

ROBERT JONES BURDETTE was born in Greensboro, Pennsylvania, July 30, 1844; he died at Pasadena, California, November 19, 1914. He graduated from Peoria, Illinois High School in 1861. He served with the Forty-Seventh Illinois Volunteers from 1863 to 1865, participating in the siege of Vicksburg and the Red River Campaign. Returning to Peoria, he engaged in newspaper work. March 4, 1870 he married Miss Carrie S. Garrett daughter of a prominent Peoria merchant. In 1872 he began contributing to the Burlington Hawk-Eye, in 1874 became managing editor and soon made a reputation as a humorist. He served in editorial capacity on the Brooklyn, N.Y. Eagle and was contributor to the Los Angeles Times from 1900 until his death. He was ordained minister of the Baptist church in 1903 and served as pastor of the Temple Baptist Church of Los Angeles from 1903 to 1909. He was famous as a lecturer and author.

Robert Jones Burdette

Railroad officials named our town "Burdett" for Robert Jones Burdette (1844-1914), a famous newspaper editor and humorist, lyceum lecturer, and Baptist clergyman whose popular writings for the Burlington, Iowa *Hawkeye* caused him to be called "The Burlington Hawkeye Man." Burdette was here at the time of the settlement of Burdett (1886) and was a member of the town company which laid out three sections of land in town lots. It is thought the final "e" of his name was dropped from the name of the town because of a clerical error by the Post Office Department in Washington, D.C.

Robert Jones Burdette had entered the Cooper Institute in New York in 1868 to study art with the avowed intention of "painting a great historic painting that was to cover a canvas as big as the side of a barn with buckets of paint and a name made famous signed in the corner." But New York did not seem to want any "great artist." At that time U.S. Grant was very much in the public eye, and Burdette tells in a letter of seeing "the distinguished smoker" airing himself on Broadway. He wrote: "General Grant left this city today and the closeness with which he has been watched during his stay, precludes any possibility of his having stolen anything." One Sunday evening while in New York, Burdette went to Plymouth Church to hear Henry Ward Beecher preach.

His letters while in New York shaped his newspaper career. After a thrilling adventure as a member of a filibustering expedition to Cuba where he, "the smallest man on the boat," was wounded by the Spaniards "the first time they fired," he returned to Peoria in 1867 and took a position as editor on the *Transcript*.

By the end of the year he had become city editor and his wit dominated the local page. The editor of the paper announced one day that if he wanted anything funny in his paper he would write it, so Burdette transferred his services and capital to the *Peoria Review* which went out of business in 1874.

He had only a ticket to Burlington and his sense of humor left when he began work on the *Burlington Hawkeye*. He was the city editor for several years, then managing editor, and after he began lecturing, a special correspondent. He found the *Hawkeye* a conservative old newspaper with a short subscription list and left it one of the liveliest, most influential papers in Iowa with readers in every state in the Union. Mr. Burdette's paragraphs on public and political life with its whimsical coloring, his shrewd and logical editorials, and his domestic sketches in which his penchant for burlesque, parody, punning, exaggeration, and ludicrous situations was given full play proved to be popular. Charles Beardsley, editor-in-chief, thought all printed mirth unseemly; and he chafed and fumed at the city editor's stuff. There was enough news in town without printing nonsense. But the rise in

subscriptions sent Mr. Beardsley back to his editorials; Bob continued in his genial foolery, and all Burlington was happy. What did anyone in West Hill care that a big fire was covered in only a paragraph, so long as there was a column recounting the experiences of Mr. Middlerib. Nobody missed not having a full report of the political rally at South Hill Square if "the Hawkeye man" had published the latest adventures of Old Bilderback and Master Bilderback. Middlerib and the Bilderbacks were creatures of Burdette's imagination and the story of how Mr. Bilderback couldn't find his hat is very entertaining but too long to print in our book. His lecture "The Rise and Fall of the Moustache," printed in 1877, is said to have been delivered nearly 5,000 times.

A report of Burdette's death was circulated in the late 1800's, but the Burlington Hawkeye with which the humorist was associated denied the rumor. Bob confirms the denial in the following letter to the editor dated June 14, 1879 from Bryn Mawr: "My Dear Waite: Like the true friend and loyal comrade you ever were, you do right to protest against my burial prior to the autopsy. I am indeed very much alive, not only so I haven't been dead even a little bit, not once. Could have been had I wanted to be, could be yet but I don't want. Maybe I ought to be even now. But as we make weekly confessions, 'We have left undone those things which we ought to have done,' possibly the rumor that I had gone dead grew out of the fact that I have learned to ride a bicycle, I say 'have learned not am learning.' Learned all in one lesson all by myself. Went out in the moonlight last Friday night to learn, having first locked my family in the house and forbade them to look out of the windows. Led my bicycle; a colt foaled in 1897. (Would give the name but for the fact that I had to pay for the wheel.) Will only say therefore in accordance with the ethics of our profession that it is not the wheel anybody else says it is. I held him by the withers right in the middle of the road and mounted without assistance. I dismounted in the same independent manner. Got on again and proceeded to break him to the saddle. Did I ride him the first time? Well, say! People had told me (liars of all ages and sexes) that I couldn't fall if when I felt that I was falling I would stick out my feet. I stuck out both feet and both hands and fell on my head. I fell on one side of that diabolical wheel and then on the other. I fell on both sides at once, I fell on top of it and underneath it and made 'dogfalls' with it. I fell between the wheels, I fell behind the hind wheel and before the front one at the same time and don't yet know how I did it. I fell and thrust both legs between the spokes of one wheel. I met a terrified man in a buggy and drove him clear off the pike, through Wheeler's hedge and I don't think he has come back yet. Every time I fell I slapped the palms of my raw swollen throbbing hands on the hard 'inelastic' pike, except the time I fell on my head. I fell harder with a greater varieties of landing than any man could fall unless he dropped out of a balloon and let on a load of furniture. I lost my confidence, my patience, my temper, my clamps, lamp, bell and reputation. I broke one pedal, the saddle and the or-

dinance against loud, boisterous and abusive language at night. I ran into everything in sight except the middle of the road. I sat down on everything in the township except the saddle. I scorched in a circle not fifteen feet in circumference until you could smell brimstone. I made more revolutions than a South American republic and didn't get ten feet away from where I started. I haven't been so mauled and abraded, so thumped and beaten, so trampled upon and pounded, so bruised and scratched since I left the army. 'But I can ride,' I don't say that 'I do' but 'I can.' Do I consider 'biking' good for the health? For the health of some people, I do. I don't see how a physician can bring up his family unless his children have something to eat but in my own case I reserve my decision. I will wait until I know whether I am going to die or get well. And do tell Brother David to keep his obituary notice on the standing galley until he hears from 'Slug Nine.' I don't believe I've got '30' yet although friends who have called to me break down when they say 'goodbye' and walk out of the room on tip-toe. But I wouldn't mind that if I knew what became of my shoulder blades the time I ran under the hay wagon.

Cheerfully yours.
Robert J. Burdette"

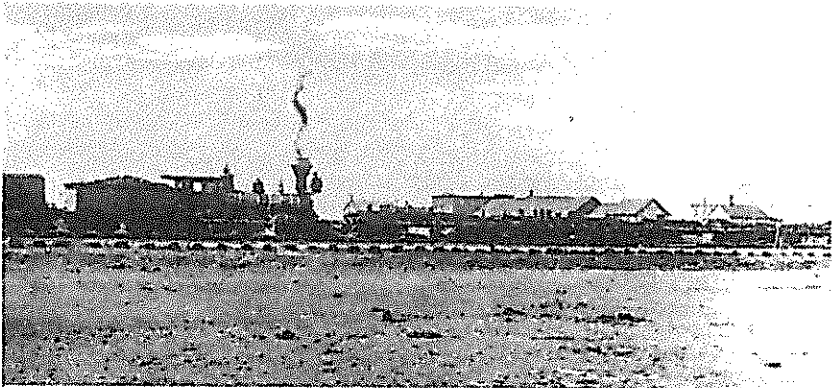
Fred C. Browne, going through some papers of his father J.C. Browne, found the following letter his father had received in 1887 from Robert J. Burdette. Mr. Browne at this time edited the *Burdett Bugle* and had evidently sent a copy to Mr. Burdette at Bryn Mawr, Pa. where the following letter was written July 27, 1887: "My Dear Bro. Browne: Many thanks for a copy of the *Bugle* the clarion notes of which shrilled all the way from Pawnee county and startled the echoes in this quiet land of Quaker colleges yesterday. I hope the railroad up the Pawnee valley is as certain to happen as the great eclipse, that there will be preaching in the Reformed Presbyterian church without a \$ of debt, that the new county with the *Bugle* for official paper is a thing of course. That Dan Notestine has as good a time when he goes to Larned as I used to have, that Huddleston will get big money for his wool, that Tuttle's wolf agrees with his chickens and that Father Disselcamp's flock is devout and orderly in its walk, and that all the Provines that went from Pennsylvania bear me in remembrance. May your circulation grow beyond the measure of an affidavit.

