

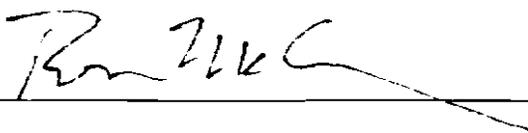
AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Lisa M. Miles for the Master of Arts  
(name of student) (degree)

in American History presented on 14 May 1993  
(major) (date)

Title: A Land of Her Own: Independent Women Homesteaders

In Lyon and Coffey Counties, Kansas (1860 - 1870)

Abstract approved: 

## ABSTRACT

This thesis concentrates on women who farmed independently in Lyon and Coffey counties in Kansas during the 1860s. These women contradicted the nineteenth century perception that women simply did not possess the physical strength or business sense necessary to succeed in farming. These women also called into question many mid-nineteenth century attitudes regarding the proper behavior of women. The most significant point of this investigation lies in confirming the view that, contrary to expectation many women, independent of husbands, did indeed farm successfully in Lyon and Coffey counties.

Land laws, including the Pre-emption Act of 1841 and the Homestead Act of 1862, opened vast tracts of land to settlement. The Homestead Act in particular helped many women homesteaders since it made land available to single women for the first time. Treaties with Indian tribes and federal land grants to railroads also increased the amount of available land. The railroads, the government, land agencies, emigrant aid societies, and individual communities all advertised the availability of unoccupied lands and expressed a clear desire that emigrants should settle in these locales. The combination of these factors resulted in a tremendous influx of emigrants onto the western frontier during the mid-nineteenth century. Some of these emigrants were independent women who established farmsteads and endured the same trying conditions as any other settler of the time. However, the tasks they performed and the dangers they faced, as well as the societal prejudices they overcame, made success all the more difficult since they had no husbands to assist them. Yet many of these women persevered and truly made their farms a successful land of their own.

**A LAND OF HER OWN:  
INDEPENDENT WOMEN HOMESTEADERS  
IN LYON AND COFFEY COUNTIES, KANSAS  
(1860 - 1870)**

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A Thesis

Presented to

the Division of Social Sciences

**EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY**

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

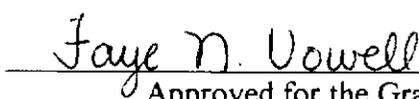
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by

Lisa Miles

May 1993

  
Approved for the Major Division

  
Approved for the Graduate Council

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

My sincere appreciation goes to Professors Ronald McCoy, Samuel Dicks, and Faye Vowell. I am truly indebted to them for their assistance in the writing of this thesis. I also wish to express my gratitude to Joyce Thierer for her guidance in the selection of this topic. I am thankful for the patience and cooperation exhibited by all the children. To Debora Charles, I will always be grateful for her proof-reading and child care skills, as well as for her constant support.

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## INTRODUCTION

It takes brains, not brawn to make farms pay. We need more women farmers!<sup>1</sup>

These words of suffragist Harriet Storry explain the attitude of many women homesteaders on the American frontier. However, American society in the mid-nineteenth century generally believed that women simply did not possess the physical strength or business sense necessary to succeed in farming. The women included in this thesis invalidate these perceptions.

Traditionally, the focus of historical investigation dealing with homesteading has been upon the trials of male farmers and the domestic duties of their sunbonneted wives; this approach ignores the woman who pioneered alone. This thesis attempts partial rectification of this trend by concentrating on women who farmed independently in Lyon and Coffey counties in Kansas during the 1860s. The discrimination and hardships they faced, their daily routines, as well as the methods they developed to meet their specific challenges are examined. The most significant point of this investigation lies in confirming the view that, contrary to expectation, many independent women did indeed homestead successfully in Lyon and Coffey counties.

The term "homesteader" in this study applies to those who pre-empted, squatted, inherited, or bought land from government sales. The term also includes those who filed actual homestead claims. Thus "homesteader" as used here is interchangeable with such designations as "farmer," "settler," and "pioneer."

Independent women homesteaders managed their own farms. Many of these were women who had never been married, or "girl homesteaders" as they were then known.<sup>2</sup> Others were widows, divorcees, and women whose husbands had deserted them. Women whose husbands temporarily left them are also included here because they were left to run families and farms in their husbands' absences. These "temporary widows," like the other independent women, assumed men's tasks and responsibilities in running their farmsteads.<sup>3</sup>

Women who supported families were especially attracted by new land opportunities that offered potential for allowing them to provide for their children.<sup>4</sup> As heads of their households, they could claim homesteads or pre-empt land. Many states, eager for the stability these women settlers could provide, actively encouraged them to come and establish farmsteads.<sup>5</sup>

Settling farms in Kansas Territory in the mid-nineteenth century was made possible by a series of land laws. The Pre-emption Act of 1841, the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, the Homestead Act of 1862, and the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 all opened vast tracts of land to settlement. Treaties with Indian tribes and federal land grants to railroads also increased the amount of available land. The railroads, the government, land agencies, emigrant aid societies, and individual communities all advertised the availability of unoccupied lands and expressed a clear desire that emigrants should settle in these locales. The combination of these factors resulted in a tremendous influx of emigrants onto the western frontier during the mid-nineteenth century.

The Homestead Act in particular helped many women homesteaders. For the first time land was made available to single women.<sup>6</sup> The wording of the Homestead Act encompassed single adults and heads of households, not exclusively males. It was therefore not necessary for a prospective homesteader to be a man or married woman in order to file a claim. Consequently, the number of women who managed their own farms increased. The Homestead Act provided women with an opportunity to attract husbands,

invest capital, earn money for education; most importantly for many, it offered a way to provide for their children.<sup>7</sup>

Although these new land laws and policies made land available, they also perpetuated discrimination against some women. Unlike women with children, widowed women, or single adult males, single women were discriminated against when they tried to pre-empt a claim. In his mid-nineteenth century account of life Beyond the Mississippi, historian Albert Richardson relates:

No woman can preempt unless she is a widow or the "head of a family." But sometimes an ambitious maiden who wishes to secure one hundred and sixty acres of land, borrows a child, signs papers of adoption, swears that she is the head of a family, and preempts her claim; then annuls the papers and returns her temporary offspring to its parents with an appropriate gift.<sup>8</sup>

Thus the determined young woman could find a way around the rules to secure herself a homestead claim.

Historian Edward Dick, in his seminal work Sod House Frontier, 1854-1890, described these independent women as "plucky" and "staunch," then condescendingly credits them with trying "without training or physical strength to wrest a living where strong men had great difficulty in maintaining their hold."<sup>9</sup> Dick's patronizing sentiments published in 1937 reflect the attitudes of American society in the 1930s, attitudes not unlike those of the 1860s.

The attitudes of mid-nineteenth century American society naturally shaped the environment in which independent women homesteaders lived. These attitudes were even less liberal than those of the 1930s in accepting women who lived their lives outside the "proper sphere" of women's behavior. Contemporary prescriptive literature, writings which encouraged specific behaviors desired by society, abounded with examples of the traits reflective of the ideal mid-nineteenth century woman. The literature included many

"prescriptions" for how to become that ideal woman. Popular literature also provided abundant reprimands and remonstrances for the woman who failed to live up to those ideals.

Lyon County and Coffey County newspapers of the period contained numerous moralizing commentaries regarding the accepted behaviors and responsibilities of women. These local papers provide insights into the attitudes of their subscribers in the selection of newsworthy events and the content of editorials. The *Kansas News* of Emporia, Kansas, published an editorial entitled "The Rights of Women" in 1857 which, though recognizing the need for the excess population of the east to resettle on farms in the west, denied that this was an option for single women:

#### The Rights of Women

There is evidently something wrong somewhere, when -- in a land like this, which is sparsely settled and produces more than enough of the necessaries of life- - it is impossible for a large class to keep gaunt hunger from their doors. . . . The broad and fertile prairies of the West need hands to cultivate them, and if those who strive for a precarious subsistence in the cities would venture forth upon them they would at least make enough to eat and in a few years place themselves above the danger want. We speak now of the male sex. That there are multitudes of females in all parts of the United States who eke out a miserable existence by ceaseless and scarce-rewarded toil, and who cannot flee from want by any means in their power is too true. There is no resource for these. They cannot till the land be it ever so productive.<sup>10</sup>

It was widely assumed that women were incapable of successfully farming on their own. Here, the author simply accepted that notion claiming: "The sphere in which society tolerates them [women] is so limited that while all want some must starve."<sup>11</sup> The solution lay in shipping the eastern males out west to farm while allowing women to assume their vacated jobs. This view reflected a prejudice that independent women in Lyon and Coffey counties had to surmount.

The history of these two counties are also briefly examined in this thesis, including such episodes as Indian troubles, Spanish fever, and the drought of 1860. The effects of the Civil War are related from a local perspective. Later attempts geared towards improving the communities and encouraging new settlers to locate in the region are also touched upon. These condensed county histories are included because they describe the physical and social environment in which these independent women lived.

The final segment of this study examines the lives of the women. Federal and state census records, newspaper accounts, and local histories are employed to reveal as much as possible about the reality of their temporarily remote lives. Outside employment, relations with hostile Indians, deaths of loved ones, fire, theft, and even murder constituted some of the risks that touched their lives.

The opportunity to homestead in Kansas became more accessible because land laws, treaties with Indians, and railroad land grants all encouraged development. As a result, unmarried women could establish homesteads, while enduring the same trying conditions as any other settler of the time. However, the tasks they performed and the dangers they faced, as well as the societal prejudices they overcame, made attaining that goal all the more difficult since they had no husbands to assist them. Yet those women persevered and the descendants of many who found a land of their own can be found in Lyon and Coffey counties to this day.

## CHAPTER 1

### COME TO KANSAS

Scarcely a day passes that the white tops of the emigrants' wagon may not be seen passing by.

This observation comes from an 1857 editorial in the *Emporia News* of Lyon County, Kansas.<sup>1</sup> The continuous emigration into Kansas that this describes stemmed from the many new land laws and policies. Other inducements to settlement in Kansas included invitations to emigrants printed in local papers and the recruiting efforts of emigrant aid companies.

Lyon and Coffey counties in the east central portion of Kansas witnessed this constant stream of new settlers because the primary goal for settlers from the mid-1850s through the late 1860s lay in the eastern third of the state.<sup>2</sup> This portion of the state enjoys a more temperate climate than the western two-thirds, and it was here that development began, first along the many rivers and streams, later beside the railroad routes.<sup>3</sup>

According to historian Leslie E. Decker, land disposal in Kansas was accomplished in two distinct phases. The first phase began with the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 and the opening up of Kansas territory for settlement. The Pre-emption Act of 1841 still applied during this period. This phase continued through the mid-1860s with the sale of Indian lands, cash and scrip sales, and railroad grants emerging as primary means for effecting land distribution. A large portion of the eastern third of the state was settled under the system of cash, warrant, or scrip sales, and of land grants. The second phase of land

disposal commenced in the mid-1860s when the homestead and preemption systems became widespread.<sup>4</sup>

Kansas contains fifty million acres of land. Over one half of that land, fifty-three percent, found its way into the private sphere of ownership by individuals, partnerships, or companies, a considerable number of which were speculators. The remainder was set aside as Indian reserves, granted to railroads, or granted to the state for educational purposes.<sup>5</sup>

This investigation focuses on the early years of Kansas, beginning in the mid-1850s prior to the achievement of statehood when many of the independent women homesteaders who will be studied here came to Kansas. The investigation continues through 1870 when Kansas concluded its first decade as a state. The influence of many of the various land laws, policies and advertising efforts overlap each other during this time period.

The first land law affecting Kansas was the Kansas-Nebraska Act, passed by Congress in May 1854. This purportedly opened Kansas to settlement,<sup>6</sup> but ironically, not a single acre became available for pre-emption or purchase.<sup>7</sup> The reason for this apparent inconsistency lay in the federal government's failure to complete land surveys, or ratify requisite treaties with local Indians that would have made these lands obtainable.<sup>8</sup> To amend the error, the government performed the surveys and signed the treaties thus enabling legal settlement by whites.<sup>9</sup> As American society had historically expressed so little concern for the rights of Indians, white settlers were not in the least averse to intruding upon Indian lands.<sup>10</sup> By the end of 1854, public land policies had been amended to the extent that Kansas land could be acquired by anyone who paid the minimum price of \$1.25 per acre.<sup>11</sup>

The Pre-emption Act of 1841 profoundly impacted on the settlement of Kansas. This law let squatters stake out claims prior to the arrival of land surveyors on the scene. Claimants could later purchase their prescribed one hundred-sixty acres at the minimum price.<sup>12</sup> The Pre-emption Act worked well in conjunction with later land acts that enabled homesteaders to obtain larger portions of land.

In an 1860 article, the *Emporia News* described the availability of government land and pre-emption land in Lyon County:

There is perhaps a third of the land in this county yet remaining in possession of the Government, and another third which has been pre-empted and can be bought at from three to five dollars an acre. This, when improved, will be worth double or threble [sic] its present price, and the owner will also have the value of what he has raised besides, which will richly repay the expense of improvement.<sup>13</sup>

The Homestead Act of 1862 made available one hundred-sixty acres of public land to adult males or heads of households. The prospective homesteader was required to be a United States citizen, or "intending" citizen, over the age of twenty-one who made improvements on the land and resided on it for five years.<sup>14</sup> Under the pre-existing Preemption Act, homesteaders could pre-empt an adjoining quarter section of an additional one hundred-sixty acres of land while still working their original claims.

Together, the Pre-emption Act of 1841 with the Homestead Act of 1862 also let settlers commute their original homestead claims to pre-emptions, enabling them to purchase the land outright for \$1.25 per acre, thereby avoiding the five year wait for their claims to be "proved up."<sup>15</sup> Proving up is the term applied to obtaining a patent based upon the testimony of two witness who concurred that the settler had met the terms of the act. Fulfillment of this last formality transferred ownership of the property to the homesteader.<sup>16</sup>

After the Civil War, homesteading increased. The Homestead Act, made a special arrangement for that conflict's veterans: the time ex-soldiers must wait for a claim to be proved up was shortened by the number of years of military service.<sup>17</sup> This provision also applied to the soldiers' widows.<sup>18</sup> Many of these widows were left with legacy money to invest and some took advantage of the Homestead Act to settle out west.<sup>19</sup>

In 1929, historian Laura M. French described the settlers who came to Kansas after the Civil War:

many of them were ex-soldiers whose time of service was deducted from the regular requirement of five years' residence before a homesteader could prove up on his land. This was in accordance with the Homestead Act of 1862. The new settlers brought some money, some provisions and other supplies, livestock, field and garden seeds, but more important even than all these, they brought an enthusiasm for the new country which served to kindle anew the smoldering fires of enthusiasm of those older settlers who had come in the fifties.<sup>20</sup>

The Federal government envisioned the Homestead Act as ending the concentration of great estates in the hands of a small landed gentry and also as a way of ending uncontrolled land speculation.<sup>21</sup> The opening of Kansas Territory, for example, was accompanied by an exceptionally active period of land speculation due, in part, to new wealth coming from California's gold fields and strong foreign demand for American wheat. The government's western lands also provided a means for absorbing the tremendous influx of immigrants flooding into the country.<sup>22</sup>

Yet the Homestead Act was not nearly as successful in ending land speculation as hoped. People became so obsessed with claiming land and turning it over for a quick profit that they often neglected the ordinary process for filing, improving, occupying and proving up a homestead claim.<sup>23</sup> It is quite probable that many, if not most, homesteaders were actually speculators who never intended living on their claims.<sup>24</sup>

Interestingly, only a quarter of the homestead claims that were filed in the 1800s were ever proved up under the original terms.<sup>25</sup> The others were most likely sold as relinquishments or abandoned.

Land sales became a significant factor in the dispersal of Kansas lands during 1859 - 1861 period. The purpose of these sales in Kansas, or elsewhere, lay in generating additional revenue for the federal government.<sup>26</sup> But like the Homestead Act, the sales policy never achieved its authors' primary objectives.

Treaties with Indian tribes also made land available for sale in Kansas. In Coffey County, a federal treaty with the Sac and Fox Indians prompted this report of concern, which appeared in an 1859 issue of the *Neosho Valley Register*, Burlington, Kansas, that the land would fall into speculators' hands:

#### Treaty with Sac and Fox Indians

The lands embraced within this treaty are some of the best of the Sac and Fox Reservation, and part of it are the grounds now occupied by the Agency. It is devoutly hoped that these lands will fall into the hands of people who will locate on them and improve them. If this is done the country will be greatly benefitted by this treaty, but if the vulturous land sharks get possession of them, they might as well remain in the hands of the Indians, so as the good of the country is concerned.<sup>27</sup>

Land warrants also inhibited the attainment of the government's desire to generate revenue through land sales. Veterans were the beneficiaries of military-bounty land warrants. Although these the warrants could not be used in lieu of cash at land auctions, they were employed for purchasing land that was unsold at the auction and thereby made available for private entry.<sup>28</sup> The shortage of cash and the abundance of land warrants during the late 1850s and the early 1860s resulted in the failure of land sales to produce the cash revenue desired by the government.

Between 1858 - 1860, of the fifty million acres in Kansas, 7,966,090 acres were ordered into market. The sale was announced far in advance of the auction, yet squatters became highly agitated because they were now required to immediately raise the two hundred dollars necessary for purchasing their claims. Those who failed to come up with the money lost their claims and the value of their improvements.<sup>29</sup>

In 1859 the *Emporia News* reported that because of farmers' allocations of funds for land sales only two reapers and mowers existed in Breckinridge, later Lyon, County: "We know of several farmers who would have purchased Reapers the present season, if the land had not been forced into market obliging them to use their money for the purpose of pre-empting their farms."<sup>30</sup> An editorial appearing in the *Emporia News* in 1860 addressing the government land sales, expressed the opinion that there:

have been cruel -- terribly cruel blows at an honest, loyal people, trusting to the plighted faith of the party in power to secure, at least for a long series of years, their homes from the grasp of shyster and speculators. Many have already abandoned their claims on which had been spent the labor of a year or two in preparing them for that cultivation which in a couple of years more would have yielded sufficient to pay the Government its price for the land. Of those who remain, not one in ten can pre-empt their land with their own means without selling the last animal off the place, on which depend the existence of themselves and families; many could not even pre-empt with this sacrifice . . . Judging by the past sales, there will be little or no land purchased at the sale. The speculators will wait until the sales are closed and then lay warrants on the land. . . . warrants are more plenty than money, and will be used almost exclusively.<sup>31</sup>

Private land agencies were more than willing to assist others in purchasing land at the government sales. Central Kansas Land and Collecting Agency advertised its services in an 1859 issue of the *Emporia News*. The agent promised he would attend all:

#### Government Land Sales

and can safely say to capitalists and others who desire to invest in Western land that I can buy *better land* for *less money* than you could yourselves if present.<sup>32</sup>

The Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 established agricultural colleges and created yet another non-cash option for land purchase. Every state not "in rebellion" received thirty thousand acres of public land within its borders for each senator and representative it sent to Congress. States lacking a large block of federal land within their borders received scrip. This scrip, issued at the rate of \$1.25 an acre, entitled the bearer to public land in other states. Large tracts of land made available through the Morrill Land Grant Act could be sold by states, thereby generating money for the development of their land grant colleges.<sup>33</sup>

Unfortunately, like other acts and policies, the Morrill Act did not encourage the settlement of land by individuals. Instead, the large tracts of land were most often sold off *en masse*. As a result, settlements arose far from one another and communities developed slowly.<sup>34</sup>

From the 1860s on, railroad land grants also contributed significantly to the development of Kansas. Federal regulations stipulated that surveyors lay out a strip of land, each twenty miles wide on either side of the railroad tracks was a strip of land. The government retained control over alternating sections of land, and the remainder went to the railroads. Under this scheme, the government's land could be occupied under the Pre-emption and Homestead Acts. Under the Homestead Act, the available amount of land adjoining the railroad was limited to eighty acres.<sup>35</sup> Settlers could either homestead an eighty acre claim, or they could purchase one hundred sixty acre lots at the rate of \$2.50 per acre.<sup>36</sup>

Homesteaders claimed the government's lands first. Although the railroad companies wanted to sell their own land, they recognized that the government's land would be taken up quickly by settlers. As a result, the demand would grow for railroad land.<sup>37</sup> It was critical for the railroad operators to insure that the land around their lines became occupied by people capable of providing them with business.

