

Indian History

Colonel Custer was in charge of Fort Riley in October 1866 and was there until March 27, 1867 when he left to join General Winfield S. Hancock (Commander of the Department of the Missouri) in his expedition from Fort Harker against the Indians west of Fort Larned.

Hancock reached Fort Harker April 1, 1867 and remained there until April 3rd. The command moved to Fort Larned with about two thousand men and the following organizations: Seventh United States Cavalry, General Custer's 37th. United States Infantry, Captain Parsons, and an engineer corps commanded by Lieut. Micah Brown. General J.W. Davidson accompanied the expedition as inspector general. Wild Bill was attached as a scout and a number of Delaware Indians accompanied the command in the capacity of scouts, guides, and interpreters. The troops were under the command of General A.J. Smith and they arrived at Fort Larned April 7. Custer arrived two days later.

From Kansas Historical Collections Volume 17 the following is copied. 'Col. J.H. Leavenworth, United States agent for the Comanches and Kiowas, and E.W. Wynkoop, United States agent for the Cheyennes, Arapahoes and Apaches of the plains, joined General Hancock, and he acceded to Wynkoop's request to have a council with the Indians there.

Hancock's force moved on April 13 to a camp twenty-one miles west of Fort Larned, where on the 14th a conference was held with the Cheyennes, Arapahoes and Kiowas. The understanding was that the Indians were to remain in their villages during the night, but it was reported that all of the chiefs and warriors were saddling up to leave and evidently did not intend to return. General Hancock then ordered Colonel Custer, with a portion of the Seventh Cavalry to surround the villages and if practicable to prevent their departure. This village was thirty-one and a half miles west of Fort Larned. It was on the north branch of the Pawnee river, where the Indians had one hundred and thirty lodges in a grove. The village was deserted and on April 15 Custer started in pursuit of the Indians. This pursuit lasted several days, but he was finally compelled to give it up on account of lack of forage for his cavalry. After General Custer left in pursuit of the Indians, General Hancock, on April 19, 1867, ordered Col. A.J. Smith to destroy the deserted Indian village!

The Cheyenne tribe had lived in the Minnesota country of the Santee Sioux but gradually moved west and acquired horses. The northern Cheyennes shared the Poudre river and the Big Horn country with the Sioux. Dull Knife (in his 40's) was an outstanding leader of the tribe. To his own people he was known as Morning Star but the Sioux called him Dull Knife.

The southern Cheyennes drifted below the Platte river into Colorado and the Kansas plains. Black Kettle of the southern branch was chief. The younger men called Hotamitaneos or Dog soldiers were more inclined to follow Tall Bull and Roman Nose.

Black Kettle and Lean Bear went to Fort Larned in the spring of 1864 to trade. The year before the two chiefs by invitation had visited the Great Father Abraham in Washington and they were sure the Great Father's soldiers at Fort Larned would treat them well. President Lincoln had given them medals to wear on their breasts and Col. Greenwood presented to Black Kettle a United States flag and a huge garrison flag with white stars for the thirty four states. Col. Greenwood told him that as long as that flag flew above him no soldiers would ever fire upon him. Black Kettle was very proud of his flag and when in permanent camp it was always mounted on a pole above his teepee. This promise proved untrue as were many other promises the white men made to the Indians.



Black Kettle



Pacer (Chief) Kiowa-Apache

In the terrible Sand Creek massacre of the Indians by the U.S. Soldiers, Black Kettle escaped with his life but his wife was injured. This loss to the tribe resulted in his rejection as chief and he with a remnant of the tribe moved south. About three years later he and his wife were killed by General Custer and a cavalry troop at the Battle of the Washita.

The following is from "Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee."

'Although wrongs have been done me I live in hope. I have not got two hearts . . . Now we are together again to make peace. My shame is as big as the earth, although I will do what my friends advise me to do.

I once thought that I was the only man that perservered to be the friend of the white man, but since they have come and cleaned out our lodges, horses, and everything else, it is hard for me to believe white men anymore! Matovato (Black Kettle) of the southern Cheyennes. 'We were once friends of the whites, but you nudged us out of the way by your intrigues, and now when we are in council you keep nudging each other. Why don't you talk and go straight and let all be well?' Matavato (Black Kettle) to the Indians at Medicine Creek Lodge. From Major Henry Inman's Indian History

'Near where Browns Grove is located, under the grateful shade of the thick clumps of timber, about forty wigwams were irregularly scattered. On the hills a herd of two or three hundred ponies were lazily feeding, guarded by a half dozen superannuated squaws. A troop of dusty little children were chasing the yellow butterflies from the now dying sunflower stalks that conspicuously marked the broad trail to the river. This beautiful spot was selected by Black Kettle, chief of the Cheyennes for his winter camp. A few weeks previously he had moved from Canada and settled with his band to hunt on the Arkansas bottoms and to watch his enemies the Pawnees, who claimed the same ground. Year after year the most sanguinary battles between the two tribes had been fought.'

Apart from the wigwams near the edge of the stream was the magnificent lodge of Yellow Buffalo, the war chief of the Cheyennes. This lodge was formed of beautiful beaded robes and porcupine quills and it's interior was graced with a long row of scalps! (Trophies of his fame as a great warrior.)

West of Burdett on the Rucker, Bindley and Nichol farms arrowhead hunters have found two different kinds of arrowheads leading one to believe that there were two tribes encamped there.

June 1932: "Wind Uncovers Big Beds of Indian Relics." 'Great beds of buried Indian relics were uncovered this spring west of Burdett by winds which removed the surface soil from wheat fields. Many artifacts have been found on the site of an old Indian village on the E.A. Nichols farm one and one-half miles west of town. The adjoining farm on the east (Long Hill Farm) owned by G.W. Bindley has produced some relics but the best hunting has been on the Nichol place.