Yours fraternally,
Robert J. Burdette."

Fred C. Browne was an uncle of Mrs. Louis VanMeter and J. C. Browne, her grandfather. Huddleston had a sheep ranch north of Wondra's. Steve Tuttle with the wolf lived about three miles southeast of Joe Birzer's. Provine was a member of a lumber company, Mize and Provine.

When this letter was written, it was thought a part of west Pawnee and east Hodgeman counties would form a county with Burdett as the county seat. "Some visionary has proposed the possibility of Burdett the pretty and prosperous new town in the northwest corner of the county becoming a county seat by the formation of a new county." The scheme was to cut off a slice from each of the three counties whose boundaries met near Burdett, namely Pawnee, Hodgeman, and Ness. Every new town hoped to become a county seat, but when Burdett tries to snatch twelve miles off the west end, "we are sure she will get her hands slapped."

In February 1899 the Toledo Blade announced that Robert Jones Burdette, the humorist, was to marry Mrs. P.C. Baker, a very wealthy widow of Pasadena, California, who has been his life-long friend. March 1899: "Robert J. Burdette and Mrs. Clara Baker were married Saturday at Pasadena. The couple will live there where the humorist will fill the pulpit of the First Baptist Church. Burdette is reported to be very wealthy." He became pastor of Temple Baptist Church in Los Angeles, California, in 1903.



First Train into Burdett.

Railroad

The building of the railroad to Burdett from Larned created much excitement in 1886 and as in most western towns its coming meant a great deal to the people, and Burdett was no exception.

To bring the railroad to Burdett it was necessary that bonds be voted to provide the necessary funds and much conversation took place on the question. The editor of The Burdett Bugle waxed quite eloquent in the August 24, 1886 issue of that paper and headlined his report with "A GRAND TRIUMPH" "The Railroad Bonds Carry—by a majority of thirty votes"

"Tuesday morning's sun rose from the eastern horizon with an unobstructed light, and as he arose higher cast forth an oppressive heat, which was not alleviated a particle by the very mild breeze

which floated over the prairie. At eight o'clock a meeting was called at the school house where the polls were held and a judge and two clerks were chosen to serve on the election board.

"By virtue of the power in them vested by the law, W.E. Curtis, Justice of the Peace, and E.E. Blossom, township trustee, were ex-officio members of the board. After completion of the board the polls were declared open and the voting began

"They were informed of the glorious results which called forth repeated cheers and applause from all sides, rending the air with shouts and halloos.

"To further demonstrate the enthusiasm over the wonderful event a bonfire was built, which caused the confiscation of nearly every available goods box and barrel in town. They were all piled up in the street between C.R. Case's store and the Burdett House and ignited. All the time the fire burned a continual shout rended the air. Fire works were displayed in front of the Norris Brothers store just preceding the lighting of the bon-fire. The front porch of Norris Brother's Store is decorated with small flags, while the stars and stripes float majestically in the breeze from the Burdett House and C.R. Case's Store."

Enthusiasm was running high and The Burdett Bugle went on to state:

"Every day you delay in investing in property in and around Burdett you are losing money, as real estate is rapidly changing hands at an increasing value. Do not delay but come at once and see if this is not the most progressive, the most picturesquely located, and the most progressive town in Western Kansas. The Burdett of today is but a prospectus of the gigantic proportions of which this town will assume within a year. Come now, then before the real boom commences, which is beginning to be seen in the very near future . . . It is only a question of time, we say, and at not a very far distant day, when every acre of land in the wide and fertile Pawnee Valley will be worth from \$12 to \$15 per acre."

The people of Brown's Grove and Burdett arrived at an amicable agreement and joined forces to bring a railroad here and build a good live town. Two railroads were expected to come: the Chicago, Kansas, and Western to push west to Jetmore while the other road—the Denver, Memphis, and Atlantic would go through to the north, making Burdett the junction. (August 3, 1886 Burdett Bugle) "When the C.K. & W. comes through, needless to say that the property within ten miles of Burdett will double in value, and when the D.M. & A. arrives the value will triple."

How the line got here under Santa Fe control is not clear but the following item from the Bugle states: "Corporations are soulless. It may be so, but the Santa Fe railroad company does not lack for cheek. Since our people have built a nice little city for them to run to, they now ask that we build the road to the city. We cannot believe that the voters

of Brown's Grove township will be so blind to their own best interests as to aid the Santa Fe to bluff the D.M. & A. That is the road we need as it is competing with the Santa Fe."

July 1886: "Last week a party of sixteen surveyors arrived here and commenced setting grade stakes. They are in the employ of the Santa Fe company and report that the probabilities are that a line of road from this point westward by way of Brown's Grove will be undertaken within a very short time by the company mentioned."

Arrangements were perfected last week whereby all traces of a possible town site fight at Burdett have been removed. Arrangements of the parties interested in old Brown's Grove and Brown's Grove addition are to be moved into Burdett with all their business and unite in building up one good, live, prosperous town. Mr. Adams has had a force of men up there this week moving buildings onto the new site. Among those moved or to be moved are the Sabin Store building, the Case store, Dr. Butler's store, Rachner's store, the Blossom Hotel and nearly all the other buildings there. Mr. Seely owner of The Burdett House, has completed plastering thirty of the forty-three rooms in his rooming house and will finish the others as rapidly as possible . . . Alexander and Co., have moved their lumber yard over to the new town and a newspaper will soon be started under the management of A. Connell.

September 1886: The grade on the Pawnee Valley and Denver road between Larned and Brown's Grove will soon be ready for ties and rails.

Sub-contractor Rumsey of the force now at work on the Chicago, Kansas, and Western railroad between Burdett and Larned moved their camp here last Thursday and are now working on the grade of the western terminus of the road. Civil engineers of the company are surveying switches and stockyards here. Trains will be running into Burdett by the middle of next month or by November first.

October 1886: The Pawnee Valley and Denver railroad branch of the Santa Fe, now called the Chicago, Kansas, and Western is being built at a lively rate. About 200 men were run in here on the last Monday and put to laying tracks and at this writing they are at it at a lively rate and are several miles from town. We understand that they will have this road finished to Burdett in two weeks from now. Everyone in Larned is anxiously awaiting the announcement of the excursion to Burdett on the new railroad.

The Burdett Bugle reported that as early as October 17th all eyes were eagerly cast in the direction whence the wonderful construction train and its band of brawny laborers were to come, and a glimpse through the telescope brought them plainly to view in the neighborhood of Huddleston's sheep ranch some seven miles distant. It was then thought that the prospects of their reaching town by October 20th were infallible. The Bugle (October 26, 1886) told that it was not, however, until "last Thursday evening" that the irons were laid up to the Elm

Street crossing. At about twelve o'clock the next day a special (the first train of passenger cars to come to Burdett) carrying President W.B. Strong, general freight agent C.W. Smith, chief engineer A.A. Robinson and a number of other invited guests arrived.

