Grain Co., Hutchinson, and is now operated by his son-in-law, T.R. Arbuckle, Jr. The bank, now the Home State Bank, is operated by Mr. E.F. Nelson and his son, Kenneth. The cattle feeding picture has changed and the old pens and yards have largely disappeared from along the railroad tracks.

At the present time Little River has a population of about 550, down from nearly 700 during its better days during the teens and twenties. Many businesses have been lost which apparently will not be replaced. The hospital is outmoded and has a very limited time to operate. However, in this instance, community leaders have worked to establish a larger hospital district which will give a sound tax base upon which a

~~skilled nursing home~~ will be built. Construction is to start this fall.

Projections of school enrollments are down and some feel that even after recent consolidation action the schools may yet be forced into a change which will further detract from the community life. Only time will tell whether Little River can find services to render and functions to fill that will renew the old spirit of growth and prosperity or if it shall gradually decline with its potential services no longer great enough to justify additional growth.

In either case, it has an interesting history and changes that come cannot always be stimulating to all.

Paul C. Perry



## HISTORY OF LITTLE RIVER, KANSAS

Carlyle wrote: "History is the essence of innumerable biographies." This history of Little River is based on the lives of the early pioneers, who settled here, and the effect their lives had in the founding and growth of the town.

Homesteads were founded by early pioneers in the late 1860's and the 1870's in the upper valley of the Little Arkansas River in eastern Rice County. The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company foresaw that a desirable strip of country lay between its main line, through Sterling on the south, and the Union Pacific Railroad on the north, which was not adequately served by any railroad. It was in the most favorable position to occupy this territory, and projected its M and M Branch Line between Florence and Ellinwood. This line crosses the Little Arkansas River near the eastern border of Rice County, and it was decreed that at this point a station should be established. The name of the station "Little River" was doubtless adopted from the fact that it was located at this point where the railroad line intersected the Little Arkansas River.

The planning, plotting, and selling of town lots was in the hands of a Santa Fe Land Agency, known as The Arkansas Valley Town and Land Company. The streets of the town were laid out at right angles with the railroad track, which lay in a slightly southwest-northeast direction instead of true east and west.

Thus the streets of Little River make an angle of some ten or fifteen degrees with lines joining the North-South and East-West points of the compass. The headquarters of the Arkansas Valley and Land Company were in Boston, Massachusetts. It is said that Boston streets were originally laid out to follow the cow paths which led in and out of the city. This legend may seem plausible to a stranger who passes within its gates. It may have been for this reason that those who laid out the town were little concerned with making the streets coincide with true compass directions. More probable however, is the idea that the railroad was the most important fact to the proposed town, in fact, it was the very reason for the town. Thus, the streets guided on the railroad for direction.

In the spring of 1880 construction of the railroad had been completed and a station was built. The first train from Florence to Ellinwood went through Little River on June, 1880. Dr. C.E. Holbrook, the first doctor in Little River was the first station agent. Such was the beginning of Little River, in Rice County, Kansas.

As the railroad construction neared this proposed townsight from the east, a camp was established near the crossing of the river. Some of the laborers boarded at a ranch house on a hill just west of the townsight. This ranch house was occupied by the H.B. Hodges family, and they fed the railroad workers there before there was a town of Little River. This ranch house still stands but is used for a barn at the present time. The lower story is made of stone and partially under ground; the upper story

is made of wood with the outside boards placed vertically, with cleats to cover the cracks. A "lean-to" addition was later made. Residents have long referred to this hill, with its historic building as The Clutter Hill. This farm now belongs to my father, who inherited it from his mother, who was the daughter of Cyrus Clutter. He bought the farm many years ago. It is said that, at the Hodges Ranch, the same big wooden block in the yard doubled as a wash stand for the boarders, and as a butcher's block upon which beef or buffalo meat was cut and pounded for the kitchen.

The A.C. Walker family, who arrived in Kansas from Hampton, Iowa, with two daughters and a son, in 1878 also boarded some of the railroad workers. The Walkers had arrived with all of their household goods in a wagon pulled by a team of mules. Once here they hauled lumber from Sterling and built the first building in what was to be the town of Little River. This building was their home and also a store. This small store carried a meager stock of merchandise to supply the increasing needs of the settlers in the vicinity. This building was crudely constructed, as many new town buildings were; not even covered with weather boarding. On November 18, 1880 Mr. Walker's son-in-law, George Russ, came to Little River with his small stock of goods. Walker and Russ were then organized as partners and this firm called itself the Pioneer Grocery. This store stood for many years as a landmark, and later served as a post-office, doctor's office, ice cream parlor, courthouse

and church. This building stood where the post office now stands, and was not torn down until 1910, when it is said, some young fellows, one Hallowe'en night tore it down as a prank. See this first building in Little River below.

