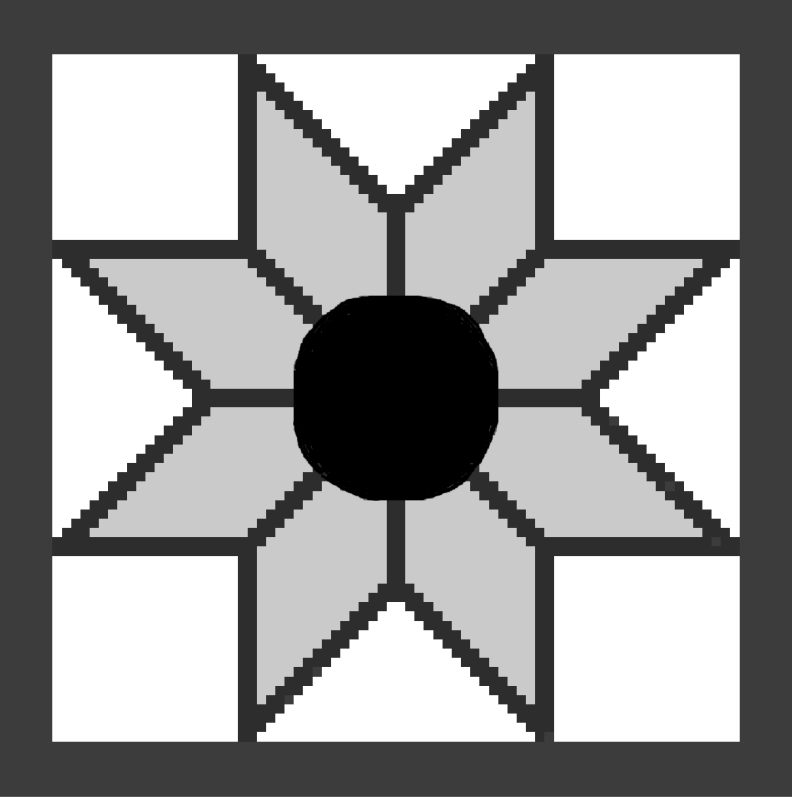


# WOODSTON

*Established 1885*

Kansas Sampler Foundation



## ARCHITECTURE

### *The Great Barn of Yesterday*

Commercial and residential structures in Woodston were eclectic plains designs. A unique feature was concrete-block construction from locally-manufactured blocks. The historic bank building at the corner of Main and Cedar streets is the finest example, but there are other business buildings and houses remaining. The historic Thomas Barn, voted No. 1 barn in Kansas in 1918, stood three miles east and 2.3 miles north of town. It was destroyed by fire in 1995 and a monument now marks the location. The native limestone Ash Rock Church is the oldest standing church in Rooks County and is located five miles north and one mile east of town.



*The simple yet elegant concrete-block architecture of the Woodston bank building is a source of pride for the entire community. It is now the home of the Woodston City Office.*

*The historic Ash Rock Church has warmly welcomed visitors to this north-west Rooks County community well into its third century of service.*



## ART

### *Woodston's Artful Leaders*

Kelly and Lee Hull of rural Woodston were leaders of the art community, she a painter and he a photographer. They both produced interpretive landscapes. Their work is found in many public and private places in the region, but none of their creations are left in Woodston. The only remaining art exhibit today is found at the post office, where one may view the FBI mug shots of most-wanted criminals.



*A view taken in the 1960s looking south toward Woodston. The local limestone proved to be exceptionally adaptable as both building stone and road pavement.*

## COMMERCE

### *The Fruit of the Land*

Woodston, like other towns in the Solomon Valley, serves an agricultural area, providing supplies and equipment for farming as well as basic necessities for living. The railroad was the primary connection with the rest of the country until the 1950s, when trucks using Highway 24 superseded railroad usage. The highway is still used today, primarily for shipping grain from area farms.

## CUISINE

### *Community Coffee*

Woodston had a series of restaurants over the years, all offering basic meat and potatoes fare. There is no food service in Woodston today, but a community coffee shop is maintained in the former office building of the middle grain elevator. The local church women serve a special dinner at Fellowship Hall the first Saturday of pheasant season.

## CUSTOMS

### *Customs from the Country*

The people of this area celebrated religious and patriotic holidays with special events. There were fraternal organizations and women's clubs. A booster club sponsored holiday festivities. School programs drew crowds. None of these customs remain today, but instead you find the local citizens taking part in other customs, such as the wheat harvest every summer. This activity includes the entire community and requires that everyone lend a hand in bringing in this valuable Kansas commodity.

## GEOGRAPHY

### *A Center of it All*

Woodston is located in the beautiful Solomon Valley in the Blue Hills region of Kansas. The broad valley runs through rolling plains. The town served farmers and ranchers in the valley and in the upland areas north and south for about ten miles in each direction.

## HISTORY

### *No Mill, No Problem*

Woodston was established in 1885 as a railroad town. It is located in the Solomon Valley but never had a close association with the South Fork Solomon River. It was the only community in the valley that did not have a water-powered mill. The town's population peaked in the 1920s and sustained a viable community until the 1960s, after which it went into decline. Like many other towns of the Great Plains, Woodston struggles to remain a viable community. However, the will and pride of the people persist.

## PEOPLE

### *Diversity Galore!*

Woodston was settled by predominantly western European immigrants, with no distinctive ethnic group maintaining a sustained identity in the community. Most young people left to find other opportunities. The best-known citizen and business man was John E. Jones, who started with a small service station and became owner of a fleet of fuel trucks, a chain of service stations, and related businesses. His was the last business in Woodston that had significant connections outside the immediate community.



*Woodston's one-room schoolhouse stands as a testament to the town's early years when future generations were taught basic lessons in readin', writin', and 'rithmetic.*