The party expressed themselves highly pleased with the location of Burdett and the great beauty of the Pawnee Valley. They made the Bugle office a call and also the real estate office of Mr. D.Y. Sabin from whom they purchased several business and residential lots. The opinion of the railway company is that Burdett will become a good trading point. That is clearly indicated by the substantial station yard and fixtures they have built, with more building still to be done. The new yard is large and commodious enough to accomodate the trade of a city of four or five thousand inhabitants. In addition to the switch built just east of the town site to be used in connection with the stockyards; there are two long switches about a half mile in length, and a short switch all arranged in a most convenient manner. The fact that President Strong has purchased a number of lots also goes to show that he is interested in the welfare of the place and will therefore assist in making it a live city.

Viewing the whole situation, we can see nothing but a bright future for Burdett and the Pawnee Valley as almost every natural advantage favors us. We have a wide expanse of fertile country from which to draw trade and it seems as though all that is necessary is enterprise on the part of our citizens. In fact nearly everything rests with them. They have the facilities for advertising the country and by judicious management of business can build up a large western trade. At the completion of this new railroad we assume, to a certain extent, the former position of Larned—that of being the base of supplies for a large section of the country—and a rapid development of the Pawnee Valley and a substantial growth of Burdett will doubtless take its place in the near future. Burdett is the distributing point for Riverside, Birds Nest, and Hodgeman.

October 1886: Last Saturday a car was chartered from Larned by a few of our citizens for the purpose of attending a grand republican rally at the new town of Burdett. About fifty souls boarded the train here (Larned) including the band, the Coyote Club and the Republican county nominees. Robert Norris was chosen chairman of the meeting and came forward and introduced Judge Brown as the first speaker of the evening. Other speakers were Capt. Henry Booth, Nelson Adams, Capt. J.P. Worrell, George Dunn and W.C. Edwards.

October 1886: The new railroad at Burdett has put in some good switches and a neat little depot, also a turntable.

November 1886: The new depot at Burdett is now completed and the section house at this place is also completed. The building is thirty by forty feet and two stories high.

December 1886: The stockyards have been completed and are now ready for shipment of stock.

Elmer A. Mather has completed the drilling of a well for the railroad. The depth reached was one hundred fifty feet. At one hundred twenty feet there was eighty-five feet of water but as no water was found deeper the casing will have to be drawn back to the vein reached at the one hundred twenty foot level.

January 1887: (From the Burdett Bugle) "Many of our readers are anxious to learn what D.A.M. Jay Gould-Santa Fe is going to do about Burdett. A report from our committee on railroads is now in order and our citizens should devise some means of looking after the welfare of the town.

Concerning the line going on west of Burdett the following items were found in the Burdett Bugle, November 1886: A corps of surveyors have been to the west engaged in locating a line to Ravanna. They have spent some time in Jetmore.

January 1887: A proposition is now before the people of Hodgeman county to vote \$120,000 in bonds to the C.K. & W. railway. As soon as the road is built to Jetmore and in operation the company gets \$50,000 and when it is completed to Ravanna and in operation they get the additional \$70,000.

February 1887: The Jetmore brass band visited Burdett last Wednesday to accompany some Larned railroad men to Hodgeman county. It surprised the natives to hear the band and behold them in full force, we could hardly persuade our 'devil' that the millenium had not arrived.

"The railroad goes on West" The bonds in Hodgeman county for the Chicago, Kansas, and Western carried last week by a 200 majority! The road will be extended from Burdett to Jetmore by June it is thought.

April 1887: The track layers of the C.K. and W. are five miles west of Burdett.

August 1887: The track laying of the C.K. and W. railroad has now reached the town of Hanston, fourteen miles from Burdett and the people are jubilant.

November 1888: The C.K. and W. have ordered all of their track hands off the Burdett branch. This leaves no one to report broken rails, washouts, etc., and renders traveling somewhat dangerous.

September 1895: Mr. Kerfoot, the station agent here, is having a hard time getting the water tank to hold water. He has been keeping the engine going early and late and he hopes to get the tank (wood) soaked up soon . . . By October of 1895 he finally got the wooden tank soaked up so that it would hold water but it took a month of pumping.

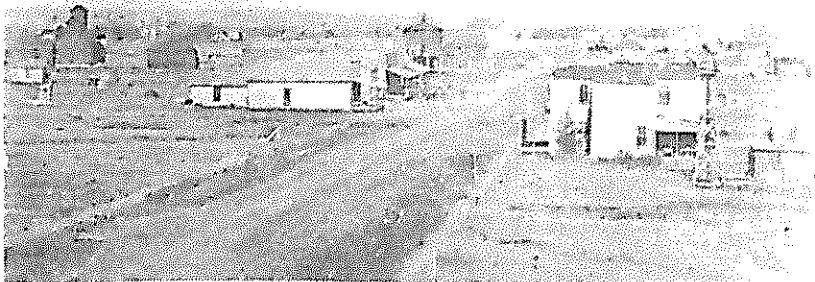
August 1897: Owing to the increased business of the Jetmore branch of the Santa Fe caused by the large number of shipments of wheat from Burdett, Rozel, and Sage, another brakeman was added to its train service. He is Joe Pixley of Larned.

January 1909: "There is a chap in Hodgeman county who is building a railroad, his name is Myers. No one in Topeka knows his

initials but the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe know what he is trying to do. There are no stocks or bonds. The promoter asks no cities, townships or counties to vote bonds as bonuses. No one knows anything about Myers.

He landed in Jetmore two years ago with four mules, a wagon, and a scraper and announced his intention of building a railroad to Garden City. He has four miles of right-away purchased and is leasing other land. With his scraper and mules he is doing this all by himself and has one half of the fifty-four miles to Garden City graded and surfaced ready for the ties and rails. He paid \$400.00 per acre for the land. He hires no help, just keeps plugging away. It seems he has plenty of money to buy the land, feed for his mules, and supplies. Little can be gained by questioning him but neighbors have learned he thinks a big railroad will come along and buy him out before he completes the line."

September 1913: "A railroad grading gang consisting of three large cookshacks, five or six wheel scrapers, and men and teams enough to handle them went through town. It was learned they were going west of Jetmore to grade for the Santa Fe and another gang was also coming. Maybe we will yet live to see this branch extended on west."



"TAYLOR BINDLEY RECALLS" The well to furnish power for the railroad in 1886 was dug by hand. Dirt was brought to the surface by buckets raised on a windlass and hand power. "How many of you ever saw the inside of this well?" he asks. It had four long flights of stairs that took you to the steam pump located on a platform about four feet above the water and those steps were always slippery and with no hand rail. Cold chills chased one another up and down our spine each time we had to go down which was every time the pump was started. Until a few years ago the agent had to do the pumping but of late years the railroad has sent a pumper from Dodge City.

The first water tank was of wood and we were never able to keep it full in dry weather because the top part was always drying out, leaving great cracks between the staves.

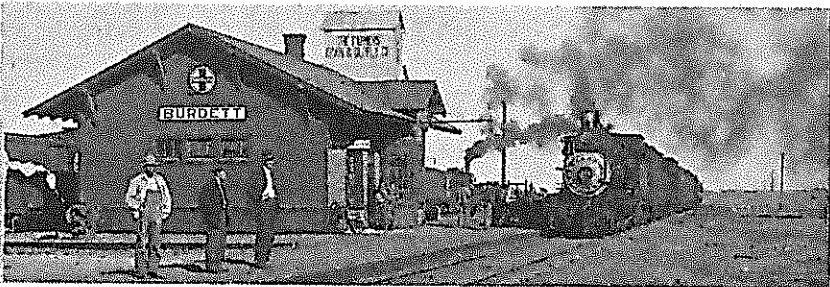
Another great attraction was the turntable used for turning the engine for its return trip to Larned. It was built on the order of a merry-go-round. The engine was run onto the table and the whole crew was required to operate the affair. Burdett was the end of the line for about a year, then the tracks were extended on to Jetmore so the turntable was the first to go. (Tiller and Toiler, April 1942)

May 1942: "The Santa Fe railroad has used steam for pumping water at Burdett since 1923. Now a windmill is being installed by Santa Fe workmen which will have a cement platform around the well. A forty foot tower with a twelve foot wheel is to be constructed."