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The "Pioneer Grocery" was the first building in Little River, Kansas. It was erected in 1880 by A.C. Walker. On the horizon in mid-background can be seen the ranch house of H.C. Hodges. ( now the barn on the Clutter Hill ) Comments about the school group will come later in the history.

In the summer of 1880 there were four or five rural Post offices in this vicinity. These were at Lodiana, River-view, Fairpoint, and Voyles. During the summer these were consolidated into a single office in Little River, and James Crawford, who had been postmaster at Lodiana, was the first postmaster, with T.H. Wible as his assistant.

By 1877 there were many families in and around this community and there were many children who needed to be in school. The county superintendent called a meeting on March

19, 1879, at the home of Henry Clump. They decided the district should be three miles square, and this included the territory of what is now Little River. The first annual meeting was held at the home of J.D. Bright, August 14, 1879. It was voted to locate a school house north west of what is now the home of Lee Alton, an uncle of mine. This school was to be built of sod, and the necessary funds were taken out of a building fund to erect this sod house. A.G. Wolfe, a great great uncle of mine was hired to teach the first term of school. This three months term began November 17, 1879 and he was paid thirty dollars a month. Mary E. Webb taught a spring term of two months, beginning May 23, 1880, at a salary of twenty dollars a month. The United Brethren Church was rented for classes in town after the town was established, and the country children continued to attend at the sod house. In the summer of 1882 bonds of \$2,700 were issued to build a school house in Little River. A two room house was built and also a new one in the country about two miles north west of town. It was named after a pioneer in the community, a Mr. Hope. The school was Hope District 98. Two of the teachers hired to teach in the town school were Lottie Johnson and her brother Roy Johnson and their pictures, with all the pupils in school, appear in the picture with the caption, "Pioneer Grocery", on a previous page. An item on the supplies first purchased for the new school was of interest to me; five gourds to be bought to use for drinking cups. In 1883, an upstairs was put on the building to be used for a high school.

There were two teachers in town and one in the country until 1891, and then a third teacher was added for the primary department, in the town school. In 1892, J.J. Caldwell, employed as superintendent, installed a regular high school course. In 1907 a new brick school building was erected and it remained in use until 1938 when our modern school was built on the same site. My father is now the superintendent of this school and has been for fifteen years, teaching for ten years before World War I, resigned to enter the service, and then returned as superintendent several years ago.

Among the first buildings erected in the new town was the Tremont House. J.H. Fishel built this hotel on block one at the corner of Main Street and Kansas Avenue. It was two stories in height, and contained, as remodeled in after years, eleven guest rooms on the upper floor. Herb Levitt operated this hotel for several years and then sold it to Bill Beougher. This hotel was not the first one for Jim Gregg operated one just north of what is now the hospital. This hotel was known as the Santa Fe Hotel. The Tremont House was once quarantined for small-pox during the early days in the town's history, and this necessitated the erection of a "pest house" just east of the town. This pest house stood until 1892 when a tornado blew it away. The Tremont House stood as a landmark for forty years in the same location. It was sold to W.H. Burke and in 1921 he built a fine modern hotel, which now stands on the same corner.

Another early building in town was a lumber company built by D.J. Fair of Sterling in 1880. This building holds the distinction of being the only one built at that time,



which is still standing, and has been continuously occupied by the same line of business. It is now occupied by the T.M. Deal Lumber Company. As originally constructed, it covered one lot and had two stories, the upper one being a hall. This hall was used for a time for union church and Sunday School meetings. The first Christmas service in the new town was held in this hall. For many years it was used as a lodge hall by the Corner Stone Masonic Order. The first Sunday School was held in the upper part of this Fair building before it was completely finished.

A Rev. J. B. Schlichter of Sterling came to Little River and did missionary work for the Congregational Church and as a result a church was organized notheast of town in the North Fork community. This church was called the North Fork Congregational Church. Among the charter members were the names of my great grandfather and great grandmother; Mr. and Mrs. George Perry. This organization adopted a resolution July 31, 1880 to move its home to the new town of Little River and to change its name to the Little River Congregational Church. For a time its meetings were held at the railroad station building and at the home of A. C. Walker until the D. J. Fair building was completed. The Congregational Church was finished in July 1883. A parsonage was also built in 1884.

At some time in the earliest part of the town's history, a small church was erected by the United Brethren Church. Its first pastor was my great great grandfather, Rev. F. M. Wolfe.

The first Methodist Episcopal class was organized in the year 1881 and the parsonage was built the same year.

during the pastorate of Rev. B.F. Edwards. James Zent was the first and oldest member of the church. During the first few years the Methodists did not have a church building so the Congregational Church offered the use of its church on alternate Sundays, and the offer was accepted. The Methodist Episcopal Church in its first form was built in the year 1886.