Yet once again individual settlers were ignored as railroad officials, eager for sales and speedy infusions of cash, sold large tracts of their lands to speculators.<sup>38</sup> Many Kansans were distressed to see speculators once again come out on top, but their criticism lessened somewhat when the railroads also sold land for the development of extensive farming and cattle operations.<sup>39</sup>

The railroads tried attracting settlers by offering transportation to the lands promoted in their extensive advertising campaigns.<sup>40</sup> The railroads were not the only advertisers; land agencies and communities advertised land with posters, newspaper ads and circulars.<sup>41</sup>

In 1865 the *Kansas Patriot* of Burlington, Kansas ran this clear and concise notice: "We want one hundred thousand more settlers in the Neosho Valley,"<sup>42</sup> which encompassed much of Lyon and Coffey counties. Earlier notices appeared with more embellishment. The *Neosho Valley Register*, also of Burlington, published this invitation in 1859:

#### To Emigrants

Come to the Neosho Valley, ye who are seeking locations in Kansas. Come and secure some of our beautiful lands before the speculators grab them. We have plenty of timber, good water, fertile prairies, and towns near at hand to furnish you with supplies. There are no more desirable openings at the present time, than this locality affords.<sup>43</sup>

The *Emporia News* printed more lengthy descriptions of the local attractions. In early 1860, it advertised:

#### Cheap Land for Settlers

There is no portion of Kansas or the West that offers so many inducements to the emigrant the coming season as the valleys of the Upper Neosho and its tributaries. . . . Cheap lands -- good lands -- and "plenty of it" -- are not alone the attractions offered. We have a market for all farm products at high prices . . .

A few hundred settlers can find locations *to suit* in this vicinity the coming spring. The sooner they reach here the better choice they can make, and the better start they will bet on their first season's work.<sup>44</sup>

Later that same year, the *Emporia News* explained that "We of course claim the 'garden spot' of all to be the rich delta formed by the confluence of the Cottonwood and Neosho rivers." The article described the conditions facing new emigrants:

to the west of us, on the principal of these streams -- the Cottonwood -- from a point twenty miles distant to its source, a greater portion of the rich bottom land, containing some timber, is yet untaken, and now open to settlement. Those who go in there this spring cannot but be suited in everything but being in the midst of a populous settlement. There are other good locations on the same stream this side, and also upon the tributaries, which flow through a more undulating country, though not less productive in agricultural staples. There is a fine region of unsettled country also to the south of this that will doubtless soon be teeming with a large and thrifty population.<sup>45</sup>

Emigrant aid companies facilitated emigration. A letter written to the *Emporia News* in 1868 expresses the need for such a beneficial organization in Lyon County:

Emigration Society.  
Emporia, April 28th, 1868.

Editor of Emporia News: Though a stranger in your town and community, I hope that your heretofore liberality of spirit will be exercised toward me for offering a suggestion on a point which should interest every citizen of our commonwealth. Kansas is my adopted State; Emporia my future home. I therefore feel an interest in every effort tending to develop the resources of the country.

Emporia, nor Lyon County, so far as I know, have no Emigration Society. Why should it not have? Here is a beautiful enterprising town, situated about the geographical center of the State, in one of the most attractive agricultural districts in the Union, yet comparatively but little known outside of the State.<sup>46</sup>

The author felt that an emigration society could help develop the community. However, the motives of some emigrant aid companies were questioned in an 1855 letter to a Coffey County newspaper:

The Emigrant Aid Co. who have *aided* themselves by impoverishing many that have gone to Kansas by holding out inducements which were entirely unwarranted, are deserving the severest censure of the public, and they are getting it on every hand.

The hotel at Kansas City (owned by the Co.) is in the habit of charging those that they HELP out, \$1 a day when going west, and \$1.50 when returning. So in relation to the fare on the boats, it was about \$9 going up the Missouri; in coming down the same *Mudhole* I had to pay \$15. There seems to be a regular system all the way out and back to plunder the traveller, and rob him either directly or indirectly, as the case may be . . .<sup>47</sup>

Expressions attesting to the desirability of settling in Kansas can be found in the local newspapers of Lyon and Coffey counties. The *Emporia News* of 1857 claimed that, "Scarcely a day passes that the white tops of the emigrants' wagon may not be seen passing by. . . . Almost all bring their families, with sufficient provisions for the winter, and many bring all the necessary tools for pioneer life."<sup>48</sup>

The *Emporia News* by 1869 abounds with ongoing observations of the emigrants, no doubt encouraged by the new land laws, policies and advertisements. Typically these articles describe the people who came and the Lyon county's success in attracting settlers:

#### Emigration

Not less than thirty immigrant wagons have appeared in our streets during the past week, freighted with women and children, household goods, etc., and generally accompanied by droves of stock. They are mostly from the western tier of States, from whence, owing to the favorable winter, they have taken an early start and had a pleasant journey, all the way by land. They are all destined for some locality in this immediate vicinity where they have friends residing except a few who will look for a location on the Upper Cottonwood or upon the streams south. This portion of Kansas is now more rapidly filling up with settlers than at any previous time during the past two years, and certainly faster than any other portion of the territory.<sup>49</sup>

Another 1860 article reports the contribution this influx of new settlers made to the community and state:

#### Emigration

Not a day passes but the white-topped wagons are seen in our streets, filled with the "household goods" and stores of the pioneer, . . . Very few of the "carpet bag" emigrants are to be seen - the new additions to our population being composed of

families, which, of course, adds more to the permanency and stability of society, as well as to the positive wealth of the community.

Very few of these emigrants bring much capital - generally not more than enough to buy a quarter section of land, with stock and household goods. But they are far more beneficial to the country than any number of speculating capitalists.

Kansas is poor in money but rich in the character of her inhabitants. No country, new or old, can boast a more moral, energetic, industrious class of citizens. These are the basis of her prosperity; the guarantee of future blessings and renown.<sup>50</sup>

The quality of the continual flow of emigrants, and their positive impact on the community was also noted:

The emigration continues later the present season than usual. The flow is still constant, embracing families from east, west, north and south, singly, and in companies of from three to twenty, with teams and implements of husbandry, ready to commence work at once, wherever they stop . . . The emigrants are generally well satisfied with the country, and we have not seen a returning emigrant this season. The real, solid merits of Kansas soil, climate and position are just beginning to be fully appreciated by the class of people we most want, and the result is seen in the character and number of emigrants this present season.<sup>51</sup>

Lyon County residents were not alone in witnessing an impressive stream of emigration. Coffey County also had its share of new settlers. There, in 1859, the *Neosho Valley Register* reported:

Emigration is steadily flowing into this region. During a recent trip to Kansas City we met several trains of emigrants, and we ascertained of every one of them their point of destination, and learned all bound either for Coffey County, or the county south of this - Greenwood. They are all of that class of people, too, that we need; most of them being well-to-do farmers and inured to pioneer life. The "carpet-bag gentry" don't reach the Neosho country now-a-days.<sup>52</sup>

Kansas found itself successful in drawing large numbers of emigrants. They came as a result of new land laws, in response to the attractive policies promulgated in the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the Homestead Act, as supplemented by the older Pre-emption Act. They were attracted by advertisements and opportunities for settling near railroads and by the availability of free, or virtually free, land.

Lyon County and Coffey County received many of these new settlers. In 1860 the population of these two counties combined was 6489, and by 1870 it had grown to 14,215; it more than doubled its size in ten years.<sup>53</sup> There, local newspapers bear testimony to the large numbers of emigrants settling in that region. In spite of the frustration they felt when speculators drove up prices, homesteaders succeeded in establishing themselves as permanent settlers in Kansas.

## CHAPTER 2

### LYON AND COFFEY COUNTIES

Situated in the more temperate portion of the state, Lyon and Coffey counties drew many settlers during the mid-nineteenth century, including independent women. By issuing substantial bonds, these two counties also attracted railroads which, in turn, stimulated the arrival of still more settlers. During the 1860s, as the *Emporia News* explained, Kansas was indeed "poor in money, but rich in the character of her inhabitants."<sup>1</sup> These determined Lyon County and Coffey County settlers survived the constant threat of Indian attack, severe weather, the effects of the Civil War, and still successfully developed their communities.

Lyon and Coffey counties share similar experiences. Both were created in 1855 by the "Bogus Legislature." This was a governing body elected in Kansas Territory with votes cast mainly by Missouri residents.<sup>2</sup> In order to more fully understand the environment in which independent women homesteaders lived, it is necessary to include a brief history of the early days of these counties.

Lyon County was originally named Breckinridge in honor of John C. Breckinridge, United States senator from Kentucky, and President James Buchanan's elected vice president in 1857.<sup>3</sup> In 1861, Breckinridge, a Democrat, sided with the Confederacy.<sup>4</sup> This political act did not reflect the sentiment of Breckinridge County's residents, and its name was changed in 1862 to Lyon, in honor of General Nathaniel Lyon.<sup>5</sup> Lyon commanded Union troops at the 1861 battle of Wilson's Creek near Springfield, Missouri. He was killed in that action while leading Kansas troops, including soldiers from Breckinridge County.

General Lyon was "credited with having saved Missouri for the North and it was for that exploit that the county was named in his honor."<sup>6</sup>

Lyon County originally covered an area twenty-four miles square. In 1859, three square miles were added from northern Madison County; in 1861 twelve more miles were added on from Madison County. Madison County was then abolished and the remaining portion attached to Greenwood County to the south. Final reapportionment occurred in 1863 and 1864 with small sections of land going to Chase and Morris counties.<sup>7</sup>

Coffey County was named to honor Colonel A. M. Coffey, member of the "Bogus Legislature," and resident of Missouri. Coffey, who was strongly in favor of slavery, was reported to have served as a Confederate officer during the Civil War.<sup>8</sup> At its inception, Coffey County, along with eighteen other Kansas counties, in favor of free-state politics was disenfranchised by the bogus legislature. In 1879, the *Burlington Patriot* reported that the county was largely Republican in the early days, but that Democrats assumed influential and active roles in the shaping of county policy.<sup>9</sup>

The borders of Coffey County were drawn in 1855, and unlike those of Lyon, have never been redrawn. The county is located just east of Lyon County. Because the Neosho River cuts right through the middle of the county,<sup>10</sup> Coffey County encompasses a very fertile and lush portion of Kansas, and thus became a very popular destination for emigrants.

Residents of both counties faced many trials during the territorial period (1854 - 1861), among them Indian trouble. In 1929, Laura M. French, an early historian of Lyon County claimed that "although Emporia never experienced an Indian raid, always the people were fearful, not knowing at what moment the savages might swoop down upon them."<sup>11</sup> The fear of Indian attack came more from reports of hostile Indian activity in nearby counties.

Until as recently as 1854, Coffey County was inhabited exclusively by Indians, particularly the Sac and Fox. Abby R. Kennedy Spring Aldrich reminisced that when she came to Coffey County in 1859, she initially found more Indians than white people.<sup>12</sup> The early settlers benefited from an old trail and ford left by their predecessors, a Sac and Fox trail running through the county and crossing the Neosho River.<sup>13</sup>

The Indians in Coffey County, though rarely posing a physical danger, were apparently often a source of annoyance to the white settlers. Settlers most commonly complained about Indians intruding in their homes and demanding food. In the early 1930s, Coffey County reporter W. B. Mosley, remembered that Indians would:

come to the house frequently and ask for something to eat and would come from any direction. If the door was open they would come in. If the door was closed they would open it and come in. An Indian never would knock. They came sometimes and asked for hog meat and wanted to trade beads and buckskin for hog meat.<sup>14</sup>

At times some Indians did more than ask for food. Bert Fry, an early resident of Coffey County recorded this incident:

Sometimes the Indians would kill a white man for plunder. One man by name of Comings who lived here in Ottumwa was shot in the back while he was coming home from Kansas city in his wagon. He was killed for plunder, so the men got together and went to their village and made the Indians give the murderer up. What the white man did to him was a plenty - the unwritten law was all they had those days.<sup>15</sup>

Whether the story is true or apocryphal, it accurately reflects the prevailing attitudes of those whites towards their Indian neighbors. The "unwritten law" could be excessively harsh, yet Indians did not always pose a threat to the lives of the settlers. Fry recorded a second incident demonstrating a more positive, albeit stereotyped, view of Indians' abilities. This episode involves an Indian woman who possessed a thorough knowledge of medicinal plants. As Fry relates the tale, the child of a neighbor had been bitten by a rattlesnake. The Indian woman fortuitously happened upon the neighbor's family, made a

poultice from roots, bound the child's wound, and proclaimed, "Papoose be all right by and by." But the parents did not trust her cure and dosed the child with whiskey. When the Indian woman returned and heard of this she scolded the parents: "Oh! Bad. Bad. Papoose never will wake up." The child subsequently died.<sup>16</sup> Had they put their faith in the Indian's inherent knowledge of nature, the story implies, this child might have lived.

Far from being a bane, Indians often became a boon, and the residents of Coffey County profited financially from trade with the tribes. This report from the *Neosho Valley Register* in 1859 describes how residents benefitted:

The annual payment to the Sac and Fox Indians was made a few days ago. Since then a large number of the tribe, including warriors, squaws and papooses, have been encamped in the woods opposite Burlington. They have been making purchases of our merchants of ammunition and supplies, preparatory for a grand buffalo hunt.<sup>17</sup>

Environmental problems posed a greater threat than Indians to the survival of those first settlers in the late 1850s and the early 1860s. These years were difficult ones for Lyon County and Coffey County homesteaders, who witnessed the destructive effects of Texas, or Spanish, fever which threatened the local cattle.

Spanish cattle fever killed an estimated 300 cows in Lyon County during a three week period.<sup>18</sup> Cattle from Texas driven through the state to market in the north, were blamed for infecting local cattle with this deadly illness.<sup>19</sup> The threat was serious enough to warrant the publication of a cure for Spanish fever in an 1859 issue of the *Emporia News*:

#### Cure for Spanish Fever

The Leavenworth *Times* gives the following receipt which, on the authority of one who has tried it, it says is a certain cure for that dreadful disease among cattle, the "Spanish Fever."

One ounce aloes, one ounce rheubarb, one quarter ounce saltpetre, dissolve in about one quart of hot water. When cool, drench the animal with the liquid. In

about half an hour after the drench is administered, cut about half a pound of the fattest bacon that can be procured into thin slices, and force the animal to swallow it. Bathing the bottoms of the hoofs in a strong decoction of tobacco during the operation will be beneficial.<sup>20</sup>

This was also the time of the infamous "Drouth of 'Sixty." The great drought was the more serious of the two problems. Between the fall of 1859 and the fall of 1860, only one inch of rain fell.<sup>21</sup> This became the most severe and enduring dry spell known in the region to that time.<sup>22</sup> A contemporary newspaper reported:

The sky above our heads seemed brass and the earth was iron beneath our feet. The air around us seemed the very breath of hell, and the whole atmosphere seemed ready to burst into devouring flame. Day after day and month after month the scanty vegetation looked up helplessly to the unpitying heavens and died. It is no wonder many of the settlers, perhaps a majority of them, returned to their former homes and that few of those who went ever returned.<sup>23</sup>

The editors of the *Emporia News* maintained a sense of humor or at least found themselves still capable of recognizing absurdity when reporting the arrival of the "lightning rod man" in town with his equipment and an offer to solicit orders. "Who's afraid of being struck by lightning these hard times? Ridiculous!"<sup>24</sup>

The effects of the "Drouth of 'Sixty" on crops were compounded by a frost every month during that year<sup>25</sup> and by high winds.<sup>26</sup> Some measure of the calamity is seen in the response of relief agencies in eastern states which shipped supplies into Kansas to aid the desperate settlers.<sup>27</sup> Unfortunately these shipments did not always arrive at their destination. In 1860, the *Neosho Valley Register* lamented that there existed "many sad cases of destitution in this portion of the Territory, and aid from some source is absolutely needed, and such a source cannot be found here." The paper then complained that supplies destined for the Neosho Valley never arrive: "supplies for the suffering people of Kansas are being constantly received at the river towns, and yet none reach these parts.

Who is to blame?"<sup>28</sup> These conditions argued against success for the first wave of settlers.

The early years of the 1860s were also disrupted by the outbreak of the Civil War. It erupted in 1861, the same year Kansas was admitted to the Union, and continued in the middle of the decade. Crops which suffered from the severe drought were further ravaged and neglected due to the guerrilla warfare preceding the formal outbreak of hostilities.

The resulting famine drove many would be settlers out of Kansas territory. In spite of this exodus, Kansas still responded to the Union's call for troops.<sup>29</sup> Proportionately, Kansas supplied more men for the army than any other state.<sup>30</sup> By April 1861, Emporia and the immediate environs supplied one hundred fifty-five men; in September, yet another company was organized.<sup>31</sup> About two hundred men enlisted from Coffey County.<sup>32</sup> Not all of these soldiers were white settlers however. In 1862, in LeRoy, Coffey County, the First and Second Indian Regiments were organized with white officers.<sup>33</sup>

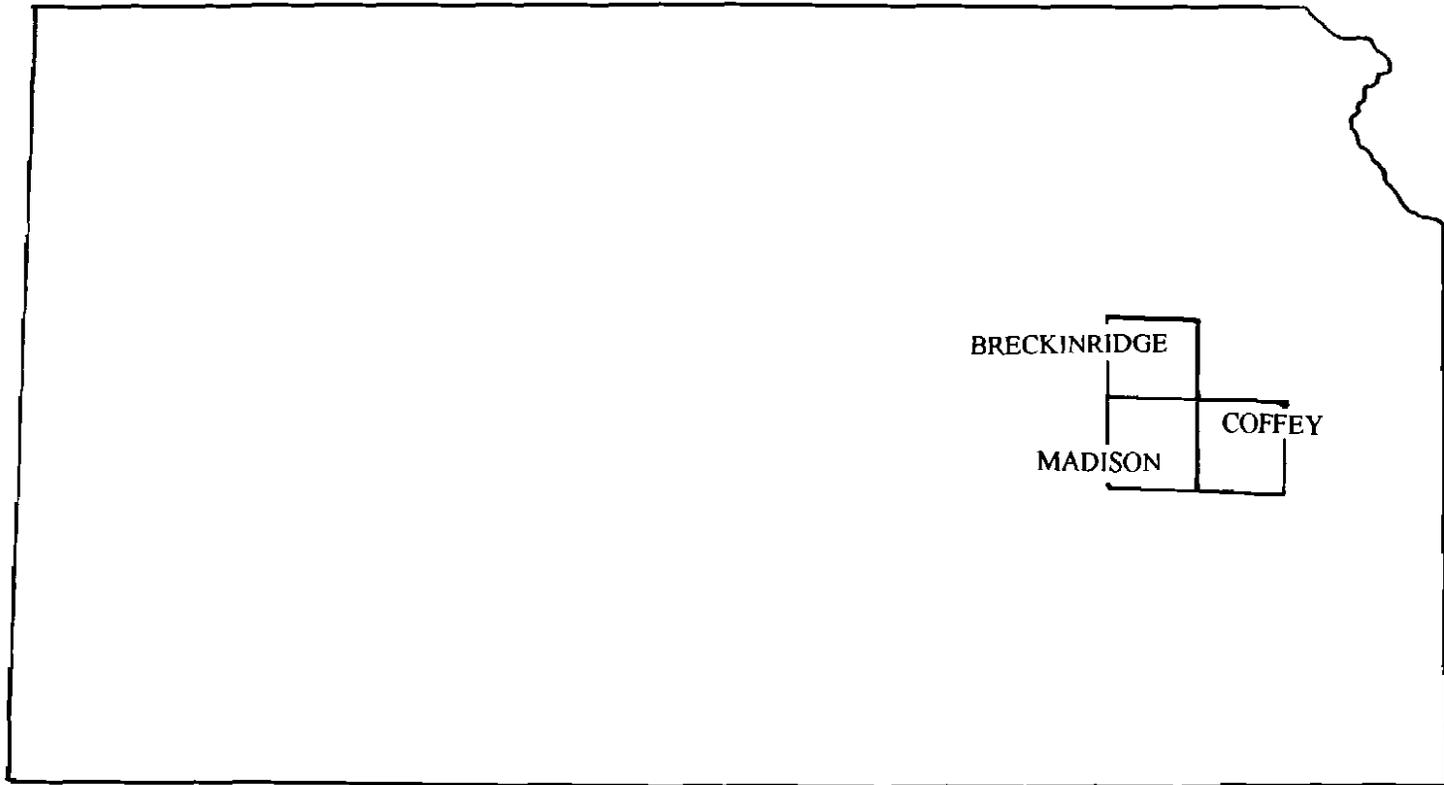
As a result of the high volunteer rate, Coffey and Lyon counties experienced a dramatic increase in the number of "temporary widows." Lyon County historian Orville Mosher claimed that "our men went into the army with enthusiasm while women sewed the flags and tended to the farms."<sup>34</sup> Yet these women did far more than that. Tending to the farms was no simple task in those days, especially for a woman alone. Though still married, these women assumed men's responsibilities in the fields, "bravely and uncomplainingly," and their "courage and fortitude" encouraged their men at war.<sup>35</sup>

After surviving the difficulties of the early and mid-1860s, Lyon County and Coffey County residents set about making their communities grow and prosper. Railroads were a requisite for ensuring the success of established settlers since they provided transportation to market for the products of their labor. Railroads also attracted new settlers. Recognizing the importance of railroads to the local communities' development, Lyon and

Coffey counties voted county bonds to encourage their establishment in the vicinity. Coffey County authorized \$200,000 in bonds in 1866 to aid the construction of the Neosho Valley railroad, later part of the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas railroad.<sup>36</sup> Lyon County followed suit in 1867, issuing \$200,000 in bonds to assist the construction of the southern branch of the Union Pacific railroad which later became part of the M. K. & T. In 1869 Lyon county increased its railroad debt to \$400,000, voting \$200,000 to assist with construction of the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe Railroad.<sup>37</sup> Railroads encouraged settlement and contributed heavily to communities' growth and prosperity. The railroads generated employment for many Lyon County and Coffey County farmers and laborers during the construction phase, which pumped substantial amounts of cash into the local economy.<sup>38</sup>

Lyon County and Coffey County residents survived the dynamic, demanding decade of the 1860s. They endured their fear of Indian hostility and struggles with the physical environment. They even withstood the hardships accompanying the Civil War. Later in the decade, they successfully sponsored railroad construction and enjoyed its concomitant influx of more settlers, new jobs, and sorely needed cash.

