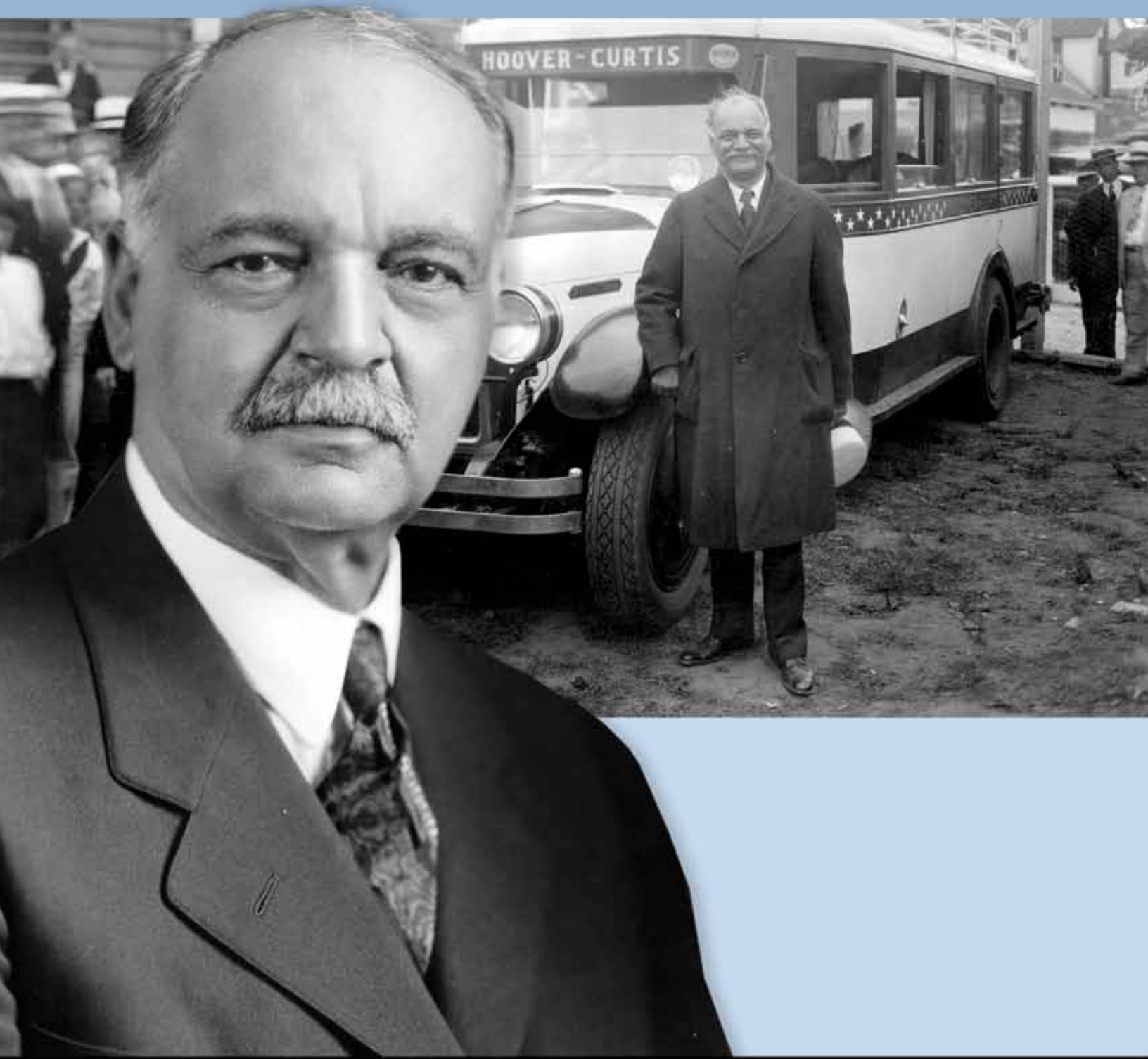
Summer 2012

Reflections

A publication of the Kansas Historical Society and the Kansas Historical Foundation



REAL PEOPLE. REAL STORIES.

