

EDITOR'S NOTE

As late as the summer of 1956 the minds of Kansans were still being titillated by Mechem's rehabilitation of a noble bird. One interesting reaction came from Miss Jane Crow of Topeka, a Girl Scout worker there. A modified Jayhawk known as Jennie, was adopted as a shoulder patch by some of her girls. Furthermore, tags were prepared, affixed to which were a kind of wire leg-cuff. If one is to believe the legend on the card, said leg-cuff holds prisoner an invisible Jayhawk and so the myth rolls on. Miss Crow writes, "We needed something for 'give-aways' or swap items, something to sell Kansas." The tags which held invisible Jayhawks prisoner were distributed at various scout meetings that summer. Thus one loyal and perceptive Kansan responded.

Following are reactions of some few others.

. . . The Jayhawk, as the story goes, came to this section of the state when parts of Neosho, Allen, Wilson and Woodson counties were covered with a heavy glaze of limestone, entirely without vegetation. They liked it here and remained, with nothing at all to disturb the great, ponderous birds which in size and shape resembled the new transport plane Constellation.

For a few centuries they remained fond of salt water, so they would make constant trips to the Atlantic, Pacific and Gulf of Mexico for a drink and return with each of their bills loaded with three or four barrels of water. This sea water they would store in the nooks and crannies of north-central Kansas, and eventually from the surplus grew the huge caverns of salt which geologists say will salt the world's ham and eggs indefinitely.

On their travels to the gulf, especially, their mammoth feet and claws picked up tons of soft earth which came with them back to this part of Southeast Kansas and eventually covered the barren limestone with the deep, Jayhawk-fertilized soil which now produces some of the best alfalfa, flax, corn and soybeans that grow anywhere in the world. Sand did not cling so well to their feet, but enough came from the seacoasts to make small showings in the beds of the Neosho and Verdigris rivers and, of course, to develop great sand bars in the Kaw river and sandy soil along that larger stream.

This, of course, is another unverified tale about the Jayhawk, but it is common knowledge that a layer of limestone lies under the rich soil of this section of the state. Who can say that the great bird of Kansas was not responsible for covering the limestone? Also it is interesting to speculate that, in bringing back so much water from the sea, the Jayhawk itself started the first floods racing through eastern Kansas valleys so that he could indulge a whim for using his web feet.

Editorial
Chanute *Tribune*
Chanute, Kansas

I don't know how I happen to rate the booklet on the Jayhawk but I know no one in Kansas enjoyed it more. I'm "agin" people who go around pinching the illusions of grownups as well as children. When I lost Santa Claus I still had the Jayhawk and I had a feeling of absolute loss when they started all that furor. That's why I liked the booklet. The conclusive evidence of the skeletons was entirely satisfying and now I sleep well again at night!

Blanche M. Irving
Haviland, Kansas

TO THE JAYHAWK

At myths I deliberately balk
And express my derision. I talk
Of "J" Brown and "C" Nation
With no perturbation—
But I *never* deride the Jayhawk!

Standish Hall
Wichita, Kansas

. . . In history, a good myth is like any other hard fact, and should be stored as food for scissor-bills who might otherwise never learn anything which isn't so.

J. H. Wilson
Salina, Kansas

. . . I've been wondering if the people out there knew that the old hawk . . . is the one that gave Leonardo Di Vinci the idea of the airplane. . .

No emblem in this Navy has the appeal that the old Jayhawk stirs inside one. That toothless falcon of the flat country flaps a mighty wing . . .

He's the bird that dug the sands for the ocean,

Yes, he's the bird that mixed the salt in the sea . . .

Wayne Replogle
Crawfordsville, Indiana

- Vol. 1, No. 1, *Men Against The Frontier*, February, 1957:
Vol. 1, No. 2, *The Red Man Lives*, May, 1957:
Vol. 1, No. 3, *Buffalo: Lord of the Plains*, August, 1957:
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Vol. 2, No. 1, *Trails of Steel*, February, 1958:
 Neil Byer, "Trails of Steel."
 U.P. Public Relations, "Condensed Sketch of Corporate History of Union Pacific."
 John D. Cruise, "Early Days on the Union Pacific."
 U.P. Public Relations, "Railroad Trials."
 Adolph Roenigk, "Railroad Grading Among Indians."
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Vol. 2, No. 2, *That a State Might Sing*, May, 1958:
 Neil Byer, "That a State Might Sing."
 Kirke Mechem, "The Story of Home on the Range."
Vol. 2, No. 3, *A Myth Takes Wings*, August, 1958:
 Neil Byer, "A Myth Takes Wings."
 Kirke Mechem, "The Mythical Jayhawk."