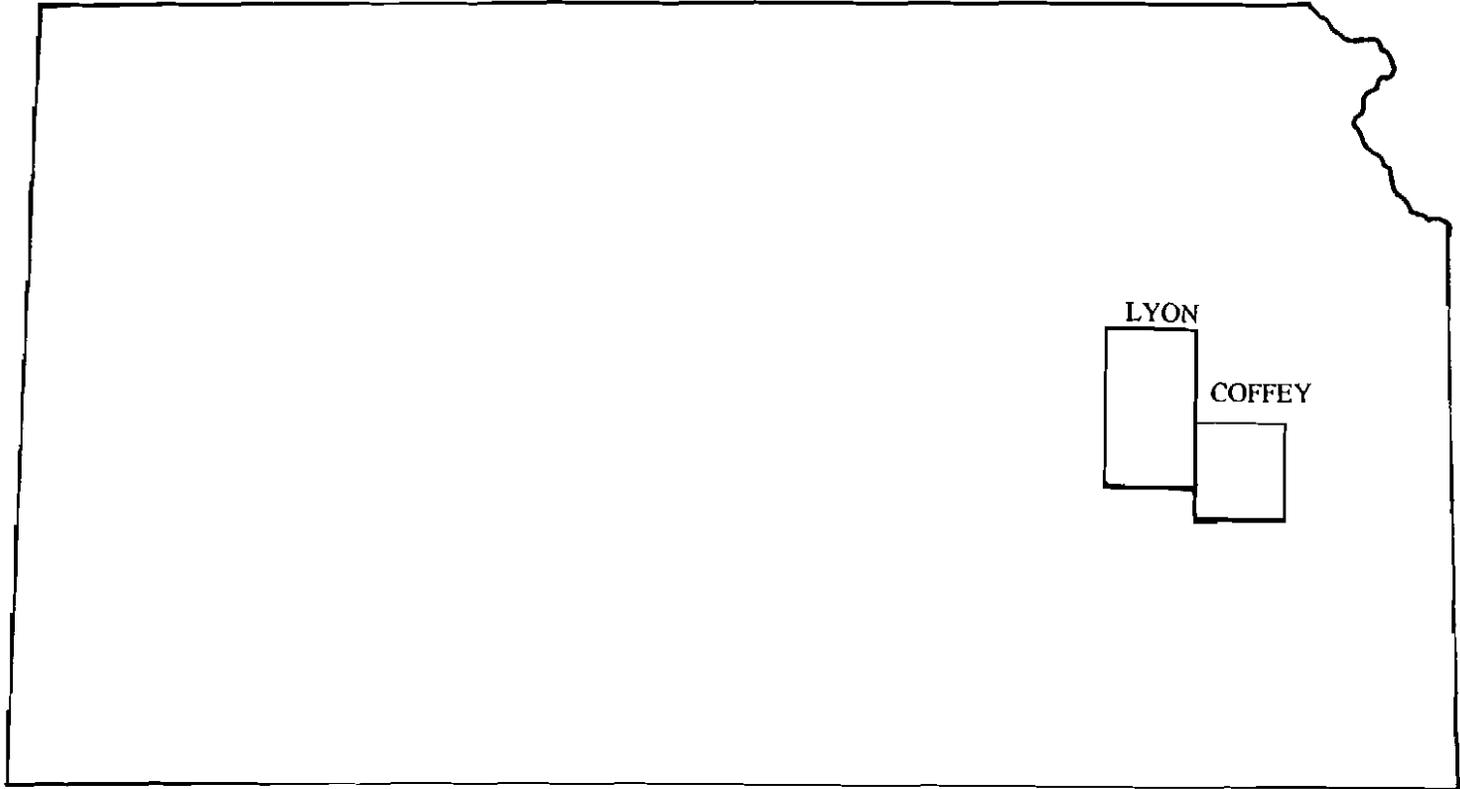
It was in this atmosphere that independent women homesteaders of this study established themselves. These trials of Indian encounters, natural disasters and war challenged all early pioneers. Yet for independent women, the struggle to succeed assumed greater difficulty because they had no husband with whom to share their weighty burdens.



**LYON AND COFFEY COUNTIES**

**KANSAS TERRITORY**

1855



**LYON AND COFFEY COUNTIES**

**STATE OF KANSAS**

AFTER 1865

## CHAPTER 3

### THE IDEAL WOMAN OF THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

The independent farm women discussed in this study did not represent the ideals of womanly life and behavior as prescribed by society in the 1850s and 1860s. It is easy to accept that such is the case, yet to fully understand how these women strayed from society's ideals, it is also necessary to understand just what society considered proper behavior for a woman in the mid-nineteenth century and how these notions were disseminated.

Historians have developed two paradigms in particular which describe the desired behavior for women of this time. The first is the Ideology of Separate Spheres, which details a woman's proper place within society. The second, the Cult of True Womanhood, describes the requisite attributes of the virtuous woman.

The circulation of these convictions among the American public was achieved through various means. Though pressure exerted by family and neighbors probably provided an effective method for expressing the importance of these ideals, the prescriptive literature of the time was perhaps the most influential manner of transmitting these beliefs. Contemporary writers described their observations of women and their role in society in widely read books and magazines. A brief analysis of these writings reveals a well-developed mid-nineteenth century image of the "perfect woman." When the real lives of the independent farm women are compared to this ideal image, it becomes evident that these women differed greatly from the paragon of womanhood.

The Ideology of Separate Spheres embraced a group of beliefs that developed in the early nineteenth century with social critics Alexis de Tocqueville, Angelina Grimke, and Lucy Stone.<sup>1</sup> It clearly defined the distinction between the legitimate areas of activity for men and women. This complex of ideas included the concept of separate and often opposite duties, functions, and personal attributes for males and females.<sup>2</sup> The advent of this ideology was brought about by economic, religious, and political events that changed the organization of American society following the Revolutionary War. These events provide invaluable insights into the behavior of nineteenth century women, both those who strove to live up to the ideal and those who chose their own paths.

The Industrial Revolution and its concomitant technological innovations resulted in a major economic transition. The workplace and the home that had previously been integrated began separating. This shift of economic production from the private or domestic sphere to the public realm resulted in the separation of female and male domains. Women, still the primary caretakers of the children found themselves assigned to the domestic sphere, while men were forced to follow their jobs into the public sphere.

The idea of "separate spheres" was developed to explain and at times to justify this new disconnection between men's and women's lives by defining the "inherent" characteristics of women and claiming these traits made them incapable of functioning in the public realm. Women were classified as physically weaker and morally superior to men. This concept was reinforced by contemporary religious views such as the rise of Protestant evangelical thought and its ideas about free will. It was women's supposed moral superiority that best suited them to the domestic sphere.<sup>3</sup>

The political atmosphere of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries also underwent a transformation. This included a new emphasis on the maintenance of social order that was manifested in the concept termed "Republican Motherhood" by historian Linda Kerber. "Republican motherhood" was the belief that the ideal American woman

was a mother who would cultivate in the next generation the requisite moral and social virtues to ensure the survival of the Republic.

Women were to be good wives and mothers to the citizens of the democracy.<sup>4</sup> In order to effectively inculcate the moral foundations of Democracy, women had to be better educated. It was the resulting increase in the literacy rate of women that made prescriptive literature such an effective vehicle for transmitting society's views concerning the "proper" role of women. Prescriptive literature includes novels, texts, magazines, and newspapers, any published materials that prescribe, or recommend specific behavior deemed desirable by society. The ideal woman as represented in this literature was one who was entrenched in the domestic sphere.

The Ideology of Separate Spheres had several implications. It explained how a democratic society could function. Society was naturally divided into two classes, men and women. Men were to create the American economic empire through individual achievement; and women were to ensure social order and moral stability through their domestic activities. In other words, the private activities and superior morals of women were to provide the moral foundation for public activity.<sup>5</sup>

The cult of domesticity prevalent in the nineteenth century was termed the belief system of the Cult of True Womanhood by historian Barbara Welter. By careful examination of popular books and magazines of the mid-1800s, Welter uncovered four special qualities or attributes of the "true" woman. The virtuous woman was pious, pure, submissive, and a paragon of domesticity. These characteristics represented the ideal which every woman should strive to emulate.

The first trait was that of religious piety, the essence of a woman's virtue and the source of her strength. Woman's religious superiority was believed to be her divine gift from the creator. It was therefore her duty to lead the sinful, particularly her husband,

back into the path of Christ. This was to be accomplished through the power of her pure and pious example.<sup>6</sup>

While church work enabled the True Woman to feel she had made a contribution to society, it did so in such a way that she remained within her submissive, dependent, domestic sphere. Church work reinforced the idea that these women should put others above themselves. Self-sacrifice to aid the sinner was the paramount goal. Such activities did not foster independence, nor did they encourage women to attempt to rise above their station in society.

The second virtue was that of purity. This attribute was essential to the proper woman who was sexually pure, above temptations of the flesh. Its absence branded the woman unvirtuous. Should a woman succumb to base instincts and allow a man to seduce her, she was no longer a True Woman. Like piety, the virtue of purity rested on a critical premise: the assumed moral superiority of women. Men were seen as more vulnerable to sexual temptations. True Women, on the other hand, were able to resist temptations because of their inherent purity and moral strength.

The third virtue was submissiveness. In order to continue the ideal family with the husband as master, it was necessary that the True Woman should recognize her subservient position and her dependent status. With marriage the goal for all proper young women, the True Woman expressed her thankfulness for the protection and support of her husband. She looked to her husband as her guardian and respected his decisions.

Although the home was the man's castle, it was also the proper sphere of the woman. The fourth virtue, that of domesticity, was therefore of supreme importance. The home was to be a haven from the rest of the world, the "Home Sweet Home" typified by nineteenth century hand stitched samplers. After enduring the rigors of the outside world, a man returned to the home for restoration. The woman was the comforter: the care of

her husband and children was her duty. As the home was her proper sphere, it was here that she created a refuge for her husband.<sup>7</sup>

Historiographer Linda K. Kerber traces the first serious examination of American women and their role in society in the mid-nineteenth century to the writings of Alexis de Tocqueville. Democracy in America, published in 1840, explains that "the inexorable opinion of the public carefully circumscribes [her] within the narrow circle of domestic interests and duties and forbids her to step beyond it."<sup>8</sup> The women de Tocqueville described were stereotypes:

American women never manage the outward concerns of the family or conduct a business or take a part in political life; nor are they, on the other hand, ever compelled to perform the rough labor of the fields or to make any of those laborious efforts which demand the exertion of physical strength.<sup>9</sup>

Women remained within their proper domestic sphere. The women in this study grew up in a society that had for many years relegated women to a very separate and distinct sphere of activity, one that showed little tolerance for those who chose not to abide by its ideals. De Tocqueville explained that the boundaries of woman's proper sphere originated in the "inexorable opinion of the public." This emphasizes the significance of societal pressure.

Prescriptive literature, a vehicle intended for the dissemination society's ideals, helped inculcate the ideologies of Separate Spheres and True Womanhood into nineteenth century American women. Nineteenth century prescriptive literature encompassed many different types of writing. Popular novels such as those written by Susan Warner and Harriet Beecher Stowe either reflect the idealized version of the American woman or offer examples of what would befall the woman who failed to live up to the ideal. The beliefs surrounding the cult of True Womanhood were based upon the premise that women were morally superior to men. According to historian Mary P. Ryan, popular novels like T.S. Arthur's What Can a Woman Do, "were required, therefore, to demonstrate how women

readers and characters could achieve moral power from a position of apparent social subordination."<sup>10</sup>

Advice books were also very influential. Those written by women like Lydia H. Sigourney and Catharine Beecher detailed how a woman could best fulfill her duties as prescribed in the ideology of True Womanhood. These popular books gave advice on proper behavior, tips on hair and clothing styles, along with recipes for preparing delicious yet economical meals.

A readily available source of prescriptive literature was periodicals. *Godey's Lady's Book*, edited by Sarah Josepha Hale between 1837 and 1877, was the leading women's magazine during this time. This monthly periodical provided color plates of fashionable clothing, moralizing short stories and poetry, as well as patterns for clothing and accessories.

By 1858, during the period *Godey's* influence would have affected women in this study, the circulation rate reached 150,000 subscribers.<sup>11</sup> On the frontier, a subscription was often shared by many women joining together and each contributing a small amount of money in order to jointly purchase a single subscription. When the magazine arrived, it was passed around to each member, then on to friends and family.<sup>12</sup> The *Kansas Patriot* published in Coffey county, printed this statement regarding the popularity of *Godey's* and the existence of subscription clubs in an 1865 issue:

Gody's [sic] Lady's Book, for December, is on our table. Now is the time to get up clubs for this superb publication. No lady should be without it. It is not only invaluable to ladies for the choice patterns and receipts it contains, but the reading matter is pure, elevating and refined, and nobody can read *Godey* without feeling better and having a more exalted opinion of the world.<sup>13</sup>

Because of this practice, *Godey's* impact was significantly greater than the subscription level alone would indicate.

The *Lady's Book* was also popular in Lyon county. The *Emporia News* published this notice in 1862 praising *Godey's*:

The first of the magazines on our table for April is the *Lady's Book*. It is always ahead of its contemporaries. It is filled with interesting reading matter, has a splendid engraving, and is full of "spring fashions." Send and get it. We can get it for you, cheap.<sup>14</sup>

The *Emporia News* claimed *Godey's Lady's Book* was "one of the best things of the kind in the country."<sup>15</sup> *Godey's* popularity was such that the editors of the *News* felt no family should be without it and that it was "worth ten times what it cost."<sup>16</sup>

The topic of many of the essays and poems in *Godey's* was motherhood which was to encompass the four virtuous attributes of the True Woman. The depth and purity of a mother's love was expressed in the following poem which appeared in *Godey's* in 1859:

A MOTHER'S LOVE  
by George W. Cook

Buried deeply in the bosom  
Of the Orient Indian earth,  
Gems of richest ray are shining --  
Gems of beauty, gems of worth!  
'Neath the billows of the ocean,  
Hidden treasures wait the hand  
That again to light shall raise them,  
With the diver's magic wand!  
What to me the wealth of India?  
What the gems beneath the sea?  
What the riches of the wealthy?  
What the gold of kings to me?  
When beside one only treasure,  
These in gaudy vestments move,  
Then, ah then, tho' poor, I'm wealthy --  
Wealthy in a mother's love!

Maiden's smiles are sweet, but fickle;  
 Love they seldom have to give,  
 Like the dreams of Eastern smokers,  
 All too short that love doth live!  
 But the holy, pure affection,  
 By a gentle mother given,  
 Never fadeth with the twilight,  
 Dies to live again in heaven!  
 Often sick and sore with trouble,  
 Longing from this world to fly,  
 How that holy love has cheered me,  
 Beaming from a mother's eye!  
 How those gentle smiles have stifled,  
 Oft the bitter thoughts that rove;  
 Oh, a priceless gift of heaven  
 Art thou sure, a mother's love!<sup>17</sup>

The True Woman's virtue of piety, also reinforced with essays and poems, reminded women of their duty to bring their sinful husbands back into Christ's fold. An 1862 essay of *Godey's* states that women's "influence restrained the evil passions of man, and was a solace to him in his griefs."<sup>18</sup>

An earlier issue of *Godey's* included "A Wife's Prayer." Here the wife was praised for her submissiveness and reminded of her inherent piety. She had to recognize her subordinate position and behave in a manner honoring both her husband and God. The wife's prayer made the request to "unite his heart to me in the dearest love and holiness, and mine to him in all sweetness, charity, and compliance. Keep me from all ungentleness of passion and humor: and make me humble and obedient, useful and observant."<sup>19</sup> *Godey's* clearly reminded women of their subservience and piety.

The tasks of consoling and comforting her husband were strongly tied to the woman's virtues of domesticity and submissiveness. An 1862 essay in *Godey's* expresses the idea that although a woman's "mental powers were inferior to man, yet she possessed qualities far above him."<sup>20</sup> *Godey's* essays also designate the domestic realm as the proper sphere for women. In 1860 the *Lady's Book* informed women that "in domestic happiness, the

wife's influence is much greater than the husband's."<sup>21</sup> The home she made for her husband was to be:

a little haven, all joy peace, and tranquillity; suspicion dwells not there; jealousy did not reign there, nor falsehood, with its double tongue; no venomous slander had a place there; peace spread her wings over it; man never entered it but he forgot the cares of a busy world; there he dwelt in happy confidence unmingled with remorse. Such a place was the quiet home of woman.<sup>22</sup>

Women were admonished not to neglect their domestic duties by giving in to the temptations of "what are wrongly called 'higher pursuits' - literary or intellectual labor - is to neglect that which 'everyone can do' - the management of domestic affairs."<sup>23</sup>

Fortunately, according to *Godey's*, fewer and fewer women were yielding to those temptations. An 1862 article in *Godey's* concluded with an example of a woman who, though she was of tremendous assistance to her husband in his profession, was able to accomplish the labor "without her having for a moment neglected the care and education of a large family."<sup>24</sup> The ideal woman was expected to do no less.