Summer 2012
VOLUME 6, NUMBER 3

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On the cover: Charles Curtis was the 31st vice president of the United States. **See story page 2.**

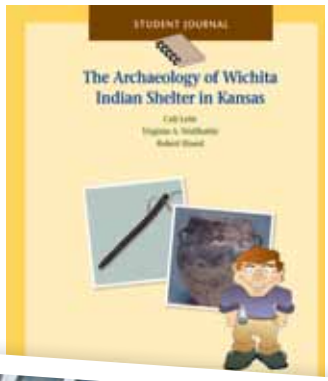
Reflections

Meet Virginia Wulfkuhle

Virginia Wulfkuhle is public archeologist at the Kansas Historical Society. She grew up on a farm near Lawrence and received a bachelor's degree in anthropology from the University of Kansas and a master's degree from the University of Texas at Austin.

Wulfkuhle worked as a staff archeologist at the Texas Historical Commission in Austin and as curator of the Museum of the Big Bend at Sul Ross State University in Alpine, Texas. She joined the Kansas Historical Society in 1990 in the contract archeology program, where she served as liaison with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and assisted in the highway program.

As public archeologist Wulfkuhle is responsible for coordinating the Kansas Archeology Training Program and other public education programs, including the recently completed Project Archaeology series of three units available for distribution to classrooms across the state.



Virginia Wulfkuhle

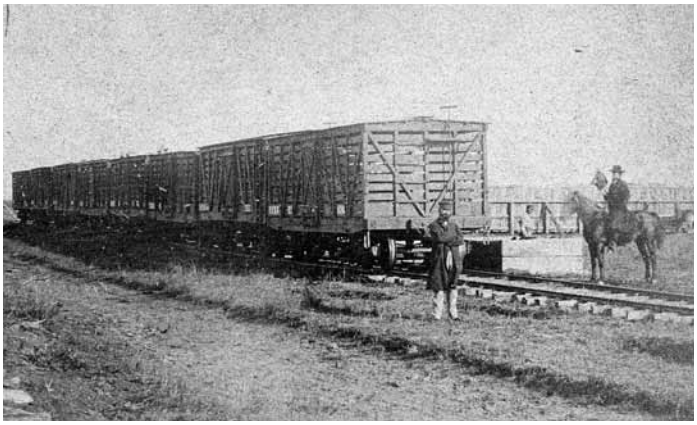
Notable Events in Kansas History

To commemorate the Kansas 150, Governor Sam Brownback appointed a Blue Ribbon Panel on Kansas History. The panel selected 12 notable events in the state's history. This date was selected because it launched state efforts to promote agriculture.

Cattle shipped from Kansas

Joseph McCoy was a cattle buyer who lived in Illinois at the end of the Civil War. He knew that longhorn cattle were plentiful in Texas but with few buyers in the area their value was low. Cattle were in demand in the North but no workable method existed to transport the animals from Texas. McCoy envisioned a hub where cattle could be herded and loaded on a train to be shipped to points in the East.

In spring 1867 McCoy moved to the new town of Abilene. The Kansas Pacific Railway had just completed a connecting spur to the community. McCoy built local accommodations needed to support the hub—a hotel, stockyard, office, and bank.



Abilene in 1867 was a very small, dead place, consisting of about one dozen log huts, low, small, rude affairs, four-fifths of which were covered with dirt for roofing; indeed, but one shingle roof could be seen in the whole city. The business of the burg was conducted in two small rooms, mere log huts, and of course the inevitable saloon, also in a log hut, was to be found.

—Joseph McCoy

Prior to the Civil War, Jesse Chisholm operated a number of trading posts in Oklahoma Territory and southern Kansas. Since his trade routes were already established, they proved ideal for transporting cattle to Wichita. McCoy hired a civil engineer to extend the trail north to Abilene.

McCoy completed the new stockyards on September 1, 1867. At the same time he sent a scout to southeastern Kansas and Indian Territory to persuade drovers to come to Abilene. Within days cattle began to arrive.