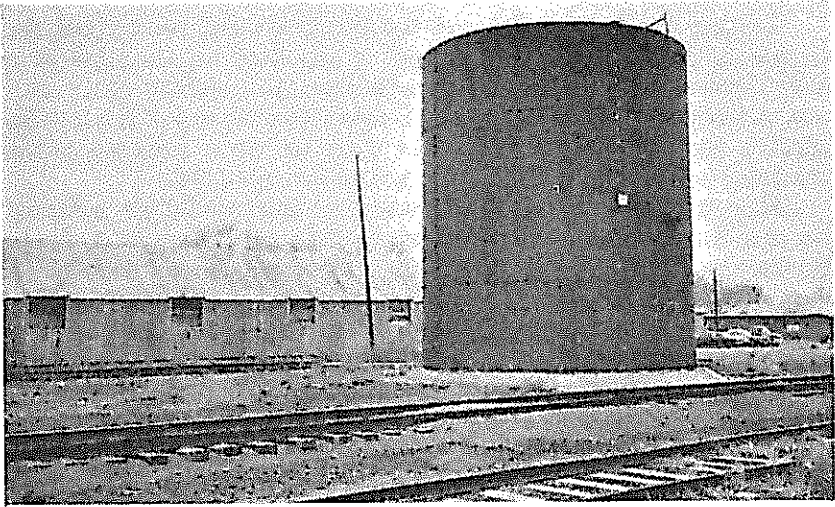
November 1947: "Friendship Train" Burdett has done its share on the Friendship Train movement. At a loading ceremony at the Farmer's Elevator in Burdett Wednesday morning, the joint collections from Brown's Grove, Sawmill and Shiley townships and Hodgeman county were loaded into a box car and a sign saying "Burdett, Hanston, and Jetmore gladly share with you" was attached to the side of the car. Burdett and vicinity has raised at last count \$2296.00 of which \$97.00 was raised by Burdett schools. Hodgeman county raised \$3237.00. This money was put together to buy 2,000 bushels of wheat to fill the car. The program was as follows: S.W. Humbarger, Master of Ceremonies; Marc Rucker represented the American Legion; and Albert Martin was chairman of the movement in Burdett. Burdett's High School Band marched and played a concluding number.

In 1950 the mail delivery by motor truck was initiated and train service was dropped to three trips a week. In 1954 train engines which had been powered by steam were changed to Diesel power. The Burdett depot agent was assigned in 1970 to man both the Burdett and Hanston depots.

The metal water tank was erected by the Santa Fe at Burdett in 1911 and it has served the branch line these many years. In the early 1970's the tank was sold to Dwight Eakin. Plans are in the making to use this tank for a round top shed. Ed Eakin now the owner has cut the tank in half from top to bottom and plans to move the half tank sides to cement side foundations east of the Delaney-John Deere place of business where lots have been purchased. The round top will be used by the Valley Hay Company.



Depot — Two Trains.



Metal Tower

History of Burdett

This history of Brown's Grove and Burdett was written by Miss Smart's English III class in 1932 from information gathered from the older residents who lived here in the making of this history. It is printed in the hopes that those who read it will learn facts they may not have known. It is printed with the permission of the class with the privilege of adding any events of interest they may have omitted. The history will be given serially until the entire story is printed. Velma Dovel is the author of the Preface and the history of Browns Grove was compiled by Jean Bindley and Zella Hendershot.

Miss Smart (Mrs. Verner Ditus) has spent approximately her entire life in the teaching profession. Her first position was here at Burdett in 1930. For the past several years she and her husband have been in Alaska where she has been teaching.

Velma Dovel (Mrs. Velma Mitchell) now lives in New Orleans, La.

Zella Hendershot (Mrs. Zella Winey) resides at Woodland Park, Colo.

Jean Bindley (Mrs. Howard Thompson) is of Burdett, Kans.

Preface

To the pioneers of Burdett, who have made this history possible, and to who assumed their own responsibilities, this history is dedicated.

The material has been gathered at a great deal of effort on our part, and if it will be of any benefit to our friends, we will feel amply repaid.

The "History of Burdett" is truly a colorful tale and demonstrates that facts are stranger than fiction. Some of the pioneers who helped make Burdett a good place in which to live have passed to their reward. But several real old timers, who came to this country when Kansas was young are still here and to them we owe our thanks for much of the material used here. We thank you for reading our history and beg you to pardon us for any mistakes we may have made.

Brown's Grove

Gaul was divided into three parts and Burdett was divided into but two, and it is the first part or the beginning that we write about first.

Browns Grove was the name given the first part. It was named in honor of Dr. Gallaton Brown, who staked out the town on his own land in 1876. This plot contained four full blocks and four half blocks and the full blocks were located in a straight line west from the street crossing the Pawnee bridge, all on the north side of the street running east and west past Rupright's and Thomson's. The half blocks were on the south side of the street and further west.

In 1878-79 this was the principal residence of the town. The main business street was the north and south street past the G.F. Mather home. On the west side of this business street was a hotel located just about where the Mather house stands. On north, still in the Mather yard was located the Case store and on yet farther was a blacksmith shop. On the east side was the Sloe and Goss general store.

On the south side of the residence street were three houses all of which have been moved away. It was on this side and near the center of the block the old town well was located.

This was a dug well about forty feet deep and water was drawn up by buckets and pulley. A frame about two feet high was built around the well, and this was a favorite place for traveling men to tack their Climax tobacco, and Arbuckle and Lion Head coffee signs.

On the north side beginning on the west were two residences, then a big livery barn owned by Frederick Ditus, then two more residences, including the Curtis house which is one of Browns Grove's original residences. The house now occupied by the Ote Keeton family was remodeled about 1879 by the late J.F. VanMeter and occupied by the family.

The first school was held in a dugout on the banks of the creek across from Rex Mather's in the Thomson property. A three months session was held in the fall of 1876 with Hugh Burnham, teacher. Mrs. Maude Mather is one who attended this school.

In 1877 a frame schoolhouse was built and located east of the Martin residence facing east. The first teacher in this building was Mr. Francisco, and among the pupils of these earlier days were Mrs. C.N. Rucker, G.F. Mather, Charles Mather, Herman, Polly and Rose Stohr, Nellie and Herman Pickard and Georgia and Lutie Brown.

The first religious meeting was held May 21, 1876, when a basket meeting was held on the creek and Rev. C. Martindale had charge of the services. Later Rev. Hockinsmith was resident minister here and in 1879 married Mr. and Mrs. John Notestine and Mr. and Mrs. George Robinson at a double ceremony. This was the first wedding in Browns Grove and the ceremony was performed in the hotel that was mentioned in the first part of the story. Mrs. Notestine is still living in Burdett. Church services were held in the schoolhouse.

Here was the meeting place of the settlers in 1879 at the time of the Indian scare, when word came that a band of Indians had escaped from the reservation and were headed this way, killing and destroying as they went. People came from far and near to old Browns Grove, where they waited in suspense.

As the crowd waited one woman asserted that the women as well as the men should be armed to better protect themselves. Along about midnight when an unusual noise was heard and all thought the Indians had surely arrived, this woman fainted, so all the weapons she might have had would have proved useless. Guards were posted outside at intervals and marched their beats with guns over their shoulders, as it was thought some military tactics should be observed. So it mattered not at all that there was absolutely no ammunition in town their bearing was that of real veterans. While the Indians came no nearer than Dodge City, yet it was a thrilling experience.

The first postoffice was in a small building on the north side of the street near where the Rupright house now stands and the first postmaster was Wm. Curtis. Later the office was moved into the northeast corner of the Sloe and Goss store and Edgar Curtis presided.

The outstanding business of Browns Grove was the Flour Mill built in 1879 by Wright and Johnson and was in operation about eight years. The mill was operated by water power and the remains of the old dam may still be seen. The old mill wheel is an ornament in the Rex Mather yard, whose farm is called the Old Mill Farm. About 1890 Jacob Besore rebuilt the mill and with Ira Minger as miller operated it for a few years. The building was razed by J.C. Browne and the material was used in building a house on his farm north of town.

