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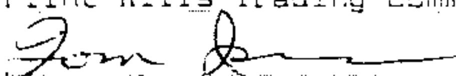
Abstract Approved: 

Volland, Kansas, has a history typical of plains railroad towns created in the 1880s. This Flint Hills town was established at a point convenient for the steam-powered railraod to meet its water and other service needs, with the marketing area which this new town could serve also an important consideration. The Volland store was for many years the central gathering place for the community, providing a communications hub and social center as well as supplying all kinds of hard and soft goods. The depot made possible the convenient transportation of surplus crops, encouraging specialization in such crops as wheat and corn. Volland, platted as a T-town, also became a center for cattle shipping and contributed to the establishment of ranching as a primary source of income. When the railroad expanded, adding a second track, the Volland community prospered. But when the institutions--the railroad, schools, and store--which had kept the town a viable trading center broke down under increased pressures from such external forces as the popularization of the automobile, school consolidation, rural to urban migration, and the introduction of the diesel locomotive, the town soon died. Volland, typical of every town dependent on only one or two technologies, could not withstand the loss of one. It, like many other Fllint Hills towns dependent on the railroad and agriculture, was not large enough to survive the loss of the railroad. Today only shared memories keep the town alive.

VOLLAND:

A FLINT HILLS TRADING COMMUNITY

A Thesis

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the Division of Social Sciences

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by

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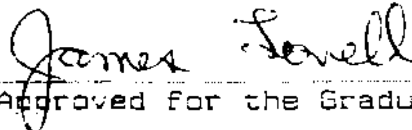

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CHAPTER 1

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP AGRICULTURE

Volland, Kansas, has a history typical of plains railroad towns created in the 1880s. This town was established at a point convenient for the steam-powered railroad to meet its water and other service needs, with the marketing area which this new town could serve also an important consideration. Its store was for many years the central gathering place for the community; the town and store formed a magnet which brought more people and, in due time, determined the need for a school. Typically, too, of towns dependent on agriculture and a single other industry (in this case the railroad), when the demand for these services decreased, the town declined.

Volland was platted in Wabaunsee County's Washington Township in the midst of the Flint Hills which stretch north and south across the eastern part of Kansas. The Flint Hills were formed by the weathering and erosion of Permian age limestone strata, containing numerous bands of chert, commonly called flint. A combination of native bluestem and other prairie grasses blanket the flinty graveled soil of the numerous hills forming a treeless upland. Brush- and tree-lined creeks and seasonal streams snake through the bottomlands. Through the 1860s to 1880s, the period of settlement, however, these waterways were relatively brush and tree free due to centuries of prairie fires and periodic

droughts.

Settlers, recognizing that it was easier to work with nature than against her, adapted their lifestyles and livelihoods to the Flint Hills. They built their farmsteads in the sheltered valleys and waterways, began to plow the native sod into fields, and pastured their cattle on the surrounding grasses.

Wabaunsee County lay along the fringe of the Potawatomie reservation. Many of the settlers or squatters came as early as 1854-1856. They did not suffer any problems of raids. The county, as did Kansas, experienced an influx of New England settlers during the Free-State period. Another influx of settlement followed the Civil War.1

Many responded to the 1862 Homestead Act, but many more settlers responded to the activities of the land promoters booming Kansas advantages as a perfect home for the yeoman farmer while in Europe they boosted the idea that Kansas was likened to a fertile soiled Edenic garden, where land for the landless only awaited those willing to come. This pull on the American and German mind brought many into the county. Early 1870s immigration was briefly checked by the 1873 depression, 1874 grasshoppers, and drought, however between 1875 and 1880, during another round of good times, Kansas experienced another influx of immigrants.[2]

A steam powered saw mill was established in 1869 to turn the hickory, walnut, oak, and other native species into

lumber to be used for farm buildings and fencing. It was operated by Gus Thierer and located on the Michael Fix farm one mile east of the site that was later to be chosen for Volland.[3]

The majority of the first wave of settlers built log cabins while a few built dug outs, as they settled in the bottomlands. However, as the settlers prospered during the late 1860s and early 1870s, they then constructed buildings out of the prevalent native limestone. Quarries and lime kilns sprung up on many farms, with the German settlers leading this construction.

The settlers, almost without exception, were farmers. They found the bottomland soil characteristically deep, rich, and fertile; however the upland soil was shallow and very uncertain for crops. With their livelihood in mind, the earliest settlers moved into and cultivated the bottomlands first. However due to the nature of the terrain every homestead was comprised predominantly of upland and bluffs.

Environmental features such as the Flint Hills soil, topography, and rainfall affected farmers' methods of farming and their crop decisions. Of equal consideration were the agricultural practices brought with them as part of their cultural baggage. For example, these farmers' habit of hoe and spade culture initially had to give way to sod corn and the breaking plow. They were able to retain some aspects of their cultural baggage like their use of the log cabin, other aspects had to adapt like cropping techniques,

and others changed drastically like their reliance upon pasturing.

Small diversified dryland farming was the rule, with cultural practices adapted from the settlers' Eastern U.S. or German homelands. The 1870 agricultural census and Andras concur with the later and more detailed Washington township agricultural censuses. The census for 1877 indicated each of the seventy-seven households produced at least a few acres of winter wheat, spring wheat, rye corn, barley, oats, irish potatoes, and millet. Some of the farmers were experimenting with crop adaptation to the soil of their farm. They planted buckwheat, castor beans, cotton, tobacco, timothy, clover, and broom corn. A few farmers tried planting small plots to sorghum for syrup. All farmers had horses, milch cows, and a few other head of cattle. A few farmers also kept mules, swine, and sheep.[4]

The prairie was gradually coming under fence. Initially each farmer was responsible for controlling his own stock so it would not do damage to the other settlers' property under the applied common law practice. Then Kansas adopted a fence-out policy, which required the farmer to fence out the other settlers' stock, usallly by rails. The Herd Laws came in the 1870s. Washington township, complied with the existing Kansas fence laws. To encourage the building of stone fences and the growing of hedges the legislature of 1867 passed a law giving a bounty of five cents per rod for the construction of these types of

fencing, as this amounted to forty cents per rod and the shortage of other suitable fencing material caused many farmers to avail themselves of the benefits of this law. In 1883 barbed wire became a legal fence and was eagerly accepted as a means of fencing the Flint Hills grasses.[5]

Women were keeping profitable flocks of poultry and producing butter. Vineyards and orchards of apple, pear, peach, plum, and cherry were beginning to be set out on some of the farmsteads. Women also made use of the nuts, wild plums, choke cherries, strawberries, gooseberries, blackberries, wild currents, and nuts that grew along the streambeds to supplement their families' diets. The early settlers, like their counterparts elsewhere on the agricultural frontier, also supplemented their mundane diet by hunting.[6]

The 1881 census shows that two more farmers had joined the township. All were growing much the same crops as they had in 1877, but rye, barley, and some of the earlier experimental crops were dropped from their cropping plans. This habit of continuing to plant certain known crops while continuing to experiment with different crops which might be equally well suited and profitable to their farms was maintained. For example, kafir shows up as an experimental crop as early as 1890 and goes on to become one of the standard components of these farmers' cropping systems until it was replaced by technology and phased out in the late 1940s.[7]

The recurring cycles of boom and bust, the droughts,

hard winters and bad crop years which preceded the 1887 crash, adversely affected Washington township farmers as did the devastation of the 1893 panic.[8]

Agriculture adapted to changes brought to the township by the railroad in 1888. The ease in transporting crop surpluses changed cropping habits, with more acres going into production of crops like wheat and corn which were more marketable. Income from the surplus crops, in turn, was used to purchase factory products. The biggest change, however, lay in the use of the grasslands. Herd laws, barbed wire, and the end of the free range caused some of the farmers to start a sideline which for many became their dominant agricultural practice, one that continues today--that of rancher and pastureman.

The railroad also enabled farmers to ship their yearly cattle surplus to city markets. Local farmers accompanied their stock to the Kansas City market, riding in the caboose. While doing business at the Kansas City Stockyards, they linked with Jim Peters, also of Wabaunsee County, who operated the J. P. Peters Commission Company. The contacts made there initiated the move from farmer to stockman-pastureman, as the commission company provided the link through its buyers, salesmen, and yards. Texas cattlemen needed summer grazing while the farmers of Washington township had extra range land. This enduring marriage of Texas cattle and Flint Hills grass brought a cosmopolitan business-like exchange and money into the

area. Volland became one of the areas major shipping points in these transactions, with Texas cattle being shipped into the area in the spring, driven to pasture for the summer, and returning in the fall for shipment to Peters Co. stockyards. The Wabaunsee County Business Directory of 1907 states, "There are from thirty to forty thousand head of cattle pastured in the county yearly at $3.00 to $3.50 and as high as $4.00 per head. Most of the animals are steers and it is not an uncommon thing for one animal to gain several hundred pounds during the season."[9]

Another consideration in the examination of the farming practices of Washington township are the changes which grew out of the external forces precipitated by the government. This includes new crops, like kafir and its subsequent development to better kafir varieties, cane, and milo maize. All of these were direct outgrowths of crop research funded by the government through land grant institutions. New technology also grew out of this research. For example, whole farming patterns changed with the advent of the tractor and its machinery to replace the horse and its machinery. The 1925 census for Washington township lists twelve tractors and three combines.[10]

Folk practices continued alongside the new technology. The Alma Enterprise advertised cinch bug control chemicals like water mixed with gas tar or coal gas tar, and carried articles on the effectiveness of creosote-tar barriers. Farmers continued to use bleeding to aid stock recovery,

cobwebs to stop bleeding after dehorning, a mixture of lard and kerosene to heal cuts, and other such techniques to fight routine farm ailments from wire cuts, collar galls, cattle grubs, black leg, and hog cholera. This practice of folk culture continued into the 1960s, conducted side by side with later technological advances, like the use of vaccinations and veterinarians.[11]

County agents dealing with such folk practices attempted to disseminate the latest in government-sponsored research to change agricultural practices and bring them more into line with the latest findings. Wabaunsee received her first county agent in 1936. Technological research reached farmers in a variety of ways. The *Alma Enterprise* and *Alma Signal*, both local weekly papers, carried a variety of articles on the latest farm technology. For example, in 1913-15 silo articles were popular, as were ways to improve every aspect of farming practice. Articles covered such topics as better mules, "Fattening Sheep in a Cornfield," "Proper Manner of Feeding the Calf," "Proper Care of the Little Chick," "Culling out the Undesirable Hen," and promoting feterita as a new crop ideal for Wabaunsee County. These papers also carried advertisements promoting the latest in new machinery. Local papers, farm journals, Farm Institutes, County Fairs, 4-H, and the county agent all combined to bring the latest agricultural information to the farmers of Washington township.[12]

There were other outside forces which affected the farmer: tariffs, the international grain trade, national corporations, and the issue of railroad freight rates. These concerns, as did the discussions in the local newspapers on the Grange, the Farmers' Alliance, and Populism parallel development in other areas of Kansas and the Plains.

Washington township's economy was based on agriculture. The Volland store and railroad were the only other places for jobs. This pattern was repeated time and again throughout the Flint Hills. Volland itself was created primarily to serve the railroad and only secondarily to create a market area beneficial to the railroad. This relationship worked to the mutual advantage of Washington township residents and the railroad until external forces again created an upheaval. Railroad technology moved away from the cumbersome steam locomotive with its need for frequent stops to take on water and coal, to the faster, more powerful diesel engine. Volland, still needing the railroad, but no longer needed by it, found itself abandoned like an old, empty boxcar.

CHAPTER 2

THE RAILROAD CREATES A TOWN

The last half of the nineteenth century brought many changes to the Flint Hills. What was once tall grass prairie roamed by the Pottawatomie and Kaw became homesteads fenced by immigrants from the eastern United States and Europe. Along with this most crucial change came a host of other changes as a solid farming region with its attendant schools, railroads, and towns developed. The railroads were the most influential agent of change. Not satisfied with evolutionary progress in the settlement of the Plains and the establishment of towns, they instead created towns where they would most benefit the railroad and then controlled their structure and growth.