Arrowheads, spear points, tomahawks, broken pottery, bone beads and grinding rocks have been exposed by the dry weather and wind.

The latest and richest find is in a field east of Burdett. Those who have searched there have been rewarded with relics in a good state of preservation. This field also seems to have been the location of an Indian village. Since the word of this discovery many have visited the area and have been rewarded with nice curios.

Our only Indian scare in Browns Grove was in 1879. A school house stood on the lot where Mrs. Ray Miller's home is located. This schoolhouse served as a Church, School, and Meeting place for the early community. It was at this place the settlers met in 1879, the time of the Indian scare. Word came that a band of Indians had escaped from the reservation and were heading this way, killing and destroying as they went. People came from near and far 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 and at intervals 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. The Indians came no nearer than Dodge City, yet it was a thrilling experience.

"The Fighting Cheyenne"

Legend, Facts and Fiction by George W. Bindley

"On the ashes of my campfire you have built your homes." Go back and visualize if you can the surroundings of Burdett one hundred years ago. The Pawnee and the hills to the Southwest remain the same, the valley east and west covered with grass on which thousands of buffalo grazed; no sign of human life except the tepees of some wandering tribe of Indians. This was the hunting ground of the Cheyenne. They followed the buffalo north in the spring and south in the winter. They made camp wherever it suited their fancy and moved only when grass for their ponies became short. Two camp sites, one east and one west of Burdett, are still visible. They always built camp in shape of a horse-shoe—with the open part always to the east.

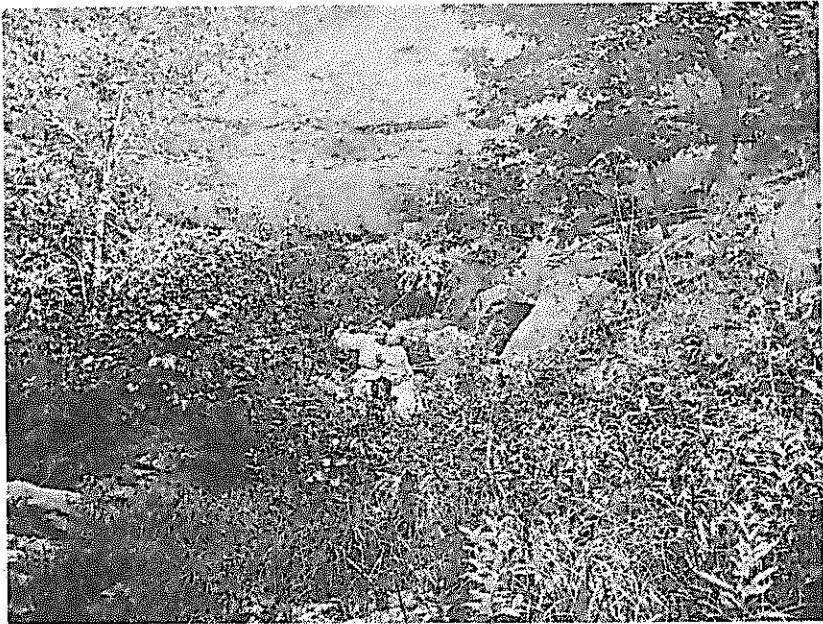
Legend tells us "Lover's Glen" was named so by the Cheyenne camp west of Burdett. It seems a pair of young lovers quarreled; the young braye left, and that night the maiden disappeared. In the morning they found her body at the bottom of a canyon about one-half mile southwest of camp. She had jumped from the high wall on the south side of the glen and was dead. Her body was buried on a small rocky knoll about one-half mile west of the glen. This was just south of the A.T.&S.F. railroad track and last year the new highway almost touched the grave. However in the early 80's someone robbed the grave. As was the custom all belongings were buried with the body, and this has been the place where lots of beads and other trinkets have been found.

Since the coming of the white men this "Lovers Glen" has been visited by young and old who have carved their names and dates. The oldest date recalled was that of "Wild Bill Hickock-1864."

Since the coming of the railroad the glen has been changed yet many names can still be seen dating back to the 80's. In the 1860's a battle was fought just east of Burdett between the Indians and U.S. soldiers. One soldier was killed and was buried on the land now owned by J.C. Searcy.

"Our trails have become your highways"—not quite but near. The old Indian trail followed the Pawnee creek on the south side to Burdett. Here on the place owned by G.F. Mather the trail crossed to the north side and came out on the level east of the house now occupied by Irving Brownlee and from there west and north following the Pawnee fork.

The trail still leads west, and west have gone the one's that made the trail. They left no record but the ashes of their campfires tell us that they passed this way.



Lovers Glen
Edith and Vern VanMeter

Dr. Gallatin Brown

Dr. Gallatin Brown, a Civil War Veteran obtained a tract of land along the Pawnee on which there was a large grove of beautiful ash trees. He got his land from the government and staked out the town called Browns Grove. He built a low water toll bridge of ash logs which was in those early days the only bridge west of Larned. There were many travelers wishing to go north and west across the bridge. He was Pawnee county's first coroner and in January of 1879 his name is in the proceedings of the board of county commissioners of Larned, Kansas. An expense for room rent for election was allowed to him. (\$2.50). He had ad's in the Larned papers of his business and evidently lived there before coming to the area of Browns Grove.

January 1879: "Dr. Brown of the Grove has gone to Mt. Pleasant, Burlington, and Fort Madison, Iowa to conduct an excursion to Kansas."