About 1885 E.E. Blossom came to Browns Grove and anticipating the growth of the town, gave additional land, that is known as Blossom's first and second additions to Browns Grove. These additions included that part of town where the Searcy, VanMeter, and E.P. Bauer homes are located. This was laid off into town lots and until about two years ago part of the farms of J.C. Searcy and E.P. Bauer was still listed as town lots.

Along about this time the railroad was being surveyed out from Larned and it was expected it would be built to Browns Grove, but when it did come it left Browns Grove a half mile to the north. With the belief in mind that the railroad was coming that way several houses and one hotel, the Mable-Gur, was built in this section. The hotel was

located east of the Bauer home and was moved up to Burdett, where it was run as the Commercial House from 1893-1901.

With the coming of the railroad and its being built so far south, missing Browns Grove entirely was the beginning of the end for the original settlement. Many houses and business buildings were moved and this accounts too for the fact of the town being spread over so much ground. The story goes that R.M. Norris who had a general store in Browns Grove, conducted his business all the time his building was being moved to its new location in Burdett.

Browns Grove had no doctor, but several miles northwest lived Doctor Pickard, who attended the sick for miles.

Browns Grove Township was formed in 1878 and the first meeting was held December 7th. of that year. The board appointed by the county was S.O. Jackson, trustee. O.E. Dewey, treasurer. E.P. Robb, clerk. This board arranged for an election and the first officers elected in 1879 were: R.I. Sparks, trustee. O.E. Dewey, treasurer; and S.C. Olmstead, clerk.

The township at that time included Shiley, Sawmill, Keysville and Browns Grove.

Among the residents recalled and connected with Browns Grove history are these names: D.Y. Sabin, T. Brown, C.R. Case, N.O. Mather, John Notestine, G.K. Lee, George Perry, E.E. Blossom, F. Temple, E. Curtis, R.M. Norris.

Burdett's growth began with the coming of the railroad, a branch of the Santa Fe built from Larned. The first train arrived in August 1886. The town was named by railroad officials for Robert Jones Burdette, a famous writer and humorist. Why the final "e" was left off the town's name is still a mystery.

When the coming of the railroad was an established fact, a town company was formed, and the town plotted. The north boundary was the lot line running east and west north of the Irwin and Sturdy homes and extended four blocks east and west. This left a gap between Burdett and the old town and this was filled in by Sabin's second addition to Browns Grove. The new town south was laid off into lots for four blocks south of the railroad.

The Burdett Town Company had planned for a large city for they had acquired all of section 33, located south of the section line, and according to some of the older residents the entire section had been laid off into city lots.

What is now U.S. No. 50N was planned as the principle street and was named Broadway. This was a 100 foot street. First Avenue was a block north of Broadway, or where the Central Garage is now located, while second and third avenues were both south.

The streets running north and south were named for trees—beginning at the west Maple, Spruce, Elm, Locust and Pine. The main street of present Burdett was originally named Elm.

For about a year Burdett was the end of the railroad and during the construction of the road west, a turntable was used here. This was located west of the water tank. At this time old Burdett was at its prime.

Quite a number of business houses were here. Among them were two hotels, the Burdett House located on the corner where the meat market now stands. This was quite a good sized house containing more than twenty five sleeping rooms. Mr. and Mrs. E.G. Seeley were the first proprietors. This was destroyed by fire in about 1893. On the corner southeast facing north was the Mable Guy a smaller hotel that was moved from Browns Grove. This was later called the Commercial House and was conducted as a hotel until about 1912. In those days livery stables were a paying business and these were generally run in connection with a hotel. The stable with the Burdett House was located a block west about where Charles Moore's house now stands. The other was run by the late John Notestine who bought it about 1892 from the late G.K. Lee and E. Curtis. Both stables and the Commercial House were torn down. On the west side of Main street beginning at the railroad right-of-way was located a general store. This in later years was burned and the present brick building was put up.

A little south was another building containing three storerooms. It was in one of these rooms that J.C. Browne printed the Burdett Bugle, an eight page weekly newspaper. Mr. Browne put the paper out for several years from about 1888.

It was in the south room of the old building the Norris State Bank opened for business in 1906. The bank was conducted in this location until about 1908 when the present bank building was built. The late James Burns was the first cashier. This building was razed and the present postoffice occupies the site.

Next comes the Danford cafe which was built in Browns Grove in 1880 and was moved to its present location. This was the building occupied by R.M. Norris who conducted his business affairs while on the move. This has housed various business activities. The first bank in Burdett was in this building, conducted by W.I. Taggart for several years prior to his death in 1889. This building has been used as a residence, and for many years as a restaurant.

On the corner father south was the Burdett House, after this was burned a skimming station was located here and did a thriving business (about 1900) before the days of hand separators.

Across the street near the corner was the Case Store, run by the late C.R. Case of Macksville. This building was moved to Burdett where it was used for a number of years as a store building.

Further on near the P.J. Bauer residence was another building now occupied by a drug store. On the south side was the store building now occupied by the Bauer Store and the old Harter Hall originally located where the Bauer Garage is now. The hall was moved to the Bauer Store and converted into the store building. The hall was a two-

story building with a basement that once was occupied by a barber shop.

On the east side was first a billard hall, next another store building. On the corner the Commerical House. Across the street was the Asher building that housed a shoe repair shop. This building was moved to the Sieverling farm where it was made into barns.

Next came the real estate office of D.Y. Sabin. This is still standing and is occupied by John Patrick.

In this new country, building material was of great importance and there were two lumber yards, one facing north about where the John Bauer residence is located. The other was on the corner where the Lindas lumber company is located now. G.H. Mize was the head of this lumber yard.

The first church building was a Presbyterian church located where the present parsonage stands. This was sold to the Methodists and was struck by lightning and burned about 1896

It is a question whether there were more residents in Burdett in the boom days than there are now. It is possible but not probable as the population was larger. As happened in many of the frontier towns that sprang up with enough rural population to support them, the bubble burst and the town gradually died, people moved away, leaving empty houses and business houses.

Along about 1909 and 1910 a Commerical Club was organized by some ambitious men of the town and community with the idea of "boosting the town." The outstanding activity was the building of a residence and on this numbers were sold and in the fall of 1909 the house was raffled. Mr. St.Clair of Rozel drew the lucky number and won the prize. Later S.E. Notestine bought the property, and is occupying it as a residence.

In 1911 the grade school was built and in 1920 the rural high school was constructed. Burdett may not grow as fast as in the earlier days but we believe the growth is more stable and what is gained now, will be for the future.

Burdett now has the following business firms that contribute to the livelihood of its people. Five grain elevators, among them the Farmers Co-operative, which has made Burdett the wheat center for miles around. Two lumber yards, three garages, one service station, one meat market, three general merchandise stores, four oil and gas wagons, one grocery store, two drug stores, one confectionery, one hotel, one rooming house, one cafe, one bank, one doctor with up-to-date office, one blacksmith, a superior grade school, five teacher rural high school, one church and parsonage, one miniature golf course, two barber shops and one shoe shop.

BURDETT!

The New Town on the Pawnee River

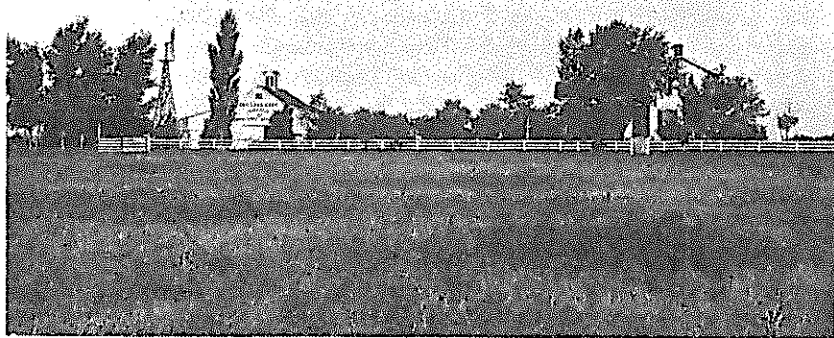
(The Successor of the Old Town of Browns Grove.)

Under patronage of the Prairie Valley & Denver and DeWitt, Memphis & Atlantic Railroads in Pawnee country.