Kansas Territory, after much heated debate by Congress on whether the area was to be free or slave, was signed into rsality by President Pierce on May 30, 1854. Settlers rapidly took up land under the Preemption and Homestead Acts. Those homesteading along the western branch of Mill Creek and its feeders--Illinois Creek, Spring Creek, and various seasonal creeks--came primarily from Germany after having made stops elsewhere along the way.[1]

After a territory was established the next step was to create counties, so the 1855 bogus territorial legislature established Richardson County in honor of William A. Richardson, the Congressman from Illinois who had introduced

the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. As was typical for early counties, Richardson County was attached to neighboring Shawnee County for revenue and judicial functions until 1859, when the newer county acquired the six hundred people required by law to organize. In March, 1859, the citizens held their first election for county commissioners, and the following year legislation took effect which changed the county name to Wabaunsee (Pottawatomie for "Dawn o' Day"), in honor of Wabonsa, a Pottawatomie chief who had lived with his tribe on its reserve since being driven from Iowa in 1848. The county underwent several boundary changes before 1872, when it permanently attained an area of 804 square miles. Washington township, along the western edge or the protruding part of the county map, was created in September, 1873, from territory originally included in Alma Township, created the year before. The Mission band of the Pottawatomie had been removed by an 1870 treaty to the Indian territory in what is now called Oklahoma, and the Prairie band to a reserve in Jackson County. This treaty also allowed the Santa Fe Railroad Company to purchase land for rights of way.[2]

Railroads captured the imagination of Americans just prior to the Civil War. Once the conflict ended, people resumed their dreams of a transcontinental rail link. Kansas newspapers fanned this discussion in the late 1850s, as people talked of the possibility of increased business as railroads opened new areas for settlement and enabled the existence of a denser population. Railroad fever

reached new heights when, on July 1, 1862, President Lincoln signed the Pacific Railroad Bill. The transcontinental railroad had come to be seen as a military and political necessity due to the inefficiency of communication systems then used in the area still thought of as the Great American Desert.[3]

Although the Union and Central Pacific railways were chartered by Congress in 1862, building was sidetracked by the cost of construction and a population too sparsely settled to guarantee profitable operation. In 1864 the government offered more lucrative terms. These subsidies included gifts of land in alternate sections for each mile of track laid in a twenty-square-mile strip. The government also took a second mortgage on railroad loans so that private citizens would be more inclined to invest. State governments further assisted by additional land grants. Cities and counties along the rights-of-way also issued bonds in exchange for company stock.[4]

The transcontinental railroad marked an end to the historical unity of the Plains. Railroads not only moved produce and people across the Plains, but also contributed to cultural changes by bringing in large numbers of immigrants. The railroads performed these duties well for the Plains while at the same time they assisted the agricultural frontier on the Plains' eastern fringe.[5]

The 1873 panic slowed construction and precipitated the consolidation of numerous lines into larger companies. As

many of the smaller lines did not have the capital to continue service during times of tight money, the larger and rival railroad companies either leased the smaller lines or purchased their property to strengthen their own empires. The Rock Island-La Salle Railroad was but one example of this national occurrence. The company was chartered in 1847, but by 1857 it planned to link with Chicago, so it changed its name to the Chicago and Rock Island. By 1880 numerous lines were consolidated into the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad Company. The company's ever-expanding plans called for reaching west to Denver and south to Fort Worth, both of which it reached in 1893. This company kept itself on sound footing, surviving the 1890 depression without major problems.[6]

During the eighties railroads competed ferociously to control transportation in the West. Ransom Cable, President and General Manager of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific and its subsidiaries, planned a series of western lines including a trunk line west from St. Joseph to Topeka and continuing through Herington, Wichita, and Caldwell, and then south into Indian Territory. As part of these plans, the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific incorporated the Chicago, Kansas, and Nebraska Railway Company under the Kansas general laws, December 30, 1885, thereby securing valuable rights-of-way, franchise rights, and other property.[7]

Once the transcontinental lines were completed, work began on subsidiary lines. To say that 1886 was a boom year

for Kansas railroad building was putting it mildly--there were 453 railroad companies chartered in 1886 alone. The government ceased assistance, judging that enough lines had been built to connect the country and that the railroad business had become a paying proposition. The timing of railroad construction activities was from then on controlled by national levels of business activity. Construction peaks, like the one of 1886, coincided with the peaks of nationwide economic upswings when the climate for investment was relatively favorable. During these good times the competing railroads frantically built trunk lines.[6]

The 1886 boom period sparked another round of railroad fever in Kansas. Wabaunsee County caught it. Passing bond issues was one way to attract a railroad into an area, as companies depended in part on construction bonds to finance new lines. The _Alma Enterprise_ carried petitions from each of the four townships, calling for a special election to be held on July 17, 1886, to vote on a railroad bond subscription. Bond amounts varied. Washington township's petition called for "Two Hundred shares of One Hundred Dollars each of the capital stock of THE CHICAGO, KANSAS, AND NEBRASKA RAILROAD COMPANY, and in payment therefor, to issue to said Railway Company Twenty of the bonds of said Township, of the denomination of One Thousand Dollars each." The petition stated that lines must be operating by July 1, 1887. This bond election carried by a good majority in every township--a total of 690 votes for and 29 against.[7]

Earlier, in 1880, Wabaunsee County had already voted bonds which brought in the Manhattan, Alma, and Burlingame Railroad, but every town not having a railroad connection wanted one, and those who had one wanted two. This enthusiasm for railroads was typical throughout Plains development. Wabaunsee county had no railroad mileage prior to 1885, when, according to U.S. Census reports, it boasted but forty miles. But in the next five years the county's mileage more than doubled to eighty-eight miles.[10]

The Chicago, Rock Island, and Chicago route was under the direction of Marcus Low. In early 1887 track was laid to Topeka, and by March 24 construction crews had reached Alma and were hurrying west toward Herington.[11]

Once all enticements had been negotiated and the survey crew had made its final report, the land bargaining phase began for Washington Township. Typical transactions between the railroad and individual settlers in 1886 included:

DATE	NAME	RAILROAD	AMOUNT
Oct 9	Mary Fix, widow	C K & N	$ 403.50
Oct 9	John R. Fix & wife	C K & N	1400.00
Oct 9	John R. Fix & wife	C K & N	1400.00
Oct 9	Heinrich Volland & wife	C K & N	550.00
Nov 20	Henry Grimm & wife	C K & N	825.00

The four parcels of land were in sequence of direct track line and were roughly the same in value, yet cost the railroad differing amounts. The C K & N, in the above table, stands for the Chicago, Kansas and Nebraska Railway Company. The Kansas Pacific and the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad companies also bought land during this period. These railway companies were all subsidiaries of

the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad Company, and had been acquired as part of the earlier overall consolidation.[12]

Once all legal work was completed, construction work could begin as crews applied railroad construction methods learned during the transcontinental railroad-building days. However, compared to the 1860-1870 era, the building was much easier. The distance that supplies had to be hauled was not as great as it had been, and the crew was moving through settled areas.

Two work gangs pushed the track forward. The grading gang prepared the road bed by grading, blasting, and building fills and bridges as necessary. As speed was always a factor, once an area was prepared the gang moved up the track. Next came the track layers who performed the ballet of muscle and iron that when perfectly choreographed quickly converted a wagon-load of rails, spikes, and plates into a well-laid track system. The gangs lived much the way their predecessors had during the earlier railroad-building era, only with more contact with settlers. For example, the men in one of the grading camps built dugout shelters on the Mary Fix farm for themselves and their horses during the winter of 1886-1887.[13]

It was common in the plains region for railroad presidents to shape a region's economy by deciding where towns along their lines should be placed and for whom they should be named. Railroads rarely allowed independent, potentially competitive townsites to develop, and then only

when in their opinion the towns' prospects were poor. Thus a network of railroad towns was created to cover the agricultural interior and its markets. Townsite agents staked out these towns, knowing they would be sure to grow.[14]

Transportation technology greatly influenced town placement. The team-haul concept was universally accepted by early town planners. Railroads now also dictated the spacing of towns, especially of those to be platted along their routes. They saw these towns primarily as providers of needed railroad services. Steam locomotives needed to take on water and coal periodically. Track maintenance was always a concern, too, so section or track crews operated out of such towns. In addition, railroads, profit-minded as any business, looked forward to providing the links between agricultural producers and their major markets and between manufacturers and consumers. The depots enabled freight, passenger, and mail exchange to thrive.

The Chicago, Kansas and Nebraska Railroad needed a town half-way between Alma and Cable City, later renamed Alta Vista--another of the railroad's newly created towns. One would assume that a town would have developed around the first post office, which had been in Henry Grimm's home. Early Washington Township maps designated the surrounding area as Grimm. This location, however, was not convenient for the railroad. The railroad decided instead to establish a town that it would call Grafton on land belonging to

Grimm's neighbors, Henry and Barbara Volland, honoring an agreement made during 1886 land negotiations which stated that "it is understood by both parties that said Railway Company will locate & build a depot for freight and passenger purpose on the land." Throughout the Plains railway stations were consistently spaced roughly eight miles apart. The Grafton station site was eight track miles from the Alma station.[15]

Shortly before track had reached Alma, and while grading was occurring at Grafton, this petition was filed at the Wabaunsee County Register of Deeds:

PLAT OF GRAFTON

> State of Kansas, County of Wabaunsee--I, Henry Volland, do hereby certify that I am the owner of that part of the [undecipherable] of the SW part of section (3) T (13) S. R. (9) E of the 6th principle meridian in the County of Wabaunsee and State of Kansas. It being the Land upon which the Town of Grafton: is situated and Laid out and the Lots and Blocks so laid out are for the purpose of sale--and the size of Lots in length and width are designated on the Plat. Also the numbers of the Lots and the numbers of the Blocks wherein they are situated.
>
> That the length and width of streets and alley are also indicated thereon. That this description of the land so subdivided is in accordance with the wishes of said Henry Volland.
> [Signed by] Henry Volland
> Subscribed and sworn to this 9th day of February A. D. 1887.[16]

At a session of the 21st Judicial District on March 5, 1888, F. H. Reber and other area residents petitioned for an order changing the town's name from Grafton to Volland. On March 22, this petition and evidence were heard. There being no resistance, and the statutory notice having appeared in the Alma Enterprise, the court granted that "the

prayer of said petition would promote the interests of the petitioners and the residents of the said town of Grafton." The court adjudged that the "name of the Town of Grafton in said County of Wabaunsee and State of Kansas be and the same hereby is changed to the name of Volland, and be it further ordered that the petitioners pay the costs herein." The paper town of Grafton ceased to exist.[17]

Henry and Barbara Volland, like other townsite and land speculators on the agricultural frontier, hoped, dreamed, and anticipated that their town would grow into a thriving, booming, populated trading and service center for their area. They believed quite optimistically that in the process real estate values would soar, making them wealthy.

Volland's plat was typical of the many railroad towns laid out during the 1880s--structure, or form, was more important than function, or the activities of the town-to-be, and the checkerboard grid pattern developed for Philadelphia was adopted. The basic grid was adapted to accommodate the tracks bisecting the plat. It was a pattern that was copied again and again in the Plains because of its successful focus on the railroad. Towns laid out in this fashion were called T-towns. The tracks formed the top while the town formed the shank of the letter T. It was basically still a rectangular grid pattern, but as it was oriented toward the linear focus of the tracks, it had a lopsided appearance which was not oriented to the cardinal directions. Other characteristics of a T-town included the

location of the business district all on one side of the track and the central location of the depot, the most significant building in town.[18]

To prospective buyers plats carried the reassuring look of existing towns. In a typical town of the period alleys were desirable, blocks were oblong rather than square, and the projected functions of streets were reflected in their widths. Volland's plat map complied with all of these characteristics except that the street size was modest when compared to other towns projected on the Plains. Too, typically residential lots varied in size from business lots, but the plat for Volland only shows one width.[19]

Another characteristic typical of Plains railroad towns was the use of familiar etreet names, one of which always appeared--Main Street. Volland complied with this, but failed to adopt the usual numbered streets. Adams Street should have been a numbered street to adhere to the typical example---but then, Volland was only platted as two blocks.

Volland was atypical, too, in that it had no plans for a square, church, or elevator. Instead of the elevators characteristic of T-towns in a grain farming system, Volland, located in the Flint Hills pasturing area, gave the elevator's place of honor next to the depot to the stockyards. With this adaptation Volland fit the typical T-town pattern.