On November 16, 1884 a newly appointed board of trustees consisting of C.C. Moll, James Mc Anarny, and P.M. Donnelly met to make plans to obtain a new building for the Catholic Church. By December much progress had been made toward the erection of the new building. In April 1885 the church was damaged by a windstorm, but fortunately it was covered by insurance. The building was accepted from the contractor, H.L. Canfield on May 16, and was dedicated by the Rev. J.A. Sheridan, on July 26, 1885. Like the average church structure of those days, it was very "plain" both within and without, but in the years following, it has been enlarged and beautified, making it more attractive in appearance.

Both the Congregational Church and the Methodist Church have built new buildings in the last five years, and the Catholic Church is also planning to build a new church in the immediate future. The United Brethren Church and a Christian Church were both razed and homes were built on their sites.

Livery stables in the early days were fully as necessary as the garage is today for the traveling public. The first livery stable in Little River was owned and operated by George W. Rouse and was located on the north side of block three facing Kansas Avenue. This was soon removed and a

larger one was built on Main Street where the hospital now stands, and one opposite it on Main Street, which indicates the importance of the business. The time came when it was found undesirable to have livery stables on Main Street and they made their last stand next to the alleys on block one and four and remained there until the early part of the twentieth century. The last livery stable was called the Blue Front Stable, and was located where the Williamson Warehouse now stands. A list of men engaged in this business from time to time includes such names as James Long, Herb Levitt, William German, Lee Smith, Will King, Clarence Cassingham, Bill Beougher, Bert Perry, Jim Bolin, Jeff Dunham, George Masterson, (Bat's brother and brother-in-law of George Hoffman---one of the early business men and a philanthropist, mentioned later on in the history.) J.L. Joy, and others.

Several of the early buildings in Little River, including the Fair building, which is now the T.M. Deal Lumber Company, were made of native stone, which was quarried from what is now known as the Charles Wilson Farm. Another building erected in 1886 of native stone is still in use on the west side of Main Street. This building now houses the Williamson Furniture Store. Over the years there were various businesses in the lower story but the upper story was used for entertainment purposes, and was called the Opera House. In later years a gun club used the Opera House for target shooting with huge logs placed in one end for back stops. About five years ago this hall was remodeled and made into a furniture display room by A.J. Williamson. He had the ceiling painted to cover a mural of a nude woman. The first bank was also made of stone

and was located on the site where the Citizens Exchange now stands. J.W. Pulliam was the town's first banker. This bank was organized in 1886.

In 1898 a bad fire almost destroyed the town of Little River. All of the businesses on one block on the east side of Main Street from what is now Williamson's apartments to the Leo Sporn building were destroyed. After they were rebuilt it necessitated the establishment of a fire department. On March 25, 1905 the city purchased a fire engine and apparatus for seven hundred dollars. A Volunteer Fire Department was organized July 16, 1915. To-day the town has a modern fire truck for use in the town and surrounding community.

The first paper in Little River was published by W.E. Fosnot of Ellsworth soon after the town was established. This paper was known as The News and later changed to Rural West. In 1886 T.G. Robinson started a weekly paper and called it The Little River Monitor. W.G. Greenbank worked for him as an apprentice for three years, and then bought him out in 1889. Mr. Greenbank edited The Monitor for fifty years until his death in 1940. A paper called The Comet was published for awhile but soon folded. After the death of Mr. Greenbank The Monitor was published by several men including the following; Ed Geymann, Bob Doty, Herb Wullschleger, Jack Hull and the present owner, Merritt Leach. For the first time in seventy-five years the name of the Monitor has been changed. This summer the Monitor was consolidated with the Central Kansas Farm Journal and is now known as The Rice County Monitor-Journal.

The town of Little River was incorporated November 8, 1886. The first mayor of the town was Dr. R.S. Bragg and the first city clerk was George H. Weld. Other early mayors of the town were: J.W. Crawford, S.B. O'Neal, Jeff Dunham, Thomas Spriggs, H. L. Canfield and George Weld. All of these men were mayors before the year 1900. Some early city clerks were: Burton Pulliam, J.C. Davis, John Lane, George Curtis, C.A. Walker, A.G. Wolfe, S.P. Plank, and W.D. Middlekauff. The first city treasurer received one dollar a year paid semi-annually. Ordinance number three in the city clerk's records required hawkers and peddlers to pay five dollars a day to sell their wares, (farmers not included). Auctioneers were required to pay one dollar a day to sell. Drays used in the city for pay were to pay five dollars a year to operate. Ordinance number seven related to Billiards, Pigeon Hole, Jenny Lind, and Carondalet tables. This business was assessed a license fee of fifty dollars a year, and if the license was issued for less than six months, the fee was two dollars a day. The closing hour was set at 10:30 P. M. The early sidewalks in the town were of two inch planks, twelve feet wide. The residential district had walks of one inch planks, four feet wide. No horse, mule, or cow could be driven on these sidewalks. If the ordinance were violated the owner could be fined the amount of the damage to the sidewalk plus five to ten dollars and the cost of the action. This ordinance was in effect December 7, 1886. In 1906 an ordinance was passed requiring all sidewalks thereafter to be built of brick and not wood or cinder. The Main Street and many residential streets were paved in 1924.