Other articles in *Godey's* reflect a strong emphasis upon the purity of the woman. Her worth as a wife was directly influenced by her purity. In 1861 women were counseled:

She that hath a wise husband, must entice him to an eternal dearness, by the veil of modesty, and the grave robes of chastity, the ornament of meekness, and the jewels of faith and charity; her brightness must be purity, and she must shine round about with sweetness and friendship, and she shall be pleasant while she lives, and desired when she dies.<sup>25</sup>

As its circulation rate suggests, *Godey's Lady's Book* was quite popular. Perhaps more influential than *Godey's* were local newspapers. These papers were more accessible even than *Godey's* to the average woman in Kansas. One such paper, the *Emporia News*, of Lyon County, published its share of prescriptive literature for women. Often the advice or

patterns of desired behavior were veiled in essays praising women's "innate" qualities. "Women in Adversity," appearing in the *Emporia News* in 1859, focuses on the moral superiority of women:

### WOMEN IN ADVERSITY

Woman should be more trusted and confided in as wives, mothers and sisters.-- They have a quick perception of right and wrong, and, without always knowing why, read the present and future, read characters and acts, designs and probabilities, where man sees no letter or sign. . . . Woman never evaded mere temporal calamity by suicide or desertion. . . . Women should be consulted and confided in. It is the beauty and glory of her nature that it instinctively grasps at and clings to the truth and right. Reason, man's greatest faculty, takes time to hesitate before it decides; but woman's instinct never hesitates in its decision, and is scarcely ever wrong, where it has even chances with reason. Woman feels where man thinks, acts where he deliberates, hopes where he despairs, and triumphs where he fails.<sup>26</sup>

This article glorifies the abilities of women, and favorably contrasts them with men. However, below the surface, it also provided a pattern for the sort of behavior to be emulated by every woman.

The moral superiority of women is also the subject of "What is Due to Woman," an article which appeared in an 1860 issue of the *Emporia News*. Here, mothers are credited with civilizing society and ensuring its continued success by virtue of giving birth to great men. Because of this vital contribution, men are advised:

To be grateful to woman for this unbounded achievement of her sex, that she, far more than he, and too often in despite of him, has kept Christendom from lapsing back into barbarism; kept mercy and truth from being utterly overborne by those two greedy monsters -- money and war. Let him be grateful for this, that almost every soul that has led forward or lifted up the race, has been furnished for each noble deed, and inspired with each patriotic and holy aspiration, by the retiring fortitude of some Spartan, or more than Spartan -- some Christian mother. . . . So everywhere; man executes the performance, but woman trains the man.<sup>27</sup>

Thus women are informed that as True Women, they are not to be the makers of history, but rather the ones behind the scenes encouraging their sons and husbands on to greatness.

The influence of a woman, as long as she lives up to the domestic ideal, is also recognized the Coffey County paper, the *Neosho Valley Register*. An article appearing in 1861 described:

A Wife's Influence -- A married man falling into misfortune is more apt to retrieve his situation in the world than a single one, chiefly because spirits are soothed by domestic endearment, and his self-respect kept alive by finding that although all abroad be darkness and humiliation, yet there is a little world of love at home, over which he is a monarch.<sup>28</sup>

"A Low Voice in Women" appearing in an 1859 issue of the *Emporia News* suggests that a woman's task of consoling and comforting her family, and even her attractiveness to her husband was directly affected by the quality of her voice:

#### A LOW VOICE IN WOMEN

Yes, we agree with that old poet who said that a low soft voice was an excellent thing in woman. Indeed, we feel inclined to go much further than he has on the subject, and call it one of her crowning charms. How often the spell of beauty is rudely broken by coarse, loud talking. How often are you irresistibly drawn to a plain, unassuming woman, whose soft, silvery tones render her positively attractive! In the social circle, how pleasant it is to hear a woman talk in that low key which always characterizes the true lady! In the sanctuary of home, how such a voice soothes the fretful child, and cheers the weary husband!<sup>29</sup>

Advice to women was at times more obviously stated than in the above selections. The following article, appearing in the *Emporia News* in 1868, candidly details the desired virtues of the True Woman, under the guise of loving advice from a mother to her daughter:

"My Daughter," said a fond and affectionate mother, as she was leaving the home of her childhood, to go among strangers as a teacher: "Let virtue be thy priceless jewel; Truth, thy firm friend; Piety, thy bosom companion; Kindness, a welcome visitor; and Neatness an every day associate. With such friends to advise and guide, thy path through life will be strewn with no regrets."<sup>30</sup>

The *Neosho Valley Register* explained in 1859 that "no man ever desires a "highly accomplished woman for his wife. That is a fact, ladies, worth (we think) your serious

consideration." A man looks for qualities in a woman that promise "household felicity," and he shuns well read, passionate, intelligent, or worldly, accomplished women.<sup>31</sup> The *Neosho Valley Register* stated in 1860, that "none of our excellent girls are fit to be married until they are thoroughly educated in the deep and profound mysteries of the kitchen!"<sup>32</sup>

These quotes from *Godey's Lady's Book* and the local newspapers of Lyon and Coffey Counties serve to define the attributes of the True Woman as well as to delineate her area of influence or proper sphere. These commentaries were readily available to the average woman. The ideals they espoused represented the consensus of American, male dominated society. However, these ideals neither matched reality, nor did such stereotyped expectations wholly reflect the reality of individual women's lives.<sup>33</sup>

The concepts of Separate Spheres and the cult of True Womanhood fell short of representing the reality of the typical pioneer woman's life. Referring to the Cult of True Womanhood, historian Elizabeth Jameson explains that many of the ideals it prescribed were unattainable for the working farm woman in the West. The very nature of the homestead family blurred the barriers between the separate Spheres, as gender-assigned tasks were shared by both sexes.<sup>34</sup>

Had the average Kansas woman been able to attain the ideal of True Womanhood, the *Emporia News* would not be filled with so many negative comments about women. Calling attention to the laxity of some women's housekeeping skills, the *Emporia News* in 1859 printed the following anecdote: "A Woman, purchasing cups and saucers, was asked what color she would have. -- 'Why, I an't particular,' says she: 'any color that won't show dirt.'"<sup>35</sup> Apparently this observation was considered important, or humorous enough to warrant a second printing three months later. Another derisive comment, entitled "Amusement" was published in the *Kansas News* in 1857:

Amusement -- A plain-spoken woman lately visited a married woman, and said to her: "How do you contrive to amuse yourself?"

"Amuse!" said the other, staring, "do you know I have my housework to do?"

"Yes," was the answer, "I see you have it to do; but as it is never done, I conclude you must have some other way of passing your time."<sup>36</sup>

Other negative comments assumed the form of still more jokes. These afforded men a way to teasingly point out that real women were simply not living up to the idealized expectations. The following joke appeared in the *Emporia News* in 1868:

Why are women like churches? Firstly, because there is no living without one; secondly, because there is many a-spire to them; thirdly, because they are objects of adoration, and lastly, but by no means leastly, because they have a loud clapper in their upper-story.<sup>37</sup>

So much for the desired "low voice in women."

A joke, printed in 1860, addresses "the sweet open countenance of woman," claiming "The man who tried to sweeten his tea with one of his wife's smiles has fallen back on sugar."<sup>38</sup> The necessity of a woman possessing a warm, friendly character is expressed in this commentary included in an 1860 issue of the *Emporia News*, "Ladies who have a disposition to punish their husbands, should bear in mind that a little warm sunshine will melt an icicle much quicker than a regular north-easter."<sup>39</sup>

Another witticism focused upon the inappropriate and immodest behavior of some women. This quip appeared on 7 July 1860 in the *Emporia News*:

"Speaking of shaving," said a pretty girl to an obdurate old bachelor,

"I should think that a pair of handsome eyes would be the best mirror to shave by."

"Yes, many a poor fellow has been *shaved* by them," the wretch replied.<sup>40</sup>

Advice commentaries were also a common form of inculcating the concepts of what was desired in a woman and traits that should be avoided. In 1859, the *Emporia News* ran this comment: "To Young Men Only -- When your lady-love can't be moved by any other

process, try the leave-her."<sup>41</sup> The next week's issue included this: "Advice to Young Men -- Get a piece of calico that will wash."<sup>42</sup> This remark diminishes women to the level of objects, mere "pieces of calico," and reflects a very poor opinion of the true value of women as human beings.

The *Kansas News* of Lyon County included this cutting comment in 1857: "A strong minded woman is now defined as she who spoils a very respectable woman in vain endeavors to become a very ordinary man." Women who stepped outside their submissive role were thus reprimanded.<sup>43</sup> Apparently these complaints were considered important as most appeared on the first and second pages of the newspaper.<sup>44</sup>

While the average homesteading woman offered a mild challenge to the nineteenth century paradigms of Separate Spheres and True Womanhood, the lifestyles of the independent women homesteaders questioned the very accuracy of these stereotypes. The basic assumptions behind the gender-based distinctions of abilities and duties of men and women were defied even more blatantly by independent farm women.

The independent woman homesteader was single, either by choice or by circumstance. Her marital status alone kept her from fulfilling wifely duties or exhibiting any wifely virtues. She was the head of her household and had no husband to be the king of her castle, no husband to whom she had to be subservient. Many of these women did have children, but because these women were often the sole supporters of their families they had even less free time to focus on the care and education of those children than their married counterparts.

The idealized role of women could not entirely fit most pioneer women whether married or independent. Due to the very nature of a working farmstead, they performed chores that would definitely be considered within the man's sphere back east. For the single farm woman, this acceptance of "man's work" was even more striking as she was

usually the main economic provider for her family. For many of these women, this new position was a learned one, a role they assumed upon their husbands' deaths. For others, it was purposely chosen from the outset as a means of achieving autonomy.

These independent women were pioneers in more than one sense of the word. Their struggles and sometime successes on the frontier made them pioneers along with other frontier men and women. Their lifestyles contradicted society's prescribed roles for women. They adhered to neither the doctrine of the True Woman nor the concept of Separate Spheres. Yet the abilities and strengths they possessed to persevere against the mainstream of American society makes them all pioneers.

## CHAPTER 4

### **THE REAL FARM WOMAN OF THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY IN LYON AND COFFEY COUNTIES, KANSAS**

The day-to-day life of the authentic independent woman homesteader of Kansas in the mid-nineteenth century differed greatly from the prescribed ideals. The concept of Separate Spheres was useless to her. The attributes of the True Woman, though still present to some degree, were not the focus of her life.

The occupation of the real independent woman farmer was incompatible with the norm of society. She had to struggle with Indians on a personal level. She had to endure the trying conditions of a harsh, uncivilized environment. Yet in spite of all the adversity, she persisted and succeeded.

The nineteenth century concept of Separate Spheres accepts that men and women are naturally suited to different areas of activity. The men were to be involved in the world at large as workers and to be the heads of households. Women were to focus their energy on the home and family. The independent woman homesteader dismissed the separation. Between 1860 and 1870, 133 women were heads of farming households in Lyon and Coffey counties. These women continued to operate in the female sphere of the home; however, they also stepped into the male sphere by running agricultural businesses.

Their lifestyles made it necessary to take on additional tasks that back East would have been considered outside a woman's proper sphere. These women provided their families with food, from the planting to the preserving; sewed their clothing; doctored the people as well as the animals; hauled all the water for cooking and cleaning and laundering.

"Women's work became whatever had to be done, herding cattle, checking trap lines, seeding rows with corn."<sup>1</sup>

The cult of true womanhood could not have much affected the daily lives of these women. With all that they had to contend with, there was little leisure time for striving to be the ideal woman. While the first two attributes of the true woman were important, the final two had little meaning for the independent women.

The first virtue of piety could be met by attendance at worship services and being a kindly neighbor. The second virtue, purity, could be of critical importance. As will be detailed in the following chapter, one woman was suspected of being the mistress of a Coffey County farmer and was subsequently stabbed to death along with her child, for her impropriety by the sons of the farmer. Purity was indeed a crucial virtue.

The two remaining virtues were of little importance to the independent farm woman. Submissiveness to a husband, the "king" of the "castle," was not a factor to be dealt with by these women. The independent woman homesteader was both the queen and the king of her castle, bearing the double responsibility.

The virtue of domesticity, while still valid to a certain extent, did not occupy the position of supreme importance to her that it did to the ideal woman. The independent woman no doubt wanted to create a wholesome environment for her children, but to put her all into making her home into a "haven from the rigors of the outside world," would drain precious energy away from her efforts to keep her family going.

This column by Fanny Fern appeared in the *Neosho Valley Register* in 1860. It offers an amusing response to the concept of the ideal woman:

Exposure of Popular Fallacies --  
Respecting Women.

"A woman should always be neatly and elegantly dressed; she has no excuses for appearing otherwise!"

Has she not, sir? What do you call those five little animals in pink aprons and pinker cheeks, who hang around from "morn till dewy eve?" What do you call the baby, who always wakes just when he ought to be asleep, and lifts up the full force of his small lungs just when he ought to keep still? What do you call the soup, which must be seasoned to a grain of pepper, and the pudding which must be baked just so, or there will be trouble among the lords of creation? The coat which must be mended? the cravats which need only a stitch? the china that must be washed? the carpets which must be swept? We should call these very respectable excuses for a little *dishabille* now and then!

"A woman gadding abroad, is one of the most disagreeable sights in the world; her place is at home!"

We are not sure of that, either; not if she wears a pretty bonnet, and has cheeks like the sunny side of a peach, and ripe, cherry kind of lips.

We've seen a great many more disagreeable things, and confess a weakness for bright eyes and pretty hair. Undoubtedly her place is home, but that's no reason she should shut herself up there, until she looks like a cherry stalk or a lump of chalk. Who would buy the coal and calico, the marketing and the new music, if a woman is never to set her foot over the threshold . . . The man that wrote that heresy never kept house, we know.

"Women should always be calm and composed, like a peaceful landscape or a serenely shining star.-- Her whole manner should carry out the idea of rest and repose."

All very well if the gentlemen in possession of these "serenely shining eyes" would allow them to remain up among the clouds, high above all the sublunary toils and turmoils. But what is the luminary to do when husbands bring home a friend to dinner on Monday, when the "wash" is in high procedure--when an extra chicken has to be broiled, and the best table cloth whisked on at three minutes and a quarter's notice? Has our critic a right to complain if his wife makes her appearance with face redder than pickled beets, and manners decidedly flurried?

"A woman should never, under any circumstances whatever, "lose her temper."

Might as well tell the wind not to blow on a March day, or the rain not to come down in April. It does them good to "explode" occasionally. A woman to be good for anything must have as much spice and sparkle in her as a bottle of champagne [sic], and if a cork comes out once in a while, with a bang, why that don't depreciate the value of the goods.

But let the men preach; it don't amount to anything after all. We hold them captive by every one of their dickey strings and coat buttons - by the rents in their stockings, and toothaches and headaches they want to be *rursed* through. They can't do without us, and all this good advice and assumed air of bravado is only a very natural calling under the invisible chains. On the whole, we think it rather foolish to take notice of it at all. Talk away, gentlemen; you won't hurt our feelings.-- *Fanny Fern*.<sup>2</sup>

The article reflects the opinions more of married women than of those who were

unattached. Though as the vast majority of the women in this study had been married at one time, it undoubtedly spoke to them as well.

One young woman from Coffey County cannot be officially included in this study because her situation did not fit within the parameters of the investigation. Yet her day-to-day experiences could be those of any independent woman homesteader. Therefore her encounters and activities have been included nevertheless.

Cecilia McGinnis came to Coffey County in 1856 with her father and five of her brothers. Her mother died while the family was living in Illinois. Her father was a doctor and was away from the home so much that his children learned to function without his assistance. Cecilia was only thirteen years old, yet she ran the household.<sup>3</sup> Consequently it is appropriate that she be incorporated into this examination of independent women homesteaders.

According to a newspaper article written by her nephew in 1933, Cecilia learned to calmly deal with Indians. Hartford, Kansas was the site of a large log cabin used as a refuge for women and children when hostile Indians were abroad. An alarm would be given and all would gather in this central place for protection. The walls were fortified with sacks of sand placed there by the men.

Reports of Indian raiders intent on killing and scalping all whites were sometimes unfounded. After three or four such reports, Cecilia refused to heed them. McGinnis explains that as she "looked out the door women and children were running for the shelter of the cabin in Hartford." When the men came to warn her, Cecilia told them to "go on their way." Cecilia was simply "too busy ironing" to pay attention to what turned out to be yet another false alarm.<sup>4</sup>

Cecilia did have encounters with real Indians. One day a group of Indian women came unbidden into her kitchen. One of the women slipped under her blanket some of the food that Cecilia had been storing. Cecilia tried to speak with them, demanding the return of

her property, but the Indian women just laughed at her. Undaunted, Cecilia walked over to the woman with the stolen food and jerked off her blanket. The food fell to the floor. The Indian women laughed, and the thief ran off. Cecilia must have earned their respect with her behavior as the other Indian women left her alone.<sup>5</sup>

Like that of most of the women in this area, Cecilia's new home was a log cabin with a grass floor. Cecilia was lucky in that her cabin also had a rag carpet. She struggled to keep the "thousand legged worm" from infesting her home.<sup>6</sup>

Her kitchen facilities were also very rustic. To bake cornbread or biscuits she had to build a campfire. The dough was placed in a skillet or Dutch oven. It was then buried in the hot coals to bake. Frequently her coffee was made of ground parched wheat as coffee shortages were common.<sup>7</sup>

Cecilia probably cooked from recipes, or "receipts" such as these that appeared in the local newspapers. For breakfast she might fix:

#### Buckwheat Cakes

Four cups of buckwheat flour, five of water, two tablespoonfulls of good hop yeast. Set them to rise in a warm place over night, add a little salt before baking; and, with a cup of good coffee, fresh butter and honey or syrup, you have a breakfast fit for a king.

Much depends upon baking; have a quick fire; and if the cakes are sufficiently light, they will be ready to turn as soon as they are well located upon the griddle. Leave a cup of the batter to start again with; and, after the first morning, add a teaspoonfull or so of soda.<sup>8</sup>

For dinner she might prepare:

#### Beef Soup

This is an excellent dish for cold weather. Pour over two pounds of meat (with or without a marrowbone), six quarts of cold water; place it over a moderate fire; let it boil two hours; add three sliced potatoes, a turnip, half a cabbage head cut fine; a sliced carrot and an onion. Just before taking up, crumb in a slice of bread, add salt and pepper, a little cayenne, or a bit of red pepper and a trifle of summer savory. If your beef is very fat, or if it contains a marrow bone, the broth should be allowed to cool, in order to remove the fat, or else it will be too rich for any stomach.<sup>9</sup>

There were many receipts listed for desserts. Particular attention was paid to recipes that made use of stale ingredients, conserved costly ingredients, or offered less expensive substitutions. These receipts include:

#### Cheap Sponge Cake

Two eggs, one cup of flour, one cup of sugar, one spoonful of sweet milk, half a spoonful of soda, one teaspoonful of cream of tartar, and a little salt: grate in some rind of lemon and add part of the juice, and a teaspoonful of butter. Bake fifteen minutes.<sup>10</sup>

#### Plum Pudding

One stale brick loaf - take off the brown crust - cut it in thin slices, and spread them with butter; pour over one quart of boiled milk, and let it stand until morning; grate in one nutmeg, one teaspoonful of salt, eight eggs well beaten, a pint bowl of stoned raisins, flour the raisins, and bake two hours. To be baked immediately after putting in the raisins and eggs.<sup>11</sup>

#### Hard Times Pudding

Mix together half a pint of molasses, half a pint of water, two teaspoonsful of soda, and a teaspoonful of salt; stir in flour to form a thick batter, and boil in a mold or pudding-bag.<sup>12</sup>

### USEFUL RECEIPTS

#### A Delicious Dessert

Two cups of sweet milk and one of sour cream, (or one cup and a half of buttermilk;) two well beaten eggs; small teaspoon of saleratus and half teaspoonful of salt; use flour enough to make batter about as thick as for griddle cakes, add a teacup of dried cherries, plums, or currants, and pour into a tin pail, or moulds, with a closely fitting cover; place it in a kettle of boiling water deep enough to reach the top of the mould and boil fast for two hours. Serve with any sauce. It is very good without fruit if you have none.