While here he occupied the Sabin house (later known as the Geo. K. Lee home) until as a result of some transactions his presence in the community became distasteful and he thought it better to seek a home elsewhere.

Dr. Brown was a rather noted character of the locality. He sold railroad land, practiced medicine and also preached all over this section of the state. (From Kansas and Kansans.)

His last entry was a power of attorney from his wife Sarah to him, signed November 18, 1878. This was the last record of him owning land recorded here. (Register of Deeds office. Larned, Kansas)

October 1877 the following item was run in the county paper. "\$15.00 Reward. Estrayed or stolen a dark brown mare both hind feet white, about eight years old and weighs near 1100 lbs. and snug built. The above reward will be given for her return to Dr. G. Brown at Browns Grove, Pawnee county, Ks."

"The Folly of the settlers that went west." The above is the caption of a slanderious article that has recently appeared in the Topeka Commonwealth paper said to have been dictated by Dr. Gallatin Brown of Brown's Grove. Dr. Brown had made a trip to Topeka to get help for the settlers in Ness, Hodgeman, Lane, Buffalo and Pawnee Counties. The counties were in drastic condition and 4,500 people were in actual suffering. He had gone to Topeka to interview the Governor and others with a view of calling an extra session of the legislature to provide aid for the citizens on the frontier.

From the Topeka commonwealth newspaper of July 3, 1879 it read "A mass meeting was held at Browns Grove in Western Pawnee County last Saturday and a committee was appointed to see the officers of the railroad company and the Governor. The chairman of the committee is Dr. Brown a well known citizen of that place. The settlers have discussed various ways of help and have come to a plan of calling an extra session of legislature and have asked the railroad company to ship food free or at reduced rates.

We take it that the Governor will not call the legislature together. If the legislature should be called together we would favor a "Patrol Guard" be stationed along the Eastern border to keep professional beggars from leaving the State."

In the Larned Press July 1879, an editorial spoke that this article did not benefit Pawnee County as they could take care of their own and the Missouri people." I told you Kansas was not an agriculture state but a desert." They said of Dr. Brown if we can not stop this slanderious self-appointed lunatic then let the Probate Court take this matter in hand and provide a place where people of this caliber will be taken care of and be less dangerous to our community.

July 1878—Dr. Gallatin Brown travels to Boulder Colorado for the Eclipse of the Sun.

July 29th, 1878 Dr. G. Brown has returned from the mountains he reports a cloudless sky for the eclipse and a large crowd of scientists from all parts of the country at Denver and outlying towns to observe the same.

Browns Grove

The following information was found in the Historical book of Pawnee County marriages from 1873 to 1892. The biographical sketches of Browns Grove residents were also found in this publication but some history has been added to them.

"Browns Grove is a thriving inland village in the township of the same name about two and one-half miles from the west line of Pawnee county. It is beautifully situated on the banks of the Pawnee River. This village was platted in 1876 on Sec. 28, Twp. 21, Range 20. It is surrounded by a very fine farming country. Some of the finest yields of wheat ever known in Kansas have been harvested in this part of the Pawnee valley."

Biographical Sketches

T.H. Barrett, stock raiser, Sec. 24, 21, 21. P.O. Browns Grove. He has 480 acres of land and now has eighty head of cattle. The firm name is Barrett and Roche. Five years ago in 1879 they began with one cow and a yoke of oxen. They began farming and bought what cattle their scanty means would allow. After farming two years they never realized as much grain as they sowed in the ground. Mr. Barrett was born in Honesdale, Wayne County Pa., March 25, 1850 and was raised in his native county. He lived some time in the state of New York. In 1878 he married Mary E. Roche a native of Canada.

++++

C.R. Case, dealer in general merchandise, Browns Grove opened trade in November 1881 and carries an average stock of about \$2000.00.

He first located on a farm about five miles west of Browns Grove in 1877 and followed agricultural pursuits until he opened trade. He was born in Duches county, New York, February 6, 1844 and was raised in

his native county. In 1869 he went to New York City and engaged in trucking until he came to Kansas. He was married in May 1865 to Miss Ann Russell of the same county N.Y. They have four children: Lillie, Ella, Charlie, and Florence. Mr. Case was a member of the Browns Grove School board.

He died at his home in Macksville, Kansas, October 19, 1925. His paternal ancestry is connected with the Quakers who settled in Connecticut in the early 17th century. His maternal ancestry is early Dutch settlers of New York. Various were his occupations; farming, storekeeping, and railroading until 1870 when the family moved to New York City where he was employed by a street car company and finally purchased a dray business.

In December of 1877 he came west and settled on a farm in Hodgeman county where he raised sheep. Mrs. Case and the children came in February of 1878. Mr. Case purchased a general store in Browns Grove (now Burdett) in 1881 and was in that business until 1909 when he moved to Macksville. He also owned a steam laundry in Larned, was sheriff of Pawnee county from 1894-1898, postmaster at Burdett and a member of the school board while in residence here at Burdett and Browns Grove.

While living in Hodgeman county he furnished a building and wood (which he chopped) for fuel so his children and the neighbors children could have schooling.

Mrs. Case died at the home of a daughter at Macksville in 1934 at ninety-one years of age.

In an October 1925 paper the following item about Mr. Case is reprinted: "He was a man of courage and was a good sheriff. An incident occurring at the old home neighborhood proved this. He and two men were taking an early morning walk when a ruffian, whom one of the men had warned a certain young lady of who contemplated marriage rode up to the three men with a six shooter at his side and struck one of the men. The man struck, was athletic and jumped and caught the ruffian by the collar when he reached for his gun. Mr. Case saw the action and also jumped and grabbed him by the hand (holding the gun). The fellow was pulled from his horse and surrendered, unbuckling his belt loaded with 45 gauge cartridges. Mr. Case occupied the Sabin building, the present home of Mr. Lee."