Towns were generally platted conservatively during the 1890s. Volland was platted in 1888, but the plat was nonetheless conservative. The size of an initial plat

reflected its creator's belief in the town's possibilities for growth. After Washington township sufferad a major dust storm and a drought in 1889, Henry Volland's conservative plat became even more so. On January 7, 1890, he petitioned the Wabaunsee County Board of Commissioners to adjust the plat map by the vacation of Main Street, Madison Street, and Adams Street up to where Adams Street intersected Monroe Street; to leave Monroe Street open and public; and to vacate the alleys and public reservations as recorded on the earlier plat. His request was approved. Volland's conservatism was well founded--more catastrophes followed for the township: droughts occurred in 1890 and 1893 through 1896, there was a devastating prairie fire in 1890, and the crash of 1893 created agricultural hardships.[20]

The first and only business lot sale for a number of years occurred in 1891. William Perry paid Henry and Barbara Volland twenty dollars for a quarter-acre made up of several lots located at the junction of Adams and Monroe Streets. The town Volland was obviously not going to make a fortune for the Volland family, whose primary objective was the creation of a thriving trade center. On May 10,1892, Perry in turn sold part of his recent acquisition to J. R. Fix for twenty-six dollars. No other lots on the original plat were sold. The nation in 1893 was experiencing another depression, part of its recurring cycles of boom and bust. The rest of the lots were converted to stockyards.[21]

Once the structure or form phase of development was

basically completed, Volland began familiar town activities. The town displayed a blend of the activity or functional town traits. This blend was to be expected of a prairie town on the fringe between the two areas. A variety of influences affected a town's development and as the dominant cultural background of the town's founders was that of Yankees familiar with eastern urban centers and middle border towns, the settlers had brought this heritage west with them, making their inheritance felt in the new towns.[22]

By the 1880s, towns nationwide were undergoing the same concentration of functions that was occurring in other institutions; transportation, banking, and warehousing functions were consolidating into ever larger, more centralized conglomerates. There remained, however, a mutual interdependency between the hinterland town and its surrounding countryside because of their inherently symbiotic functions.

Town functions or activities were an essential component of this interdependency. The general mercantile was usually the first establishment in a town. This was true of Volland; a small general store with a two room living quarters attached was preceded only by the depot.[23]

Mercantile activities prior to the store opening had been conducted in a manner typical of frontier areas. A farmer would drive his team and wagon to the nearest settlement to lay in a several months' supply of staples. Such a trip to Topeka or Kansas City necessitated an absence of several days to several weeks. This frontier trading

pattern ended with the coming of the railroad to Alma, and later to Volland. Volland store proprietor "Dad" Perry originally stocked only the basic essentials or staples, so farmers still made the trip to Alma periodically. Merchants there attempted to achieve centrality--the ability to provide needed goods and services in excess of the needs of Alma's residents.[24]

As Perry's store became more successful, area consumers had less inclination to travel further to patronize another store. Merchants calculated the distance their clientele traveled into their prices, as trade center dynamics depended upon the ability of the merchant to form a market area for goods. For example, if Perry charged the same price for an item that a merchant in Alma charged, it cost less for a Volland area resident to travel to Volland than to Alma, thereby reducing the cost of that item by the cost of the distance traveled. The closer a customer lived to the store, the cheaper it was to make purchases--the concept of range of goods.[25]

Merchants also calculated in the other services they rendered for their clientele. Accepting barter in trade was an accepted part of the merchant's function, as was the purchase of groceries on credit. The store also provided the cherished function of visiting. To the isolated farmer this social function was an added benefit of a trip for groceries.[26]

The merchant usually doubled as postmaster. Before

Volland existed the area was served by what was known as a farmers' p. o., as it was established in a farmhouse. On March 14, 1873, Henry Grimm became the first local postmaster and his home the post office, earlier the settlers had received their mail at Wabaunsee. The position of postmaster was passed among the neighbors, until Leonard Perry became postmaster in 1891. He first incorporated the post office into the store, giving farmers another excuse to stop by, if only to pick up the weekly newspaper.[27]

During the 1890s a transition was going on within mercantile establishments across the nation, until by the end of the century small town merchants could not survive just by stocking their stores with traditional staple goods to meet the farm family's needs for sugar, flour, and coffee. Brand names, through the use of extensive newspaper advertising, tremendously changed consumer demands. Where once consumers accepted whatever coffee the store stocked, they now requested brand names like Lion or Folgers. These demands greatly changed the mercantile establishment both in appearance and in the types and names of goods offered to consumers.[28]

A second function typically among the first to be addressed by towns was education. School had first been held in Washington Township, however, in 1862--before the arrival of the railroad and its founding of the town, but roughly contemporary to other school openings in the County.[29]

At a meeting of area farmers held to discuss their childrens' future, E. Hoffman, Henry Volland, and E. L.

Lower were elected to be the first board of District 3. The Henry Krieg farm became the site of the first schoolhouse. Between March 14 and June 25, 1863, a restructuring changed the district number to 9. Concern over the Krieg building prompted a special meeting May 7, 1866, at which Michael Fix deeded one acre of his farm to the district for the school. The next year a 16x24 frame school was built for about $400.00. Lessons were taught there until the spring of 1874, when at another special meeting a vote of ten to three allowed the creation of a 20x30 stone schoolhouse on the Sebastian Wertzberger farm. The contents of the old frame school were then sold. Equipment, wood, and outhouses were purchased by other schools, farmers bought miscellaneous items, and for $165 Mary Fix bought the building, which she had skidded over the prairie to her housesite.[30]

The politics, placement, and replacement of the District 9 school were very typical of other early Plains schools. Issues other than school buildings were discussed during District 9 meetings. One of these issues was improvements: attaching stationary blinds to the windows in 1872, building a fence in 1874, plastering the schoolroom in 1875. But the one topic that brought lively discussion at every meeting was who would win the cordwood supply contact, as this was one of the few ways an area farmer could earn cash. Another topic which generated discussion at each of the annual meetings was the length of the school terms and who would teach them, as the tendency was to hire a female teacher for

the three month summer term and a male teacher for the three-month winter term. This was typical of Plains schools as women worked for less, thereby saving the school money, while a male teacher was wanted for the winter term when the big farm boys attended. This pattern was followed when possible, but the teacher situation was always an issue. District 9 records for 1873 carried discussions showing the desire of the board to have the school taught in German; if a qualified teacher could not be found, the position would be advertised or school would be postponed.[31]

School boards were typically comprised of a director, clerk and treasurer, leaders of their community and generally reelected. Christopher Wertzberger held the position of District 9 director from 1871 to 1880. Henry Grimm was treasurer from 1871 to 1874 when his opposition to the Wertzberger site cost him his seat. Grimm, believing that lessons should be in English and wanting a closer school for his children deeded a half-acre to form a new district.[32]

District 9 was reapportioned and subdivided several times during the later 1870s and 1880s, until it became Numbers 9 (Sunnyslope), 18 (Spring Creek), 19 (Illinois Creek), 70 (Hillside), and 26 (Grimm), which came to be known as the Volland school. Each of these areas maintained a local identity hinging around the school, although the farmers also saw themselves as part of a larger community which centered around Volland, their store and the post office, with the railroad providing a link to an even wider

community, one in which they were becoming more and more active.

The half century from 1850 to 1900 saw Volland established as a community, centered around its store and schools. The railroad which had literally created and shaped the town continued to dominate it, providing most of its population and defining most of its functions. The railroad brought outside influences, often in the form of goods, and encouraged the development of specialization such as the marketing of grazing. The community had become quite dependent on this iron and steel newcomer.

CHAPTER 3

Building a Community

Volland at the turn of the century was settling into its role of railroad station and trading center. Wabaunsee County had grown in population from 1,023 in 1860 to 12,721 in 1900, with the largest increase occurring between 1880 and 1890. The county began to lose population after 1900, until by 1920 it had 11,424 people. Washington Township's population changes paralleled those of the county, peaking in 1890 with a population of 400 and then declining by thirty to fifty people each decade.[1]

This population decline was typical of rural Kansas and the Plains. The trend had many people worried; who would feed the growing nation, and even more important, what would happen to the rural values on which the country had been founded?

The Country Life Movement had its origins during the nationalization efforts of the 1880-90s. The nation was in the throes of a rush toward modernization. Science and American ingenuity could solve anything. The yeoman farmer and the farmer's idealized values could exist forever if the reality of farm families' work and life was upgraded to fit idealized modern standards. Modernization would keep people down on the farm. The Country Life Movement, comprised primarily of progressive easterners, encouraged the government to take an active and central role in correcting the many deficiencies that they perceived in country life.

Unlike other outside forces on rural life such as the railroad, which was created to earn a profit for urban entrepreneurs, the Country Life Movement was altruistic.

In 1908 President Theodore Roosevelt appointed a Country Life Commission to study the problem. The Commission solicited rural opinions through thirty public hearings. (The only ones close to Kansas were in Denver, Omaha, and Council Bluffs. These cities were to represent the middle plains perspective.) In addition to the hearings, the Commission mailed surveys to residents of forty states and territories. They received 120,000 answers.

The local Republican paper, the _Alma Enterprise_, barely reported on the Commission, while other Kansas weeklies ran the entire survey and carried on a lively debate. Farm journals were also active in the dialogue between the farmers and the commission. In the fall of 1908 meetings were held in Kansas schools to obtain grass roots opinions.[2]

Although the commission held hearings and tallied surveys, the members already knew what they would find. Conditions down on the farm were old fashioned. Questions asked of the rural populace were designed not to find out if things were bad, but rather just how bad things were. The pastoral was nonexistent in the pastures, fields, and homes of rural America.

The commission identified "three main directions in which the farmers can help themselves; namely, better

farming, better business, and better living on the farm." They felt that this could be done by cooperation, communication, organization, and education. The objective of the Country Life Commission was not so much to help farmers raise better crops, but to call "attention to the opportunities for better business and better living on the farm."[3]

The commission's answer to better business was cooperation and organization. If large numbers of farmers would voluntarily organize and cooperate, they could influence agribusiness and economics. The Farmer's Union stores and elevators, such as the ones in Alma, were a result of this effort.

The Country Life Commission had many proposals for better living. Some involved the character of the farmstead --ideas for better construction of the farm house, barn, and outbuildings. Others involved making the farmstead more attractive through gardens and lawns. Liberty Hyde Bailey published a four volume work, Cyclopedia of American Agriculture, in 1909 to assist farmers adjusting to the new methods of agriculture and farm living. Bailey compiled this set while he was a professor at the New York State College of Agriculture, Ithaca. He was also chairman of the Country Life Commission. Each of the six other commission members either taught or wrote in the area of agriculture and rural life.[4]

The report filed by the Country Life Commission listed in detail the deficiencies of farm life. Each of these

drawbacks was then answered by a proposal to correct the situation. Some were straightforward. The lack of good highway facilities was countered by the proposal to improve all roads and highways. The Good Roads Movement, actively supported in Wabaunsee County, was the result.

Other deficiencies were noted such as poor sanitation and the lack of adequate public health. The Country Lifers thought that farm life should be the most healthful of lifestyles, but instead they found that disease, poor diet, contaminated water, and generally unsanitary conditions were coupled with long hours of toil. The commission's answer was the establishment of more effective boards of health which would teach general hygiene. One result in Washington Township was that the farmers constructed better wells and privies.[5]

As the commission saw it, the home had the most promise for the overall betterment of country life. The farm woman's lot was full of burdens and very narrow compared to the urban ideal. More attractive and comfortable homes would induce youngsters to stay on the farm. By teaching domestic, household, and health issues to all schoolchildren and by reaching out to adults through extension and through women's clubs, improvement could quickly be seen. Wabaunsee County's experience paralleled these nationwide efforts. Education and organization of farm woman enhanced the quality of daily life. Good reading matter was promoted and libraries were introduced into rural areas.[6]

Country Lifers believed they could suggest solutions, but they needed country people to assume the leadership in solving these problems. The commission was to serve as a catalyst rather than as active agent of change.

