

Bypaths of Kansas History

GIRL VS. BOY BEFORE THE ERA OF THE SHMOOS

The Kansas Daily Commonwealth, Topeka, August 23, 1872.

Ottawa boys wear shirts made from flour sacks. When a girl longs to know what brand her lover is bagged in, she pursues him to the river bank, and when he dives, she draws near, looks only at the mark of "XX" or "XXX" and hurries away before John rises. She gets away, of course she does, and never looks behind her.

APRIL FOOL IN EARLY-DAY DODGE

From the *Ford County Globe*, Dodge City, April 2, 1878.

At three o'clock yesterday morning, several parties rushed frantically through our streets yelling "fire!" Immediately the different alarm bells of the City began to "clang out" on the midnight air that weird terrible sound which sends the cold blood rushing through the veins of the bravest. Pistol shots joined in the general tumult. Howls! yells! shrieks! also took part. Everybody ran to the engine house, grabbing the hook and ladder wagon the crowd pushed madly towards the Lady Gay, round the corner, and down Bridge St. for about a block, when the astonished firemen discovered that the fire they were rushing so frantically to, consisted of a few barrels and boxes, which had been placed upon a sand bar in the middle of the river, and purposely ignited. The boys recognized the fact that they were all first-class April fools, and yesterday, although we knew that everybody was out to see the fire, you couldn't find a man, woman or child, over two years and a half old who would acknowledge that he had heard the alarm or was waked at all.

EARLY DAYS ON THE A. T. & S. F.

From *The Globe Live Stock Journal*, Dodge City, July 7, 1885.

The Santa Fe railroad was built from Newton to the state line in 1872; it had to be completed that far that year to secure their land grant. There was no money in operating the road at that time, west of Newton, and for several years afterwards. During the winter of 1874, one man had charge of the track from Larned to the state line; he used to go west on the five o'clock train in the morning, and return on the eight o'clock train in the evening. He rode on the platform of the rear car and watched the track, if anything wrong was noticed, the train was stopped for him to make repairs. During the summer of 1875, Lieut. Spencer, of the 17th Infantry, stationed at Fort Larned with a detail of five or six soldiers, went west every morning and returned in the evening as a guard for the train. At that time from Larned west, there was but one train a day each way, and that was freight and passenger combined. Larned was the end of the freight division. Mills and Newhall were the pas-

senger conductors from Newton to this city. Mr. Newhall generally layed over Sunday here and was the superintendent of a small Sunday school, we think the first to be organized in Dodge City. No Pullman cars were run west of Newton until the winter of 75-76, and then for some time the conductor of the train was also conductor of the Pullman. The summer and winter of seventy-four, Larned was an eating station for breakfast and supper. In seventy-five the trains stopped for meals at Kinsley. The company's eating houses were at Lakin, Emporia and Topeka. In seventy-eight and nine, Larned and Florence were eating stations, now they are Coolidge, Kinsley, Newton and Topeka, in this state. In '74-'75, the cattle shipped over this road were loaded at Great Bend, and that was the cattle town of the valley, and a lively place, with all the good and bad that Dodge City has ever had the name of having. There were no settlements south of the river, except an occasional cattle ranch, and the great herds came over the trail straight to Great Bend for shipment, or passed on north to the Kansas Pacific. The most of the herds going north crossed the river this side of Great Bend, but it made but little difference in those days as there was nothing to intrude on but the Indians and buffalo.

There have been so many changes in the past ten years in the Arkansas valley, that it is hard to recognize in the cities along the valley, the little stations of those times. There was not a house at Nickerson. Sterling was called Peace, and had but a small showing for a town; Great Bend was the biggest town in the upper valley; Larned was not a third as large as Speareville is now; Garfield, then called Camp Criley, had perhaps ten houses, and Kinsley not as many as Garfield. Speareville was known as the Dry Ridge with a water tank. Dodge City was about all on Front street; but in those days was really and truly a loud place. From here to the state line was next to nothing in the way of stations. Pierceville made a start, but the Indians filed a contest and ruined the town in the summer of seventy-four. Syracuse was first started by a colony from New York, who were mostly railroad conductors and others who knew nothing about skinning buffalo or hauling bones, and that was the only show for making a living, so the first settlers mostly returned to their old homes in the east, and Syracuse is now just taking the first boom they have had in ten years. In the fall of eighty-one, the railroad hotel was moved from Lakin to Coolidge, as was the end of the divisions, which ruined Lakin until this year, when the town began to build and is now going ahead as only a Kansas town can. There is a good deal of history connected with the stations in the valley, commencing with and including Newton to Granada, the first station in Colorado, about twelve miles from our line. The town of Coolidge is less than a mile from the Colorado line, which will give another town in that county a chance to make a good sized place, which as a matter of course must be the county seat.