++++

A.B. Deaton, stock raiser Sec. 24, 21, 21 P.O. Browns Grove. He has 320 acres of land forty of which are cultivated. He owns seventy five head of cattle which cost annually to keep about \$3.00 per head. In this place he can raise steers up to four years for about \$12.00. Mr. Deaton was born in Woodford county, Illinois, November 22, 1839 and was raised in Morgan county. He moved to Nebraska locating in Richardson county in 1854 and farmed there until he came to Kansas. He was married to Miss Filena McCarty of Galia county, Ohio in 1864, she was born February 14, 1844. They have four children: Mauna Loa,

Nellie, Ernest, Frederick, and Robert. Mauna Loa married Elmer A. Mather and lived on the north bank of the Pawnee north of Burdett. The rest of the Deaton's moved to Missouri. (Mrs. Clinton Smith's Great Grandfather.)

++++

Fred Ditus, stock raiser keeps a livery and feed stable at Browns Grove. He came to Edwards county, Kansas in March 1877 and farmed for three years. He now has eighty head of cattle and he paid out \$1.50 per year per head for keeping his stock in 1882.

He was born in Baden, Germany, January 1, 1844 and came to America in 1851 with his parents and settled in Will county, Illinois and was raised on a farm.

He enlisted in 1862 in Company F, One Hundred and fifty-sixth Illinois volunteer infantry and participated in all of the battles of his command, and was mustered out in the fall of 1865. He was married January 1, 1868 to Miss Lucilla Ludington a native of Ohio. They have seven children: Anna, Jessie, Kate, Lucy, Nellie, Carl, and Effie. Mr. Ditus is a member of the Masonic Order and is now Deputy sheriff of Pawnee county. He built the house in Browns Grove in which he lived and died. (According to his obituary) he came to America with his widowed mother when he was eight years of age. He was a teamster in the government service at the age of nineteen years. (Leon Ditus's grandfather.)

++++

E.A. Johnson, firm of Johnson and Wright proprietors of Pawnee Valley Water Mill at Browns Grove. These mills were erected in 1879 by Mayer and Johnson and changed to the present firm name in May 1882. These mills were built of cut stone at a cost of \$10,000.00, 26 feet wide, 35 feet high and three stories. It has a head of 20 feet with a capacity of 75 barrels in a day.

Mr. Johnson came to Emporia, Kansas in 1867 and engaged in milling. He was born in Denmark July 17, 1850 and came to America in 1860 with his parents and located in Fond Du Lac, Wisconsin, in 1865 and here he was raised. He began milling at the age of twenty-one years going to Iowa at that time. In 1880 he and Miss Lizzi H. Hall of Emporia Kansas were married. They have one daughter, Gertrude M. Mr. Johnson is a member of the Methodist Episcopal church and his wife a member of the Congregational church.

++++

D.Y. Sabin, stock raiser and farmer came to Browns Grove in September, 1877 and was in agricultural pursuits and sheep raising and changed to the cattle business in the spring of 1882. He has 300 acres of land fenced and keeps 100 head of cattle.

He was born in Franklin county Vermont, January 14, 1832 living in his native county until he was 16 years old, when he went with his parents to North Fork, St. Lawrence county, N.Y. He soon after went to

Ripon, Wisconsin where he lived from 1851 to 1877 being principally engaged in the merchantile business.

November 1877: Browns Grove is to have a new store and lumber yard operated by Mr. D.Y. Sabin. He has purchased Dr. Brown's timber claim and will lay out an addition to Browns Grove. He has forty acres of this purchase fenced in with wire. He brought with him from Fond du Lac the frames for a house and store. The cellar for his house is already dug and the frame ready to be raised. He has begun the cellar for his store (23 by 40). He is also building a large barn.

He was married May 23, 1880 to Miss Lillie Brown of Carrollton, Green county Illinois. They have one daughter Lutie M. Mr. Sabin is a member of the Blue Lodge and the K. and P.

In the Sawmill news June 1880 "Mr. Sabin of Browns Grove has lately been married to a Miss Brown. Though there is more than the usual difference in the ages of the married pair we would bespeak for them nothing less than the highest degree of happiness consequent upon the married state for they are we believe worthy and respected citizens. If true love abounds, true happiness will be enjoyed, we congratulate them." (Mr. Sabin was 48 and Miss Brown 18)

August 1881: D.Y. Sabin has a very fine sheep farm on the Pawnee above the mill, the pond which gives him abundant water. He intends using it the coming year for washing his sheep believing that his wool will command a higher price on the market. He has 800 fine spanish merino ewes.

He has expended some \$6000.00 in fitting up his farm and deserves to succeed. A year ago last winter Mr. Sabin put into Pawnee 10,000 lake trout and several hundred salmon.

September 1887: Our old and highly esteemed D.Y. Sabin is lying seriously ill from the effects of a painful accident which happened to him last Monday evening. He had started at the usual hour to bring up the cattle and as he did not return his family became uneasy. Search was made but no trace of either he or the pony could be found. The alarm was given and an organized party of the citizens of the town were soon scouring the large pasture behind his dwelling through which the creek runs and where it was thought he would most likely be found. About ten o'clock at night he was discovered about 400 yards from his residence and on the north side of the creek lying upon the ground unconscious.

He was taken home and medical assistance summoned and as he did not regain consciousness nothing definite as to how the accident happened can be learned.

