~ *Part 13* ~
Reflections on a Common Theme
Cemetery Stories

CLOUD COUNTY
Looking for Cloud County Cemeteries - by Joan Nothern

The first history of Cloud County appeared in Cutler's History of Kansas, 1883. It made no mention of cemeteries, although the first settler's death is well covered. Jacob Heller took a claim June 20, 1860, then accidentally shot himself in October 1860. He shot himself in the mouth when drawing a loaded gun from a wagon, muzzle forward. His death was the first recorded in the county.

The Kansas Historical Society provides the list of cemeteries published in the Transactions of the Kansas State Horticultural Society, vol. XXVIII, 1906. It published Kansas cemeteries by county. In 1906 there were 43 cemeteries listed in Cloud County, most pinpointed by city or township, with the size in acres noted. At that time, Glasco had one cemetery of five acres.

The WPA Guide to 1930s Kansas, published in 1939, was compiled and written by the Federal Writers' Project of the Work Projects Administration. Cemeteries were included among city attractions only rarely, and then with reference to U.S. military history. The National Cemetery in Leavenworth has soldiers buried since the War of 1812. Sunset Cemetery in Manhattan is noted for the Soldiers Monument placed there in 1898. The Topeka Cemetery has a monument, dedicated May 30, 1895, to the Kansas soldiers who died in the Battle of the Blue.

It is in this spirit that on page 327 of the WPA Guide there are these instructions for travelers to Glasco. "Left from Glasco on an improved road, within a Roman Catholic Cemetery, is a plot reminiscent of Flanders Field, its 16 crosses aligned beneath a flagpole. The gateway to this cemetery, a Memorial to World War Soldiers, has two white stone columns with inscribed brass plates."

MITCHELL COUNTY
by Linda Clover

INDIAN CREEK CEMETERY
SE1/4 Sec. 13. Turkey Creek Twp, Mitchell Co. Kansas

This cemetery has been abandoned, and no longer exists as such. The owner of the land surrounding this hilltop site took over the area and cattle now roam there. There are a few limestone rocks in evidence, but there is no discernible engraving on them. No one seems to know of any record book on the cemetery. According to the owner of the land, several families that had been buried there had been moved to other cemeteries. To the best of their recollection two of the families buried there at one time were Rankins and Pooler.

BOGARDUS CEMETERY
SE¼ Sec. 21 Asherville Twp. Mitchell Co. Kansas
BELL
Benjamin   1868
Braxton   (23 yrs)   12 Aug 1868
Elizabeth (21 yrs)   12 Aug 1868
     (wife of Braxton)
 Mary   1868

BOGARDUS
 D.C. (David) (1839, Troy, N.Y.)   12 Aug 1868
     Co A Ill. Inf. GAR   (married Hester R. Bell, 1859. Parents of William Francis)
FARROW E. W.
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Great historical significance is personified by this little cemetery tucked back in among the trees along West Asher Creek. It was here that the victims of an Indian Massacre on August 12, 1868, were buried. Some of the people first laid to rest here are reported to have been moved, leaving only the few people listed above remaining.

It was at the Bogardus cabin site three miles southeast of present-day Beloit that the Indian raid took place. David Bogardus and Braxton Bell, 23 years old, were killed by the Indians; Braxton's wife, Elizabeth, only 21, was mortally wound. Their infant daughter, Ella Bell, about I year, was seriously wounded. Aaron Bell's two daughters, Esther Jane, age 8 and Margaret, 6, were kidnapped and later released. Mrs. Borgardus and her son, Matt, 8 years and Will, 9 months, escaped injury.

Many stories have been written and told of this infamous Indian Massacre along the Solomon River valley. One source of information is "Historical Moments of Mitchell Co." by Waconda Chapter, Kansas Anthropological Assoc. 1976.

MOODY CEMETERY
First Owner of Land, George S. Jones
Cemetery name was unknown for some time
NW ¼ Sec. 10 Pittsburg Twp., Mitchell Co. Kansas
JONES
 Harry W. 9 mo 13 ds 18 Aug 1885
        son of G. S. & L.
 Maud L. 7 mo 11 ds 16 Oct 1882
        daughter of G.S. & L.
PHILLIPS
Dan'l (17 Dec 1883) Co. D, 27th IND Inf. GAR
RUBLE
 Laura A. (maybe 2 months) daughter of M. & L.T.
        (broken stone)
WATSON
 John F. 18 yr 7 ds 10 May 1877
 Nora O. 2 mo 15 ds 17 Mar 1876
        daughter of D.D. & L.