Some Washington Township farmers supported the commission's findings, while other farmers (and the majority were in this group) rejected them. Many farmers were angry over the repetitive and paternalistic way the Country Lifers told them how bad their lives were and how to improve them, while at the same time promoting the myth of a yeoman farmer who had never existed. Farmers who traditionally had had little use for the educated expert were being told by their newspapers, farm journals, and government to accept whole-heartedly the new, the expert, throwing over the old, the familiar, the tried and tested lifeways. Others saw it as denying their children a right to choose urban occupations. Each side saw the other as arrogant. Despite opposition the Country Lifers continued their efforts to convince rural people to accept their proposals whole-heartedly.[7]

The major conflict between the two groups lay in perception. Farmers saw farming and its attendant rural qualities as a way of life, while the Country Lifers saw farming first as a business and secondly as a way of life: "the business of agriculture must be made to yield a reasonable return to those who follow it intelligently; and life on the farm must be made permanently satisfying to intelligent, progressive people...a gradual rebuilding of a

new agriculture and a new way of life." This reconstruction caused resentment and retrenchment among the conservative farmers. Farmers tried to hold on to the old ways by adapting slowly, but World War I and the nationwide move toward industrialization took its toll on the traditional Flint Hills farming and pasturing systems and on family lifeways.[6]

Although farmers resisted changes suggested by the Country Life proponents, the advantages brought by the railroad were readily incorporated into Flint Hills lifeways. Listening for the train, visiting the depot, catching a train to a variety of places for business or pleasure--all became a part of everyday life. The railroad had a direct influence on the town, as noted in the _Alma Enterprise_. "The population of Volland, has increased considerable the past week as the R. I. steel gang are now located here." "The Rock Island extra gang which was located at Volland for several months moved to Alta Vista." These groups brought money into the town.[7]

The railroad sent out a carpenter gang in 1912 to build another loading chute onto the existing stockyards. This improvement was greatly appreciated by the stock shippers, as it enabled them to load or unload two cars at one time. Cattle, hogs, and sheep were routinely shipped in and out of the Volland stockyards. The number of cattle thus moved yearly was well into the thousands. The local newspaper reported weekly which farmer was shipping and how much of what commodity. An example: "A train load of cattle arrived

here Saturday. Most of them being taken to the Aye pastures near Manhattan." The Volland stockyards were popular because train schedules to Manhattan required cattle to be enroute for two additional days. Instead the cattle were driven over the hills using the Spring Creek Lane, fenced off for this purpose. Use of the railroad to move cattle became routine: "Several cars of cattle were being shipped out everyday on account of the shortage in grass and water in pastures," noted the Alma Enterprise in the summer of 1913.[10]

Farmers had other uses for the railroad than just stock movement, as indicated by this typical newspaper item: "Schepp and Casey got in several cars of corn, cake and cotton seed this week." It was common practice for several farmers to purchase and ship jointly in this manner. Farmers also used the train for fun activities: "Quite a number of stock shippers went down for the stock show at Kansas City this week," said a 1912 news item.[11]

During 1909, Volland's business area took on a new look when Otto Blonc decided to build a new blacksmith shop. Blonc had replaced Sylvester Hiner, so his was not a new service. This progression was typical of towns, as was the sequence of businesses: first a general store opened, then a blacksmith shop.[12]

The community had readily accepted the store and had adjusted its trading patterns accordingly. Volland was now the local trading center. Its shopping area stretched out

beyond Washington Township, creating an irregular area of roughly fifteen to twenty miles square. It stretched east and west from points halfway between Alma and Volland, and between Alta Vista and Volland, including the Templin community. The north to south boundaries were much more irregular, from Deep Creek, an area midway to Manhattan, south to Illinois Creek and South Branch. Stores at the turn of the century carved out such trading areas, then later had to defend them as the automobile began to change trading patterns yet again.[13]

Trading patterns common during the first several decades of the twentieth century included taking eggs in to use as barter and going to the store on its late nights--Monday, Thursday, and Saturday--after all the farm work was done. The opportunity for socializing was an important magnet for the community store.

Dad Perry was replaced by a younger merchant. This merchant proved unsuccessful, as he did not speak German, so John William Kratzer bought the mercantile business in 1900. Kratzer had previously clerked in a store in Alma. Otto, his younger brother, also joined the establishment as a clerk, and then he, too, moved up as the brothers formed in 1910 a partnership that was to last twenty years. Moving up to store owner from clerk was a tradition typical of country stores.[14]

Merchants of this period assumed a number of functions which later became specialized or municipal functions. The Kratzers performed banking, post office, transportation, and

produce trade functions. This diversification was essential for a general mercantile to be successful.[15]

The Kratzers' primary function as banker was a carry over from earlier agricultural periods. Merchants extended credit to their customers, collecting twice a year on outstanding accounts. This eased the tight money situation for the farmers, while at the same time allowing the merchants to sell their goods. This symbiotic relationship was further strengthened through the merchants' role in produce sales. Barter was a viable form of exchange in Volland as it, too, helped ease tight money situations. Kratzers accepted eggs and at times other items in exchange for groceries and dry goods. This produce they in turn shipped to market via the railroad, taking the money they realized from its sale to pay their creditors, the wholesale dealers of Kansas City. This rather elaborate system of contacts allowed merchants to thrive. Their practice of fulfilling the middle-men's niche aided a wide variety of people from farm family to major eastern wholesale establishments with branches in the Midwest. Kratzers enabled the mutual interdependence of Volland and the countryside to continue to the advantage of all.[16]

Early stores traditionally contained the post office. The Kratzers continued this role by applying for and receiving the postal contract for the Volland area. They, like Dad Perry and other good merchants before them, realized that picking up the mail served as an excellent

drawing card to their business. At the same time the check from the government increased their income. Bill Kratzer received their first contract in 1900. Rural mail routes were rapidly being established out of Alma, but many residents were still unserved, and others continued to prefer using the store. The mail trains continued to be met regularly. The Kratzers hired Willie Hermes to meet the trains and hang the mail sacks. Parcel post became available in 1913.[17]

The store served as an active social center, with the merchants playing a vital role as news dispenser to the isolated farmers. Anyone stopping at the store was sure to find someone with whom to visit. The merchants also kept newspapers for their customers, thereby becoming well-read themselves. The Kratzers, however, not wanting to offend any customer, rarely sided on the many issues heatedly discussed on their porch in the summer or around their stove in winter. The Kratzers encouraged loafing in their store and, understanding their customers' need for a community social setting, eagerly provided it. Besides, they reasoned, the loafers bought plugs of tobacco, crackers, and other items as they talked.

The store opened at 8:00 AM and kept long hours. Evening hours varied with the seasons, the store often staying open until 10:00 PM so farmers could come in after they got out of the fields during harvesting. On the nights they were scheduled to be open late the merchants often had to chase the farmers out and lock the doors at midnight, especially

on Saturday nights.

The store's basement doubled as storage and as a tavern, at least until prohibition came to Kansas. Beer and whiskey were both sold. On many Saturday nights farm families would drive to town to buy groceries, pick up their mail, and visit. As was typical of thousands of rural communities, visiting was as important a reason for going to town as was anything else. Isolation was still a fact of farm life. Men would gather in the basement to relax with fellow farmers and to talk over crops and politics, to gossip, and of course to enjoy the contents of the barrels. The women reigned over the store area, relaxing and relishing the contact with other women, as they were less likely than the men to have an excuse to leave the farm and so to have the opportunity to visit with one another. As the women visited and shopped, they also kept a watchful eye on the children who played in front of the store.

Volland was a booming trade center. The new partners found that their store could not hold all the groceries, dry goods, and durable goods from agricultural supplies to shoes their customers demanded. Customers, especially with the advent of advertising, expected specific brands -- and of course everyone wanted a different brand. Not only that, but on many an evening their little store was so full of people that they had trouble getting through the crowd to gather their customers' grocery needs. The Kratzer brothers decided that what they and Volland needed was a newer,

larger, more up-to-date mercantile establishment.

They chose a site just across the road from the old frame store, as Monroe Street was never locally identified as anything other than a township road. The land was purchased from Barbara Volland, but it lay west of the original town plat.

The basement was dug by a crew using horse slips, but the Kratzer brothers had city-like plans for their new, two-story brick structure. The basement was to be used as a storeroom, the first floor for general merchandise, and the second for storage, as a dwelling, and maybe eventually to enlarge their stock. They planned to use the old store as an annex, for some hardware and farm items.[18]

By October, 1912, both the Alma Enterprise and Alma Signal were keeping Wabaunsee County residents apprised of the store's progress. News items like this one appeared almost weekly: "The brick work on Kratzer's new building is progressing nicely and if the weather is favorable, will soon be finished." By the end of October the new store's brick work was completed. These news items also attracted shoppers to Volland to check the progress of the construction work, talk with the Kratzer brothers about their plans, and get groceries. The news items were excellent free advertising.[19]

November saw carpenters hard at work on the store building. They were followed by plasterers during December. The new year, 1913, saw work progressing rapidly. Carpenters were called in again during February. George

Falk had the carpentry contract. The store was built at a cost of $7-8000. A cement porch surrounded the front two sides of the store, on the east side it was wagon-box height for ease of loading. Three steps assisted one's entrance. This lay-out was typical of small-town stores.[20]

With the building nearing completion, the Kratzers decided to purchase stock for the new store in addition to doing their regular spring buying on their semi-annual trip. This time, instead of one of the partners going by himself, Otto Kratzer took Louise Dittman, the clerk, along to assist with the purchases. They hired Clara Fix to assist in the store during their absence. The Kratzers were now making their major twice-a-year buying trips to Kansas City rather than points east. The railroad's influence had also changed the habits of hundreds of other store owners across the Plains in a like manner.[21]

The store made bulk purchases and had them shipped by rail. Shipments were usually announced in the paper: "Kratzer Bros. got in a car of stock salt Tuesday." The salt had probably been ordered by Otto on his spring buying trip. Such items were often ordered in advance and then would be shipped to coincide with the merchant's greatest need, in this case just at the beginning of the pasturing season.[22]

Stocking the new store continued. Arranging items carefully to attract customer attention has always been a part of the merchant's cunning. Otto Kratzer and Louise

Dittman went back to Kansas City, combining last minute stocking with their fall buying trip to purchase winter goods. Such spring and fall purchasing trips were part of the overall business life for store owners.[23]

As the clerks and owners completed the last minute details on the store and its contents, the newspapers of Alma reported:

> Kratzer Brothers at Volland have completed one of the most attractive store buildings in Wabaunsee County and arranged an opening for Saturday. October 18. They invite the people of Volland and vicinity to make them a call on the opening day and be shown through the store.
>
> The goods are being neatly arranged for the fall and general opening. Each person who attends will be given a neat souvenir.

This was a rather lengthy article for the Alma Signal. It was followed by a half-page advertisement--the first time this store had actively advertised in the Alma weeklies.[24]

Finally one of the biggest days for the Volland community was upon the town. Of course it was front page news in the Alma papers:

> The grand opening was attended by several hundred people from all portions of the county. A great number from Alma went on the morning trains. All were received with a cordial welcome....
>
> The guests at the opening were treated in a royal manner. After they were escorted through the new building where the new fall goods were displayed in an attractive manner, they were taken to the former store building, where sandwiches, coffee, cakes, and ice cream were served. Each was given a full portion of eatables as a sufficient supply was on hand.
>
> Each person was given a souvenir, whether a

purchase was made or not. The remembrances were attractive ones and will be kept by their owners as a reminder of one of the biggest days they have spent in this part of the county.

The souvenirs were china plates for the ladias, and pennants for the other guests. . . . They have enjoyed the patronage of the people of Volland and vicinity for the past ten years and by their method of giving their customers good, dependable merchandise have won their friendship and trade."[25]

Opening day of the new Volland store was indeed a gala event: the inside of the store building was decorated with garlands of crepe-paper, and pennants were everywhere. The clerks, Louise Dittman and Trudie Emrich, even wore pennants as sashes. According to the Alma Enterprise, "About 250 'Kratzer' banners and as many handsome platters were given away as souvenirs."[26]

Not only was the store stocked with the latest merchandise, but that merchandise was displayed in state-of-the-art display cases. Everything was modern and city-like in appearance. The Alma Enterprise claimed, "It was a great day for Volland, the like of which they will probably never see again." The grand store looked rather out of place, surrounded as it was by pastures and hills.[27]

That December, the Kratzer Brothers General Mercantile of Volland carried a multi-columned advertisement announcing its wish for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to its customers, as was typical of all the Alma businesses. The Kratzers, however, combined their advertisement with a reminder to their customers that:

Christmas is drawing near, so please remember

> that the Volland Store has very nearly everything in stock which will make a Suitable Christmas Present for young and old. Such as fancy Chinaware, Ornaments, all kinds of Toys, Candies, Nuts, Fruits and all kinds of something good to eat. Our long Suit is the useful articles which are mostly bought now days for Christmas Presents.[28]

Volland as a town had matured in other ways, too. The township governing board held their regular meeting there, usually in the store.[29]

Although Kratzers fulfilled many of the functions of a banker, area residents knew that major banking and miscellaneous business functions were only a short train ride away. The Volland depot was a regular stop for locals No. 14, eastward and No. 13, westward. In addition to these local passengers, local freights and regular trains stopped.[30]

Volland was seen by farmers in its trade area as their primary trading center, even though shopping was also done at the county seat, Alma, and trips to other towns were commonly recorded in the local news section of the Alma newspapers. Trips to the doctor and dentist were usually to Alma. J. A. Steinmeyer, Louie Schepp, and George Casey, all members of the Volland community, sat on the board of directors of the Farmer's National Bank in Alma. Towns like Alma, Alta Vista, Topeka, Manhattan, and Kansas City all were part of the trading complex of Volland. As these trips were usually combined functions, the village of Volland enjoyed no monopoly on residents' purchases.

Volland residents did not lack the functions available

in the larger towns, as some Flint Hills communities did. The store did its best to keep up with the times. Big-town soda fountain stores were approximated by the ice cream and soda pop served out of the ice box kept in the meat room. The drug-store function was met by the patent remedy shelves. The need for a saloon was met by the old store's basement. Kratzers attempted to meet all the needs of the residents in their trading area. Those functions they were unable to meet were only a short train ride away.