In 1887 a city ordinance was passed making it mandatory to collect from each male between the ages of twenty-one to fifty years the amount of one dollar a year. This ordinance was repealed in 1894. Another early ordinance was of interest to me. This ordinance provided that fines assessed by the Justice of the Peace could be worked out at the rate of fifty cents a day. It also provided that the convicted person could be put in chains or ball and chains while at work to prevent his escape.

The town was supplied with water from hand dug wells and cisterns for many years. The first public well was north of what is now the T.M. Deal building and another one was a block south. In August 1913 bonds were voted for a city water system. A water tower was erected and well dug just north of town on the river bottom. This well served until about 1940 when new wells were drilled three miles north of town where a more adequate supply of softer water was found.

On June 7, 1903 telephone lines were put into operation and in 1905 the Mutual Telephone Company leased a lot and erected a telephone office.

All but the south two lots of block thirteen are set aside as a city park. The first park fund was established in 1904.

A city light plant was erected in 1916. In 1920 the Kansas Power and Light Company bought the city plant for fifteen thousand dollars, and brought electricity to Little River from Lyons.

Drillers Gas brought natural gas to Little River in 1935.

Salt was found when a company was formed and machinery purchased to mine for coal. Several years later the city

council voted to give mining privileges to the Standard Salt Company of New York. This franchise was given in 1907 and was to run for ninety-nine years, and gave them the right to mine under streets and alleys inside the city of Little River. Actual salt mining operations however, were not started until a year later, in 1908. Several houses were erected close to the mine, which was located at the west edge of town. The town prospered because of this influx of miners and officials. In 1927 The Morton Salt Company, now the owner of the plant in Little River, decided to close this plant, which had been mining rock salt, because the evaporative method was found more economical. These smaller mines were closed and the employees sent to larger mines.

In 1936 an ordinance was passed to acquire land and built a city lake. Bonds were voted, land bought, and W.P.A. labor used and a lake was built two miles west of town. This place offered wonderful recreation facilities for several years. It became a financial burden to the city, and was sold to Paul Thompson in 1948.

A theatre was built and opened about 1915 by Clara Jennings on the site where the Standard Station now stands. This theatre was used for several for all community affairs; graduation exercises, school plays, lectures, etc. Mrs. Jennings built another theatre in 1926 just south of the present Citizen's Exchange building. Pictures were shown there for years until television came into prominence and forced the closing in the 1940's.

Little River is proud of its cemetery, which is located about one mile north and east of town. Benjamin Bean was the first person buried there. He died in May, 1879 and his widow deeded that plot of ground for a cemetery.

The history of Little River could not be written without the mention of two well known philanthropists; George Hoffman and W.H. Burke. George Hoffman came to Little River in 1883. As a young man he was bull whacker in the long trains of ox teams which followed the trails from the Mississippi River to Denver and back. Afterwards he was a cowboy and cattleman. He established himself in the cattle business and invested in land in the vicinity. He engaged in grain buying and soon purchased a controlling interest in the Citizen's Bank, which he held during the remainder of his active business life. His probable purpose in life was to use his large fortune for philanthropic uses. He built a fine modern hospital in 1916 at a cost of over one hundred thousand dollars and kept it in operation during his lifetime. He provided an endowment fund to maintain the hospital after his death. Hoffman Memorial Hospital is still self-supporting and is an asset to a small town of this size. Mr. Hoffman died in 1930. 1930

W.H. Burke was a man who was generous with his time and money in promoting projects and businesses to benefit the town. It was largely due to his vision, initiative, and untiring effort that the Hoffman Memorial Hospital was erected and endowed. In 1921 he and H.C. Hodgson built the fine modern Burke Hotel. Mr. Burke had before this time bought the elevator and grain buying business from Mr. Hoffman, and had built up one of the finest elevators in this part of



the state. He operated his grain business from 1914 until he sold out in 1949 to Miller and Bidwell, who operate the business under the name of Burke Grain Company. Mr. Burke was president of the Citizens State Bank for many years. Several of the business buildings in town to-day are owned by the widow of Mr. Burke, who makes her home at the Burke Hotel.

Little River to-day has a population of 552 people, so is just another small town which has suffered because of good roads and larger cities near by to attract trade away, from it. My parents, relatives, and friends still live there so it is my home town and I like it.

*Bill Perry*