BURDETT, BURDETT! BURDETT!

The greatest success yet in the way of new towns in Liberty has been achieved here in Pawnee country. The first event in the state in this manner, stock raising, business openings. The railroads in assured fact. One now being built from Fairbault and head south to and the other. Dwellers, what a town and the first in the month days. First come, first served. A fair field to all. No town started in Kansas within the last two years has the prospects of this new town. Now is the time to get in, as in every other town. For prices call on W. C. Edwards at Larned, or D. V. Sablin, Brown's Glaze, Kansas.

Half page Ad in June 1886 Pawnee Co. Newspaper.



Geo. K. Lee Town home.

George K. Lee

Kansas & Kansans

While most of the names of Burdett's settlers recorded as homesteaders in this frontier community, George K. Lee came into the country as a stockman. While farming had engaged his attention it has been largely incidental as an instrument in forwarding his enterprise as a stockman. He was one of the veterans of the industry and has done perhaps as much as any one individual in improving the standards of stock and animal husbandry in this section of the country.

Mr. Lee was born in Knox County Illinois, August 30, 1856. William A. Lee, father of George grew up near Rochester; New York, and was a pioneer in Knox County, Ill. He was a farmer and stock raiser also. His farm was near Galesburg. William Lee married Betsy Knowles from Avon, New York and to this union 2 sons were born, George K. Lee of Burdett and William A. Lee of Galesburg, Ill.

From the farm in Ill. George went to Kansas City where for several months he worked with the firm of Wood Brothers & Company livestock commission men. He left that city with live stock to deliver to Abilene, Kansas and in the course of his stay at Abilene he responded to the strong inducement to go to the western plains country and handle cattle on the open range country. Thus it was in September 1887, he came to Pawnee County and Browns Grove. The country at that time looked and presented a pleasant aspect to a practical cattle man like Mr. Lee. He located at the fork of the Pawnee and Buckner Creeks and in the spring of 1878 he had shipped out to western Kansas a car load of Shorthorn cows from Galesburg, Ill. These animals were all registered stock. Finding this region was too far west for the suc-

cessful handling of blooded stock he sold them and then began handling the southern stock brought in over the trails. Mr. Lee drove the Kansas-Texas trail from 1880 to 1884 with Mr. Curtis firm of "Lee and Curtis". Their principal work was handling Southern Texas horses of the Mexican pony breed. These horses they gathered together in bands and drove them north into the plains, selling them among the settlers all the way up into the Northern Kansas. The cattle that they handled were of the native Texas Longhorns. This proved a profitable business but was abandoned because the settlers were coming in so fast breaking the land and destroying the range. On leaving the trail Mr. Lee returned to Burdett, here he bought railroad land and began raising cattle. In 1884 he bought and brought into Pawnee County the first Galloway bull, which became the head of his herd. It was one of the first Galloways imported into this country from Scotland to Kansas City in 1883.

In 1886 Mr. Lee had accumulated several hundred head of cattle. These cattle he exchanged at a good price for land in Dodge County, Nebr. During the winter of the historic blizzard of 1884 he lost most of his stock. He always considered himself unfortunate in having saved so many from the storm since the burden of feeding them until spring and the price he finally received put him close to bankruptcy. During the profitable crop seasons up to 1893 Mr. Lee shared in the prosperity along with the other settlers but in 1893 another period of drought set in and continued for several years. Little was raised from the lands and taking it 'all in all' those who placed their dependence on stock were better off than the purely agricultural men. Throughout the years Mr. Lee continued in the raising of his Galloway cattle, in the meantime he developed a herd of full blooded registered cattle. Mr. Lee was one of Kansas outstanding Galloways breeders. His ranch to the west of Burdett was a splendid estate a focal point of the community. Mr. Lee handled cattle on the Kansas City market ever since he came to Pawnee County and was pointed out as a veteran stock man of western Kansas. His ranch and farming acreage number around 800 acres in Pawnee and Hodgeman counties. He built the pioneer livery barn of the village, and was in the livery business as long as he dealt in Texas horses selling it to John Notestine in August of 1887.

Mr. Lee served as an officer in Browns Grove Township, stockholder in the Farmers Elevator, one of the early directors of the Bank, was a member of the school board, and was an active member of the Masonic Order having joined when he was in Knox County, Ill. serving at one time as past master of his lodge. He was interested in politics as a democrat and a number of years he frequented the conventions of state and county and helped nominate congressmen from the Big Seventh District.

Mr. George Lee was married Oct. 12, 1880 to Miss Katie Bowman a niece of Col. Bowman of Larned. Mrs. Lee was born in Green County, Ill. and came to Kansas with her step father Thomas R. Brown and her

mother Sarah E. Saxon, Bowman, Brown. Mr. and Mrs. Lee have four children, three girls and a boy. Maude, Cora, and Eula, and Rex. (Mrs. Myrna Fox is Mr. George Lee's granddaughter, she and her husband Harold still live on the old Lee farm)

In the 1880 census, Hodgeman County, Marena Township, Kansas listed in household No. 55,

Brown, Thomas R. 48, farmer Ill., Va., Ohio.

Brown, Sarah E., 40, wife Ill., Oh., Ky. (Widow of George Bowman)

Brown, Julia, 16, dau. Ill., Ill. Ill.

Brown, Nonie, 6, dau. Ill., Ill. Ill.

Bowman, Katie, 20, step-dau. Ill. Ill. Ill (M 14 Oct. 1880 George Lee)

Cato, John N. 17, adopted, Ark., Ill., Ark.

Lee, George K., 24, boarder, stock raiser, Ill., N.Y. N.Y.

George A. Curtis

George A. Curtis was born in Burdett, Kansas December 31, 1880. His parents were Mr. and Mrs. William E. Curtis. He grew up and attended school in Burdett and also Kansas State Teachers College at Emporia. He taught school near Larned. At Burdett he served as postmaster for several years and then worked for the Lindas Lumber Co. In 1916 he moved to Ford, Kansas where he was manager of the company. He then went to Pratt where he was the assistant manager of the Pratt Co-op Exchange. In Bloom, Kansas he was manager of the Bloom Co-op from 1920 to 1930. In 1945 he moved his family to Dodge City where he sold life insurance until 1950 when he retired. Mr Curtis died in 1958 and was a member of the Methodist church. He was married to Miss Nellie Searcy at Burdett October 12, 1910 while he was postmaster there.

Mrs. Curtis was born in Springfield, Illinois January 5, 1885 and came to Kansas when she was 7 years of age. She grew up at Burdett and attended Bethany College at Lindsborg majoring in music taking piano lessons. She was active in the music department in church and Sunday School and has given piano lessons off and on since 1909.

The Curtis's have three children, Rolf H., John Edgar who died in 1959 and Beryl. Rolf married Elma Stewart and they have three boys, Beryl married Sam Freeland and they have two boys.

+ + + + +

June 1880: Dr. Charles Hardman is held in high esteem by the citizens of Browns Grove. He collects and stuffs animals and has quite a museum in his place of business.

+ + + + +

Farming

Kansas has been pictured as "The Greatest American Desert" but settlers who came to this part of the state found this to be false and had glowing reports of the richness of the Arkansas and Pawnee valleys.

Government land was being taken rapidly and railroad lands are selling faster than expected. The land in Pawnee county one half of which (every even section) is subject to Homestead and Pre-Emption entries the other half (every odd section) is railroad land valued from four to six dollars an acre and sold on eleven years time with interest at seven percent and a drawback or reduction of twenty-two and one half percent for improvements.

The opening of the spring of 1879 brings many people to the Browns Grove vicinity. Immigrants are constantly arriving and new buildings are dotting the prairies in every direction.

The past week a colony of twelve all of one family arrived from Pebble county, Ohio, the balance will follow soon. G.W. Harris the enterprising leader of the colony bought a quarter section of railroad last fall adjoining Dr. Brown's homestead near town and has already started building a house.

Mr. F.I. Scammon of Bureau county, Illinois another arrival brings with him a steam feed mill and implements and will start improvements on the half section north of town which he purchased.