SEPTEMBER 5, 1867

The first load of cattle to be shipped via rail from Kansas

Above, Joseph G. McCoy, 1880; left, Joseph McCoy's stockyards in Abilene, 1867.

"Capacity for Hard Work": Charles Curtis

Charles Curtis was a man from different worlds. In his youth he lived on the Kaw reservation; he would eventually live in the White House. During his years as a statesman, Curtis presided during changes in laws concerning women and American Indians. As vice president of the United States from 1929 to 1933, Curtis became the first and only person of American Indian descent to serve in that office, and the only one to learn English as a secondary language. In the Curtis home, Kansa and French were spoken.

Vice President Charles Curtis on the steps of the U. S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., between 1928 and 1933.

Vice President Charles Curtis reenacts casting a ballot in the U.S. Senate, 1929.

Curtis was born in North Topeka in 1860 to Oren Arms and Ellen (Pappan) Curtis. His mother, of Kansa, Osage, Potawatomi, and French ancestry, died when Curtis was three. His father served as a captain in the Civil War. His father received a dishonorable discharge, was court-martialed, and jailed. At the age of five Curtis was sent to live with his maternal grandmother and other relatives on the Kaw reservation near Council Grove.

On the reservation life was unsettled and his paternal grandmother feared for his safety. When Cheyenne warriors raided the Kaw reservation in 1868, young Curtis joined a Kaw interpreter on a 60-mile ride to Topeka to seek assistance. Curtis' family decided that he should remain in Topeka and attend school for white children. His grandfather William Curtis owned a racetrack in North Topeka. The young Curtis soon became an accomplished, well-paid jockey. Curtis' grandparents had high aspirations for the young man and encouraged him to further his education. The family helped Curtis secure a claim for his mother's Kaw land along the Kansas River. After three years at Topeka High School, Curtis graduated and found work in various other occupations.

Curtis began work as a clerk for Topeka attorney A. H. Case. For two years he studied and gained experience in the municipal courts. In 1881 he was admitted to the bar and became a partner in Case's law firm. Curtis passion, though, was politics. He was elected county prosecutor in 1884 and gained a reputation for his strict enforcement of the prohibition law.

In 1892 Curtis was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, where he served for eight terms. Curtis was appointed to numerous committees including the prestigious House Ways and Means Committee and Committee on Indian Affairs and Public Lands. He

Charles Curtis with Herbert Hoover, between 1928 and 1933.

authored a bill that made changes to Indian Territory and sponsored legislation that impacted the tribes.

Editor William Allen White found much to like about Curtis. "There is nothing little and mean about Charley Curtis," White wrote in the *Emporia Gazette* in 1895. "And, above everything, there is nothing lazy about him. He pushed more pension bills through congress than all the Populist congressmen combined. This is a matter of record. He has the capacity for hard work that is called genius."

In 1907 Curtis was elected to fill an unexpired term in the U.S. Senate, and then elected to a full term. He ran an unsuccessful campaign in 1912, but regained the seat in 1914. He was elected Republican Party whip in 1915, where he worked to organize and coordinate the party. Curtis served on many committees and much of the legislation he sponsored related to agriculture and American Indians. Curtis was elected majority leader in 1925.

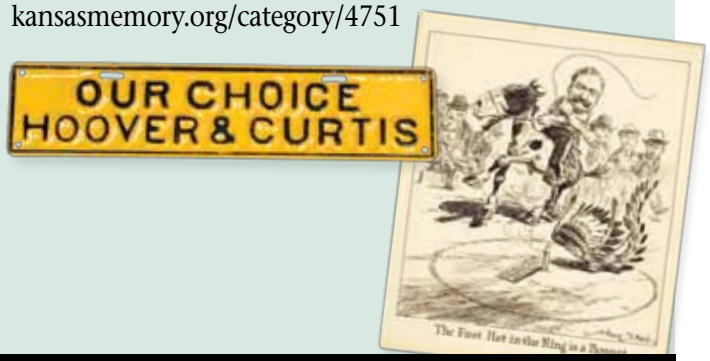
His popular stand on farm relief helped him gain the nomination as Herbert Hoover's vice presidential running mate in 1928. They served one term, 1929 to 1933.