#### Making Cake Without Butter

A New-England lady, who is quite a famous housekeeper, recommends an economical plan for making cake without butter, which may be useful to our readers. Take a piece of salt pork, (fat,) and melt it down, and strain it through a piece of coarse, thin muslin. Set it aside until cool. It is then white and firm, and may be used like butter in any kind of cake. In pound cake, she assures us it is delicious. She says that after one trial, she never used butter again.<sup>13</sup>

The newspapers also provided receipts for baking needs, and methods for preserving food:

### A Good Recipe for Vinegar

Take forty gallons of rain water, one gallon molasses, and four pounds acetic acid. It will be fit for use in a few days. Acetic acid costs twenty-five cents per pound. this is the recipe by which most of the cider vinegar is made which is sold in the country stores.<sup>14</sup>

In an article entitled, "How I Made Sorghum Sugar," readers are informed of the simple process of producing sugar from sorghum syrup. Thickened syrup is to be placed in a room at seventy-eight degrees for three days. At the end of three days the resulting mass of crystals is to be drained. The author concludes by stating that "Sorghum Sugar made in this way, ought not to cost over two or three cents a pound."<sup>15</sup>

Another article describes the process for preserving hams. The hams must be cured and smoked by the last day of February. They should not be prepared after this time as "there is a fly, and a little black bug, that comes about the first of March; and, when they hang after that time, there will always be some insect in the ham, put it up as you may." The cured and smoked hams are then to be packed down in dry ashes to preserve them.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to cooking, another time consuming chore for homesteading women was cleaning the laundry. Cecilia McGinnis hauled her clothes to the river to be washed. She suspended a big iron kettle for boiling the clothing upon a frame. She built her own fires and washed the laundry. She did her ironing with a flat iron heated by the hot coals of the fire.<sup>17</sup>

Local newspapers provided several recipes for making soap to facilitate the washing process. The recipe for basic soap required a "sufficient quantity" of lye made from hickory or oak ashes, strong enough to "bear up an egg." For each gallon of lye, the reader must add a pound of clean kitchen fat, that of beef and pork or bacon, and bit of lime, the size of a "large hickory nut." The mixture must be boiled hard for several hours and stirred frequently. The next step after allowing the mass to cool and thicken to a gel is to add a pint of salt to each three gallons of soap, and boiling for ten minutes. The soap

must then be cooled, melted again the next day, and allowed to cool again in wooden moulds.<sup>18</sup>

Also available were these two recipes:

#### How to Make Soft Soap

Two pounds of potash, six gallons of lye, too weak to make soap of, dissolve the potash in the lye, and add six pounds of clear grease, and boil from six to eight hours. This quantity will make five gallons of soft soap.<sup>19</sup>

#### Labor-Saving Soap

Take four pounds of hard soap, put in water enough to dissolve it. Then, after dissolving an ounce of borax, stir it in, and put in a pan to cool. Then cut into pieces convenient for use and rub on stains and dirt before boiling.<sup>20</sup>

Most women were responsible for the health care of their families. For this reason many recipes for home remedies appeared in the local papers:

#### For Burns

When the skin is not off apply raw scraped potatoes. When the skin is off apply sweet oil and cotton, or linseed oil and lime water made into paste. Elder ointment is very good; make ointment of the green bark of the elder, stew in lard.<sup>21</sup>

#### Mix for a Cough or Cold

Take one teacup of flaxseed, soak it all night. In the morning put it in a kettle with two quarts of water, a handfull split up of liquorice root, one quarter of a pound of raisins broke in half. Let them boil till the strength is thoroughly extracted, then add the flaxseed, which has been previously soaked. Let all boil about half an hour more, watching and stirring that the mixture may not burn. Then strain, and add lemon juice and sugar to taste. Take any quantity cold, through the day, and half a tumblerfull, warm, at night.<sup>22</sup>

Mid-nineteenth century women also had to contend with personal hygiene issues. The following article describes a process to eliminate perspiration odors. The article also illustrates a misconception prevalent in the nineteenth century concerning the body odor of people of color:

#### A Valuable Secret

The unpleasant odor produced by perspiration is frequently the source of vexation to gentlemen and ladies, some of whom are as subject to its excess as their fellow mortals of another color. Nothing is simpler than the removal of this odor, at much less expense, and much more effectually, than by the application of such costly unguents and perfumes as are in use. It is only necessary to procure some of the compound of spirits of ammonia,

and placing about two tablespoonsful in a basin of water: washing the face, hands and arms with this, leave the skin as fresh, clean and sweet as one could wish. The wash being perfectly harmless and very cheap we recommend it on the authority of one of our most experienced physicians to our readers.<sup>23</sup>

These women also needed access to gynecological information that was not readily available in the mid 1800s. This branch of the medical field was ignored. Women's problems were to be accepted by women as a fact of life. Consequently women turned to mail order doctors and patent medicines for help.<sup>24</sup> For single women, methods for preventing or for terminating pregnancy would have been especially important as nineteenth century American society condemned pregnancy out of wedlock. The following advertisements appeared in the *Neosho Valley Register* in 1859,

Dr. Creager is sole agent for Dr. Winder's Celebrated Matrimonial Series, 3 books: No. 1, a book for Young Men, designed to prepare them for the society of Ladies; No. 2, "Errors in Courtship;" No. 3, "Reproductive Control;" any one of which will be mailed to order, postage paid, upon receipt of 25 cts. Three cent postage stamps as good as money.<sup>25</sup>

#### The Great Female Pills

Dr. J. P. Creager is the general Agt., wholesale and retail, for Dr. Wheatings' celebrated Female Pills. [These Pills are truly valuable for ladies; for they will restore the "monthly courses" when they may stop from any cause whatever.] They have never failed in any case where the directions around the box containing the Pills have been strictly followed; indeed, there is no case of failure ever come to our knowledge. Being purely vegetable, they are perfectly safe. Single boxes mailed to order, post paid, upon receipt of one dollar, by

J. P. Creager  
Baltimore City, Maryland

A liberal discount to druggists. 3 cent postage stamps as good as money.<sup>26</sup>

The daily lives of mid-nineteenth century farm women, especially those who were independent, differed greatly from the prescribed ideals of the ideology of Separate Spheres and the concepts of True Womanhood. These women focused on day-to-day efforts to survive as independent farmers. They had to deal with Indians, manage any children, do the cooking, the cleaning and the doctoring for their families, in addition to

their chores in the fields and with the livestock. For these women who had little spare time to waste on trying to live up to what society dictated, Fanny Fern's essay could easily be generalized to also address the females as well as the males who pushed for the idealized version of woman: "let society preach; it don't amount to anything at all. On the whole, we think it rather foolish to take notice of it at all. Talk away; you won't hurt our feelings!"<sup>27</sup>

## CHAPTER 5

### **INDEPENDENT WOMEN HOMESTEADERS IN LYON AND COFFEY COUNTIES**

Independent women homesteaders as a group, in Lyon and Coffey counties encompassed many different kinds of women. Though they came from different backgrounds and faced life's challenges in various ways, they all shared the similar experience of farming in rural Kansas during the mid-nineteenth century. Each one toiled unassisted by a husband, to make her own way on her own land.

Lyon County began the decade of the 1860s with 3,647 residents. Twenty-eight of these were independent women farmers. These women were the heads of farming households. In 1865 this figure dropped to twenty-two. However, by 1870 there were at least thirty-nine women farming independently among the Lyon County population of 8,014. During the years from 1860 until 1870, seventy-two single women were farming in the county.

Coffey County began the decade with 2,842 residents, twenty-one of which were single women farmers. By 1870 the number of independent women engaged in farming rose to forty-seven out of a population of 6,201. In all, sixty-one individual women were farming in Coffey County during the ten years between 1860 and 1870.

According to the ninth census of the United States taken in 1870, there were 73,228 people engaged in agricultural occupation in Kansas. This category includes agricultural laborers; dairymen and dairywomen; farmers and planters; farm and plantation overseers; gardeners, nurserymen, and vine growers; stock-raisers and stock-herders. Kansas women made up three hundred ten of the more than seventy-three thousand agricultural workers.

These women included ten agricultural laborers, one dairywoman, and 299 farmers and planters. Based on local census data, Lyon and Coffey counties combined, appear to supply 136, or almost forty-four percent of the female agricultural workers in the state.

The exact number of women working in agriculture during the 1860s is difficult to obtain. Occupation titles and how the classification of these independent women underwent a change during the ten years between the 1860 census and that of 1870. In 1865 one woman was a postmaster in addition to being a farmer. Yet by 1879 her title had changed to postmistress. A woman who was listed as a farmer in Kansas Territory during 1860 might be classified in 1870 as only keeping house on a farmstead, while the oldest male member of the household was labeled the farmer. In Lyon County for example, during 1860, twenty-seven of the twenty-eight female heads of farming households were listed as farmers. Yet by 1870, not one of the thirty-nine female heads of farming households was labeled a farmer. With the exception of the postmistress, these women were now reported to be keeping house.

This new categorization of women reflected a change in the way women were being perceived. In 1861 Kansas became a state. While it was acceptable for a woman to be called a farmer in the uncivilized Kansas Territory, the legitimacy that resulted from Kansas becoming an official state required that women be viewed in a more traditional manner.

Many of these independent women came to farm in Kansas as the wives of farmers. They were subsequently widowed and left to manage on their own. Using administratrix notices and reports in local newspapers, seven of the independent women farmers listed in Lyon County were proven to be widowed in the late 1850s and early 1860. Rachel Lewis was widowed by her husband George,<sup>1</sup> Sarah McCullough lost her husband John,<sup>2</sup> Sarah Parker lost Henry,<sup>3</sup> Mary Johnson lost Harvey,<sup>4</sup> Christina Gunkel lost Henry,<sup>5</sup> Catherine B. Cole was widowed by John,<sup>6</sup> and Sarah Jane Moore lost her husband John.<sup>7</sup>

John Moore died of lung fever at the age of forty-two.<sup>8</sup> Sarah, then only thirty-one years-old, was left with six school-aged children. In the 1860 census data, Sarah is listed as the head of her household. On 17 May 1860, D. J. Evans transferred \$260 worth of real estate to Sarah in Pike Township.<sup>9</sup> Yet as Sarah is no longer listed as the head of household in the 1865 census, she must either have remarried, died, or left the area.

Catherine B. Cole was widowed by her husband, John, in 1857. Henry was reported in the *Kansas News* to have been the victim of an accident:

#### Distressing Casualty

Mr. John R. Cole, residing about two miles from this place, was almost instantly killed, on Tuesday evening last. He mounted a spirited horse behind another man, and seizing the reins, said: "Now for a ride," or something to that effect. The horse reared, and Cole still pulling on the reins, fell over backwards, across the chest of the unfortunate man, breaking several ribs, and literally crushing in his chest. Medical aid was immediately summoned, but was of no avail, as he lived but a few minutes after the accident. Mr. Cole has left a large family with, we understand, but slender means of support. Truth compels us to add that this is another in that long, sad array of accidents, misfortunes and crimes, caused by that curse of the world's - the "*worm of the still*."<sup>10</sup>

Catherine was about thirty-seven when John died. The large family he left consisted of nine children. In the 1860 census, the youngest children are recorded as being a set of two year-old twins. This would indicate that Catherine was either pregnant with the twins at the time of John's death, or else the babies were newborns, and thus almost three years old at the time of the census. Either way, Catherine would have been left in an extremely difficult situation, with "but slender means of support."

Other women came to the area already widowed. Ann Williams came in 1856 from Wales at the age of fifty. Her two sons, David and Hugh came with her.<sup>11</sup> Though they were not located in the 1860 census data, they were listed in both the 1865 and the 1870 census reports. In the more traditional manner, Ann was recorded as keeping house, while her son David, in his thirties, was labeled as the farmer, even though Ann was still considered the head of the household.

Two women one from each of the two counties investigated, were listed as farming alone. They had neither children nor other adults living with them. It is difficult to guess their marital status, as they could have been single, divorced, or widowed.

The remaining women in the study are presumed to be widowed or divorced. Despite other assumptions, the nineteenth century was not an age of marital bliss. Territorial legislatures routinely made divorce an available option and provided liberal divorce laws that frequently favored women.<sup>12</sup>

There is also the possibility, however, that some of these women might have been unwed mothers. The frontier areas provided many people with an escape from troubles back east. An unwed mother could easily have moved west, claimed to be a widow and established herself "legitimately" in the new territory.

Single, divorced, or widowed were not the only categories of unattached women farmers in Lyon and Coffey counties. There were also women who had been deserted by their husbands. These women were often lost in census reports, yet newspaper accounts can sometimes fill in the blanks.

Mary Wiley of Coffey County had been deserted by her husband. Her experiences demonstrate not only the situation of a woman who needed the assistance of her male neighbor to survive, but also the dangers facing an unattached woman on the frontier. These dangers increased during the middle of the decade as many men were displaced by the Civil War. "Foot loose soldiers, out-of-luck miners, ex-slaves, ruffians and outlaws roamed freely throughout the countryside."<sup>13</sup>

In 1860 Mary Wiley and her six year-old son William came to the Neosho Township in Coffey County. Mary had been living with her husband in Illinois. Her husband was seized with "gold fever" and left for California. After several years, communication between the two ceased and Mary was faced with a quickly diminishing financial reserve, and no likely prospects. When a thoughtful neighbor suggested she come with his family

to homestead in Kansas, she readily accepted.<sup>14</sup>

J. P. Hamilton, a contemporary of Mary Wiley wrote about the Wiley case for the LeRoy Reporter. According to Hamilton, the trouble for Mary arose because her kindly neighbor, Mr. John Johnson, had a very jealous and unkind wife. At Mrs. Johnson's insistence, her husband John built a separate house for Mary and William on his new property. Whenever Mary would go to the well at the Johnson's for water, Mrs. Johnson and her daughters would insult and harass her.<sup>15</sup>

In 1861 Johnson's two grown sons came to Coffey County, and Mary found herself in real danger. Wesley and Harrison Johnson had moved to New Mexico during the late 1850s. Wesley was the oldest. Hamilton describes him as being quite attractive, intelligent and articulate. His manner was that of a gentleman. His eyes were said to be "bright, and piercing and dancing." He was credited with "superior knowledge and sly cunning," evidently the brains behind the horrible fate which befell poor Mary and William.<sup>16</sup>

The younger brother, William Harrison was said to be the muscle behind Wesley's plotting. Hamilton thus describes Harrison:

strongly animalized, with brutishness, sensuality and avarice beamed from every feature. Short and strong of build, his strength was almost Herculean. Having a bull dog courage and viewing death as a matter of no consequence, he would enter upon any undertaking, no odds how hazardous or fatal the consequences if the object sought would satiate his desires.<sup>17</sup>

The Johnson boys were not with some merits though as they neither smoked, chewed, drank, nor gambled.<sup>18</sup>

Hamilton claims Mary had premonitions about her "tragic ending at the hands of Harrison." Her worries were well founded as Hamilton's spellbinding account of the murders, quoted at length, bears out:

One night in June, 1861, dark, ominous-looking clouds began to form in the west . . . As it approached toward midnight the thunder peals became more frequent and distant . . . when all of a sudden the gates of heaven seemed to open and such a downpour of rain I never witnessed. While the storm was brewing the murderer of Mrs. Wiley and her son was no doubt planning the perpetration of a deed that will forever blacken the annals of Coffey county history. The night was propitious for his fiendish designs, knowing that when approaching or leaving the premises . . . Finally the door is reached. He stops and listens . . . Behold him as he draws the knife from its sheath; then he enters. There in one corner stands a bed upon which rests the sleeping mother. In the opposite corner stands its counterpart upon which slumbers the innocent child. . . Approaching the mother's bed he takes his position . . . a piercing shriek breaks the stillness of that chamber and no doubt wakens the sleeping boy . . . again and again did the deadly knife descend until it numbered nineteen times, either one of which was sufficient to cause death. Then he leaves the mother with his knife still reeking with her life blood he makes it drink that of her boy. He inflicted twenty-one stabs upon the boy, severing the spinal column and disjoints the thigh.<sup>19</sup>

Hamilton claims that John Johnson stated his belief in the guilt of his son Harrison, and he reported that Mary had frequently expressed her fears that Harrison might kill her. Yet he would not testify in court to that effect. Mr. Johnson's sons were arrested and later released due to insufficient evidence. When further evidence was found, the two had left the area, and little attempt was made to recapture them. Yet Hamilton alleges he frequently saw and heard of them near Leavenworth.<sup>20</sup>

J. P. Hamilton's account which appeared in the *LeRoy Reporter*, is no doubt embellished some to create a more dramatic story. In 1934, the *Gridley Light* published the "Record of Crimes, Casualties, etc.," of early Coffey County which included an account of the 10 June 1861 murders. It contained some facts, such as the first names of the victims, not found in Hamilton's account. This report implied there was some justification for Mrs. Johnson's jealousy as Mary Wiley was commonly regarded as the mistress of John Johnson:

Mary Wiley and her son William aged six were found to have been murdered while they slept. Their bodies were hacked to pieces by some fiend or fiends. Mrs. Wiley and her son resided in a small house on the John Johnson farm two miles

west of LeRoy, south of the river. Johnson and his family resided in another and larger house on the same farm. Mrs. Wiley was regarded as a mistress of the senior Johnson. William Harrison Johnson and Wesley Johnson, sons of John Johnson, of mature years, disappeared immediately and were indicted by the Grand Jury for the murder. Matilda Johnson [their sister] was also indicted as an accessory, and was tried and acquitted. Soon afterwards the Johnsons left the country and no trace of the family or the two young men was ever found.<sup>21</sup>

The tragedy suffered by Mary Wiley and her son illustrates one of the dangers threatening women on the frontier. A single woman, particularly one like Mary Wiley who was suspected of impropriety, was especially vulnerable to violence in the early days of Kansas.

Coffey County was the location of another violent altercation. Though the woman's marital status cannot be determined from the reports, she was nevertheless independent from her husband, and living with her son and his wife. The *Kansas Patriot* printed this account in 1865:

A man named Clark, living about two miles from LeRoy, has been involved in a difficulty for some time past, with some negroes living near him about some hogs. - The woman, in attempting to release the hogs from an enclosure, was shot by Mr. Clark, and he also fired at a son of the woman. The son returned the fire and hit Mr. Clark four times with shots from a revolver, killing him almost instantly. The son escaped and has not been found as yet. The woman was not dead at our latest advices, and hopes are entertained for her recovery.<sup>22</sup>

This version of the story seems to imply that Clark was the victim, protecting his property.

This following account appeared in the same *Gridley Light* article which described the Wiley murders. This report, written sixty years after the event must have been based upon additional investigation as Mrs. Curry and her son and his wife are said to be the victims:

Lewis Clark, (white) shot a negro woman named Curry on his farm 3 miles northwest of LeRoy, also firing a shot at her son John. Mrs. Curry and son were attempting to liberate some hogs owned by them that Clark had shut up. John Curry, the son, fired and instantly killed Clark, and ran away. A company of men

and boys from LeRoy hanged John's wife trying to force her to tell the whereabouts of her husband, but did not kill her and she stoutly denied having any knowledge as to her husband's whereabouts. Mrs. Curry recovered from the wounds inflicted by Clark and her son John returned and was a respected and industrious farmer near Ottumwa for many years.<sup>23</sup>

This episode illustrates the threat of violence that was present in mid-nineteenth century Kansas. The threat was no doubt greater for single women and people of color.

Temporary widows are another category of women included in this investigation, though ignored in official census reports. These are women whose husbands left to temporarily prospect in the gold fields, to work away from home, or to join the military. The eruption of the Civil War created many temporary widows in Kansas. Here again, letters, diaries and newspaper accounts can often fill in the blanks.

Harriet Cochran, wife of Charles Cochran, became one of these temporary widows during the war. Harriet and her husband were among the first to arrive in the Key West settlement of Coffey County. Charles volunteered for the Union Army and left to serve in the border warfare.

Harriet remained on their farm with their two small children. During her husband's absence she relied upon the assistance of her brother, Lemuel Warner, who also lived in the settlement. In a letter dated 19 February 1863, Harriet's mother wrote:

I suppose through the day you do not think so much of its loneliness, but come the night and your little chicks in bed, then you have plenty of time to think of your loneliness. But you must look up to God as your protector, and put trust in Him, feeling that all will be safe under His watchful care.

I hope you have good neighbors near you. You must get Lemuel to assist you with things that you cannot so well see to yourself.

Harriet's role of temporary widow happily ended with the safe return of her husband at the end of the war.<sup>24</sup>

A great challenge for single, unattached women came when they were confronted with tasks they could not perform on their own. Commonly, "women homesteaders turned to

men for help."<sup>25</sup> Some women like Harriet Cochran had brothers to assist them. Others had adult children, friends, and hired hands to help when necessary.