Schools in Washington Township during the 1900-1920s retained the subdivisions made during the late 1800s. The schools reflected changes going on throughout the Plains. Teachers were now predominantly women teaching until they married, with an occasional male teacher using teaching as a stepping-stone. Teachers' salaries ranged from $35 to $75 a month. There continued to be a discrepancy in wages between the genders.[31]

Teachers now were expected to carry at least a second grade certificate. In the Volland school between 1900 and 1913 eight terms were taught by teachers holding this level of certificate, seven terms were taught by teachers with a third grade certificate, and one term by a first level. After the 1913-1914 term and throughout the period under discussion, teachers had all received normal school training. This higher level of education of the teacher was the norm as teaching was now seen as a profession. In addition the teachers were also expected to attend teaching

institutes and to be active in the Reading Circle.[32]

Standardized textbooks were required by the Uniform Textbook Law. County superintendents had standardized funding and curriculum throughout the County's school districts. The school grounds were changing as much as the teaching. As a result of sanitation issues of the 1890s, two privies were placed at opposite corners of the school grounds. Efforts were made to beautify the yard, yet the school house with its barn standing on a barren knoll was still common in Washington Township. The Country Life Commission exerted a heavy influence on the schools, for they envisioned a special role for schools--an integral part of overall plans to improve country life. The commission listed the rural school system as one of its three immediate concerns. They called for "a new kind of schools in the country, which shall teach children as much outdoors as indoors and perhaps more, so that they will prepare for country life, and not as at present, mainly for life in town."[33]

The commission ranked schools as second in its list of deficiencies. Educators concurred with the commission that one-room schools were to blame for the rural migration. They played up the commission's recommendations as they moved to adapt the old 3-Rs curriculum to the new call to better country life. Schools nationwide, urban and rural, adjusted their curriculum to rural issues by teaching new subjects like nature study. School libraries were encouraged.[34]

The commission pointedly solicited rural opinion on this issue by including this survey question: "Are the schools in your neighborhood training boys and girls satisfactorily for life on the farm?" The commission anticipated the farmers would respond negatively--"not necessarily because they thought their schools were poor schools, but because they believed their schools had, in fact, encouraged their children to leave the farm and seek more advanced positions in life than farming."[35]

The curriculum changes shocked farmers. The commission, responding to educators, claimed: "Everywhere there is a demand that education have relation to living, that the schools should express the daily life, and that in the rural districts they should educate by means of agriculture and country life subjects." The rural school curriculum expanded to include nature study, health, and sanitation. Flint Hills farmers could not readily see the benefit of the courses, for to them a nature walk to the creek sounded too much like fun and not enough like school.[36]

Fun, to many Volland area residents, was synonymous with baseball. By 1913 the community was caught up in the nationwide baseball fad, so Kratzers supplied land for a baseball diamond behind the store. Games were reoorted in the weeklies with other local news: "The first baseball game of the season was played here Sunday between Volland and Templin. The score was 6 to 3 in favor of Volland. Quite a

crowd attended the game. A number coming up from Alma."
The Volland team was one of the first teams organized, well before the team in the county seat of Alma, a point often bragged about by the Volland community. Baseball and gathering at the store were not the only social activities; dances were also becoming popular.[37]

Socializing was made easier and certainly more interesting as the automobile made its appearance during the 1910s. By the end of the decade the automobile had just begun to make its mark, acting as a catalyst for social, economic, and political changes.

The Volland community was by now made up of older second-generation and younger third-generation settlers, interspersed with newcomers who had purchased their farms from the pioneers. German was still used by many of the older people, but by the 1910s English had become the predominant language. The residents were primarily farmers, with a few railroad employees residing in the town itself. Economic distinctions were becoming more noticeable, as it became apparent that certain families owned more land and had a better standard of living than their neighbors.
The years 1909 to 1914 were excellent years for the farmer overall.

Volland continued to react to complex external forces which were increasingly changing this community. The Country Life Movement, only one of many external forces on the community, sought to change everything from schools to roads to what the family talked about at the dinner table.

The people had willingly adjusted to the changes the railroads had introduced, but in all other ways they and their economy were still dependent on horsepower. Independent pioneer life was giving way to an increasing dependency on goods and services from the outside as the community entered a period of modernization. Communication was greatly enhanced by the telegraph which the railroad operated out of its depot. Within the community, the pioneers were all gone and the Civil War veterans had died. Good economic conditions nationally brought good crop prices and a prosperity which made possible the increased standard of living the Country Life Commission believed would keep people down on the farm--even after they'd seen K.C.

CHAPTER 4

VOLLAND ACCEPTS MODERNIZATION

The end of World War I brought many changes to the Volland community. It continued as an active trading center, but outside influences brought an era of modernization to this Flint Hills village. The telephone, automobile, and improved roads decreased the isolation of farm life. The building of the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific's double track exposed the community to many outsiders while bringing in money. This income eased some of the difficulties the twenties brought to the farmers, but nothing could completely offset the effects of the nationwide depression of the thirties. Many of the reforms comprised in the Country Life Movement were finally accepted. These changes were ultimately incorporated into the Volland community and into the farm family's life style.

Nationwide, with the end of World War I, people desired a return to normalcy, but Washington Township, like the rest of the nation, could not return to what some of the older residents called the good old days. Major changes were making a profound attack on rural isolation and provincialism.

The aftermath of World War I brought a higher standard of living to the nation as a whole. The switch from guns to butter meant that more and better consumer goods were being produced. These goods were heavily advertised to reach the

prosperous urban group. The rural class, responding to a decade of Country Life rhetoric, also desired these goods, and in Volland, the Kratzers' store was glad to oblige. The Kratzers, progress-oriented as they were, often introduced new items to their clientele. One of the best examples of this type of change came with their promotion of Western Electric products. The Kratzers, who rarely advertised, in 1924 ran several ads in the local weeklies announcing that they had taken over as Western Electric's agent to Wabaunsee County, ready to supply the farm lighting plant, batteries, and other lighting needs. Shortly thereafter the Volland local news included this typical entry: "Otto Kratzer has been busy the past week installing a light plant in the Herman Falk place at Templin." The installation of these plants on farms throughout their store's trading area was heralded as a sign of progress, home betterment, and status. Electricity, even with the limited use that came from a light plant, began to make a difference in farm life.[1]

The Volland store, being a modern mercantile establishment, also began to stock such items as hand-powered vacuum sweepers and, later, electric sweepers. Tennis balls competed for space with home improvement supplies. Aspirin and other drugs were more in evidence.

In other ways the store continued familiar functions. Local girls still became clerks--Clara Fix was replaced by Rosa Heideman, who was replaced by Hazel Grunewald. Familiar brands were found on the shelves. The Washington

Township Board continued to hold its meetings there, making Volland the seat of township government. Charles Heideman, C. F. Horne, and Otto Kratzer comprised the District 26 school board, so they held their meetings in the store, too. The merchants continued to receive information and pass it along, Otto Kratzer even taking on the local news columns in the two Alma papers and the Alta Vista Journal. The increased use of Rural Free Delivery continued to reduce the need for a post office, but the Kratzers kept the contract until October 31, 1955.[2]

Customers in the 1920s used a variety of vehicles to reach Volland for trading purposes, as one would expect during this transitional period in transportation. The local news reported items such as, "Art Meseke was over with mules after salt." Other customers motored in for groceries. The increased use of automobiles and trucks caused changes at the store. A gas pump was installed outside on the porch. Inside, a section of store shelving was allotted to tire supplies and other filling station needs. Kratzers also began to stock small quantities of sacked feed.[3]

During the 1920s Kratzer faced a family of tough competitors that was coming into its own. Mail order houses, such as Montgomery Ward and Sears, Roebuck, and Company, actively sought the rural market beginning in 1886 through the use of illustrated catalogs. Farmers read and reread these wish books and soon began to place orders. The

mail order houses selected goods which would appeal to the rural market, and by volume purchasing they could offer reduced prices to their customers. By offering savings and the ease of shopping at home, coupled with the convenience of parcel post and rural free delivery, they could pull customers from small-town merchants like the Kratzers. Consumers' familiarity with brand names and comfort with new quality standards also helped open this market. Washington Township began to avail itself of mail order as first the agricultural and then later the nationwide depressions caused people to seek savings. Flint Hills farm families also became more aware of clothing styles as they were exposed to catalogs, motion pictures, and newspapers. Improved communication and transportation allowed people to broaden their community identification, so that they did not rely so heavily on the bonds they had felt with the local store and merchant. The old country store was gradually being replaced on the Plains. The store, which had once served as a social, political, and economic center, was under direct attack from a variety of external factors, of which the mail order house was but one.[4]

Bill Kratzer's health began to decline in late 1929. He began to be away from the store more and more, necessitating an additional clerk. Bill died suddenly while working in his store on November 9, 1930, at the age of sixty-five. This ended a successful twenty-year partnership. Otto carried on the store; Mabel, his wife, began to take an increasingly active role; and Gus Kratzer,

another brother, joined the staff as a clerk.[5]

Improved communication and transportation took people physically and mentally further from their homes, communities, and the local store. Young people were reminded constantly of the opportunities awaiting them in larger towns and cities. The rural to urban shift continued despite the earlier efforts of the Country Life Movement. Wabaunsee County had a population of 11,424 in 1920; by 1940 it had declined to 9,219. World War I had assisted this outward trend, as people were encouraged to seek job opportunities in cities then actively engaged in rapid industrialization.[6]

While the urban class prospered during the twenties, the country was experiencing an agricultural decline. The 1922 tariff act, created as part of the nation's return to a protectionist attitude, impaired the ability of the American farmer to compete on the world market. This inability to sell produce, coupled with the loss of wartime markets, induced an agricultural depression. Farming meanwhile had become increasingly capital-intensive, while its reliance on labor diminished. Towns such as Volland, which existed in a balance between agriculture and the railroad had to retrench.

Volland turned to its other means of support, the railroad. The Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad Company of 1920 was weak, having made some poor business deals during the 1910s, and was just coming out of

government control during the war. But the Company rapidly gained strength under its president, Jim Gorman. During the 1920s another wave of economic concentration occurred in big business. The Interstate Commerce Commission increased its role, especially in rate fixing powers. The discovery of oil on the company's Arkansas line brought a new boom. By 1922 business was improving when a massive strike had repercussions throughout the railroad industry. During 1923 there was some internal shuffling within the executive level, but the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific, now seventy years old, seemed strong enough to weather all such storms.[7]

The people of Wabaunsee County were not overly concerned about all this financial manipulation as long as they continued to have adequate service. They did get excited when the Rock Island, as the company was called locally, announced plans to build a double track in their area in 1925. Such a track would allow trains going west to use the northern track and trains going east to use the southern track. Traffic, and commerce, could increase. The Union Pacific Railroad had begun building a double track between Topeka and Kansas City in 1905. Under Interstate Commerce Commission rulings the Rock Island also used this track. During 1925 the company had built twenty-two miles of track heading east from Herington, so the announcement was expected, since plans to join these two points had been rumored. It was anticipated that it would cost the Rock

Island two million dollars to build the twenty miles from McFarland to Jones Station just above Alta Vista.[8]

A railroad boom like this had not occurred in the county since 1886-1887. These two cycles of railroad building in Washington Township paralleled one another closely. As in 1886, the railroad had to negotiate with the local landowners to purchase rights-of-way. Typical transactions between the railroad and individual settlers included:

DATE	NAME	AMOUNT	FOR
June 30	George W. Thierer & wife	$ 186.45	.86 acre
June 26	Mamie Brasche & husband	275.00	Pt. NE1/4
July 29	Clara Layman, et al	70.40	strip 15 ft wide, SE1/4
June 26	Otto Kratzer & wife	100.00	.21 acre
Aug 6	Charles F. Horne & wife	2062.00	

These five examples lay in track sequence and provide a ready comparison of 1926 land values. These prices were not comparable to the first land purchases made sixty-one years before on the same tracts of land, because the railroad in 1926 was adding only a 15-foot strip to its existing holdings, while before it was purchasing a 150-foot strip. The first three landowners were descendants of the earlier owners, while the last two had purchased their land since the earlier negotiations. Only one railroad was involved in these purchases of 1926. All of which were handled by Fred Iles, of the real estate and tax department of the Rock Island.[9]

After purchase of the rights-of way, construction crews

began work during 1926-27. Local residents followed the railroad's lead in calling this period "double tracking." The track building was a blend of nineteenth-century transcontinental techniques and modern technology--horse slips worked beside the steam shovel, mule-drawn dump wagons labored beside pony-engine-drawn dump cars, the horse-drawn grader was next to the Stroud motorized grader, and the man with his shovel was dwarfed by the excavating machine pulled by a caterpillar tractor. The first track's bridge work had been done by stone masons who laid up arched culverts; now the railroad used concrete--the cheaper, quicker, and more effective way to build bridges.