Mr. Sabin died later this month (September) at his home in Burdett, 55 years of age. Rev. Shockley of Larned preached the funeral sermon. Mr. Sabin was agent for the Burdett Town Company. His home was the two-story George K. Lee home.

++++

A.M. Wellwood, stock raiser and dealer came to Browns Grove in the fall of 1880 and engaged in the livestock business. He has a stock ranch near the above place and now has 260 head of cattle. He was born on Long Island, N.Y. December 1, 1855 and lived in Brooklyn, N.Y., until he came to Kansas. His stock cost \$2.50 per head to tend and feed in 1882.



Browns Grove Flouring Mill

The most interesting and outstanding industry in Browns Grove was the flour mill built in 1879 by Wright and Johnson.

Mr. Johnson was born in Denmark July 17, 1850 and came to America with his parents in 1860. They settled at Fond du Lac, Wisconsin in 1865 where he was raised. In 1867 he worked at mill work at Emporia, Kansas and began milling at age 21 going to Iowa at this time. In 1880 he married Miss Lizzie Hall of Emporia, Kansas.

The grist mill is no longer a mill on paper but is ready for business. (January 1880) E.A. Johnson of the firm of Johnson & Wright are the owners of the mill.

The mill erected by these two men is built of cut stone at a cost of \$10,000.00, 26 feet wide by 38 feet long three stories high with a head of 20 feet and a capacity of 75 barrels a day. This was the first mill west of Hutchinson.

A dam was built across the Pawnee to furnish water power for the mill which was located approximately two blocks west of the present bridge. The dam was of wood and dirt construction.

Rock was quarried from land owned by C.N. Rucker 2 miles west who located there in 1877.

Being the only mill and the first in this part of Kansas farmers came from Dodge City, Larned, Garden City, LaCrosse, Kinsley, and Scott City to get their grain ground. They would wait 2 to 5 days for their turn camping along the creek, swimming, and fishing in the mill pond back of the dam. The pond was a popular place for the young people in the late 1800's. It extended more than 2 miles west to the Hodgeman county line. Boating and swimming were popular summer pastimes and in winter it was the finest skating pond in west Kansas.

In 1880 a field of buckwheat was planted where the Glen Warner's home is located. The crop was cut with a hand scythe and flailed out by hand. Some of the grain was saved for seed and the rest ground at the mill into buckwheat flour.

The mill produced flour under the name "Pawnee Chief" and many a pioneer home a century ago had sacks of this flour from the Pawnee creek flour mill, one of the first industries in Pawnee county.

February 1880: The mill is running smoothly and we think it a nice thing to be able to use flour of home manufacture and we enjoy the air of prosperity it gives our town. Already 100 bushels of grain has been received in a single day.

A personal account of a day at the mill follows, April 1880: "I went over to Browns Grove last week with a grist for the first time. The miller, Mr. Johnson, was sick but not wishing to return without my grist I called upon him at his boarding house and found him suffering from a bad cold and threatened lung fever. When he heard how far I had come and I was in need of my grist he said he would try and grind it for me. Such kindness I think worth volumes of praise and I can speak a good word for the kindness anyone will receive when going to the Browns Grove Mill." This item was signed P.J. Hecox, Keyesville.

Mather, Mayer and Monger (May 1884) went out with lanterns the other evening and in a short time speared 48 pounds of catfish.

September 1884: The flouring mill of Al Mayer at Browns Grove which has been idle for 2 weeks on account of the dam is again running full time.

July 1885: Mr. Mayer hopes to be ready to grind the new wheat crop. Mayer and Johnson operated the mill until 1885, when Mr. Besore bought the property.

July 1889: Work on the mill dam is progressing. Mr. Besore is working a large number of hands which make things lively about Burdett. When completed the mill will be capable of turning out 100 barrels of flour a day.

Mr. Besore re-built the dam of limestone rock 12 feet high and also installed a steam engine for power when the water was low.

Because of bad conditions (perhaps a drouth) in the late 1880's and early 1890's many homesteaders left Kansas and these are the years that the mill stopped running.

In July 1897 J.M. (Jacob) Besore died at his home in Burdett in the early morning hours. He was a native of Germany and had lived in

Pawnee county eight or ten years. Some years ago he owned and operated the Burdett mill.

It is said some of his relatives held high rank as officers in the German army and that he was distantly connected with the German Emperor.

He was a very peculiar and extraordinary man in many respects and made few personal friends. Mr. Joseph Besore and another brother who were summoned by telegram did not arrive in time for the funeral as his death was of a few minutes warning and the weather was too warm to retain the corpse any length of time.

Very few marks of the Old Mill or the dam remain. The mill wheel laid in the yard at the Rex Mather home for several years but was sold for scrap iron when a need for metal was asked during World War II. This farm was called the "Old Mill Farm" and the stone house is now being demolished.

The mill was razed by J.C. Browne and material was used in building a stone house still standing on his farm north of Burdett, 22-21-20. Some of the rock was used by S.L. Palmer in a house on 19-21-20 west of town. This house was torn down in 1973 and a stone was found with lettering M & J and the date 1879. It is thought this was a cornerstone or an over-the-entrance block from the old mill.

In 1911, E.A. Mather and G.F. Mather built a concrete dam across the Pawnee on the "Old Mill Dam" site. It was 2 feet wide at the base, 1 foot at the top and 4 feet high. It was equipped with a fish ladder that met requirements of the fish and game law.



