

KANSAS TOWNS

The names of Kansas towns have diverse origins. Many have Indian names. The Wichita were an Indian tribe and the name translates "painted faces." There is confusion about the origins of some town names. Havanna was named after an Indian tribe, not the city in Cuba. Spelling errors also contribute to the confusion. Cuba was not named for the country in which Havanna is located, but for a pioneer whose name was spelled with a "K" not a "C." One town agreed to be named after the winner of a poker game. It became Cawker City. While settlers of one town argued about its name, one disgusted resident declared, "by jingo, we'd better decide the name of the town." Jingo is in Miami County.

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In the 1850's some settlers from the Albany, New York area came to Nemaha County and the town of Albany, Kansas was born. In 1882 the post office moved to Sabetha and except for the limestone school sitting on a hill, most of Albany was hauled away. For about eighty years people forgot that John Brown spent his last night in Kansas in Albany and that slaves leaving Missouri on the underground railroad stopped there too. But in 1965 people from neighboring towns got together and formed the Albany Historical Society. Volunteers moved in historic houses, built metal sheds to house antique cars and farm machinery, added a blacksmith shop, log cabin and an old post office. They turned the old schoolhouse into a museum. Albany, Kansas is no longer a ghost town.

From PLAINS TALK

In the autumn of 1870 a small group of colonists from Wisconsin settled in Coneburg, Kansas. By June of 1871 the main line of the Atchison, Topeka, and the Santa Fe railroad had reached the townsite. The directors of the railroad, while traveling across Kansas, stopped in Coneburg. Among the visitors were F.H. Peabody of Boston, treasurer of the Santa Fe. In his honor the name of the town was changed from Coneburg to Peabody. In 1874 Mr. Peabody presented to the town a library building, furniture, and a collection of 2,000 books for free public use. Thus Peabody has the distinction of having the first free public library in the state of Kansas. The original library building has been preserved and now serves as the Peabody Library Historical Museum.

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