Civil engineers set up their office in Alma. Soon the survey crews were hard at work, planning what bridges to widen, what grades to change, and what curves to straighten. Five companies, all from outside Kansas, bid on this major construction contract; the Rock Island planned on laying its own track. Construction was to begin on April 15 and be completed by December 1. On March 22,1926, the bids were opened in Chicago. The Flick Construction Company of Chicago was awarded the grading contract, while John W. Fox, El Reno, received the masonry contract.[10]

By early April crews were moving fence and telegraph lines near Volland in preparation for the grading crews. Flick Construction Company planned to do all the steam shovel and rock work itself on this stretch of track. They had material shipped into the Volland station as noted in

the Alma Enterprise: "About 30 cars of material and machinery have arrived, including 13 cars of ties, seven of rails, two of rail fastenings and a 70 ton steam shovel is assembled near Volland."[11]

Subcontracts for parts of the construction work were normal. Shirley and Calderhead of Omaha had the one for all the team work west of Volland, so that company established its camp about two miles west of Volland.

Flick Construction Company was kept busy the summer and fall of 1926. The Rock Island planned to save money by purchasing the forty-acre John Boettcher farm and digging a new channel for Mill Creek. Crossing the creek two times within 1500 feet was not considered feasible, so engineer G. L. Murphy planned a cut that would eliminate a bridge, make possible the use of a smaller one, and save maintenance costs. A 100-horse-power drag line was brought in to dig the new creek bed, and a narrow gauge track was built from this site to the major grading sites to haul creek bed dirt which would be used for fill. A pony engine pulled a train of small dump cars between the two work sites. Periodically this little track was extended until dirt was hauled as far as four miles. This part of the track work attracted sightseers. Many farmers loaded up their families on a Sunday afternoon and drove over to check on progress.[12]

Blasting was a necessary part of the construction work, as the route lay through major limestone ledges typical of

the Flint Hills. One section of ledges, roughly three miles east of Volland, repeatedly claimed lives. Blasting with TNT was one of the more dangerous aspects of grading gang work.[13]

The work pace was stepped up in July. Grading gangs began double shifts. Another steam shovel was brought in. Work on the bridge continued to progress, but the Fox Construction Company experienced a high turnover of transient workers, especially during construction of the bridge one mile west of Volland.[14]

During October 10,000 main line ties were scattered along the double track route and then laid 3,000 to the mile. The last stretch of track to be laid was between Volland and Alta Vista. After the rails were laid, eighteen inches of rock and cinder ballast was tamped under the rails and around the ties.[15]

The sequence of operations of track-laying was the same as for the first track. As each gang completed its tasks it moved on up the track, each gang giving way to the following gang as the work progressed from surveying, to grading, to bridge-building--cement, then steel--and finally to track laying. Each gang as it moved through Washington Township infused money into the local economy, introduced new ideas into what had been up to then a rather homogeneous society, and left a few new members in the community when the rest of the gang moved on.

The immediate effect of the railroad employees was to swell the population of the township. The influx of so many people greatly assisted the local economy and reduced taxes. The railroad employees of course spent money in the areas where they lived. One of the Flick camps was two miles east of Volland. The Shirley and Calderhead camp was two miles west of town. Just above them was the Seabury camp.[16]

Double-tracking brought jobs and revenue to farm families. Ironically, while men looked forward to the camaraderie of construction work, women, who took in borders for cash, were faced with what amounted to a full year of two threshing meals a day. At forty to fifty cents a meal--and Esther Thierer frequently fed a dozen and a half people, it was far more lucrative than selling or bartering eggs. But the work was so strenuous that it meant being house- or farm-bound. Esther Thierer served roast beef every other day, which meant a trip every other day to Alta Vista for her husband, George. On the off days she killed, dressed, and cooked chickens enough to feed the current crew and any of their family members who were rooming and boarding with the Thierers. Her experience was typical of other farm women living along the track. Many local men, experiencing tight finances due to falling agricultural markets, sought employment on the various gangs. Farmers with their teams, among them George Thierer and Robert Brasche, hired out to the contractors.[17]

The Kratzer Brothers store of Volland had a prosperous two years selling supplies to railroad employees and regular

customers alike. Sightseers also stopped for soda pop as they admired the construction feat.

Although the second track was completed in 1927, this influx of people had a lasting effect on the outlook of the Volland area residents. Farm isolation decreased for the many families with boarders. The store, the school, and every social event brought the residents into contact with a wide variety of ideas, concepts, and people from throughout the United States and Mexico. New words found their way into the local language. The people of Volland found themselves becoming more tolerant of those who were different from themselves, as their sense of closely bonded community stretched to incorporate a new diversity.

Some of the men who came into the community as railroad employees stayed. Clara Fix, daughter of one of the pioneer families, married Charles Layman, an agent et Volland. Hazel Grunewald, a clerk in the Kratzer store, married Dewey Watkins, a riveter on the bridge gang. Philomena Dittman, another clerk in the store, married S. S. Estey, an engineer. "Robert Corbin and family moved to Volland where he is working on the double track," as noted in the Alma Enterprise. These were but a few examples of a pattern which repeated itself up and down the track. The influx of immigrants upset the balance of the older, established community and created a new community based on new adaptations by the older community base.[10]

This contact brought new ways of seeing the world at a

time when regionalism and provincialism was already under attack by technological forces. The people of the Volland trading area, like those in countless other Flint Hills and Plains towns, were in a state of flux between the old, familiar, horse-dominated world and the new, unfamiliar, and at times scary, machine-dominated world.

While the railroad initiated Plains people to the possibilities of a larger community, it was the automobile that destroyed barriers. A horse and rider taking a short-cut through pastures was common during Volland's early trading period. However, with time roads became standardized, following section lines and ridgetops, blending Plains and Prairie pattens for road lay-out. Increased use necessitated improvements as roads and highways increasingly bridged the gaps between railroad tracks.[19]

References to automobiles became commonplace in the Volland news columns. One week's report in the 1926 local news contained references to Gus Senne's "rattle box," George Thierer's "leaping lena," and Albert Schultz's "cherry seeder"; accounts of who was motoring where, and a reference to Otto Kratzer's trip to Alma. The automobile had replaced the horse and the train for local trips. For a time Volland was even on a bus route. This transition to automobiles was heralded in the local weeklies by large ads announcing car makes and prices, as Alma had two dealerships. Each of the two Alma papers contained a full page devoted to automobile-related information and

maintenance. Announcements about purchasing licenses indicated the incorporation of automobiles into the County tax structure. Automobile accidents were also reported. Of course, Volland residents who purchased new cars continued to be duly noted: "Several new cars being driven here, Art Schultz has a Durant coach and Ralph Brasche a Ford roadster." The joke that " horses, these days, never get scared at automobiles in the road--only when they meet another horse," showed how completely the automobile was incorporated into Washington Township life by 1927.[20]

With the increased use of automobiles the concept of community changed and was enlarged to include Alma and Alta Vista. People were motoring in to spend Saturday nights in these towns where once they would have stayed in Volland. The young adults' use of automobiles to drive to school widened their world in two ways, increasing their social interaction while reducing their link to the Volland community, as they came to identify with a town high school.[21]

The introduction of motion pictures in Alma and Alta Vista further lured farm families away from the Volland community. The local weeklies carried theater advertisements, announcing the transition from silent to talking films in 1927. In 1913 showings were random, but by the twenties they were weekly. By 1930 residents were even driving as far away as Council Grove to see a show.[22]

Following the acceptance of the automobile, farmers

rapidly incorporated the truck into their operations. This vehicle revolutionized farm hauling, opened markets further from the farm, and killed the team haul concept. Farmers no longer had to rely solely on the railroad to move their produce as crops and livestock both began to be trucked. Feed during this time was more and more likely to be a sacked, totally prepared ration. This further enhanced the truck's usefulness to the farmer. Less and less did the local news report train cars of bulk feed coming into the station.

Other changes occurred in agriculture due to the increased acceptance of gasoline engines. The engines, coming as they did in a variety of styles and sizes, could be readily adapted to the farmer's needs. Stationary engines came to be used in a myriad of ways limited only by a farmer's imagination. They relieved the drudgery of pumping water to stock and assisted in sawing wood when attached to a buzz saw. The most revolutionary use of the gasoline engine came with the replacement of the expensive, limited steam engine with the more versatile, gasoline-powered tractor. Tractors began to replace horses on Washington Township farms in the later twenties. Some farmers made the transition early to a total tractor-and-its-machinery style of farming. Other farmers, and these comprised the bulk during the thirties and forties, operated with both horses and tractors. The tractor and its specialized machinery gradually replaced the horse or mule and its machinery, until by the fifties only one farmer

clung exclusively to his horses. The use of tractor-pulled machinery changed farming technique; for examples plowing depth, row spacing, the combine replaced the thresher, and the baling of hay was begun.[23]

Another technological invention which significently reduced isolation, especially for farm women, was the telephone. As the 1100 line stretched west from Alma, farmers eagerly installed crank-style wall telephones. Kratzer's store, being at the ending point for both the Alma and Alta Vista lines, installed a telephone from each company. People on the Alma line could come to the store and call friends who were on the Alta Vista line. The merchants could justify the expense of the added customer service of having two telephones because half of their customers were on each line. Long distance service became available in 1926, but many residents continued to make calls from the store. Going to town to place a call on the other line replaced the post office as an excuse to socialize.[24]

"John Cromers are trying out a radio at their home this week," reported a local news note in February, 1925. The radio became common in the area by 1926. This was another technological innovation which greatly reduced isolation and provincialism, providing farm folk with the same entertainment, current news, and advertisements enjoyed by city folk.[25]

One of the last major technological changes to come to

Washington Township was total farm electricity. In 1948 farmers could finally claim membership among the growing network of REA users. The Rural Electrification Administration began in 1935, but as was typical of other technological innovations, it took a while to arrive in the township. Life was never to be the same. No longer were farm families limited by generators and batteries to a single-use electricity. Electricity revolutionized almost every task, every aspect of life--from doing chores and housework after dark to decreasing the labor of laundry and no longer being dependent on ice or the spring house for short-term preservation of foods. Women's role on the farm was changing with outside influences. The new agricultural technologies, coupled with an increased emphasis on the home and on homemaking, meant an increased specialization. Fewer women went to the fields or worked cattle with the male members of their families. Life was still hard, but some labor-saving devices were coming into the home. The newspaper carried advertising which promoted screening, painting, and wallpapering as ways to improve the home. These changes would have been heralded by the earlier Country Life Movement, as they reduced the farm woman's burden while at the same time bettered life within the farm home. However, many women had left, and were leaving, the farms to take advantage of the new job status of women in towns and cities, leaving behind the drudgery which was still such a dominant feature in the farm woman's life.

Rural women, and all women in Washington Township were

in this category, began to have more contact with other women during the twenties. This was aided by the automobile, the telephone, and an increase in voluntary associations open to women. The WCTU, Federation of Women's Clubs, Eastern Star, and other national clubs active at the time were seen by farm women as existing more for town women. A Royal Neighbors' club started in Alma, but by April, 1926, a group of Volland women joined. Members of this active chapter attended monthly meetings and district meetings. At the October, 1926, meeting in Alma the Volland women's group served the refreshments. The Royal Neighbors Club role was replaced by monthly meetings of the Volland Club of Wabaunsee County's HDU, Home Demonstration Units.[26]

Schools in Washington township were not as greatly affected by outside forces during this period as they were during the 1900-1920s. Schools continued to figure strongly in the farmer's sense of community. It was proudly proclaimed to the larger community through the newspapers that ". . . the Volland school has a new stage, freshly tinted walls and varnished seats and desks"; and, "There will be a pie and box social at the volland school District 26 Friday november 1 at 8 o'clock. A short program will be given. Ladies please bring pies or boxes." Eighteen dollars was cleared at that pie social. Activities of the students were also monitored: "The pupils of Volland have been making hot dish mats. also toys out of wood and painting them for Christmas."[27]

Enrollments for District 9 and 26 increased due to the number of railroad employees living in the Township. For example, the pupil record for District 26 shows an enrollment of sixteen in 1920 and twenty-five in 1925. Double-tracking also brought Spanish-speaking children.[26]

Community sentiment was stirred up over a proposed rural high school to be built in Alma. The local weeklies were doing their best to keep the issue before the county. "Some very encouraging reports have come in from some of the county districts the past 10 days regarding the attitude of some of the more prominent farmers towards the proposed rural high school," remarked the Alma Enterprise in June, 1929. "Some of them are coming to realize that the new district is not a town proposition alone but that it is based on a much broader principle...it belongs to the whole community." In due time this high school was built, and another in Alta Vista. As a high school education became more desired, young people from the Volland community either drove in to school or boarded in town, much like their counterparts throughout the Plains. The Alma and Alta Vista high schools expanded to teach vocational agriculture and domestic science (home economics) courses, reflecting the effect of the earlier Country Life Movement.[27]