Damaged by Wind

Census of 1880

PAWNEE COUNTY, KANSAS BROWNS GROVE TOWNSHIP

1. Sparks, Robert
2. Robertson, Peter
3. Dewey, Orlando E.
4. Bennyworth, Ada
5. Gleason, Michael
6. Hanna, Edward
7. Fox, Amos
8. Templeton, John
9. McCready, Jacob
10. Myers, Eugene
11. Middlecauff, Victor
12. Young, Geo. S.
13. Keeney, Park E.
14. Keeney, G.S.
15. Crosson, Barnard
16. Garrison, Freeborn
17. Vanbroclin, Nelson
18. Schow, Mathias
19. Crosson, Wm.
20. Blair, John
21. Sarver, John
22. Sarver, Charles
23. Keller, Mary J.
24. Crosson, David
25. McNeil, James
26. Gerdis, Geo.
27. Biggs, Wm.
28. Hall, James
29. Ewell, Franklin J.
30. Davis, David G.
31. Putnam, Jacob E.
32. Smith, Hollis A.
33. Shuck, Josiah C.
34. Shuck, Philip
35. Shuck, Enoch
36. Reynolds, Benj. F.
37. Fritz, Thomas
38. Tabor, Orange F.
39. Davis, Oliver
40. Andrews, Joseph
41. Huestice, Emmet
42. Gallagher, Henry
43. Shiley, Levi
44. Barrett, Thomas H.
Roach, Thomas H.
45. Deaton, Abram B.
McCarty, Geo.
46. Knickerbocker, Herman
47. Robb, Elijah
48. Howell, Erlis E.
49. Fulton, Joseph
50. Woolard, Perry
51. Carrick, John S.
52. Haight, Wm.
53. Bryan, Wm. C.
54. Scammon, Francis
55. Schnell, Chas.
56. Reif, Francis
57. Boucher, Joseph
58. Vanbuskirk, Chas.
59. Swigerd, Geo.
60. Swigerd, John
61. Phillips, Albert
62. Adams, Chas.
63. Rogers, Elizabeth
64. Young, Henry
65. Rowley, Joseph
66. Beauchamp, Wm.
67. Wing, Jacob
Johnson, Nathan
68. McPherson, Wm.
69. Mower, (Maur) Anna
70. Stambaugh, Wm. H.
71. Mohr, Carl
72. Harger, Samuel
73. Sieverling, Wm.
74. Sieverling, Fritz
75. Dumond, John H.
76. Mather, Nathaniel
77. Bindley, Thomas
78. Johnson, James F.
79. Hettinger, Andrew
80. Simons, Emery
Nichols, Rufus
81. Curtis, Wm.
82. Notestine, Aaron

83. Hatfield, Leslie
84. Stitson, Elias B.
85. Wordenburg, Thomas
 Henderson
86. Brown, Almon
87. Brown, Henry R.
88. Zahn, Joseph
89. Metcalf, Mary A.
90. Bradbury, John
91. More, Friend E.
92. Strock, John
93. Parks, James R.
94. Smith, Esau
95. Arbogast, Silas
96. Rogers, Alexander R.
97. Notestine, John
98. Notestine, Isaiah
99. Willey, Lewis
100. Robinson, Richard
101. Robinson, Henry W.
102. Guth, Jacob
103. Stewart, Heman
104. Stewart, Ruth
105. Seymour, Shuman
106. Fowler, Eli M.
107. Notestine, Frank
108. Everitt, Jacob
109. Payne, Henry
110. Hawk, Geo. W.
 Frybarger, Susan
111. Caldwell, John
112. Enfield, Eli
113. Caldwell, Elizabeth
 Rhinevault, S.G.
114. Robbins, Calvin A.
115. Valentine, Caleb
116. Dewey, Henry F.
117. Ulcox, (?), Philo J.
118. Patton, Fred W.
119. Montgomery, Eugene
120. McCormack, Geo.
 Montgomery, Wm.
121. Keenan, Lizzie
122. Mock, Benjamin
123. Miller, Ira
124. Miller, Herbert E.
125. Miller, George L.
126. Pierce, Joshua O.
127. Darling, Robert
128. Vanhart, Geo. F.
129. Harger, John
130. Beebe, Sarah
131. Templer, James
132. Wooley, Geo. W.
133. Callen, Season E.
134. Fritz, Frank
135. Woodside, Wm.
136. Miller, Benny
137. French, Alfred J.
138. Marlatt, James W.
139. Bartholemew, David
140. Osgood, Levi M.
141. Holland, John
142. Gosser, Joseph
143. Babcock, Charles J.
144. Merrick, Airilla
145. Rogers, Mary
146. Athea, James W.
 Spencer, Leander
147. Howell, John
148. Howell, Floyd
149. Keeney, Wm. E.

IN THE VILLAGE

AT BROWNS GROVE

1. Hardman, Dr. Chas.
 Pugh, Lydia (Mother-in-law)
2. Wright, Silas G.
3. Goss, Otis G.
4. VanMeter, John F.
5. Perry, John S.
6. Ditus, Fred
 Harrison, Hans
7. Hockensmith, Henry
 Johnson, E.A.
8. Sabin, Daniel Y.
9. Jones, John S.
 Mayer, Robert E.

Cheap Jim

Cheap Jim was an early peddler who passed through Burdett several times a year in the late 1880's. A January 1896 item (in a Larned paper) from Burdett says, "Cheap Jim passed through town last week. He reports a good run of business and will return in the early spring."

August 1896: "Cheap Jim returned and gave us a visit last week in a business capacity. Some people laugh at Jim's odd ways and like to give the impression that they are a notch higher. We look back some ten or fifteen years when J.M. Gillette better known as "Cheap Jim" first began his trade. He walked then carrying his goods on his back never complaining and having a cheery word for all. Going from house to house selling what he could of his meager stock minding his own business. This continued for several years then he got a burro and cart which served him and later he added another burro. Finally he acquired an up-to-date peddler's wagon and a good span of mules replaced the burros. Of late years he has averaged about three or four visits to each home on his route which he has traveled for years and always receives a hearty welcome especially from the children who hailed his coming with delight."