Sarah Vestal of Coffey County lived on the farmstead of another family, much like Mary Wiley did. Fortunately Sarah did not meet with tragedy by relying on an adult male for assistance. It is difficult to determine from the census data, but it is likely that the J. W. Woolsey family with whom she resided were relatives.

In 1860, Sarah Vestal was twenty-two. Dependent upon her were four year-old Harriet and two year-old William. Francis Vestal, a seventeen year-old farmer and perhaps Sarah's younger brother, was also listed under her name. Although technically she was not the head of her household, she is included in the study as the census reflects she had her own farming operation. She owned \$75 worth of farm implements and machines and \$125 worth of livestock including four milch cows, and four working oxen. During 1860 she produced four hundred bushels of Indian corn, five bushels of Irish potatoes, fifty pounds of butter and ten gallons of molasses from sorghum, and she slaughtered \$30 worth of livestock. These accomplishments more than qualify her as an independent woman farmer, though she did not own any land.

As is often the case in the farming industry, it became necessary for many of the independent women homesteaders in the 1860s to augment their earnings by taking additional jobs. Jobs that would keep them on their land, such as weaving, laundering, or keeping boarders would enable these women to work around their farming chores and would be preferred to those jobs that would keep them from their farms. Harriet Cochran added to her income by teaching school in her log cabin during her temporary widowhood.<sup>26</sup>

In the 1865 Agricultural Census, two independent women farmers also worked as weavers in the Emporia Township of Lyon County. The first was a thirty-eight year-old widow named Sarah Parker. Her oldest son, eighteen year-old John was credited by the

census report with doing the farming. A nineteen year-old young woman, Hamit Gregory, perhaps a daughter, did the housework. Sarah's holding consisted of one hundred sixty acres, forty of which was improved and fenced, which she inherited from her late husband, Henry. This situation must have been profitable since by 1870 her real estate value rose from \$3000 to \$4800, and her personal estate rose from \$400 to \$2090. By 1870 she also had another young farmer, William Jay living with her.

The other weaver was thirty-three year-old Christina Gunkel. She owned a much larger farm of 353 acres, fifty of which were improved and fenced in 1865. In 1860, Christina' husband Henry died of lung fever at the age of thirty-five. Christina also apparently lost her three year-old daughter Sarah the same year. Sarah died of a "putrid sore throat."<sup>27</sup>

Christina was left with four children under the age of ten. Yet she did have two other adults living with her. Naomi Casebolt, age fifty-six, perhaps her mother lived there. Elijah Lang, age forty-nine, perhaps an uncle was also residing with the Gunkels and working as a farmer.

Christina's troubles were not over in 1860. In 1863 her house caught fire and was burned to the ground. Completely destroyed was all her furniture, bed clothes, and clothing. According to the *Emporia News* account of the fire, "nothing was saved from the devouring element."<sup>28</sup>

Christina's kitchen, situated a few feet from the main building was saved by neighbors. In those days, kitchens were located away from the main house to prevent over heating the living quarters during the hot months. The newspaper goes on to explain that "the loss is considerable, and is a pretty severe stroke on Mrs. G."<sup>29</sup>

This fire explains why Christina, who was listed as a farmer in the 1860 census found it necessary to supplement her income as a weaver in 1865. It also explains why her personal estate value dropped from \$600 in 1860 to \$300 in 1865. Christina's oldest son

fifteen year-old William was listed as a farmer in 1865. His full time farm work was obviously needed at that time to keep the farm running.

By the 1870 census, Christina and her two youngest children, eleven year-old John and six year-old Martha were no longer listed. Perhaps she remarried. Elijah Lang was also no longer listed. Naomi Casebolt is reported as the head of the household, keeping house, while William, now twenty years old, and Frederick, now eighteen, ran the farm.

Another woman working an additional job was Elizabeth Trask. Apparently Elizabeth was a widow or a divorcee as she is referred to as Mrs. Trask. In 1865, twenty-seven year-old Elizabeth was listed as being a postmaster in addition to operating a farm in the Emporia Township.

Elizabeth was a single mother with two small daughters, Luella who was nine years old, and Clara who was four. Elizabeth's real estate was valued at \$1000, and her personal estate at \$200. Her farm property consisted of four milch cows and twenty sheep. She is not reported to have owned any real estate, so evidently she rented or leased her land.

Elizabeth must have been a good business woman. In January 1868, the *Emporia News* ran this advertisement:

**MRS. E. TRASK**  
 AT THE POST OFFICE, EMPORIA.  
 Has just received, and now offers to the public  
 the most complete assortment of  
**BOOKS AND STATIONERY,**  
**And Fancy Notions,**  
 Ever offered to the public in this place. She  
 wishes to call particular to her stock of  
**WALL & WINDOW PAPER**  
**School Miscellaneous & Blank Books.**  
 ALSO STATIONERY OF ALL KINDS.  
 Morton's Gold Pens, Pictures, Cord  
 and Tassels, Cord for Pictures and

Windows, Albums, Pocket Books,  
Purses, Memorandums, Diarys, &c. , &c.  
Pens, Pencils, Portfolios, Alphabet Blocks  
And many other articles, all of which are on  
exhibition at the Book Store. She also keeps  
on hands at all times the

Grover & Baker Sewing Machine

which cannot be excelled for family use. Call and examine for yourself.<sup>30</sup>

By May 1868 the *Emporia News* reported that construction had begun on Elizabeth's new "business house."<sup>31</sup>

By 1870 Elizabeth's title was changed to that of postmistress. Her personal estate value went up to \$500, and she now had another adult in her household to help out, Sophia Scott, a twenty-six year-old dressmaker from Pennsylvania. Elizabeth met the challenges of homesteading by taking an additional job, and later by accepting another adult into her home.

Taking other adults into the household was a common way for these unattached women to keep their farm families going. Lucy Hunt, a farmer in the Emporia Township of Lyon County also had another adult living in her household. With her in 1865 was Augusta Ferrell, a young woman who was working as a physician. This woman, perhaps Lucy's married daughter, had her daughter Harriet living with her.

Lucy was sixty-five at the time, and twenty-one year-old William Hunt, her son, was also living with her and was listed as a farmer. By 1870, Dr. Augusta was gone, though Harriet remained. By 1870 William Hunt had been replaced on the farm by young Edward Jones. William had spent the war years rising from the rank of private to that of sergeant in Company K of the Second Regiment of the Kansas Volunteer Infantry. <sup>32</sup>

During the Civil War years, many male children were unavailable to help their mothers out on the farm as they were serving in the military. Anna McCaw of Lyon County was one of the many mothers who saw their sons go off to war. Three of Anna's four sons were soldiers. Thirty-five year-old James, and twenty-six year-old David were members

of Company E, in the Eleventh Regiment of the Kansas Volunteer Cavalry. Anna's son John, twenty-three years old, was wounded in action in 1862 in Prairie Grove, Arkansas. In 1865, like his brothers, he was discharged from Company E.<sup>33</sup>

Lydia Harrington of Coffey County also had help running her farm. She had at least five adult children living with her. The oldest boys, twenty-five year-old Ebenezer and twenty-three year old S. R. helped to run her farm in 1860.

The most unusual homesteading family in this study was that of Mary Hammer. In 1865 Mary was listed as a single farmer in Pike Township of Lyon County. Assisting her in her work were her three adult daughters, Rebecca, thirty years old, K., twenty-one years old, and Mary, twenty-four years old. Their farm was not a large one, only one hundred twenty acres. The cash value of the farm was \$1000. They had one horse, three milk cows, five cattle, and one hog. Together in the year 1865, they produced twenty-three bushels of wheat, ten bales of ginned cotton, fifty pounds of butter, forty pounds of cheese, four tons of hay, and forty-six bushels of grass seeds, and they slaughtered \$30 worth of animals. This family is unusual in that all the members were women, and they were all listed as farmers in the 1865 census.

The situation of Bluma Price, age fifty-two, was like that of a few other Coffey County women. In 1870 she was listed as the head of her household. Yet living with her was an adult male, near her own age, with the same surname, fifty-three year-old George Price.

In such cases the male must either have been a relative, or there was a mistake in the reporting either of name or age in the census data. In this particular case it seems a mistake has been made and George should be listed as the head of the household. In other instances, a mistake seems unlikely. If the woman were married, the husband was usually listed as the head of household even if the property were in the woman's name only.

Another way for these women to keep their farms going was for their children to find employment outside the home. Many of the children of the women homesteaders in this

study were employed. In 1860 Jane Hadley's son Enos was employed as a common laborer in Lyon County. Dolly Priest's two grown daughters Martha and Jane were school teachers in Lyon County in 1865.

Many children of independent farm women of Coffey County were also employed. Lydia Harrington's daughter Rowena worked as a school teacher in 1860. Angelina Ban's fifteen year-old daughter Olive was a domestic servant in 1870. Eliza McComb's forty year-old son J. M. supplemented the family income by working as a broommaker in 1870. This outside income no doubt did much to boost the families' financial situations.

These independent women homesteaders of Lyon and Coffey counties were a diverse group. Many were widows attempting to do their best to manage both their farms and their families. For some the children were dependents requiring care. For other women, children were an economic asset as their assistance with the farm or their work outside the home boosted the family income. Women without older children often had other adults in the household to help manage things. Still other women took additional jobs to support their families.

All these women, however, faced the hardships of farming in rural Kansas during the 1860s. Their strategies, as well as their situations were varied. Yet they were all united by the fact that they were struggling to subsist and even to succeed without a husband's presence.

## CONCLUSION

Independent women homesteaders successfully farmed in Lyon and Coffey counties in Kansas, during the mid-nineteenth century. According to census data, there were at least 133 woman farming independently in the two counties at that time. The actual numbers were greater, however, as many unattached women homesteaders were not included in the census figures. Some of these were women who were temporary widows or those sharing a homestead with another family. This investigation includes all these women.

Kansas was the destination for many prospective settlers. Land laws opened up rich farm lands for settlement. Treaties with Indian tribes put even more desirable lands on the market for sale to homesteaders as well as to land speculators. Railroads with land grant tracts ready for buyers induced settlers to the area. The tide of emigration was flowing freely during the decade of the 1860s, especially to the more temperate part of Kansas, the eastern third of the state. Lyon and Coffey counties were particularly attractive with their woods, streams, and river valleys.

The Homestead Act of 1862 made land available to unmarried women for the first time in American history. Widowed women with families to support were quick to take advantage of this new opportunity. Many were war widows who received credit for their deceased husband's military service, and were thus able to prove up their claims more rapidly.

Yet not all of the women homesteaders came to Kansas as independent women. Many of the women in this study were widowed after they arrived. Left with children to

support, often with no family near by, these women made their husbands' land their own and established themselves as independent women farmers.

These widows, along with the single women homesteaders and those "temporarily widowed" faced conditions that were often harsh and trying. Kansas in 1860 was not the lush, verdant paradise that those who came in the 1850s had hoped it would be. There was a frost in every month of 1860 that adversely effected the crops. High winds, with storms and tornadoes occurred frequently during the summer months. Unfortunately though, the storms did not bring rain, as this was the year of a terrible drought which left a great portion of the state destitute, and famine threatened. The drought victims were assisted with food and clothing shipped in from the east. These conditions did not make farming an easy venture. That many of the independent women farmers survived this difficult time is a credit to their abilities.

These women also had to survive encounters with Indians. Luckily for these women, the Indian tribes in this portion of the state were not as hostile as in other parts. From the available data, it appears that at most, women only had to contend with Indians demanding food from them, and nothing more.

Mid-nineteenth century American society possessed very definite ideas about what was considered appropriate behavior for women. In the writings of social critics like Alexis de Tocqueville, Angelina Grimke, and Lucy Stone, there arose the concept of the ideology of Separate Spheres. This concept encompassed the idea that men and women were naturally suited for very different and distinct activities, and that each belonged in their own sphere. Men were to be active in the public sphere of the community and politics. Women were to tend to the home and the family.

The independent women farmers in this investigation would have had little use for such a concept. Separate Spheres were simply not very relevant for these women. Their

families and homes were no doubt quite important to them, but they kept their families going by the work they did in the fields and with the livestock. These independent women farmers had a foot in each of the two spheres and blurred the distinction that society deemed so natural and important.

A second concept developing in the mid-nineteenth century was the cult of True Womanhood. Disseminated primarily through prescriptive literature, this concept conveyed a pattern for becoming the ideal woman. The necessary attributes of this idealized woman were the virtues of piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity. Piety was relatively simple to fulfill, through church work and neighborliness. Purity was of critical importance. One woman who reportedly strayed from the path in Coffey County was murdered. Submissiveness was of little consequence to these women since they had no husbands to whom they were to be subservient. Domesticity was a concern for these women because they desired to raise their families in good homes. Yet the emphasis placed upon domesticity in prescriptive literature was unrealistic for women with so little leisure time.

These women contradicted the basic tenets of the society's view of what the perfect woman should be. Simply by farming independently of husbands, they denied the accepted ideas that women were incapable of possessing the strength and intelligence to succeed at such work. By succeeding without the support of a husband, these women proved themselves more than capable of farming independently.

These women continued to perform the traditional female duties of laundry and cooking. They hauled water from streams and rivers to use in the kitchen. They boiled their laundry clean in great kettles and laid it to dry on bushes. They pressed the clothing with heavy flat irons, heated in the coals from their fires. They cooked under primitive conditions, often without stoves or proper ingredients. The homesteading woman learned to make substitutions for many scarce items.

Women were responsible for child care and medical care. As if the pregnancy and birth process alone were not enough, women remained the primary caretakers for their children. This meant that every trip to the river for water and every trip to the kitchen garden, the small children went with her. Women were also responsible for doctoring these children as well as the rest of their families, when they fell ill. Home remedies and patent medicines were common. Medicinal knowledge was gathered from older relatives, newspapers and magazines, and even from local Indian lore.

The independent women homesteaders of this study performed all the traditional tasks, yet they also executed the male duties. They planted crops in the fields, tended them, and harvested them when ready. The crops included buckwheat, Indian corn, Irish potatoes, hay, sorghum, rye, oats, tobacco, grass seeds, and cotton. They processed the sorghum into molasses, and baled the cotton.

They managed the livestock, doctored them, and slaughtered some to feed their families. The animals included, horses, asses and mules, milk cows, oxen, cattle, swine, and sheep. The women processed butter and cheese, and produced wool from their sheared sheep.

These women led very active and demanding lives which did not fit into society's ideal of the proper behaviors for women. Yet these women persisted and succeeded at farming independently. These women, independent of husbands, often had assistance from other sources. Many of them had adult children living with them who helped with farming tasks. Some women had other adults living with them to share the burdens. Some women sought additional employment to augment their farming income. Still others had their children working outside the home to supplement the family finances. They had many different strategies for making their farms succeed during difficult times, under adverse conditions.

Historian Jacob Stotler's 1890s account of the history of Lyon County includes this passage regarding the significance of women:

In these early days of privation no class made more sacrifices for Kansas than her women. To them is due the larger share of credit for overcoming discouragements and difficulties. Toiling without cessation in the heat and in incommodious and unshaded habitations, undergoing sickness, often without any of the comforts of life, wearing themselves away by incessant work, being always confined to their uncomfortable homes when comforts were not to be had, compelled to deny themselves of needed rest and recreation, no lot was harder or more dreary than that of the pioneer women of Kansas. But they went through it like heroines, and those who lived to see the triumph of better days feel proud of their success.<sup>1</sup>

Life was not as solemn and dreary as Stotler indicates. There were opportunities for socializing, though they were often associated with work, quilting bees and barn raisings for example. Yet even so, the independent woman homesteaders examined in this thesis deserve every bit of the praise Stotler bestowed upon pioneer women. They are even more deserving of this praise since unlike pioneer wives, these women succeeded without the assistance of husbands. With her own labor, the independent woman homesteader made her farm produce, and truly made the land a land of her own.

## NOTES

### Introduction

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## Conclusion

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The names listed in the various census reports are often misspelled. Many times they were spelled differently each time a census was taken. I have therefore tried to track down what the original name would have been by cross-checking the other sources.

Variations in style and quality of penmanship among the different census takers also created confusion. In preparing the following appendices, I have tried to decipher the names; and I hope I have been able to come close to the originals.

APPENDIX 1

1860  
Federal Census for Kansas Territory  
Breckinridge County

name	age/sex	occupation	origin	real estate	personal estate
<b>Agnes City Township</b>					
No female heads of household.					
<b>Americus Township</b>					
No female heads of household.					
<b>Cahola Township</b>					
Haworth, Mary	57F	Farmer, illiterate	OH		100
Mary B.	11F				
Martha A.	16F	housework			
David Richards	35M	Farmer			900
Ruth S.	21F				
Cyrus	15M	laborer			
John	8M				
Sanford	4M				
Hamilton Haworth	26M				200
Wright, Ann	60F	Farmer, illiterate	TN	1000	200
James	19M				

**Emporia Township**

Cole, Catherine B.	39F	Farmer	IN	1000	500
John	17M	attends school			
William A.	15M	attends school			
Elizabeth	13F	attends school			
Jonathan	12M	attends school			
Richard C.	10M	attends school			
Catherine B.	7F	attends school			
Martha E.	5F				
Fanny	2F		KS		
Anna	2F		KS		
Gunkel, Christina	37F	Farmer	IN	3700	600
William	10M	attends school			
Frederick	8M	attends school			
John M.	6M	attends school			
Martha M.	1F		KS		
Elijah Lang	49M	Farmer			
Naomi Casebolt	56F				
Sherman, Elsie	37F	Farmer	OH	2000	600
Samantha J.	17F	attends school			
Amanda E.	15F	attends school			
Albert T.	13M	attends school			
Elsie A.	11F	attends school			
William H.	6M	attends school			
Francis M.	3M				
Charles S.	9/12M		KS		
Stafford, Polly	60F	Farmer	IN		100
Thomas B.	20M	farm laborer		200	
William	12M				

**Forest Hill Township**

Allen, Mary A.	42F	Boarding House	IN	800	250
William A.	20M	Laborer			50
Reuben	14M	attends school			
Oliver A.	10M	attends school			
Charles M.	9M	attends school			
John P. Sleeper	22M	farmer		800	
Wesley Pearson	23M	farmer		400	300

Loomis, Mary A.	41F	Farmer	OH	2000	600
Charles F.	21M			1000	
Orlean H.	19M	farm laborer			50
Loren	17M	farm laborer			
George W.	15M	farm laborer/attends school			
David F.	11M	farm laborer/attends school			
John E.	10M	attends school			
Hiram S. Arnold	23M	farmer		500	50
Mayberry, Jane	60F	Farmer	PA	300	125
Samuel R.	21M				
Victoria	18F	attends school			
McLeod, Gertrude	43F	Farmer	England	1000	200
James	18M	farm laborer			
Gertrude	16F	attends school			
Pitts, Mary	56F	Farmer	VA		
Stroud	38M	farmer			
William	29M	farmer			
Silas	26M	farmer			
Oliver	24M	farmer			
Eliza	18F				
Rima, Catharine	62F	Farmer	NY	800	100
Peter Hupstader	38M	farmer			300
Lucinda	30F				
Catharine L.	5F				
Mary B.	3F				

### Freemont Township

Lewis, Rachel	28F	Farmer	S. Wales	1000	200
John S.	16M	farm laborer			
David G.	15M	attends school			
Evan T.	13M	attends school			
Moses R.	9M	attends school			
Mary A.	7F	attends school			
Oliver H.	3M	attends school			
Stucker, Jane	45F	Farmer	IN	700	150

**Pike Township**

Hadley, Jane	52F	Farmer	NC	800	500
Eunice	24F				
Enos	15M	common laborer			
Ruth	11F	attends school			
Moore, Sarah J.	31F	? (Farmer)	NY		1112
Isaac	12M	attends school			
Elias	10M	attends school			
John W.	8M	attends school			
George	6M	attends school			
Eliza	3F	attends school			
Emerson	13M	attends school			
Phillips, Deborah	50F	Farmer	VT	1600	200
Martha J.	13F				
William J.	12M				
Andrew Baker		Farmer			120

**Waterloo Township**

Aylesworth, Laura	48F	Farmer	PA	1000	300
Franklin	20M	laborer			
Joseph	16M	laborer			
Mary	13F				
Cummings, Jane	59F	Farmer	Upper Canada	30	35
Phoebe A. West?	25F				
E. A. Cummings	21M	farmer			
Dunmire, Anna	53F	Farmer	PA	2000	600
Benjamin	24M	farmer			
John	18M	farmer			
Addison	12M	farmer			
William	7M	farmer			
Rachel	20F	farmer			
Julia	15F	farmer			
Gates, Margaret	36F	Farmer	IL	400	35
William	7M				
Penny	4M				

Mary J.	2F				
S. F.	55M				
Johnson, Keziah	57F	Farmer, illiterate	PA		
Zephaniah	26M	farm laborer			
Elizabeth T.	18F	servant			
Priscilla A.	15F	servant			
Smith, Thebe	69F	Farmer	PA	600	500
Maria	35F	housework			
Ephraim	26M	farm laborer		400	

APPENDIX 2

1860  
Federal Census of Kansas Territory  
Madison County

name	age/sex	occupation	origin	real estate	personal estate
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**Elmendaro Township**

McCullough, Sarah	63F	Farmer	KY	1400	600
James A.	25M	farmer		1500	30
Drusilla A.	32F				100

**Hartford Township**

no female heads of household.