"No evolution in human history is more important than the expansion of the powers and privileges of modern women," Curtis said in his acceptance speech in Topeka in 1928. "The women of our country have made great flight and accomplished much in their contest for legal, educational, occupational, and political freedom and it was not until our own generation that equality with men before the law was extended to the women."

Curtis retired from public office and continued an active interest in political affairs. He died in Washington, D.C., in 1936.

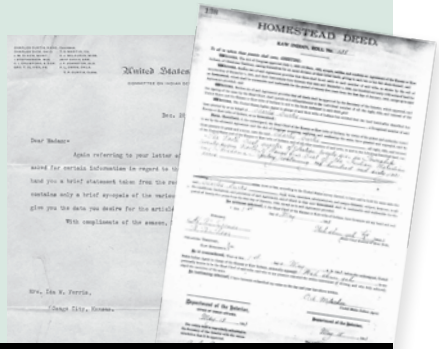
BROWSE | KANSAS MEMORY

Our online digital archives features photographs, correspondence, deeds, and objects related to Curtis.
kansasmemory.org/category/4751



RESEARCH | STATE ARCHIVES

Visit the research room in Topeka and delve into Curtis' autobiography, correspondence, genealogy, deeds, and abstracts.
kshs.org/15800



EXPLORE | KANSAPEDIA

Charles Curtis was named one of the top 25 people in Kansas history. Learn more about his accomplishments in our online encyclopedia.
kshs.org/12029

Governor Benjamin Paulen and Senator Charles Curtis with Potawatomi members in Fort Riley, 1928.

SAVE OUR HISTORY | SUCCESS

Sallie White Portrait Conservation

Three members of the Kansas Historical Foundation Board of Directors joined together to donate funds for the conservation of the Sallie White portrait and an icon. The restored portrait will be on display at Red Rocks State Historic Site in Emporia in the fall. The Honorable Paul Buchanan, J. Eric Engstrom, and Hal Ross, all of Wichita, donated the nearly $4,000 to conserve the painting. The restoration effort also included work on the icon—another painting in the White's house of Jesus, Mary, and two Apostles.

"We have been working on a new tour and enhanced visitor experiences at Red Rocks," said Jennie Chinn, executive director of the Kansas Historical Society. "The painting of Sallie White, hanging on the second floor of the house, had become darkened over time. We identified these conservation project needs for the site."

The three Wichita board members quickly became interested in assisting with the effort. "We were familiar with the work of conservator Peggy Van Witt," said J. Eric Engstrom. "She was one of the reasons we felt comfortable with the project."

The Historical Society is grateful for the generous gift, which now allows visitors the opportunity to enjoy the striking portrait and the icon.

SAVE OUR HISTORY | NEED

Adopt An Artifact

Several artifacts in our collections, like the Sallie White portrait, need special care to preserve history. We invite you to consider supporting one of these efforts. Our website features an Adopt an Artifact page, with the most recent addition, the Lincoln umbrella.

A Lincoln supporter held this umbrella over the president-elect's head as snow began to fall in Utica, New York, in 1861.

> *The rain in which the Presidential party entered Pittsburgh last night was still pouring down this morning, but the President-elect was nevertheless true to his word . . . and delivered the address . . . to a multitude of five thousand people, under an ocean of umbrellas.*
>
> —Henry Villard, journalist, 1861

Months after his 1861 election, President-elect Abraham Lincoln made a historic train ride to Washington, D.C., for his inaugural. Instead of cooling the fires of a looming Civil War, as he had hoped, Lincoln found himself battling blizzards in New York with this umbrella.

Both the fabric and frame of the umbrella need conservation. Based on early estimates, the cost to conserve the Lincoln umbrella will be in the $3,500 to $5,000 range. Please contact Sally Zogry, szogry@kshs.org, or 785-272-8681, ext. 210, for more information.