September 1902: "Cheap Jim says this will be his last trip as he has decided to quit the road since he has added a loving wife to his earthly possessions and is bidding all of his numerous customers "goodby." He expects to engage in the restaurant and mercantile business in Hanston, Hodgeman county Kansas."

(Excerpts from articles written by early settlers about "Cheap Jim.")

He was a man of medium height and of slender build. His high falsetto voice could be heard as he approached farm homes calling his wares of: needles, darning, knitting and sewing machine needles—in fact needles of all kinds. Shoestrings, fishhooks and Castoria for babies. Buttons, pins, beads, thread, pencils, dress trimmings, ribbons, and such items. His wagon was an artistic piece of work with drawers concealed behind doors with compartments for different articles a place for everything. Merchandise was hung from the top of the wagon and shelves were constructed around the sides.

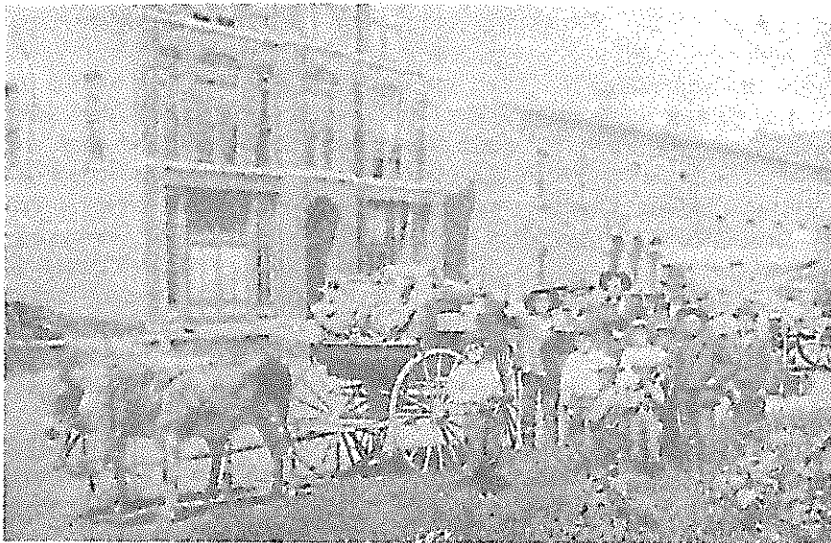
Today he is what we would call a 'loner' and he continually talked to his donkeys, who would nod their heads, curl their lips, and flap their long ears as if they understood.

Much sport was made of him and his odd ways but a Mothers frown would quiet a child's laughter and if necessary the child would leave the room until it could keep a straight face.

Some young men began teasing him—urging him to get married. They were successful as 'Jim' did marry, it was rumored to a part Indian woman. They set up storekeeping in a new building on the east side of the street in Hanston about a block from the older established Shook store and post office.

His domestic life was not a happy one, his business did not prosper and in time he sold out and moved away.

Later news of his death was received bringing memories to many who had enjoyed his visits as a break in the monotony of pioneer days.



Cheap Jim's Outfit

Duncan's Crossing

Duncan's Crossing which is located 2 miles north and about 7 miles west of Burdett is a spot with much interesting early day history.

John O'Laughlin was the first white settler in Hodgeman county and he settled here on the spot later called "Duncan's Crossing." He was born in County Clare, Ireland June 24th, 1842 and came to this country when a small child settling with his parents at Dubuque, Iowa. In 1859 he came to Leavenworth and became a freighter on the Santa Fe trail. During the Civil War he was employed by the government as department quartermaster between the Missouri river and their western frontier forts. At the close of the war he joined General Phil Sheridan's forces in his Indian campaigns over the southwest.

While with these forces and roaming over the prairie, John noticed where the north and south trail crossed the Pawnee with such steep banks on both sides that crossing it was mighty hard. Realizing that humanity, like the buffalo always followed the trails he decided to stop at this crossing. He built a little store on the bank of the creek out of timber at hand and then built a bridge and began charging toll. The

government was charged \$1.00 per team and all others were charged 50 cents a team.

He built the bridge from poles cut along the creek and also built a stockade. He had a well inside the stockade in case Indians attacked they could not keep him from obtaining water.

He did a thriving business for the government used the trail continually hauling supplies to their southern forts.

His store though small was stocked with things needed by incoming settlers as well as cowboys and freighters traveling this Hays to Dodge City trail.

The government did not pay cash but gave receipts and when in 1872 the railroad came to Dodge City the government traffic stopped. He moved farther west settling at the site of what is now Lakin, Kansas again becoming the "First Settler" there.

He married Mary V. Farrell February 5, 1882. He died December 9th, 1915. His widow and seven children survive.

Mr. O'Laughlin estimated his toll bridge cost \$100.00 besides his labor as it was built of logs. He received \$1200.00 from the government and he considered this the easiest money he ever made. He also had a contract with the government to furnish buffalo meat at the forts at four cents a pound for the hind quarter and hump. The fore quarters were left for the coyotes. He also furnished meat for the contractors on the Union Pacific railroad. Buffalo hides were worth from one to three dollars.

He sold his squatter rights to George Duncan in 1872. In 1873 and 1874 a few cattlemen commenced to settle around the old stockade, George and Bob Perry, L.A. Choat, Bowman, Adair and other cattlemen along the Pawnee. H.H. Waterhouse, Frank Kroker, Lewis Larson, J.A. Eakin and Charley Ruff all made settlement near the old Duncan crossing.