OSBORNE COUNTY
Cemeteries around Alton - by Carolyn Williams

Every community has at least one cemetery with an unusual "character." There are eight cemeteries in the Alton community.

Thanks to a number of historians in our area, one being Von Rothenberger, who compiled a rather large book entitled Osborne County Burials, 1866-2000 and also the book Osborne County Scenic & Heritage Backways, and others who took part in The People Came books published in the 1970s and the book Bull City, 1870-Alton, 1995, we have an unusual field from which to glean. Thanks to all those who took part in these endeavors. I'm just able to pick and choose whatever I wish. There are many more tales to tell, but I choose to tell at least one from each of the eight.

The first actual burying ground was the Bull City Burial Ground, less than a mile north of the town of Bull City/Alton. In 1873 this little patch of ground was established to accommodate the family of Charles Cook and his infant son, victims of homicide and suicide, the White family of four, Patricia Hughes, Harmon Austin, William Jaycox, and Hiram C. Bull and his two cohorts who were the victims of the famous elk attack in 1879. Later Bull and his two friends were the first to be moved to Sumner Cemetery, official burial spot for present-day Alton.

In 1935 Cassius Austin, son of the owner of the Austin Hotel on east Nicholas, wrote about the 13 people buried there long after the other cemeteries had been established. This little cemetery had not been known to exist except by a precious few until the day when the road was being graded and

the child's grave was unearthed. It was then that the community came to know the truth of those buried there. In 1880 Hiram Bull, Robert Bricknell, and George Nicholas, who were icons of the community, were moved to the official Sumner Cemetery. Nicholas' wife Mary was buried beside her husband here, as well as an infant in 1872. Bricknell's father, who was a Civil War veteran, was also buried in that cemetery.

Speaking of the Sumner Cemetery, a lady buried there with probably the longest name in history—and easily the longest in Osborne County—is a German lady born in East Freesland Prussia, now Germany. She was a Dieckman by birth and married a man by the name of Gustave Schweigekardt. Her claim to fame was the addition of her first name of Schwantjea. Interestingly enough, there is no record of her husband being buried beside her. Her name is engraved on her tall, thin tombstone in the shape of a horseshoe. Better to accommodate her long name?

My husband likes to brag that the only perfect man is buried in Sumner Cemetery. Floyd E. Perfect, born in 1903 and died in 1971.

Mary Ann Hill has been an enigma to me. She is buried under a cedar tree in what is known as the "Old Part," north side. The inscription on the headstone reads, "Mary Ann Hill, born in England, 1936." Von's references state that she was born in Bradford, England in 1868. We can only conjecture that she came to America alone, lived here 68 years without having a family. Perhaps she made her living as a seamstress? Only the good Lord knows. She has earned a remembrance rose from my garden on Memorial Day since I discovered her grave over 20 years ago.

Pleasant Valley Cemetery is just that, a pleasant little cemetery in the valley west of Alton. It has the distinction of having the only known Negro lady buried in this area. Hattie Shoonmaker, born in 1885, was evidently a black lady who came west alone? How did she make her living until her death in 1904? Perhaps she continued to live as a washer woman, cleaning lady, farmer? Also in this cemetery is the grave of Russell Scott Osborn, who served as Kansas Secretary of State in the early 1890s.

Kill Creek Cemetery, southeast of town in Kill Creek Township, is noted for its "residents." The west half of the cemetery is strictly for the Mennonites in the area; the east half is for the Presbyterians among us. No one of the Mennonite denomination remain in Osborne County today. Where did they all go?

The Pioneer Adventist Cemetery along U.S. Highway 24 west of Alton is the only Seventh-day Adventist resting place in the area. This is the final home of Lyman T. Earl, cofounder of Bull City who lost the toss of the coin for the town's namesake to General Bull and his wife Abigail. One of the men from the original Bull City Burial Ground, William Jaycox, was a Civil War veteran who was moved to this cemetery when the original burial ground was rediscovered. Another unknown fact: Jonathan Post, an uncle of C. W. Post of the Post Cereal Company, is buried here. He was known to have run the Advent flour mills along the South Solomon River for a number of years. Evidently the interest in corn moved to cornflakes!