Because of a drouth in the 1880's and early 1890's a great number of homesteaders gave up their land. Many went back east, but some stayed through the bad times, and some returned when the times and weather became better.

From the Brick school Valley Grove items in 1880. "There recently has been an interest of the people of the valley to secure all the cattle they can get. Stambaugh and Peters have added fifty head to their herd. Jacob Guth has added twenty-five or thirty, G.A. Curtis forty head, Notestine Brothers about thirty and N.O. Mather one hundred.

February 1886: Wheat market was 40 to 50 cents a bushel. Corn 26 to 36 cents.

October 1886: Mr. John Notestine desires to give notice that he has raised the price of choice steaks to twelve and one half cents per pound.

A man traveling through here from Illinois in February 1887 called at the Burdett Bugle office. He informed us that he had driven all the way and had taken notice of the country. On his whole trip he reported he had not seen as fine a country as the Pawnee valley.

Mr. David Clark who lives seven miles northeast of Burdett purchased a ten foot windmill (1896) with which to begin irrigation operations on a small scale this spring. The Clarks plan to irrigate their orchard and garden from a four inch pump drive by the mill. Water will be pumped into a pond fifteen by forty feet, four feet deep

and irrigation from it in the usual way most approved by practical irrigators.

Mr. Albert Phillips of Browns Grove four miles northeast of Burdett is also going to irrigate more extensively. His pond supplied by one mill will be helped by another a twelve foot steel mill and six inch pump. He purchased this pump in this city and in a few days both pumps will be throwing water into his pond. He irrigates on a larger scale than Mr. Clark and besides his garden and orchard he will grow cabbages, potatoes, and onions for market. His pond is also stocked with fine fish which may in the future become a source of considerable revenue.

These examples of progressive farming should be followed by every farmer who desires to make a pleasant and permanent home here. When less attention is paid to raising crops on a large scale and garden and orchard irrigation becomes practiced this in fact will become the ideal garden spot.

November 1898 land bargains: N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ of 34-22-20 six miles south of Burdett for sale \$400.00. (\$2.50 per acre) This is the Leroy Smith place. S.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ of 30-20-20 seven miles north of Burdett. \$600.00. (\$3.75 per acre) L.L. Steffen place.

August 1910 number 2 wheat sold for 88 cents per bushel. In December of 1911 R.M. Norris has five men drilling wheat for him. He is going on the idea "better late than never."

March 1912: the farms near Burdett are all rented that are for rent and persons are still looking for ground to put in spring crops. There is lots of land but it is held by men for speculation and they do not seem to want to improve it but merely rent it to someone living on a farm nearby. They wish the farmer to do his own work then put in the other fellows crop as best as he can. This results in not much profit for the landowner who sits in his office back east and "cusses" because his farm is not producing like others around it. "This is the remedy; Build a house on every quarter or half section and make the farm so a renter can live there. He could then farm as he would like to if he wouldn't have to wear his teams out on the road between farms. Some of you easterners try this. All we need is more people to better farm the land.

September 1912: Most everyone is making guesses about the disease that is killing so many horses. One idea is that flies are transmitting the fever from the carcasses of the stock left on the prairies and in the draws from last winter's death loss. A load of horses from Dodge City to Larned had three or four sick animals when they arrived and one was so crazed when it was turned out it ran down into the Pawnee creek and drowned. Another was down in the street south of the stockyards.

"Over 200 Dead Around Burdett"

There are at least eighty head of horses sick at this time in Browns Grove Township. Riverside in Hodgeman County has many cases. About five hundred head of horses belonging to people who trade at Burdett have died. Browns Grove's list of losses are as follows: Jacob Schadel 3, Steve Paris 2, Geo. Ehret 1, W.R. Uhland 3, John Friend 1, Charles King 1, Lester Garrison 2, Isaac Hartzel 1, Henry Helms 5, Wm. Magee 1, G.W. Rupright 1, G. Thell 3, Chas. Keller 5, Jas. Magee 1, J.H. Steffens 7, E. Griffith 2, T.E. Sloan 1, Sam Shafer 2, Mr. Miller on the Norman place 2, Jas. Cresson 2, Mrs. A. Fulton 5, A.O. Haymond 5, O.E. Moore 1, Russell Crozier 3, J. Ideker 1, J.W. Preston 10, C. Rogers 4, J.J. Riddle 3, R. Schusslee 2, J. Schoonover 1, John Maur 5, M. McBee 5, John Nelson 5, Robert Uhland 6, Warren Miller 1. C.A. Crawford 3, J. Pucket 1, H. Butcher 2, C.R. Haymond 1, Collins Browne 6, J.R. Hanna 1, J.C. Searcy 1, J.M. Hooper 5, Mrs. M.A. Bindley 1, E.A. Nichol 1, E.L. Floreth 3, Frank Curtis 1, Ben Packard 1, G.F. Mather 2, Geo. K. Lee 1, Jas. McCaffery 1, Philip Bauer 1, Carl Ditus 5, Howard Garrison 1, Henry Sieverling 2, Willard Laughlin 1, E.A. Mather 1, I.D. Mundy 1, Joe Archibald 3, Ed. Strait 1, Mrs. F. Garrison 2, E.S. Carlson 1, O. Smith 2, W.C. Edwards 2.

In Keyville Township. Chas. Ruff 2, Jno. Klein 7, Clarence Klein 1, R. Harris 4, Henry Schultz 2, Wm. Smith 8, Smith Bros. 5, Wallace Culver 2, F. Sieverling 4, Geo. Notestine 2, David Gibson 4, Nellis Olsen 1, Henry Webster 3, O.E. Lamport 2, Harry Klein 1, Chas. Speck 1, C.L. Converse 1, and Ole Olsen 2.

Pawnee County lost 1400 horses. The state 30,000 worth a market price of \$3,000,000.00.

1912: Ice harvest is on. G.F. Mather has just filled his new ice house. C.N. Rucker, Elmer Griffith and Bert Bradshaw have also filled theirs. Ice is exceptionally good this year nearly sixteen inches thick and clear as a crystal.

July 1913: E.A. Mather has been running a "hopper dozer" for the last two weeks and managed to catch forty bushels of hoppers in one day. They are stacked in wind-rows allowing them to cure after which they are sacked and will be used for chicken feed next winter.

September 1913: Really has "Cured Hoppers." Elmer Mather has cured hundreds of bushels of grasshoppers for chicken feed. A total of one hundred and ten bushels was caught in his hopper dozer but he has only kept five or six two-bushel sacks of the insects. These have been stored in a granery and he will try them as chicken feed next winter. The odor of the pile of hoppers at first was rather offensive but as they dry they now smell no worse than a pile of oil cake. Only a slight taint of kerosene which was used in the dozer remains. The chickens eat them readily even now when milk is mixed with them even though live insects are available for the catching. Mr. Mather feels they will relish them greatly when cold weather arrives.

September 1913: Much interest is shown here in farm irrigation and several plants were visited. The oldest one was E.A. Mather's, "The Old Mill Farm," where water is pumped out of the Pawnee. He waters twenty acres of alfalfa. Fifteen acres of sugar beets will make a good average in spite of drouth, heat, grasshoppers and blister beetles. One fourth of an acre is in sweet potatoes which promise a record yield. Their garden is also irrigated and a large patch of celery is being grown. A.O. Peek manages the Mather plant and he left for Colorado where he works in the sugar factory this fall. Guy Mather (a brother) had twelve acres under irrigation on the opposite side of the creek and he pumps from the Pawnee also. Grasshoppers and beetles got away with his crops this year. Further west on the creek G.K. Lee pumps from a well put down just on the south bank of the Pawnee but extends below the bed of the stream into the underflow. This plant was not started until this summer and Mr. Lee offered Mr. Dan Delp all the feed he could grow on eighteen acres if he would put down the well and run a ditch to another field about a half mile away. The eighteen acre tract was seeded to sorghum five weeks ago, has been irrigated several times and will yield six or seven tons to the acre. Mr. Lee has lived in Burdett since 1877. George Bindley has a new plant just west of Mr. Lee's and takes water out of the Pawnee.