George Duncan was born in Joliet, Illinois September 26, 1847. When 16 years of age he enlisted in the army and served two years, three months and 21 days, mustering out as a corporal. He worked eight years on the railroad for the government coming to Hodgeman county in 1872.

In taking his claim Mr. Duncan took 40 acres each in four different sections thus owning the toll bridge. He ran the Half-way-house as it was often called on the old Fort Hays-Fort Dodge Trail. There was a grocery, feed, and drug store and also a hotel, all in one.

The toll bridge was washed out by high waters and rebuilt, and later it was washed out again and not rebuilt. A ford crossing was made serviceable by rocks placed on the creek bed and the approaches cut down. Travelers were no longer charged a fee for a crossing, but it was known near and far as a good creek crossing and it became known as "Duncan's Crossing."

He was made postmaster in 1874 or 1875 and took care of the mail at his store the "Hodgeman Postoffice" until 1882 when he left the ranch. He was the first postmaster in the county.

He married Hattie Cook December 25th, 1875 and two children were born while living here on the ranch.

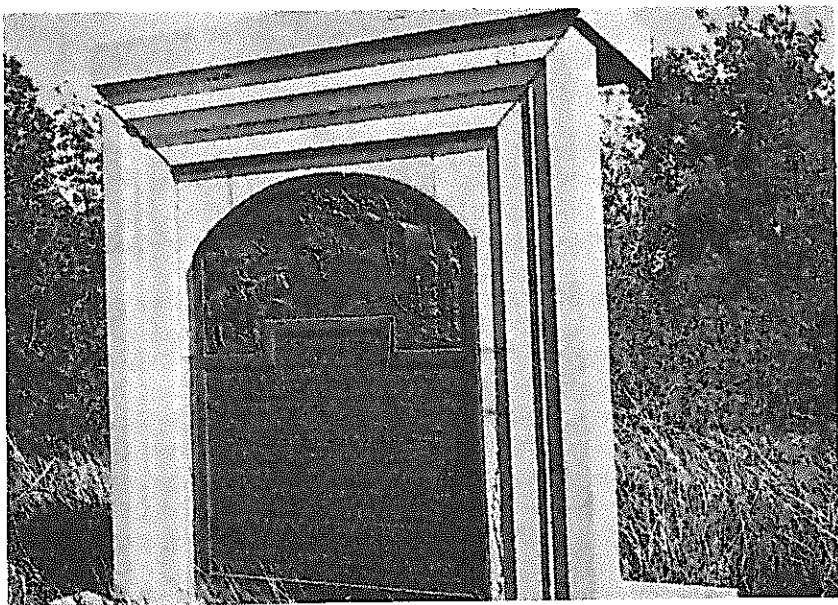
At the age of 83 he died at the soldiers home in Leavenworth December 1st, 1930. Five daughters survive.

Duncan's Crossing was dedicated on October 27th, 1929 and a marker erected with a bronze plaque stating, "This monument marks the site of Duncan Crossing and the Old Fort Hays-Fort Dodge Trail. Many famous men passed this way during the Indian War period.

Kit Carson was perhaps the greatest scout that ever worked over the trail. General Sherman and Sheridan and General Custer camped with the Seventh U.S. Cavalry at this place and Col. Bill Cody ate many meals with John O'Laughlin as did many of the soldiers who scouted from Fort Hays, Fort Larned and Fort Dodge.

At the dedication in 1929 Mrs. Mary O'Laughlin (widow of John O'Laughlin) was present and also Mr. Duncan for whom the crossing was named. Victor Murdock of Wichita and Congressman Clifford Hope of Garden City gave the dedication addresses.

A daughter of Mr. Duncan, Mrs. Kate Arnold of Topeka who was born in the postoffice building at the crossing told of a time that Jesse James and his gang visited them. The gang had put up for the night with their horses inside the stockade. With the livestock was a little colt which had become travel weary so before the James gang left the crossing Jesse gave the colt to Mrs. Arnold. The Duncan family kept the colt for a number of years but later sold to friends. It lived to be 32 years of age.



Duncan's Crossing Memorial

1878: "We are informed by reliable authority that a vein of coal sixteen inches thick has been found on the south fork of the Pawnee some ten miles above Browns Grove in Hodgeman county. Also the tooth of a mastodon was found the other day thirty feet below ground two miles west of Browns Grove by some parties who were digging a well. Other bones were found at the same time but they were so far decayed that they crumbled when exposed to the air. The tooth was petrified and weighed fifteen pounds."

+ + + + +

December 1885: "Last Saturday night L.W. Chittendon a land agent at Hodgeman Center was taken from his bed by a party of men, horsewhipped and compelled to run barefoot through patches of cactus and finally was thrown into the cold waters of the Buckner. Chittendon it is reported located a stranger on another man's claim which enraged the latter's friends to the degree of revenge. A guard of deputized officers went to Hodgeman Center, Monday night to protect the agent as he was threatened with death if he did not immigrate."

+ + + + +

February 1887: "D.L. Harter has commenced operations on a large store building opposite Roetzel's hardware store."

+ + + + +

"Burdettites must be a thirsty race as they have at various times pumped their wells all dry and then have gone to the old town well and drawn it as near dry as possible, and if any of the drug stores are not dry it is because the supply is inexhaustible." (Town well was located west of Mrs. C.O. Steffen's home.)

+ + + + +

The first child born in Burdett was a daughter born to Mr. and Mrs. P.W. Rachnor on Tuesday, September 15, 1886.

+ + + + +

Hodgden Co. Plat Book

Township 21 South, Range 21 West

CO. 14