The Friends have their own cemetery, Mount Ayr, out south of town not far from their church. Those who know the history of the Quaker community know that they are opposed to violence/war. There is a couple, Lyle and Crystal Gregory, who both served during World War II. There is one other veteran buried there as well. Quite interesting, I'd say.

One of the most fascinating tales of the Grant Center Cemetery northwest of Alton is that of a lady who died recently. Because she died during inclement weather, the family chose to have her cremated with plans to be buried later. Since she had been "into antiques" while alive, they buried her in her antique Santa Cookie Jar!

Thus ends our tales of our cemeteries in the unique community of Alton in Osborne County.

ROOKS COUNTY
Ash Rock Cemetery -- by Sherry Brown —
(with excerpts from Leo E. Oliva, Ash Rock and the Stone Church (1983)

Ash Rock Cemetery was established in 1882 in northeast Rooks County, several miles from the later town of Woodston. At the same time the Ash Rock Church was being planned, it was decided to develop a cemetery too. William Bramwell Hoar offered land just west of the new church site to use as the cemetery. A cemetery association was organized in January 1882 and adopted the name of "Ash Rock Cemetery."

There was a legend connected with the establishment of the cemetery. Sarah Flansburgh Vanderlip, wife of Charles Vanderlip, had just turned 26 years of age about one week before the organizational meeting. She supposedly remarked that she saw little need for a two-acre cemetery because most of the Ash Rock residents were young and would not be dying for a long time. Elmer Balmer made a joke (a typical way of dealing with death) that they should go ahead with the planning, and she might be the first one to be buried there. Then he remarked that she would be glad for the place. Within one month, on February 9, 1882, Sarah Vanderlip died from pneumonia, and she was the first person to be buried in the Ash Rock Cemetery. Elmer Balmer reportedly said thereafter that one should never joke about death.

The two acres were surveyed by S. S. Boggs at a cost of $6.00. Four divisions or blocks were established. Each division was separated from the perimeter of the cemetery by a lane 12 feet in width, and each division was separated from the other divisions it bordered by a street of 12 feet in width. Each division was divided into 40 lots. The gravesites or plots, within each lot were numbered from 1 to 8. There was a total of 160 lots or 1248 gravesites.

After staking the grounds, the association met and adopted a motion directing Elmer Balmer to prepare a draft constitution and bylaws "and that he be allowed to get aid from whatever source he can." They also met to elect a sexton for the coming year. At that meeting Charles Vanderlip was elected sexton and a constitution was accepted.

The constitution included the name of the association, list of officers and their duties, and several rules they intended to follow. The secretary was authorized to sell lots and issue deeds to them. The sexton was "to dig (or get dug) and fill up all of the graves that he may be called upon to dig and fill up, and shall receive for each grave dug and filled a sum . . . not to exceed $2.50 from the party or parties ordering." All graves were to be dug to a uniform depth of five and one-half feet. Only the head of a family was to hold title to a lot, and no family would be permitted more than one lot. The cost of a lot was set at $2.00. They set aside the west ten lots of Division 2 "for a Potter's field," with the proviso "that each lot is filled in rotation beginning at the Northwest corner." No one has been interred in those ten lots.

In 1887 a hitching rack was erected. Further improvements were made in 1901, as reported in the Woodston Star on November 23: "The good people near Stone Church have placed hitching posts with chains near the graveyard and are now fencing the yard with wire netting, which greatly improves the place."

At the annual meeting of the cemetery association in 1914 it was decided to construct "an ornamental fence . . . which shall not be less than 4 ft. high." The secretary was authorized to sell the old fence to the highest bidder. The new fence, still there, was constructed with metal posts set in cement and Elwood woven wire. The total cost of materials, including cement, was $122.61. That did not include the arch over the east gate or the brick corners, which were added later. For many years the new fence had signs hanging on it which read "DO NOT HITCH TO FENCE."