Spring Meeting Update

Members of the Kansas Historical Society took advantage of a special opportunity at the 2012 spring meeting. As a member benefit, the annual spring meeting offers members the chance to meet others who share their passion for history and to learn more about particular aspects of our state's fascinating past.

This June members had the rare opportunity to learn about a Kaw Indian site that was being investigated as part of the Kansas Archeology Training Program. The former Fool Chief's Village (14SH305) in Shawnee County is the location of an upcoming highway safety project that will negatively impact the site. Members also toured the home of Charles Curtis in Topeka, a member of the Kaw Nation, and the first American Indian to serve as vice president of the U.S; and visited the archeology lab and museum collection storage.

If you didn't have the opportunity to join us this year, we hope you can take advantage of future spring meetings.

Kansas Historical Foundation members tour the archeology lab, Charles Curtis House Museum, and the Kansas Archeology Training Program during the 2012 spring meeting in June.

It's Time for Ice Cream

Kansans began enjoying the cool, refreshing taste of ice cream in the late 19th century. Harry C. Scott founded an ice cream manufacturing company in Topeka in 1879 and claimed to be the earliest in the state. Scott Brothers Ice Cream provided a wide range of dairy products for three generations.

Ice was scarce when the company began, and the Scott brothers cut their own blocks from the nearby Kansas River during winter months and stored for later use. Following World War I two of Scott's sons began to run the family business. The company used a horse-drawn wagon for door-to-door deliveries in Topeka, and by wagon and train to Silver Lake and Rossville. Ice cream was packaged in tin cans kept cold in ice-packed wooden tubs. The store served a wide range of flavors to customers at its downtown Topeka facility including black walnut, butterscotch, tutti frutti, and chip chocolate. Frozen treats like "Popsicles" in 1932 and "Fudgicles" in 1934 were added to the menu. Scott Brothers closed the business in 1979.

Nicholas Steffen established Steffen's Bakery and Restaurant in Wichita in 1882. In addition to the standard menu, on Saturdays and holidays Steffen's served ice cream made from a German recipe that he had learned as an apprentice in Indiana. The frozen dessert proved so popular that by the turn of the century the business was producing 20,000 gallons of ice cream a year and expanding its customers beyond Wichita. Steffen became the first commercial shipper of ice cream in the U.S. He developed ice cream cartons with wire handles so that customers could carry their desserts home. Steffen partnered with William Bretch and grew the business, using a horse-drawn wagon to make deliveries to residential customers and building the wholesale operations. By 1904 there were Steffen's Ice Cream stores across Kansas. The business continues today as Hiland Dairy Foods Company. Although it does not offer ice cream, Hiland's offers other types of dairy products.

Steffen's Dairy Products in Wichita included ice cream among its offerings, circa 1930s.

Henry Braum purchased a wholesale butter processing business in Emporia in 1933. Meadowbrook Creamery was first located on Constitution Street and by 1940 Braum's company was producing ice cream. He and his son, Bill, sold the wholesale operation in 1952 and shifted the company's focus to retail dairy products. Meadowbrook Ice Cream Company became Braum Ice Cream, and by 1957 was operating as the Peter Pan Ice Cream Company. The store was named for the Emporia's Peter Pan Park created in memory of William Allen White's daughter, Mary. Known for its special hand-packed ice cream, the

Peter Pan Ice Cream Store in Emporia in 1975. Courtesy Walter M. Anderson Collection, Emporia State University Archives.

company grew from one store to dozens. A second store opened in Emporia by 1960 and the company eventually operated 61 stores around the state in such cities as Arkansas City, El Dorado, Iola, Newton, Topeka, Wichita, and Yates Center. In 1967 the younger Braum sold the business, maintaining the dairy herd in Emporia. For the next 10 years Steffen's operated 16 of the Peter Pans in the Wichita area. As a condition of the sale, Braum was not allowed to sell ice cream in Kansas for 10 years. The next year, he and his wife established Braum's Ice Cream in Oklahoma City. The company grew and today operates nearly 300 stores in Oklahoma, Kansas, Texas, Missouri, and Arkansas.