January 1914: A special program on irrigation is being planned. The people of this community are indeed interested in this phase of farming. Professor Walker a state expert on irrigation will speak. Lee Gould of K.S.A.C. will also address those in attendance. Local speakers on the program will be Fred Browne, J.C. Browne, Dan Delp, J.R. Hanna and C.N. Rucker.

July 1914: L.H. Allen and Albert Martin were in Larned last Friday to meet a bunch of harvest hands that another Burdett man had brought in on the evening train. He started with about fifty workers but arrived here with only twenty two. Quite a number of farmers were at the train to get hands but the Burdett men held onto their men and got them started for Burdett in automobiles at once. Over one hundred hands are needed at Burdett and the west end of the county is short of help.

W.C. Edwards and his son W.C. Jr. of Kansas City, Mo. are here superintending the erection of two cement graneries on their farms. At this time (August 1914) C.F. Ditus lives in the town property which is now the Louis Ellis home and Clarence Myers is on the Edwards country property that is now the John Thompson home. The idea for the graneries was patented by W.C. Edwards Jr. and is being tried out on these two structures. They are constructed of metal lathe plastered inside and out with cement. Both graneries are still standing at these locations.

The following poem was published in a 1915 paper and it shows that the person who wrote it had surely seen great changes even then.

"I Remember"

I remember! I remember the house where I was born,
The little window where the sun came peeping in each morn.
You'd hardly know the old place now for Dad is up-to-date
And the farm is scientific from the back lot to the gate.
The house and barn are lighted with bright acetylene,
The engine in the laundry is run by gasoline.
We have silos, we have autos, we have dynamos and things
A telephone for gossip and a phonograph that sings.
The hired man has left us, we miss his homely face,
A lot of college graduates are working in his place.
There's an engineer and fireman, a chauffeur and a vet.
'lectrician and mechanic oh, the farms run right you bet.
The little window where the sun came peeping in each morn
Now brightens up a bathroom that cost Dad a car of corn.
Our milk maid is pneumatic and she's sanitary too
And Dad gets fifteen cents a quart for milk that once brought two.
Our cattle came from Jersey and the hogs are all Duroc
The sheep are Southdown beauties and the chickens Plymouth Rocks.
To have the best of everything that is our aim and plan
For Dad not only farms it but he's a business man.

September 1919: "Elmer Griffith's Silo Exploded." The new hollow silo on the Elmer Griffith farm north of Burdett (now the Lewis Blocher home) exploded with a loud report about ten o'clock Sunday night completely wrecking the silo and causing a loss of several thousands of dollars unless the company replaces the structure. The silo was a new one fifty five feet high, sixteen feet in diameter and had a three hundred ton capacity. It had been filled three days earlier with seed cane and no less than eight hundred to one thousand bushels of seed alone was in the silo. Dave Blakey had been working around the silo. The house near-by was shaken by the explosion and hardly a tile of the silo was left intact with pieces scattered in all directions. The origin of the explosion was in the center and northwest part as about fifteen feet of silage was left standing on the east side. This is the first known such accident in the county and it is believed spontaneous combustion or expansion of gases created by the silage was the cause. A later item appeared saying: C.W. Coats, President of the American Tile Silo Company of Kansas City was here and arranged to replace the silo at no cost to Mr. Griffith.

He stated the accident was caused by weak masonry and this is the second such occurrence for the company. Tile for the silo is on the way and cost of such a structure is one thousand dollars. Bet the silo on the Louis Blocher farm is the one replaced in 1919.

January 1920: E.L. Floreth sold his farm to Mary Nuckolls of Hutchinson for one hundred and ten dollars an acre, up to this time this is the highest price paid for a section of land in this area. The sale included the residence, irrigation plant, buildings and elevator. Mr. Floreth's pumping plant was started on this farm northeast of Burdett in 1913. The well is eighty five feet deep, had fifty four feet of water and it was thirty one feet from the surface to the water. Steel casing was installed and sixteen hundred gallon per minute has been pumped in a test run. This was one of the first wells in this part of the Pawnee Valley.

Luther Fine (in 1921) is burning corn for fuel. Corn is 35 cents a bushel and coal is \$15.00 a ton.

For a few years sugar beets were grown in this area and a beet dump was in operation. It was located across the street east of the Gano office under the management of S.C. Huffman. Beets were grown here as far back as 1914 when Elmer and Guy Mather, Charles Hensen and the Bindley Brothers had acreages.

M.O. Chaffee was field man for the Garden City Sugar Beet Company in 1921. It was stated at this time that the present price of sugar beets will be \$10.00 to \$10.78 per ton. This is on a basis of a 6 cent price for sugar. If sugar should decline the price would be \$7.71 to \$7.91.

In 1927 some ideas on the control of bindweed were aired. One method tried out by Fred Browne was an attempt to drown the weed. After having the patch under water for three weeks it recovered and was back all the stronger. Others said they had good results by "hogging" it out especially where the area was small. The application of salt to the land will rid it of bindweed and all vegetation and completely ruins the land for years after.

February 1932: Pawnee county farmers ordered two thousand bushels of seed potatoes. This will plant approximately one hundred acres. Bill and Charles Nuckolls northeast of Burdett were the largest buyers ordering four hundred and fifty bushels. The seed was priced to the farmers at \$1.05 a bushel. The Nuckoll brothers as they are called farm diversified crops.

Many of us can remember the watermelons, canteloupe, onions, potatoes, and other vegetables tried by them during their farming years.

Sugar beet acreage in 1933 was raised from 250 acres to 450 in the bottom lands of the Pawnee valley at Burdett.

It was this year in the summer that a terrible hailstorm occurred in this area. Ten days after the storm people were making ice cream from the hailstones.

March 1950: O.W. Lynam was elected president of the State Livestock Association at Topeka.

Farming has changed to big business since the early years. Hundreds of acres are now under irrigation from circle sprinkler systems to the practice of flooding. Because of so much irrigation the

water level has dropped and the Pawnee creek runs only in flood time. The creek bed has filled with silt to a great extent and dead trees pile against bridges and county road crews have to clear these at least once a year. Most of the American Elm trees along the creek have died from the Dutch Elm disease which has traversed Kansas for the past several years.

Alfalfa, wheat, corn, maize and ensilage feed are the main crops grown here in the 1970's. Feed lots for fattening cattle have become commonplace and a few farmers have their own feed lots and utilize the grain and feed crops grown by marketing it through their feeding program. The small feed lot north of Burdett was started in the 1930's. A large commercial feed lot was built between Burdett and Hanston by eastern Kansas backers and began operating in 1973. This has become a good source for farmers who have grain, alfalfa and feed for sale. The severe drop in cattle prices has put cattlemen and feed lots in a pinch and much money has been lost, so commercial cattle feed lots are not being filled very fast.

The Pawnee Watershed Joint District No. 81 was organized in 1968 the object to make retention dams on upper streams and tributaries to help stop erosion, and flooding downstream. Ninety percent of the cost of these dams located on private property is financed by the federal government and watershed district and ten percent by local residents benefited in the community.

District 81 is a joint district composed of seven organized sub-watershed districts. Kansas Statutes allow only 250,000 maximum acres in each district. These seven subwatershed's organized simultaneously due to interest throughout the natural Pawnee River Basin boundaries to control flooding and conserve water supplies in the 1,583,000 acre joint district.

Nine counties are part of this district Hodgeman, Pawnee, Finney, Lane, Ford, Gray, Edwards, Ness and Rush.

The Pawnee Watershed is the largest in the United States. There is one larger organized district in Canada.

Six dams have been completed, four more construction contracts have been approved and five dams are in the detailed and advanced planning stages.

There are four towns in the district Rozel, Burdett, Hanston and Jetmore and all of these towns voted to be included in the district.

There are ten substantial tributaries in the district, major ones are Sawlog, Buckner, Sawmill and Pawnee. Others are Duck, Elm, Hackberry, Plum, Guzzlers Gulch and Dry Creek.

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February 1887: Mr. J.E. Starr from New England is stopping at the Burdett House. He is a brother of Will Starr and helped lay out Blossoms addition to our town last summer.