The trustees were authorized in 1924 to solicit funds for an arch over the main cemetery gate, and it   was installed within a year. At that same meeting the sexton's allowance for digging and filling a grave was raised from $2.50 to $10.00. The cost of digging and filling a grave in 1983 was $140.00.

In 1931 the association decided to place markers on all unmarked graves. In 1933 brick corners were authorized. New gates were added in 1934.

Ash Rock Cemetery is located 5 miles north and 1 mile east of Woodston at the corner of D and 29 Rd. The Ash Rock Church, oldest standing church building in the county, is located on that same corner across the road. The church was restored in 1976 and is in excellent condition to stand another hundred years.

GRAHAM COUNTY
Fagan Cemetery -- by Lowell Beecher

Two and one-half miles west of Bogue, Kansas, and one-half mile north from Graham county's Q road, the "river road" which links Bogue and Hill City, lies the long-abandoned Fagan Cemetery.

Memorial Days at the Fagan Cemetery pass quietly: obligatory clutches of flowers are bestowed upon other graves at other places, places better maintained. Nobody stands with bowed head at Fagan's burying ground, remembering the forgotten few buried there. Some Twenty-first Century

residents of Graham county know the cemetery's location. Fewer know the names of any of those at rest at Fagan.

D. N. Minor, previously a Wisconsin state senator, homesteaded the quarter section surrounding—and including—the Fagan Cemetery site in 1878. He's buried there, along with other Minor family members.

Hardly a pragmatist, D. N. Minor: he soon thrust himself squarely into Graham county politics, supporting Millbrook as county seat and working feverishly against W. R. Hill's efforts to steal the prize away to Hill City. When the Central Branch of the Union Pacific's surveyors planted stakes across the gut of Graham county in 1887, he founded the town of Fagan, confident he could convince the UP to place a depot at his town. The railroad founded its own camp, Bogue, and Hill City, by popular—though questionable—vote, seized the county seat from Millbrook. Fate, 2; D. N. Minor, 0.

In October 1882, the Theodore Rudman family, residing about five miles southeast of Fagan in the Kebar region, "took up" a number of hogs belonging to Mitchell Hopson, a black man living only a short distance from the Rudman homestead. Rudman claimed that the hogs had damaged his crops and, therefore demanded recompense; Hopson, who came after his hogs the same day, refused to pay, insisting that the Rudman children had driven the hogs onto their property so that they could pen the animals and demand damages.

Hopson came to the Rudman farm a second time late the same day with a cap-and ball revolver and Bowie knife. As Mrs. Barbara Rudman and daughter Mary attempted to escort Mr. Rudman into the house to avoid a confrontation with the armed man, Hopson pursued the retreating figures and fired into Rudman's body, the ball traversing the homesteader's back, right-to-left, and passing through his heart.

Fearing additional gunfire from the angry man, teenager Mary Rudman rose from her father's prone body, grappled with Hopson, and managed to disarm the murderer, throwing the assailant's revolver into nearby weeds. Hopson then attacked with his knife, inflicting severe wounds to the girl's hands. However, he quickly abandoned his attack, secured his animals, and left the farm.

Mitchell Hopson surrendered to authorities at Millbrook and was subsequently transferred to the jail at Hays, Kansas: Millbrook did not have the incarceration facilities adequate to house individuals accused of capital crimes.

A few days before his trial was to begin, Hopson "became agitated" and was dispatched by a number of heavy blows—one of which penetrated his brain— delivered by a riveting hammer wielded by a jail workman.

Mary Rudman soon thereafter married. While she had earlier been able to save her mother, a brother and herself from possible death at the hands of an armed man, she was unable to combat successfully her next mortal opponent: in 1887, she succumbed to typhoid fever and was buried at Fagan.

The mound of dry prairie soil on Mary Rudman Mullaney's grave had not yet settled when Jeff Stewart, a Millbrook rowdy and self-proclaimed racist, insulted Graham county's black court clerk, John Hawkins, with seeming impunity, declaring himself—at 6'6" and 190 pounds—to be "the toughest man in the county."

Actually, though, Stewart secretly feared one other Graham county resident, William Kelley, a man county residents universally acknowledged to be more than Stewart's match.