Above, Scott Brothers' sign features Popsicle Pete, 1930s; right, this conical ice cream scooper, manufactured by the Gilchrist Company, was probably made between 1890 and 1900.

BROWSE | KANSAS MEMORY

This Fairmont Ice Cream Store was located in Iola, 1950s. kansasmemory.org/item/216502

VISIT | COOL THINGS

Kansas State University operates a dairy farm and serves ice cream along with other dairy products. kshs.org/15640

SEARCH | KHRI

Steffen's is one of several ice cream facilities and dairies listed in the Kansas Historic Resources Inventory. khri.kansasgis.org

Hazel Gomez pictured in 1945.

Hazel Gomez

Hazel Gomez spent her life serving those in need in Topeka and around Kansas. Her community involvement spanned youth, military, and the elderly. She was a leader in local, statewide, and national Hispanic organizations.

Gomez was born March 3, 1924, in Topeka, to Epitacio and Maria Gonzales and attended Our Lady of Guadalupe School. When she was just 18 she helped to organize the Y-Señoritas club, sponsored by the Topeka YWCA. Amid World War II, this club played an active role in helping soldiers lead a more active life outside the military. Becoming active in fundraising for her local parish, Gomez was selected in 1943 as queen of the Our Lady of Guadalupe fiesta.

She married Robert Gomez on April 16, 1944, in Topeka. The couple's four children grew up in Topeka. Gomez was a founding member of the local League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and served as the state director and two terms as president. In 1973 Gomez was the first chairperson for the advisory board for the LULAC Elderly Center.

Robert and Hazel Gomez pictured in 1987.

Gomez served as secretary and president for the La Colonia Elderly Housing Project. She was president of the Our Lady of Guadalupe Mothers Study Club, and Our Lady of Consolation Monastery Guild. She was also vice president of the Silver Haired Legislature board and in 1995 served as a delegate to the White House Conference on Aging.

Over the years Gomez served on numerous boards including Friendly Neighbors, Catholic Social Services, National Hispanic Council on Aging, Volunteer Action, Topeka Youth Center, the 1975 Fiesta Mexicana, and Kansas Association of Hispanic Organizations. Gomez also served on the Martin Luther King Living the Dream Committee.

Her community involvement led to numerous awards and honors. In 1977 Gomez was selected for the Kansas LULAC Outstanding Service Award. She was honored in 1982 with the Outstanding Leadership Award at the National LULAC convention. The Kansas Association of Hispanic Organizations named Gomez as the woman of the year in 1987. She received the LULAC Women's Hall of Fame Award and Governor's Martin Luther King, Jr., Award in 1992. She was named the state LULAC woman of the year in 2000. Gomez was inducted into the Kansas Women of Color Hall of Fame.

Gomez died October 11, 2000, in Topeka. The Kansas Senate passed Resolution No. 1822 in 2001 in memory of Gomez and her dedication to community service in the Hispanic community. In 2001 a gazebo was dedicated in tribute of Gomez's service at the La Colonia retirement community. Several of the Gomez family photographs were recently donated to the Historical Society.

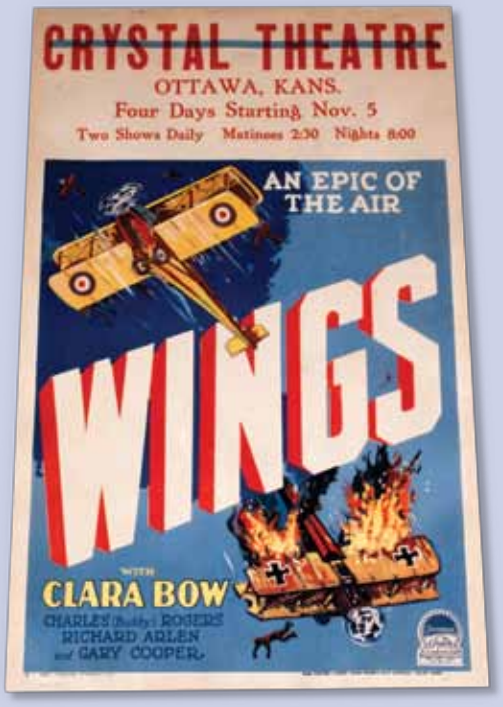
Check Out Our "Recently Added" Items

Kansapedia: Nellie Cline

Born in Larned, Nellie Cline graduated from Baker University and went on to earn her law degree. In 1912 she was admitted to the bar and in 1918 was the first woman to present oral arguments before the Kansas Supreme Court.
kshs.org/17769