College also became a viable option for an increasing number of young people by the late twenties. Mabel Brasche and Myrtle Horne were but two examples of this option. Adult education in Wabaunsee County was present in the form of farmers' institutes, county fairs, women's clubs, and

reading material. Chautauquas were well-attended by Township residents as were duly noted in the local weeklies.[30]

In spite of automobiles, telephones, and radios, getting together with neighbors was still the favorite activity among Washington township farm families. Card games and card parties gained popularity during the twenties, as they combined fun activity and visitatation. Monthly card parties in the old Templin end Spring Creek schoolhouses became a tradition which persisted throughout the decades. Parties were always popular and, of course, reported in the local news: "A number of friends gathered at the August Simon home Sunday evening. All were dressed in tacky costumes. Refreshments were served." Swimming and fishing parties were common summer social activities. Dances and picnics also were common activities. These community activities were open, nonexclusive, no-invitation-necessary affairs.[31]

Chivarees, long a favorite social activity of rural residents, continued their role. These were announced in the local news as significant events in the community. Each couple contemplating marriage knew what to expect and anticipated the subsequent party: "The Volland neighbors called on Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Laymen with cow bells and tin pans Sunday evening at the Fix home, to wish them a long and happy married life. Candy and cigars were forthcoming."[32]

Baseball continued to be popular in Volland, and Sunday games on the diamond out behind the store continued as they

had since the 1910s. Because of school activities, football and track meets were gaining popularity. In 1939 a tennis court was built in Volland, so a new sports fever swept the town.[33]

In general the fall of 1929 was depressing for Volland. Frank Munzer, telegraph operator, committed suicide. November saw the Otto Kratzer home burned and another train wreck. Farmers who had overexpanded to meet war demands now were unable to sell their produce for a satisfactory price. They found themselves in an agricultural depression. The community looked to their other industry--the railroad--as a savior. The mid-1920s double-tracking had provided jobs for some of the farmers on the various gangs. For families along the track line, it had offered additional financial assistance through the money the gangs spent obtaining food, shelter, and other necessities. The store had prospered, too. The railroad had saved the people of Washington township from as intense an agricultural depression as other farm communities had experienced.[34]

Nothing, however, could save them from the nationwide depression of the 1930s. The universal problems which followed the October, 1929, stock market crash were keenly felt in Washington Township. This had a ripple effect on the already stressed farmers. They lost mortgaged land and money in banks. But, as some of the residents stated, "At least we ate." Many a farm family took in city relatives. Credit and barter again became common at the store.

As the nation began to pull out of the Depression the

railroad again began innovations which would affect Volland. As early as July, 1926, the Alma Signal had carried an article on the Rock Island's first steps in a program to motorize over 1,300 miles of main and branch track. The motor power was to be derived from a "new gas-electric type, using as fuel a petroleum distillate," a cheaper, faster way to move larger tonnage. The Rock Island general offices further announced, "The use of the new motor cars on main lines will result in eliminating local stops for through trains and will materially speed up the through-train service." This trial test proved to be so successful that the company decided to increase the number of operating engines. By the end of the 1940s, the diesel locomotive had supplanted the steam locomotive. This decision by the Rock Island was also arrived at by the other railroad companies, until the era of steam power had come to an end.[35]

Soon the newspapers began to announce towns that were losing their agents, depots, and other railroad privileges: "The Rock Island filed an application with the state public service commission for permission to discontinue...stations in Kansas....Lack of local business in sufficient volume, due to the inroads being made by truck and bus lines, is the reason given. Both telegraph and station agents will be withdrawn." At other stations hours and services were cut back: "At Alma if you want to send a telegram after 5 p. m. you must phone it to Volland." The article concluded with

this statement of local sentiment: "The railroads may be justified by economical reasons for taking the service away but its hard on the people in the smaller towns who have been used to this service all their lives." Volland as a station was doomed.[36]

The Rock Island decided that the Volland depot was to be closed. It had hung on to its station status for a number of years by virtue of the thousands of cattle still being shipped in and out of the stockyards. With the depot closing, Volland lost its major reason for existence. Created as a railroad town, it began dying when the railroad left. It clung tenaciously to life, but when the town lost its railroad employees, it lost roughly three-quarters of its population, and their incomes. It was reduced in status to having only one section gang. Volland was now supported only by one industry--agriculture, a notoriously fickle support at that. Residents were forced to rely on the automobile and truck to meet their transportation needs. It was virtually impossible for a town to survive this degree of upheaval with all of its institutions intact. The people were disillusioned as they moved into an era of world war and nationwide materialism.

Volland of the 1920s enjoyed innovations which made farm and home work less labor-intensive and brought residents into closer contact with a larger community. Double-tracking brought a brief period of prosperity. The year 1929 was a turning point--Otto and Mabel Kratzer's house burned, there was a fiery train wreck which caused the

loss of a section house, and the stock market crashed. To this confusion was added the depression of the 1930s. The 1940s brought the diesel locomotive, which foretold the closing of the Volland depot. The 1950s and 1960s were to be spent holding on to a way of life that was no longer viable.

CHAPTER 5

DECLINE OF VOLLAND AS A TRADING COMMUNITY

Driving today through Washington Township on the Mill Creek Skyline Scenic Drive can be a beautiful Flint Hills experience. Leaving Alma tourists take a gravel road which winds over and around hills. Eight miles west they spot a cluster of buildings and then a road sign identifying them as Volland. The curious turn left to see what Volland is like. Driving slowly, looking about, they stare at what to them is an insignificant ghost town. But the Vollander hearing someone on the road looks up, as everyone on the road is noticed, and identifies the car as unknown--therefore another tourist.

The tourists see two repainted older houses, two remodeled enlarged houses, an old frame storefront identified as a museum, a huge red brick building that they think must have been a hotel because of its dimensions, cattle grazing around the hotel, and a few dilapidated outbuildings. Coming to the railroad tracks they turn around. They may notice that there are several tracks and an open expanse beside these, as they back up, turn, and retrace the road, thinking, "There's nothing here." But to the Vollander watching the car leave--this is home, community, and heritage. The town has an identity.

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Volland's institutions--its railroad, school, and store--all once formed a prosperous community. These institutions which had kept the town a viable trading center broke down under increased pressures from external forces. Long after Henry Volland's speculative dreams for the town had died, after the railroad closed the depot, after the population declined, after the school was consolidated, the store continued to try to keep the concepts of town and community alive. Volland, typical of every town dependent on one or two technologies, could not withstand the loss of one. It, like many other Flint Hills towns dependent upon the railroad and agriculture, was not large enough to survive the loss of the railroad.

Ironically the Rock Island's decision during the 1940s to replace all of its steam locomotives with the more modern, faster, and powerful diesel locomotives was viewed by Vollanders as another indication of the progressiveness of their railroad. This attitude remained until the company's decision to close the station was announced.

As a result of this transition from steam to diesel, Volland was no longer needed by the railroad to provide what had once been vital services. Water and coal were no longer needed by the locomotives. The railroad's use of the more powerful engines eliminated the need for a helper engine to assist the freights over the longest grade in Kansas, which ran past Volland. Changes in technology had reduced track maintenance needs. The telephone had supplanted the telegraph. The Rock Island, profit-minded as any business,

compared the expense of staffing the depot against the volume of traffic in tickets and freight, and decided the company was losing money. The widespread use of automobiles and trucks had eroded the link the railroad had once provided between agricultural producers and their major markets. The railroad that had once created this town now sounded its death knell. Having a railroad did not necessarily mean continued prosperity.

Vollanders felt betrayed by the railroad's decision. They, like other communities, had assumed that the railroad was their anchor and their savior during poor agricultural years. But by the 1950s the depot and the coaling and water towers were gone. A small white shed and little windmill tower for the use of the section gang that periodically maintained the track were the only evidences of railroad activity in Volland. Occasionally the familiar putt-putt of the section crew car announced the passing of the four- to six-man maintenance crew. By the 1960s even the shed and windmill tower were gone, and the crew drove around in a truck. The busy mainline train schedule had been greatly reduced even from the number of trains passing through during the fifties.

The stockyards, which had once seen thousands of milling cattle each shipping season, had become overgrown with weeds during the early fifties. As cattlemen and pastureman alike made the transition from stock cars to trucking, the stockyards had fallen into disuse. There was

no longer a need to drive cattle to Volland, so stock pens were built on the farms and corrals in the pastures to facilitate trucking. The Rock Island sold the stockyards t Fred Meyer, Alma, who had the pens dismantled and removed. Once this space between a field and a store had churned wit milling, multicolored, horned Texas cattle, hungry and thirsty after their long haul, their hooves shaking the ground, filling the air with dust and sound from their bellering. Now only green weeds bend with the breeze, and the only dusty smell is when an occasional truck passes by.

The Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific, like other railroads, found itself on the verge of bankruptcy as it celebrated 122 years of operation in 1975. Crooked roadbed in poor maintenance led to increased accidents. The government refused to rescue the Rock Island, so it decided to stay out of the quasi-government operated Amtrak corporation and to continue to run its skeletonized services over 75,000 miles of track.[1]

In 1979 the Southern Pacific Transportation Company an its subsidiary, the Cotton Belt, applied to the Interstate Commerce Commission to purchase 992 miles of the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad Company. This route, known as the Rock Island's Golden State Route, ran between Kansas City and Tucumcari, New Mexico. The sale was approved to assist the financially troubled Rock Island. The Cotton Belt found itself the new owner of the route pas a small, nonexistent town.[2]

The new owner began to rehabilitate the deteriorated road bed and other facilities. The second track was dismantled. Today only a tiny air-conditioned shed built in 1983 stands along the track. It contains microwave and computer equipment to operate signals and switches, so that the single track functions as two.[*]

All that remains of Washington Township's last railroad building era is the fill, where the proud double-trackers once watched the new diesel speed down the shining rails they had laid, and memories.

The railroad has retained a romantic image to residents of Washington Township, as it has throughout the Prairies and Plains. In the late 1880s it was a new physical force which had come to influence their lives. Memories of the steam locomotive stirred their blood. It seemed alive, as it hissed and sighed, by the depot platform. Once loaded, its whistle shrilled through the Flint Hills air announcing its intention to move, for mere people to watch out. Then with great breaths of steam it moved, chugging, and as the locomotive's great drive wheels grabbed the rails, the train moved forward. The whistles at each crossing announced its path through the township. Later Vollanders, weaned on stories of the steam locomotives, knew the sleek power of the diesel engines as it pulled long lines of over 100 freight cars or speeding passenger trains. For these later residents, the passing of a train was cause to pause, look, and count the engines and cars. The train with its Pacific Fruit cars, Chessie system cars, and Wyoming coal cars

reminded them their station was but one part of a mighty rail network.

The railroad of the later nineteenth century was the biggest industry on the Plains. It did not seek business, it created it. Railroads created towns at their pleasure. killed towns by by-passing them, and caused others towns to move to survive. Volland was among the created towns.

The depot formed the nucleus of the town, where the farm area and the railroad met. Farmers went there for milk tickets to have their cream shipped to a creamery. Pasturemen and farmers went there to make arrangements to ship stock or to notify them they had a car of feed coming in. Farmers shipped chickens, hogs, sheep, cattle, hay, and grain from the depot. Residents went there to purchase tickets to make a business trip to Alma, or Alta Vista and occasionally a longer trip. The station master ruled the depot, sold tickets, ran the telegraph, loaded freight and baggage on and off the cars, and handled special shipping needs. Loafers also went there, to watch the trains, strangers, and drummers; but most of the loafing and watching was done from the store. When the depot closed, it became a symbol that the railroad had closed itself off from the town of Volland.

The town lost population with the railroad's decision. The railroad employees were transferred, taking their families with them. This loss of children drastically reduced the number of pupils enrolled at the Volland school.

Washington township which had continued to loose population since 1900, was in danger of losing its schools. The county superintendent, who had been encouraging school consolidation for a number of years, was becoming insistent. Rather than consolidate with Alma or Alta Vista town schools, in 1948 District 9 and 26 merged. They became District 26 because they continued to use the Volland school house. This decision only staved off the inevitable. By the 1956-1957 term the combined pupils only numbered nine. The school board finally accepted the trend, voted to close the school and to give the parents affected the choice of sending their children to either Alma or Alta Vista.[4]

Although school was not being held, the school board members retained their positions and the legal power to re-convene a school in the township. Finally, in 1964 the board gave up and the schools were officially consolidated. All the schools in the Volland trading area--Districts 9, 18, 19, 26, and 70--were legally consolidated on September 24, 1964. This date was also the date that the county superintendent legally consolidated all rural schools in Wabaunsee County. However, this date did not accurately reflect the true consolidation pattern, as some consolidation already had taken place. District 18 had merged with 9, 19 and 70 with 26, and then in the early fifties District 9 and 26 merged. This last combined school had only nine pupils during the 1956-1957 school year, the last year classes were taught in a one-room country school in the Volland trading area.[5]

Following the wishes of the combined school board, the parents of these nine pupils could choose whether to send their children to Alma or Alta Vista. Those living east of Volland sent their children to Alma, while those living west choose Alta Vista. Volland, existing half-way between the two towns, became a demarcation in school and community affiliation. Volland had become a dividing line rather then a center point.