**Verdigris Township**

Johnson, Mary	56F	Farmer , illiterate	KY	600	200	
Silas M.	33M	common laborer				
Andrew G.	22M	common laborer		400	50	
Elijah H.	20M	common laborer				
Mary E.	10F					
Priest, Dolley	56F	Farmer	VT	1000	200	
William W.	25M	farmer		1000	250	
Lawrence O.	23M	farmer		1000		
Martha L.	21F			500		
Clarissa J.	17F			500		
Charles E.	15F					5000

Quiett, Elsie	52M	Farmer	TN	5000	500
Susan	44F				
James H.	16M	laborer			
Alfred	13M	attends school			
Robert B.	12M	attends school			
Reizpah? F.	10F	attends school			
Martha	10F	attends school			
Davis	8M	attends school			
Thomas	7M	attends school			
Newton	5M				
Rhoda G.	1F		KS		
Yeager, Lucinda	41F	Farmer	KY	12	400
William G.	18M				
Mary A.	17F				
Lemuel A.	15M				

APPENDIX 3

1865  
**Kansas State Agricultural Census  
 and Social Statistics  
 Lyon County**

name	age/sex	occupation	origin	real estate	personal estate	marital status
<b>Agnes City Township</b>						
no female heads of households						
<b>Americus Township</b>						
Conner, Mary	59F	Housework	OH			single
F.M.	16M	Farmer				single
Hodson, Mary A.	32F	Housework (Farmer)	PA			single
John W.	12M					single
C.R.	9M		KS			single
F.L.	3M		KS			single
McCaw, Anna	60F	Housework	SC			single
Martha	41F	housework				single
James	36M	farmer/soldier				single
David A.	27M	farmer/soldier				single
John A.	24M	farmer/soldier				single
R.P.	18M	farmer				single
Reeve, Hannah	39F	Farmer	TN	500		single
Sarah C.	15F	farmer				single
R.R.	12F					single
Martha	10F					single
Mark A.	8M					single
E.A.E.	6F					single

Shults, Harriet	34F	Housework	NY	200		single
John	18M	farmer/soldier/school				single
W.S.	17M	farmer/school				single
Mary E.	14F	farming/school				single
Sarah	12F	attends school				single
Elijah	10M	attends school				single
Henry	4M					single
George	8M	attends school				single
Swim, Margaret	37F	Housework (Farmer)	TN	1000	200	single
Lydia	17F	housework/school				single
M.E.	15F	attends school				single
William W.	12M	attends school				single
Florance	7M					single
Lilley	4F					single
W.A.	2M					single
Lydia	75F					single

### Centre Township

Barker, Rhoda	50F	Housework	OH			single
Hiram	23M	Farmer				single
Obidiah	21M	farmer				single
Daniel	18M	farmer				single
F.W.	15M	farmer				single
Benjamin	14M	farmer				single
Abigail	25F	housework				single
W.J. Cooper	4F					single
Priest, Dolley	62F	Housework	VT	2000	300	single
William	30M	Farmer		550	550	single
Martha	25F	School teacher				single
Jane	20F	School teacher				single

### Emporia Township

Bethumn, Lydia	52F	Housework	KY	1000	300	single
Isaac	26M	farmer/soldier				single
William	21M	farmer/soldier				single
James	18M	farmer				single
Isaac	22M	farmer				single
William	15M	farmer				single

S.F.	11M					single
John	8M					single
Burns, Louisa	47F	Housework (Farmer)	TN	2000	200	single
Laura	18F					single
John	6M		KS			single
Gunkel, Christina	33F	Weaver	NC	4000	300	single
William	15M	Farmer				single
Frederick	13M					single
John	11M					single
Martha	6F		KS			single
Naomi Casebolt	61F					single
Elijah Lang	55M					single
Hunt, Lucy S.	61F	Farmer	NH	2200	200	single
Augusta Ferrel?	34F	physician				married
Harriet Ferrel	3F					single
W.S. Hunt	21M	farmer/soldier				single
Morgan, Abigail	31F	Farmer	N. Wales	2000	1000	single
Rachel	9F					single
Jane	5F		KS			single
John	3M		KS			single
Lewellyn	1M		KS			single
Nicholls, Elizabeth	61F	Housework	KY			single
Ann E.	27F					single
Rebecca	25F					single
Benjamin	23M	Farmer				single
Martha	19F					single
Parker, Sarah	38F	Weaver	NC	3000	400	single
Hamit Gregory	19F	housework				single
John	18M	Farming/school				single
Milley	14F	attends school				single
Clinton	6M	attends school				single
Sarah	5F					single
Simeon	2M					single
Trask, Elizabeth	27F	Postmaster	OH	1000	200	single
L.M.	9F					single
Clara E.	4F					single

Williams, Ann	59F	Housework	S. Wales	1500	300	single
David	30M	Farmer		1500	300	single

### Fremont Township

Lewis, Rachel	32F	Farmer	S. Wales	1000	300	single
John	21M	farmer/soldier				single
David	20M	farmer/soldier				single
E.T.	18M					single
Moses	13M					single
James	10M					single
C.H.	8M		KS			single

### Pike Township

Campbell, Barbara	60F	Farmer	Scotland	3000	1700	single
Neal	32M	milling		2000	314	single
M.	29M	milling		2000	1055	single
B.J.	13F					single
Barbara Wilson	33F	housework				single
B.A. Wilson	11F					single
Hadley, Jane	50F	Farmer	NC	1000	600	single
Enos	20M	farmer				single
Ruth	16F					single
Hammer, Mary	59F	Farmer	OH	1000	400	single
Rebecca	30F	farmer				single
K.	21F	farmer				single
Mary	24F	farmer				single
Phillips, Deborah	57F	Farmer	VT	1000	100	single
Martha J.	19F	farmer		1500	250	single
William	16M					single

**Bethumn, Lydia**

Improved acres.....	63
Unimproved acres.....	117
Fenced acres.....	63
Cash value of farm.....	\$1000
Value of implements.....	\$60
Horses.....	5
Milk cows.....	7
Cattle.....	3
Swine.....	1
Value of livestock.....	\$200
Bushels of Irish potatoes.....	12
Pounds of butter.....	100
Tons of hay.....	10
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$30

**Burns, Louisa**

Improved acres.....	36
Unimproved acres.....	1000
Fenced acres.....	10
Cash value of farm.....	\$300
Horses.....	5
Milk cows.....	7
Cattle.....	13
Value of livestock.....	\$500
Value of slaughtered livestock.....	\$30
Bushels of Indian corn.....	50
Bushels of Irish potatoes.....	10
Tons of hay.....	5
Gallons of Molasses.....	20

**Campbell, Barbara**

Improved acres.....	65
Unimproved acres.....	251
Fenced acres.....	160
Cash value of farm.....	\$3000
Value of implements.....	\$75
Horses.....	4
Milk cows.....	2
Swine.....	7
Value of livestock.....	\$450

**Gunkel, Christina**

Improved acres.....	40
Unimproved acres.....	120
Fenced acres.....	40
Cash value of farm.....	\$3000
Value of implements.....	100
Horses.....	2
Milk cows.....	2
Cattle.....	4
Sheep.....	10
Swine.....	4
Value of livestock.....	\$250
Bushels of wheat.....	30
Gallons of molasses.....	22
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$50

**Hadley, Jane**

Unimproved acres.....	160
Cash value of farm.....	\$1000
Value of implements.....	\$15
Horses.....	6
Asses/mules.....	2
Milk cows.....	4
Cattle.....	3
Value of livestock.....	\$525
Bushels of wheat.....	50
Bushels of Indian corn.....	100
Tons of hay.....	8
Gallons of molasses.....	10
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$60

**Hammer, Mary**

Improved acres.....	40
Unimproved acres.....	40
Fenced acres.....	40
Cash value of farm.....	\$1000
Value of implements.....	\$100
Horses.....	1
Milk cows.....	3
Cattle.....	5
Swine.....	1
Value of livestock.....	\$200
Bushels of wheat.....	23

**Hammer continued**

Bales of ginned cotton, 400lbs. each.....	10
Pounds of butter.....	50
Pounds of cheese.....	40
Tons of hay.....	4
Bushels of grass seeds.....	46
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$30

**Hodson, Mary**

Improved acres.....	20
Unimproved acres.....	505
Fenced acres.....	30
Cash value of farm.....	\$2750
Value of implements.....	\$10
Milk cows.....	2
Value of livestock.....	\$50
Bushels of Indian corn.....	500
Bales of Irish potatoes.....	15
Tons of hay.....	5
Gallons of molasses.....	16
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$45

**Hunt, Lucy**

Improved acres.....	25
Unimproved acres.....	175
Fenced acres.....	25
Cash value of farm.....	\$2200
Value of implements.....	\$20
Horses.....	2
Milk cows.....	10
Cattle.....	12
Swine.....	2
Value of livestock.....	\$400
Bushels of wheat.....	250
Bushels of Indian corn.....	20
Bushels of oats.....	100
Bushels of Irish potatoes.....	10
Bushels of sweet potatoes.....	10
Pounds of butter.....	300
Tons of hay.....	5
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$25

**Lewis, Rachel**

Improved acres.....	12
Unimproved acres.....	158
Fenced acres.....	12
Cash value of farm.....	\$1000
Value of implements.....	\$50
Milk cows.....	4
Value of livestock.....	\$200

**McCaw, Anna**

Improved acres.....	10
Unimproved acres.....	150
Fenced acres.....	15
Cash value of farm.....	\$400
Value of implements.....	\$100
Horses.....	2
Milk cows.....	5
Cattle.....	6
Swine.....	4
Value of livestock.....	\$200
Pounds of butter.....	200
Tons of hay.....	11
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$45

**Morgan, Abigail**

Improved acres.....	36
Unimproved acres.....	282
Fenced acres.....	36
Cash value of farm.....	\$2000
Value of implements.....	\$75
Milk cows.....	14
Cattle.....	34
Swine.....	1
Value of livestock.....	\$900
Bushels of wheat.....	15
Bushels of Irish potatoes.....	4
Tons of hay.....	20
Gallons of molasses.....	14
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$60

**Parker, Sarah**

Improved acres.....	40
Unimproved acres.....	120
Fenced acres.....	40
Cash value of farm.....	\$3000
Value of implements.....	\$100
Horses.....	2
Milk cows.....	4
Sheep.....	21
Swine.....	4
Value of livestock.....	\$300
Bushels of wheat.....	80
Bales of ginned cotton, 400lbs. each.....	10
Wool.....	39
Tons of hay.....	5
Gallons of molasses.....	16
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$45

**Phillips, Deborah**

Improved acres.....	40
Unimproved acres.....	120
Fenced acres.....	40
Cash value of farm.....	\$1500
Value of implements.....	\$75
Horses.....	5
Milk cows.....	2
Cattle.....	3
Swine.....	2
Value of livestock.....	\$400
Bushels of oats.....	20
Pounds of butter.....	100
Pounds of cheese.....	50
Tons of hay.....	6
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$50

**Priest, Dolley**

Improved acres.....	10
Unimproved acres.....	100
Fenced acres.....	10
Cash value of farm.....	\$300
Horses.....	5

**Priest continued**

Milk cows.....	7
Cattle.....	13
Value of livestock.....	\$500
Bushels of Indian corn.....	50
Bushels of Irish potatoes.....	10
Tons of hay.....	5
Gallons of molasses.....	20
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$30

**Reeve, Hanna**

Improved acres.....	4
Unimproved acres.....	116
Fenced acres.....	4
Cash value of farm.....	\$500
Asses/mules.....	1

**Shults, Harriet**

Value of implements.....	\$30
Horses.....	5
Milk cows.....	5
Cattle.....	2
Value of livestock.....	\$150

**Swim, Margaret**

Horses.....	1
Milk cows.....	8
Cattle.....	6
Value of livestock.....	\$200

**Trask, Elizabeth**

Milk cows.....	4
Sheep.....	20

## Total Figures

### Lyon County 1 May 1865

Improved acres.....	10,157
Unimproved acres.....	38,057
Fenced acres.....	13,271
Cash value of farms.....	\$422,400
Value of implements.....	\$32,802
Horses.....	1,391
Asses/mules.....	80
Milk cows.....	1,944
Oxen.....	183
Cattle.....	3,051
Sheep.....	2,633
Swine.....	1,167
Value of livestock.....	\$183,341
Bushels of wheat.....	18,362
Bushels of rye.....	2,247
Bushels of Indian corn.....	12,580
Bushels of oats.....	11,396
Tobacco.....	100
Bales of ginned cotton, 400lbs. each.....	857
Wool.....	6,024

APPENDIX 4

1870  
Federal Census for the State of Kansas  
Lyon County

name	age/sex	occupation	origin	real estate	personal estate
<b>Agnes City Township</b>					
Gilbert, Lydia	53F	Keeping house	PA	2400	800
Martin B.	27M	farmer			
<b>Americus Township</b>					
Houston, Mary A.	47F	Keeping house	OH	2000	200
Smith, John J.	15M	works on farm/attends school			
Alexander	13M	works on farm/attends school			
Martin, Mary A.	45F	Keeping house	NC	1500	200
Pearson, Smith P.	16M	works on farm/attends school			
Emily J.	13F	at home/attends school			
Ella M.	11F	attends school			
<b>Center Township</b>					
Priest, Dolley	67F	Housekeeping	VT		
Martha	28F	school teaching			
Charles	24M	farming			
<b>Emporia Township</b>					
Bethumn, Lydia	53F	Keeping house	KY	2120	1160
Wm.	26M	farmer			960
Loren F.	16M	farmer			
John S.	13M	farmer	KS		

Burns, Louisa	52F	Keeping house(farmer)	TN	11000	1404
John	11M	KS			
Brown, Rufus	?M	Laborer			
Casebolt, Naomi	60F	Keeping house	VA		
Gunkle, Wm.	20M	farmer			494
Fredrick	18M				
Hunt, Lucy	66F	Housekeeping	NH	2100	1050
Ferrell, Harriett	8F	attends school			
Jones, Edward	28M	farming			
Jones, Susannah	60F	Keeping house	Wales	4080	1589
Williams, Wm.	33M	farmer			365
Hannah	17F	keeping house			
Kemp, Elizabeth	64F	Keeping house	SC		1004
Simon	29M	farmer			
Susannah	28F				
Joab S.	23M				
Moore, Tammy	43F	Keeping house	VA	7063	3290
James H.	20M	farmer			
Wm.	17M				
Mary A.	14F	attends school			
John	12M	attends school			
Rosalina	10F	attends school			
Eliza June	9F	attends school			
Samuel	8M	attends school	KS		
Leland	6M	attends school	KS		
Frank	4M		KS		
Morgan, Abigail	39F	Keeping house (farmer)	Wales	6320	1290
Rachel	14F	attends school			
Jane	11F	attends school	KS		
John	8M	attends school	KS		
Llewelyn	5M	attends school	KS		
Morgan, Elizabeth	63F	Keeping house	Wales	4800	2010
Rees M.	25M	farmer			
Betsie	20F				
Jane	15F	attends school			

Parker, Sarah	43F	Keeping house	IN	4800	2090
John	22M	farmer			
Clinton	11M	attends school	KS		
Sarah	10F	attends school	KS		
Simon	7M	attends school	KS		
Jay, William	25M	farmer			300
Dayton	2M				
William	5/12M				
Shaw, Elizabeth	52F	Keeping house	OH		
John	32M	farmer		1325	525
Sutherland, Polley	36F	Keeping house	NY	8600	2260
Mark E.	10M		KS	200	
Arthur	5M		KS		
Jefferson, Albert	25M	farm hand			
Ream, George	26M	brick layer			
Sullivan, John	24M	Day laborer		600	100
Trask, Elizabeth	32F	Postmistress	VT	1000	500
Luella	14F				
Clara	8F		KS		
Scott, Sophia	26F	dressmaker			
Weaver, Mary	60F	Housekeeping	OH	12200	1315
Keith, Louise	40F	housekeeping			
Weaver, Charles	37M	farming		10200	1942
James	20M	attends school		8000	710
Keith, Minda	18F	attends school			
Charles	13M	attends school			
Williams, Ann	64F	Keeping house	Wales		
David	31M	farmer-illiterate			
<b>Elmandaro Township</b>					
Anderson, Mary A.	55F	Keeping house	OH	1000	400
William	18M	works on farm			
Eliza	11F	at home	KS		
Bart, Eliza	41F	Keeping house	KY	200	150
David M.	15M	works on farm			
Curtis V.	13M	works on farm			

William N.	9M	attends school			
Olga C.	7F				
Ira	4M				
Lease, Lucinda	50F	Keeping house	KY	3000	800
Lemuel A.	25M	works on farm			
Jane	19F	at home			
Claber	18M	works on farm			
<b>Fremont Township</b>					
Lewis, Rachel E.	43F	Keeping house	Wales	5000	
Evan I.	23M	farmer			
Moses R.	19M	farmer			
James E.	16M	at home			
Oliver H.	13M	at home	KS		
<b>Jackson Township</b>					
Ayers, Elizabeth	63F	Keeping house	NJ	400	200
Fielding	18M	works on farm			
Elliott, Jane	42F	Keeping house	TN		
John A.	21M	works on farm			
Harmon	15M	at home			
Wm. T.	12M	at home	KS		
Rachel	10F		KS		
Henry	8M		KS		
Catharine	6F		KS		
George W.	4M		KS		
Jones, John A.	25M	laborer			
Jasper	23M	laborer			
Kelly, Mary	55F	Keeping house	TN	5000	275
John D.	23M	farmer			300
Esther	23F	keeping house			
Hiram	20M	works on farm			
George	16M	works on farm			
McLeod, Gertude	52F	Keeping house (farmer)	England	1200	700
John E.	23M	laborer			
Thomas T.	20M	laborer			

Asac	18M	at home			
Talle, Peter A.	22M	blacksmith		300	100
Ogden, Susannah	43F	Keeping house	IN	5000	1500
Damaris	20F	at home			
Marons L.	18M	works on farm			
Erving	17M	works on farm			
Frances	15F	at home			
Laura	13F	attends school			
Quincy	3M		KS		
Stout, Eliza	44F	Keeping house	TN		
Frances	21F	at home			
John	19M	works on farm			
Samuel	17M	works on farm			
Monroe	16M	works on farm			
Elizabeth	14F	at home			
Albaci James	13M	at home			
Louisa	11F	at home			
Noah	8M				
Catharine	5F		KS		
Desire	3F		KS		
Mary	2F		KS		
Waterman, Suzetta	35F	Keeping house	NY	2000	200
Wallace	14M	works on farm			
Lucy Ann	12F	at home	KS		
Ephraim	10M		KS		
Mary	8F				
Linus	5M		KS		
Duel, Dallas	26M	works on farm			
Wilder, Rebecca	39F	Keeping house	OH	800	300
Almon	20M	works on farm			
Addison	17M	works on farm			
Laura	13F	attends school			
Paulina	8F				
<b>Pike Township</b>					
Campbell, Barbara	64F	Housekeeping	Scotland		
Neal	38M	farming			
Malcolm	34M	farming			