Cool Things: Movie Poster

The poster from the 1927 movie *Wings* is one of five recently donated to the Kansas Museum of History by Arthur Bidwell of Baldwin City. The films were shown at the Crystal Theater in Ottawa during the 1920s.
kshs.org/10157



Kansas Memory: Photos of Alma

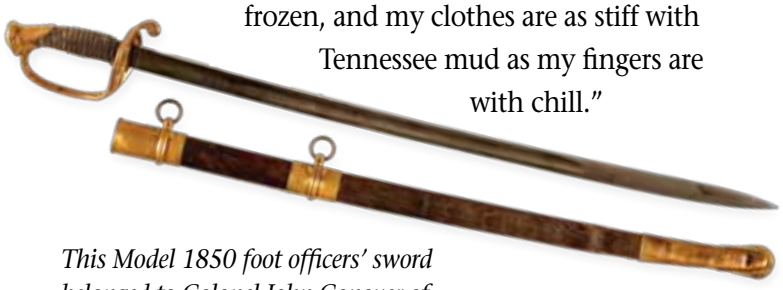
A new collection of photographs from the Wabaunsee County Historical Society includes this photo of Herman Richter in front of his furniture store and undertaking business in Alma, between 1880 and 1890.
kansasmemory.org/item/221095

Eighth Kansas Infantry Served with "Magnificent Courage"

John Martin of Atchison was 22 years old when he was appointed lieutenant colonel in the Eighth Kansas Infantry in 1861. Martin would later commend the Eighth for its "calm and patient endurance . . . magnificent courage . . . splendid discipline, and . . . unfaltering patriotism."

The Eighth Kansas Infantry was organized in August 1861 to protect settlers from American Indians and the Confederate Army along the state's borders. The Eighth did not remain in the state; in May 1862 all federal troops that could be spared were ordered to the South and the Eighth was sent to Corinth, Mississippi. From Corinth the infantry moved on to Kentucky to prevent a confederate invasion of that border state. The Union Army drove the confederates out of Kentucky then went on the offensive as it moved into Tennessee. The Eighth was assigned provost guard duty in Nashville where it remained throughout the winter.

Summer 1863 found the Eighth Kansas in the rain and mud during the Tullahoma campaign when federal forces drove the confederates out of middle Tennessee and south toward Chattanooga. As an officer of the regiment completed the monthly muster roll, he added a note about the hardships of life in the army. "I make this roll lying flat on my belly on the ground, with a rubber blanket for a desk…I have been constantly soaked with rain for seven days and nights; there isn't a bone in my body that doesn't ache; my fingers are as numb as though they were frozen, and my clothes are as stiff with Tennessee mud as my fingers are with chill."



This Model 1850 foot officers' sword belonged to Colonel John Conover of Leavenworth. Conover served as the last regimental commander of the Eighth Kansas.

Colonel John Alexander Martin served as commander of the regiment and the brigade. He was elected governor of Kansas in 1884 and 1886.

The Eighth was in fierce fighting southeast of Chattanooga at the Battle of Chickamauga September 19 and 20. The first day soldiers held their position as long as possible but eventually fell back under the onslaught of the larger confederate force. According to Lieutenant Colonel James L. Abernathy, they advanced again "under a perfect shower of bullets, sometimes driving the enemy and in turn being driven by them, until we had fought the ground over and over again, and almost half of our number lay dead or wounded upon the field." On September 20 the Eighth and its small brigade was ordered to fill a gap in the federal line, but its force was not large enough to fill the gap. The confederates became aware of the situation and rapidly moved on the brigade's flanks.