Kelley, a mulatto, owned a 40-acre pre-emption bordering Fagan and, unfortunately, occupied idle time at the same Millbrook billiard hall as Stewart. Irked by Stewart's treatment of Hawkins, Kelley quietly challenged Stewart's assertion of pugilistic superiority, but, because neither man had money to wager on physical conflict, they determined that they would bet their clothing.

As the two men began to strip within the confines of a billiard hall, Stewart drew his pistol and fired at the defenseless Kelley. The bullet broke Kelley's collar bone, severed his carotid artery and descended into his chest cavity. Death came within minutes.

Stewart's transgression was the "last straw": while he had experienced something akin to immunity following a catalog of local crimes, this infraction brought a charge of murder. Stewart was tried in Hill City's temporary administration building on Main Street—the court house was not yet built—and sentenced to twelve years at hard labor.

William Kelley's wife gathered her daughters and the family's meager belongings and moved to Leavenworth, Kansas. Her murdered husband, father of three small girls, joined Mary Rudman Mullaney and, eventually, eleven others in the Fagan Cemetery.

SHERIDAN COUNTY
These recollections were graciously shared by the Sheridan County Historical Society — and were submitted by Shirley Popp

Old Sheridan Cemetery - by Nettye Chamberlain, Hoxie, Kansas

The first district organized in Sheridan County was Sheridan. This town of Sheridan was a stage stop where horses were exchanged in delivering passengers, mail, freight, etc. from Fort Wallace on into towns in Nebraska.

Old Sheridan Cemetery was and still is a half mile east of this old town site, near the north fork of the Solomon River.

An inland town and post office, Arcona, a couple of miles east of this town of Old Sheridan were both burned and sacked in the last Indian raid in Sheridan County.

Many who were buried in Old Sheridan Cemetery were transferred to the Hoxie Cemetery. Time passed and it was impossible to find any remains but it is an established fact some names are still remembered of those who sleep in the Old Sheridan Cemetery. Later information says that most of the graves were moved to the Selden Cemetery. A recent source says there is still one grave at Old Sheridan Cemetery. The land for this cemetery was donated by John Godfrey.

Mary Jane Foster, a widow and two sons, one named Aaron, operated the Adell post office one half mile north of the Adell cemetery near the north fork of the Solomon River. Aaron and his first baby, a girl are buried in this cemetery.
Early Days in Sheridan County
By L. M. Foster
Hoxie Sentinel, December 17, 1925

The first burial we have any record of in the county was the wife of Mr. McCarty who settled on the northeast fourth of the section nine, township 6, range twenty-seven. This is the place C. H. Matthews now owns.

When Mrs. McCarty died her friends and relatives were unable to get lumber with which to make a coffin so they took her husband's wagon box and made her a coffin of it. She was buried on the southeast corner of the claim.

Silent City
by Nettye Chamberlain of Hoxie, Kansas

"Silent City" - Adell- We are a pioneer cemetery located in Adell Township, Sheridan County, Kansas. There are many early day silent cities neglected or unknown now, but we here are well remembered.

We do not know the exact number of our inhabitants but we are "at rest" on a grassy hillside facing eastward. For in that day which no man knoweth, as lightning cometh from the east and shineth even unto the west, so shall the coming of Jesus be.

Each of us have our designated lot and all have our markers, some wonderfully designed marble or granite, a few in lowly blocks of cement.

Our silent city was founded in the 1870s. In locating and developing the many homesteads surrounded, there were many grandparents, parents, children, and old uncles and aunts, some men Civil War veterans. They all came by wagon train with oxen, horses and mules; some on horseback. Our first inhabitants were the mothers and babies, then the aged. One early by accident—a boy who drowned under a load of hay crossing the North Fork Solomon River at "Devil's Gulch," a half mile west of our city.

Our population increased rapidly for several years and even unto this day occasionally another joins us here. Surrounding us is a nice useful fence with needful gates, low cement walls. No buildings are in sight of our city but northeastward is the Adell oil field which would have surprised the pioneers who sleep here.

On Memorial Day we are remembered for we are fortunate and grateful in having a final home for some veterans which rate the "American Legion" with a short service and a final salute to their comrades and others sleeping here.

Here on this sunny hillside, we await the duration.