Jessie	26F	housekeeping			
McMillin, Edward	25M	farming			
McGlachie, Peter	37M	farming			
Ellen	25F	housekeeping			
Donel	4F				
Mary Ellen	2F				
Archible	2/12M		KS		
Hammer, Mary	64F	Housekeeping	OH		
Catharine	26F				
Davis, Nancy J.	9F				
Spinell, Z. D.	56M	farming			
Eleanor	64F	housekeeping			
Elizabeth	20F	housekeeping			
Nammie	16F	housekeeping			
Jeffers, Wm.	17M	farmhand			
?	1/12F		KS		
Harvey, Matilda	40F	Housekeeping	IN	8280	1722
Wilson, Wm.	16M	farming			
Mary	15F				
Harvey, Ida	13F				
Jones, Jane	61F	Housekeeping	TN	3140	1221
Mary A.	35F	housekeeping			
G. W.	32M	farmer			
Aaron H.	27M	farmer			
Sarah C.	24F	housekeeping			
Phillips, Deborah	60F	Housekeeping	VT	2840	757
William	22M	farming			
Williams, Ann	69F		MI		
Solomon	26M	farming		800	
John	30M	farming		600	800

### Waterloo Township

Kiser, Rebecca	41F	Keeping house	OH		
Wm. T.	17M	farm laborer			
Mary F.	15F	at home			
Harlon	12M				

Ida	10F				
George	9M				
Sarah	7F				
Jefferson M.	5M				
Nancy	3F				
Hattie	2/12F		KS		
Bennett, George	25M	farm laborer			
Burns, Samuel	38M	farm laborer			
Cook, John	35M	farm laborer			
Miller, Esther	40F	Keeping house	New Brunswick	3200	1200
Albion	19M	farmer			
Adalina A.	18F	at home			
Herbert	14M	attends school	KS		
Fremont	11M	attends school	KS		
Alice	6F	attends school	KS		
Smilling, Mellina	49F	Keeping house	IN	2200	600
Sarah E.	18F	at home			
Thomas	14M	farmer			
Jackson P.	12M	attends school			
Wm. U.	11M	attends school			
Eliza E.	10F	attends school			
Weaver, Hannah	42F	Keeping house	IL		
Francis M.	27M	farmer			
Alexander	20M	farmer			
Elizabeth	18F	keeping house			
Amanda	14F	attends school			
Margaret	11F	attends school	KS		
Charles	8M	attends school	KS		
George	5M	attends school	KS		
Myron	2M		KS		

APPENDIX 5

1860  
 Kansas Territory Agricultural Census  
 Coffey County

name	age/sex	occupation	origin	real estate	personal estate
<b>Avon Township</b>					
Sarah Vestal lived with:					
Woolsey, J. W.	25M	Farmer	MO		250
Elvira	22F				
Vestal, Sarah	22F	(farmer)	MO		150
Harriet	4F				
William	2M				
Francis	17M	Farmer			200
<b>Burlington Township</b>					
Bowen, C.	30F	(farmer)	OH	1000	200
R.	17M				
A.	14M				
M.	12F				
Carson, Phebe	50F		MO	15	25
William	30M	farmer		1200	45
C.	13F				
Dougherty, Sarah	73F	Farmer	NC	2500	450
Robert W.	31M	farmer			
Sarah	14F				
Cynthia	3F				
Masson, T. A.	29M				

Holmes, Rebecca	40F		VA		125
Melissa	11F	attends school			
Lawrence	9M				
Thomas	6M				
Almira	3F				
Partridge, E. M.	24M	farmer			
I. J.	23M	farmer			
Robert	21M	farmer			150
Isaac	?M				
Mary E.	10F				
J.	19M	farmer			150
O'Casey, Sarah	55F		KY		50
Esther B.	30F				
Martha W.	20F				
Samuel	32M	farmer		400	
Smith, R.	31F	(farmer)	IN	1000	200
F.	14F	attends school			
H.	10M	attends school			
L.	10M	attends school			
E.	8F	attends school			
L.	3F		KS		
Van Landingham, Mary	60F	Farmer	KY	400	200
<b>California Township</b>					
Duncalberger, M.	45F		PA		200
John	21M	farmer		200	100
Lane, M.	40F		VA		
J. M.	25M	farmer		500	100
<b>Neosho Township</b>					
Mosely, W.	30F	(farmer)	IA		
Sarah	3F				
William	6M				
Edward	3M				
Mary	81F				
Isaac	28M				

Overley, Sarah	44F	(farmer)	NC	400	100
Sarah	14F				
Richard	13M				
John	19M				
<b>Potawatome Township</b>					
Fletcher, Nancy	49F		KY		110
Jasper	23M	farmer			
White, Ely	18F				
Sarah J.	16F				
Alvira	13F				
Fletcher, Marian	6F				
Giesy, Adaline	44F		OH	1000	500
John	23M	farmer		300	50
George	19M				
Mary J.	17F				
Josephine	14F				
Jacob	8M				
Francis	6M				
Ely	2M		KS		
Harrington, Lydia	60F		KY	220	200
Ebenezar	25M	farmer			150
S.R.	23M	farmer		50	
Rowena	20F	school teacher			
Serina	18F				
Proctor, Lydia	27F				
Susan	3F				
Charles	2M				
Fielder, Ephraim	37M				
Holland, Mary A.	67F	(farmer)	MD	1200	150
Almira	14F				
Musgrave, Sarah	41F	Farmer	OH	100	250
Sarina	16F				
Jackson	14M				
Sebastien	8M				
Phillips, Jane	60F		PA		25
Aaron	23M	farmer			

William	23M	farmer		40	
Amanda	21F				
Roberson, Isabella	43F	(farmer)	KY	100	500
John	16M				
Rebecca Ann	10F				
Russell, Matilda	35F	Farmer	IN	300	200
Elisabeth	12F				
Nancy	8F				
Christopher	8M				
Eliza A.	5F				
Woolsey, Rhoda	49F	Farmer	AL		25
Harrison, J.W.	16M			200	300
Nancy E.	14F				
Jefferson	10F				

**Bowen, C.**

Improved acres.....	30
Unimproved acres.....	130
Cash Value of farm.....	\$1000
Value of implements and machinery.....	\$25
Milk cows.....	3
Working oxen.....	4
Other cattle.....	4
Swine.....	13
Value of livestock.....	\$200
Bushels of Indian corn.....	200
Bushels of potatoes.....	20
Pounds of butter.....	150
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$60

**Dougherty, Sarah**

Improved acres.....	80
Unimproved acres.....	80
Cash value of farm.....	\$2500
Value of implements and machinery.....	\$125
Milk cows.....	4
Working oxen.....	2
Other cattle.....	3
Swine.....	1

**Dougherty continued**

Value of livestock.....	\$200
Bushels of Indian corn.....	400
Pounds of Tobacco.....	100
Bushels of peas and beans.....	4
Bushels of potatoes.....	50
Bushels of sweet potatoes.....	3
Bushels of buckwheat.....	12
Pounds of butter.....	200
Gallons of sorghum molasses.....	80
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$60

**Fletcher, Nancy**

Milk cows.....	2
Working oxen.....	8
Other cattle.....	3
Swine.....	6
Value of livestock.....	\$300
Bushels of Indian corn.....	1000
Bushels of Irish potatoes.....	10
Bushels of buckwheat.....	16
Pounds of butter.....	100

**Giesy, Adaline**

Improved acres.....	70
Unimproved acres.....	\$90
Cash value of farm.....	\$1000
Value of implements and machinery.....	\$250
Horses.....	6
Milk cows.....	7
Working oxen.....	4
Other cattle.....	10
Swine.....	10
Value of livestock.....	\$500
Bushels of wheat.....	50
Bushels of Indian corn.....	700
Bushels of peas and beans.....	1
Bushels of Irish potatoes.....	25
Pounds of butter.....	150
Gallons of sorghum molasses.....	45

**Harrington, Lydia**

Improved acres.....	8
Unimproved acres.....	112
Cash value of farm.....	\$220
Value of implements and machinery.....	\$50
Horses.....	2
Milk cows.....	4
Working oxen.....	2
Other cattle.....	8
Sheep.....	2
Swine.....	11
Value of implements and machinery.....	\$200
Bushels of Indian corn.....	50
Pounds of wool.....	20
Bushels of Irish potatoes.....	20
Pounds of butter.....	200
Pounds of cheese.....	50
Pounds of beeswax.....	2
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$50

**Holland, Mary**

Horses.....	1
Milk cows.....	2
Swine.....	4
Value of livestock.....	\$175

**Mosely, W.**

Improved acres.....	40
Unimproved acres.....	120
Cash value of farm.....	\$1000
Milk cows.....	3
Other cattle.....	1
Swine.....	11
Value of livestock.....	\$80
Bushels of rye.....	6
Bushels of oats.....	200
Bushels of peas and beans.....	1
Bushels of potatoes.....	12
Pounds of butter.....	150
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$50

**Musgrave, Sarah**

Improved acres.....	9
Cash value of farm.....	\$100
Value of implements and machinery.....	\$20
Horses.....	1
Milk cows.....	2
Working oxen.....	8
Swine.....	2
Bushels of Indian corn.....	500

**Overley, Sarah**

Improved acres.....	18
Unimproved acres.....	62
Cash value of farm.....	\$400
Horses.....	10
Asses and mules.....	4
Working oxen.....	16
Other cattle.....	6
Sheep.....	50
Swine.....	2
Bushels of wheat.....	63
Bushels of oats.....	200
Pounds of butter.....	50
Gallons of sorghum molasses.....	12
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$40

**Robinson, Isabella**

Improved acres.....	10
Unimproved acres.....	30
Cash value of farm.....	\$100
Horses.....	3
Asses and mules.....	1
Milk cows.....	1
Working oxen.....	2
Other cattle.....	1
Value of livestock.....	\$75
Bushels of Indian corn.....	300
Pounds of butter.....	20
Gallons of sorghum molasses.....	3

**Russell, Matilda**

Improved acres.....	30
Unimproved acres.....	130
Cash value of farm.....	\$300
Value of implements and machinery.....	\$25
Horses.....	2
Milk cows.....	4
Working oxen.....	2
Other cattle.....	2
Swine.....	1
Value of livestock.....	\$250
Bushels of wheat.....	25
Bushels of Indian corn.....	50
Bushels of potatoes.....	2
Bushels of barley.....	17
Pounds of butter.....	200
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$8

**Smith, R.**

Improved acres.....	40
Unimproved acres.....	120
Cash value of farm.....	\$2000
Milk cows.....	1
Swine.....	10
Value of livestock.....	\$125
Pounds of butter.....	50

**Van Landingham, Lydia**

Improved acres.....	25
Unimproved acres.....	135
Cash value of farm.....	\$5000
Value of implements and machinery.....	\$30
Horses.....	1
Milk cows.....	2
Working oxen.....	2
Other cattle.....	3
Swine.....	8
Value of livestock.....	\$130
Bushels of Indian corn.....	40
Bushels of peas and beans.....	3
Bushels of buckwheat.....	10
Pounds of butter.....	200

**Vestal, Sarah**

Value of implements and machinery.....	\$75
Milk cows.....	4
Working oxen.....	4
Value of livestock.....	\$125
Bushels of Indian corn.....	400
Bushels of potatoes.....	5
Pounds of butter.....	50
Gallons of sorghum molasses.....	10
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$30

**Woolsey, Rhoda**

Improved acres.....	10
Unimproved acres.....	30
Cash value of farm.....	\$200
Value of implements and machinery.....	\$75
Horses.....	4
Milk cows.....	6
Working oxen.....	4
Other cattle.....	6
Swine.....	4
Value of livestock.....	\$300
Bushels of Indian corn.....	300
Pounds of butter.....	200
Gallons of sorghum molasses.....	5
Value of slaughtered animals.....	\$100

## APPENDIX 6

**1870**  
**Federal Census for the State of Kansas**  
**Coffey County**

name	age/sex	occupation	origin estate	real estate	personal estate
<b>Avon Township</b>					
Ball, Eliza	61F	Keeping House	PA	3000	2000
Brantsly, George	18M	farmer			
Whitenbeck, Alice	13F				
Tunder, Jacob	28M	farmer		600	500
Lezelia	19F	Keeping House			
Ban, Angelina	52F	Keeping House	OH		
Lewis	29M	farmer			
Olive	15F	domestic servant, attends school			
Evan, Gerry	45F	Keeping House	TN		1000
Joseph	22M	farmer			
William	20M	farm laborer			
Samuel	18M	farm laborer, attends school			
Gil	15M	farm laborer, attends school			
Jordan, Mary	9F	attends school	KS		
Giesy, Adaline	52F	Keeping House	VA		
Jacob	18M	farm laborer			
Eli	12M	attends school	KS		
Shaw, Francis	48M	keeping house			
Jones, Mary	26F	domestic servant		1500	750
Griffon, Elinor	57F	Keeping House	Canada		
Lemmuel	52M	farmer		1000	450
Nancy	16F	housework			

Headrick, Hester	63F	Keeping House	PA	400	600
Agnes	36F	Housework			
Silpha	6F				
Ritchey, Henry	24M	farmer			2500
Tabitha	18F	keeping house			
Morris, Rachel	42F	Keeping House			
George	20M	farmer			
Rooney, Marietta	53F	Keeping House	NY	3000	700
Whitenbeck, Rhoda	55F	Housework	PA		
Rooney, Robert	18M	farmer, attends school			
Leonard	12M	attends school			
Carson, Minnie	9F		KS		
Simmons, Elisabeth	50F	Keeping House	KY		750
John	23M	farmer			
Columbus	22M	farm laborer			
Mary	18F	keeping house			

### **Burlington Township**

Allen, Susan	37F	Farmer	KY	2000	650
Samuel	12M	attends school			
Clara	3F		KS		
Gertson, Barbara	45F	Keeping House	France		
Augustus	24M	farmer		300	
Charles	16M	farm hand			
Martha	20F	at home			
Goodrich, Charles	34M	farmer			
Wilson, Margaret	32F	Keeping House	OH	2600	500
Sam	8M	attends school			
Fordya, George	22M	farmer			
?, Jasper	33M	farmer		80	100

### **California Township**

Bowen, Margaret	30F	Keeping House	IL	1000	
Catherine	10F		KS		

Florence	7F		KS		
Crail, America	20M	at home		1000	
Jesse	25M	farmer		1000	
Thomas	21M	farm hand			
Clayborne, Elizabeth	55F	Keeping House, illiterate	VA	1000	250
Meredith	18M	farmer, can't write			
Matilda	16F	at home, illiterate			
Nancy	14F	at home, illiterate			
Evans, Sarah	50F	Farmer	OH	2500	1160
McKenzie	17M	farm hand			
Joseph	14M	farm hand	KS		
Edda	10M		KS		
Graham, Amanda	40F	Farmer	OH	800	150
Thomas	21M	farm laborer			
Luna	9F	attends school	KS		
Catherine	16F	attends school			
Hellin, Melissa	21F	keeping house			
Harlan, Armina	26F	Keeping House	IN	1000	600
Vandyke, Seward	25M	farmer			
Price, Bluma	52F	Keeping House	NJ		
George	53M	farmer		2200	2800
Susan	22F				
Bluma	20F	attends school			
Margaret	16F	attends school			
Emily	13F	attends school			
George	11M	attends school			
Julia	8F	attends school			
<b>LeRoy Township</b>					
Locke, Martha	41F	Keeping House	KY	1000	100
Alice	16F				
Susie	12F	attends school	KS		
G.	5M	attends school	KS		
Leon	4M		KS		
Barker, A.	28M	farm hand			

Logan, Sidney	64F	Keeping House	KY	375	150
Vidley, Elias	23M	farmer		2250	375
Sutton, Lorena	58F	Keeping House	VA	4800	1000
George	23M	farmer			
Maria	20F	attends school			
Harriet	18F	attends school			
Daniel	34M	farmer			100
Irving	3M		KS		
Rosabel	4/12F		KS		

### Neosho Township

Beale, Rebecca	46F	Keeping House	PA	4000	1000
Oliver	20M	farmer, attends school			
Robert	17M	farm hand, attends school			
Maggie	14F	attends school			
Drinn, Sarah	43F	Farmer	OH	7500	2000
Lewis	18M	farm hand			
William	11M				
Harrol, Henry	24M	farmer			500
Elliot, Eunice	40F	Farmer	OH	9000	200
James	19M	farm hand, attends school			
Lawrence	17M	farm hand, attends school			
Allie	7F	attends school	KS		
Hoose, Charles	30M	farmer			
Loy, Susan	45F	Farmer	IN	350	
Mattie	18F	at home			
Susan	16F	at home			
William	14M	farm hand			
Anna	12F		KS		
Kate	9F		KS		
Mason, Sarah	45F	Keeping House	IN		
Albert	20M	farm hand			
Helen	17F	domestic servant			
Tilly	12F	at home			
Florence	10F				
Robert	9M				

Mary	7M				
I.	6M				
Mixden, Martha	53F	Keeping House	OH	1000	100
Musgrave, Jackson	23M	farmer			600
Robinson, Mary	60F	Keeping House	Ireland	7000	1600
Rebecca	30F	at home			
Joshua	26M	farmer			
Albert	23M	farm hand			
George	20M	farm hand			
Thomas	48M	farm hand			
Thomas, Ann	55F	Farmer	PA	3000	1650
William	25M	farm hand			1500
Melacton?	23M	farm hand			
Leroy	20M	farm hand, attends school			
Maggie	18F	attends school			
Eliza	16F	attends school			
Lavinia	14F	attends school			
Austin	6M		KS		
Wheeler, Sarah	43F	Farmer	VA	3500	600
Mosely, William	16M	farm hand, attends school			
Edwin	13M	attends school			
Wheeler, Josephine	12F	attends school			
John	6M	attends school	KS		
Alice	4F		KS		
<b>Ottumwa Township</b>					
Benton, Ann	47F	Farmer	PA	1500	400
Henry	21M	farm laborer			
Griffon, Elizabeth	4F		KS		
Binray, Ann	56F	Farmer	England	3000	600
Emily	14F	attends school			120
Arthur	18M	farm hand			
Foster, Elizabeth	38F	Farmer	IN	250	75
William	17M	farm hand			
James	14M	farm hand			
Mary	12F				
Jane	10F				

Alice	7F				
Lee, Elizabeth	45F	Keeping House	IL		400
William	23M	farmer			220
Martha	18F Mulatto	keeping house			50
Lucy	14F Mulatto	at home			
Allen	11M	at home			
Henrietta	9F	at home			
Scott	21M	farmer			
McComb, Eliza	65F	Farmer	PA	2500	1500
Williams, Lawrence	20M Black	farm hand			40
McComb, John	40M	broommaker			300
Esther	34F	keeping house			
Pontan, Rebecca	49F	Farmer	England		
Michael	41M	farmer		1600	500
James	14M	farm hand			
Henry	11M	farm hand			
<b>Pottawatome Township</b>					
Clasby, Sarah	59F	Keeping House	VA		2000
Hayden	23M	farmer		700	200
Wallace	18M	farm hand			50
Lucien	21M	farm laborer		500	500
Gard, Nancy	56F	Keeping House	IN	100	480
Zachariah	21M	Farmer			
James	17M	Farm hand			
Emma	16F	attends school			
George	13M	attends school			
Lunham, Isabel	28F	keeping house			
May	1F		KS		
Miller, Louisa	55F	Farmer, can't write	VA		150
James	25M	farm hand		400	
Lucinda	22F	at home			
Missiell?, Clara	38F	Farmer	VA		
James	12M	attends school			
Edward	10M	attends school	KS		
Samuel	8M		KS		

Emma  
Misy, David

6F  
29M

farmer

KS

The most valuable sources for this thesis were primary documents including Lyon and Coffey county newspapers, Godey's Lady's Book, Coffey County Clippings, and the census data. Early Day History of Coffey County was also very useful, as were the articles by Linda Kerber and Barbara Welter. Dick Everett's Lure of the Land and Sod-House Frontier, as well as Paul Gate's Fifty Million Acres, provided abundant background information.

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

A Land of Her Own:  
Independent Women Homesteaders  
in Lyon and Coffey Counties, Kansas  
(1860 - 1870)

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Title of Thesis

*Dee Cooper*

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