Fearing capture or annihilation the federals fell back. After two days of fighting the defeated federals retired to Chattanooga while the confederates occupied the surrounding high ground and besieged the city. The Eighth Kansas suffered significant losses. Of 406 men engaged in battle, 243 were killed, wounded, or missing, the regiment's largest loss in a single engagement.

The confederates were positioned on Missionary Ridge east of Chattanooga. After federal reinforcements arrived in the area, the Eighth Kansas led the attack on November 23 that drove the confederates from their rifle pits on Orchard Knob, a rocky mound located between Chattanooga and Missionary Ridge. On November 24 the Eighth held its position on Orchard Knob while federal forces took Lookout Mountain. The Eighth was back in action on November 25 in the assault on Missionary Ridge. Martin reported that the Eighth "advanced steadily in line through the woods and across the open field in front of the enemy's entrenchments… subjected during the whole time to a heavy artillery fire from the enemy's batteries, and as soon as we reached the open field, to a destructive musketry fire." As the federals reached the summit the confederates panicked and fled down the hill on the opposite side. The confederates retreated into northwest Georgia and the federals occupied Chattanooga.

In 1864 the Eighth Kansas took part in the Atlanta campaign before returning to Tennessee and fighting its last battles around Nashville. After serving with "magnificent courage," the men were mustered out of the army in January 1866.

Members of Eighth Kansas Infantry Company E: (standing) Elisha D. Rose, James Hunter, Volney Brown, Henry Davidson, (kneeling) Lewis V. Bryan, Richard Russell, William Wendall, Cyrus Grant.

BROWSE | COOL THINGS

Read more about the flag of the Eighth Kansas in the collections of the Kansas Museum of History.
kshs.org/10314

EXPLORE | KANSAS MEMORY

Our online digital archives offers more photographs, objects and flags connected with the Eighth Kansas.
kansasmemory.org/category/6637

Saddle of Colonel John Conover

VISIT | ONLINE EXHIBIT

In the online exhibit, *Keep the Flag to the Front*, you can see more of the Museum's Civil War flag collection.
kshs.org/ 10659

MOST POPULAR

One of the most frequently viewed images last month on Kansas Memory was this 1939 postcard of the Gage Park swimming pool in Topeka, one of the largest concrete pools at the time in the Midwest. kansasmemory.org/item/221336

Learn more about swimming pools in Kansas on *Kansapedia* at kshs.org/15133

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Online at kshs.org/calendar

Through August 31
Edward S. Curtis Photographs: a Sacred Legacy exhibit • Pawnee Indian Museum, Republic

Through November 17
Ledger Art of the Cheyennes and Kiowas exhibit • Kaw Mission State Historic Site, Council Grove

July 30 - August 1
LEED Workshop • Kansas Historical Society, Topeka

August 7
Heritage Trust Fund Grant Workshop • Kansas Historical Society, Topeka

August 11
Historic Sites Board of Review • Kansas Historical Society, Topeka

August 12
Community Band Concert • Kaw Mission State Historic Site, Council Grove

August 17
Campfire Tales • Fort Hays State Historic Site, Hays

August 18
Melodrama at the Mission • Shawnee Indian Mission State Historic Site, Fairway

August 24
Executive Committee Meeting • Kansas Historical Society, Topeka

August 26
Pony Express Festival • Hollenberg Pony Express Station State Historic Site, Hanover

September 13-14
2012 Preservation Symposium • Riverfront Community Center, Leavenworth

September 14 – February 24
Hail to the Chief exhibit • Kansas Museum of History, Topeka

October 13 – 14
Fall Festival • Shawnee Indian Mission State Historic Site, Fairway

November 2
Kansas Historical Foundation Annual Meeting • Kansas Historical Society, Topeka

Summer 2012

VOLUME 6, NUMBER 3

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Kansas Memory

These African American pioneers lived in Nicodemus in Graham County, 1915. kansasmemory.org/item/226440

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