Following legal consolidation, these Districts, like their counterparts throughout the Prairie and Plains states, had resigned themselves to consolidation, locked the doors forever on their one-room schools, and called for a dispersal of school property. The school houses, lands, and contents were auctioned off. This pattern of legal school consolidation, auction, and the use of the building as a community center (or else it was abandoned) was typical of the Prairie and Plains school consolidation pattern.

Today these schoolhouses bear witness to one of the many changes in institutions linked to the fate of Volland. District 70 was torn down. District 19 was used as a community center by the Illinois Creek farm families until it burned. District 18 has become a community center for the few farmers living on Spring Creek and is the voting center for Washington Township precinct. District 9's stone schoolhouse sits forlornly on a bluff with trees and brush crowding in on it, overlooking old highway 10. District 26

sits on a knoll with its windows open, its door ajar, its playground grazed by horses.

The consolidation date of 1964 is rather late for Kansas. The issue had been debated hotly for years. For example, the Alma Signal carried a representative article on school consolidation in 1913, a date more in line with school consolidation issues. The rhetoric used by W. D. Ross, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, to discuss these issues was typical. He stated in his address before a teachers association in Alma that Kansas ranked twenty-ninth in a national ranking in cost of equipment and in the educational cost per pupil. "Our rural schools are inefficient and extravagant," he said.

> They do not draw the children from the community because there is not sufficient equipment and the social environment in not great enough....The remedy for our schools is the consolidation of a number of the rural districts. If this were done more equipment can be added and better salaries could be paid our instructors....If we do our duty as American citizens we must reorganize the rural schools to meet the present day conditions."[6]

Washington Township gave every child it had to their schools, as typical of rural areas there just was not a large enough population base within the community to have a large school. This appeal to patriotism could have been delivered in any Prairie or Plains community as they were all under the same onslaught. Shades of Community Life Movement are involved in the school consolidation issue as it carried on one of the major aims of the Movement--better schools.

The tyranny of distance and the scarcity of pupils were problems of the Flint Hills school districts. The decision to bus, the adoption of the motorized bus concept, and the support of the buses out of public money enabled consolidation to be realistically considered. As a result of consolidation farmers lost control over their local schools. Their children became part of the modern, centralized public educational system.[7]

The Volland store continued to brave the fate befalling the town. The Kratzers reduced their hours and the amount and type of goods stocked. The owners, of retirement age, continued to sell a wide range of general merchandise from their supplies; they just did not replenish their stock, restocking only the grocery line. By the late 1950s, Kratzers found themselves caught in a range of goods snare that effectively reduced what had once been the proud Kratzer Brothers General Mercantile to a small mom-and-pop store. But that too was a dying business. Otto himself drove to his Topeka wholesaler and loaded a case of this item and a half case of that into his pick-up truck. Even with the reduced quantity, items stayed on the shelves too long. Neighbors could buy food cheaper and fresher elsewhere. One by one the older, loyal customers died. The younger people who did stay were in the habit of buying elsewhere and only used Kratzers' as a convenience store. Mabel died in 1970, and Otto struggled on. His death in April, 1971, marked the death of two institutions--both the man and the store had come to "be" Volland. The store formed the true hub and heart of Volland

and continued as such until it closed in April, 1971.

A public auction notice in the _Alma Signal-Enterprise_ served as an obituary. On May 16, beginning at 9:30 AM, the fixtures, drygoods, hardware, houseware, furniture and equipment would all be auctioned off according to the large auction announcement.[8]

The auction had the quality of a wake for both the store and the town that the store symbolized. Current residents, and many who had left, came to reminisce about the town, the store, the people, and life as they had known it in the railroad town. People returned for the auction just as many return for a funeral. Most had returned to buy a piece of memory. Volland had not seen so many people since the Kratzer Brothers General Mercantile had proudly opened its doors on October 18, 1913. In 1971, as in 1913, adults and young people milled around talking while children played underfoot. The mood, though, was different. In 1971 they mourned the past, while in 1913 the people had been looking optimistically to the future.

Volland the town had died by degrees. As a town it had passed through the phases common to all towns. It was conceived as a dream: Henry Volland dreamed that his town, which had once been the paper town of Grafton created by the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific, would grow and prosper. In the later 1880s the commonly held dream of all towns having a railroad was an optimistic one of growth, prosperity, and increased livelihood. Volland entered

its youth or its building phase during the 1890s. From there it matured, changing with the technological advances that had affected all railroad towns on the Prairies or Plains. Volland received its death notice from its midwife the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific. The railroad no longer wanted or needed this small station because the technology of power had switched from steam to diesel and the other . The death knell hit hard this small but functionally active Flint Hills community. Railroaders left, causing a decline in population that was never recovered. Overall business declined due to the loss of half of the town's support structures. Although terminally ill, Volland struggled valiantly. The store, its only vital institution, remained open until 1971, when it too gave up and died in a gasp.

But towns are more than just economic organisms. They are people and a sense of community, and these operate on a different time-line. People take a long time to lose their sense of community identity once community is traditionally linked to a town. The town of Volland is in this phase of its existence in the 1980s--functionally dead yet structurally visible and continuing to live in the community's memory. Volland ultimately faces total extinction like so many of her counterparts created during the heyday of the steam railroad.

After the railroad left, the town could not have continued as a service center for long--its trade

functions were too fragile to guarantee a viable tie with the community. The advent of the automobile enabled farmers to take goods to city markets and take advantage of the trip to enjoy a meal out--and other city activities--part of the good life prescribed by the Country Life Movement. Conversely, mail order catalogs enabled farm families to purchase everything from horse halters to houses without leaving home. And, in spite of the Country Lifers, people were still leaving the farm. The fact that one farm family produced more than had four farm families did not mean that that one family now bought four times the baking powder, flour, and other consumer items. The Volland store was no longer a necessity.

Although the community identified with the town and its business, identification was not sufficient pull to overcome the economic reality that other pulls were stronger. By the end of the 1940s, neither railroad nor farmer was dependent on the town.

John Hudson in his recent work Plains Country Towns, described a town as a combination of structure and functional activities. Lewis Atherton in Main Street on the Middle Border, however, described a town as a collection of businesses performing functions universally associated with the concept of a town. Robert Hine's Community on the American Frontier sees a town as not limited by structures, activities, or functions, but sharing an organic wholeness, a collective experience of birth, growth, and death. These

definitions are all useful but separately or together do not define what a town in the middle of the Flint Hills really is any more than the term human being can describe an individual.[9]

Towns created by the railroads during the later 1800s share many characteristics. Such as specific grid street patterns and reasons for conception and being. Hudson's concepts work well to define Volland structurally and compare it to other Plains railroad towns; however, Volland is located in a ruggedly hilly pasture-fields agricultural system where cattle, not wheat, are the primary export. Hudson's structural view of the town must be adapted by replacing the grain elevator with the stockyard as the dominant feature.

Functionally Volland operated as a mixture of the definitions of a town's functions as outlined by Hudson and Atherton. Both of these definitions are useful in the analysis of Volland as long as it is remembered that Hudson describes the typical Plains town and Atherton describes the typical Prairie town, and that Volland is geographically located on the fringe of these two areas and therefore was a mixture of both.

A town without a community to support it can only be a paper town. Volland's community was typical of a Prairie town due to the influence of Yankee and German settlers.

Hine applies the German concept of "Gemeinschaft, a unity stemming from emotions, beliefs, and shared life experiences. . . . a commitment surrounding families and

traditions and leading to brotherhood." Atherton
sense of belonging that links one to a town and its
area. Gemeinschaft definitely applied to the Volland
community. Hine 's communities were made up of peop
shared a sense of place, size, perspectives, day to da
tensions, political structure, and a common historical
memory.[10]

Volland was a very real place to Washington Township
residents. The town and store provided the locus, but the
community stretched to the limits of its trade area. Rather
large geographically, it was still small enough to allow
face to face contact--everyone knew everyone else, which
allowed one to feel a sense of belonging.

The early settlers were predominantly German sharing a
common language and value system. Those who were not German
adapted to the majority mores: frugality, habitual hard
work, and a desire to succeed. This initial group, under
the principle of the doctrine of first settlement, made a
lasting imprint on the community which influenced all
subsequent groups.[11]

Shared perspectives was definitely a characteristic of
this community--the farmer, railroader, and merchant. The
people shared the ups and downs of the railroad and
agriculture. They shared their belief in education and the
type of schools they wanted. The people in the community
shared a bond which only broke under intense external
pressures. Yet even then they still clung to their sense of

community as a means of overcoming the threats to their town.

There were, of course, tensions, rising out of family, class, and occasionally out of political differences, but these were lessened by a sense of belonging and shared perspectives. Those who did not choose to live under community-imposed rules of behavior either adapted or left, so that over time, the community became basically homogeneous. A certain level of eccentricity was accepted but only for those born into this community, as into a family. Initiated into the community at birth, a member enjoyed the joys of fellowship. As in a family, he or she was always free to leave, and mobility became a major problem as external pulls attracted the young people to leave the farm for the city.

Volland, with the loss of the depot, school, and store, died by degrees until it ceased to exist as a town. According to Hudson and Atherton's definitions it ceased to exist because it had neither activity nor function. It had returned to its initial phase--only a structure. A town structure in the middle of the Flint Hills has little value, even as real estate. Today's Volland exists in a strange mixture of ways. To the people geographically surrounding Volland it is part of their folk culture, while to tourists traveling along the Skyline-Mill Creek Scenic Drive, it is a museum stop. To the occasional journalist who discovers this town of the Flint Hills past, it is an editorial. This town continues to crop up unexpectedly in a variety of ways.

Volland appeared in one of thirty-five slides used in a recent study by two Kansas State University professors to determine how and why Kansans have preferences for commonly viewed landscapes in Kansas. Volland somehow continues to appear on present road-maps, but is considered a ghost-town by many.[12]

Historical memory keeps this community alive today. Their pride of place is heard as the residents reminisce about Volland's institutions of town, store, school, and railroad. These shades of the institutions that foraged the historical memory are now all that binds the community together. This collective memory and a sense of love of place is still strong, but it decreases with each generation. Volland has not died, but it will be dead when the memories cease to be shared.

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14. John C. Hudson, Plains Country Towns (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), p. 70.

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17. Miscellaneous Records, Register of Deeds, Wabaunsee County Courthouse, Alma, Kansas, vol. 1, p. 550.

18. Hudson, p. 88, 90; See Appendix, Plat of Grafton.

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13. See Appendix, Map of Volland Trading Area.

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Million: Rock Island to Build 23 Miles of Double Track Through Alma," *Alma Enterprise*, 12 March 1926.

9. Land Records, Register of Deeds, Wabaunsee County Courthouse, Alma, Kansas; "Rock Island Contracts: Grading and Masonry Let and Work Will Begin April 15," *Alma Enterprise*, 9 April 1926.

10. "Double Track: Rock Island Will Complete Double Track This Year," *Alma Signal*, 11 March 1926; "Bids Opened March 22: Work on Double Track Will Begin April 15 and be Finished Dec. 1," *Alma Enterprise*, 19 March 1926; "Rock Island Contracts: Grading and Masonry Let and Work Will Begin April 15," *Alma Enterprise*, 9 April 1926.

11. "Work Well Under Way,"*Alma Enterprise*, 30 April 1926.

12. "Rock Island Bought Boettcher Farm," *Alma Enterprise*, 4 June 1926; "Double Track News," *Alma Enterprise*, 2 July 1926; Personal oral histories with Florence Simon and Hulda Schmanke, May, 1986. (casette recordings in author's possession).

13. "Another Dynamite Victim" and "Powder Man Killed," *Alma Signal*, 27 May 1926; "One Killed, One Injured: Blasting For Double Track East of Volland Takes Toll," *Alma Enterprise*, 28 May 1926.

14. "Double Track News," *Alma Enterprise*, 2 July 1926.

15. "They Are All Busy," *Alma Enterprise*, 15 October 1926; "Track Laying," *Alma Signal*, 31 March 1927.

16. "Double Track: Rock Island Will Complete Double

Track This Year," Alma Signal, 11 March 1926; Personal oral histories with C. F. Horne, William Schultz, and Lowell Thierer, May, 1986, (casette recordings in author's possession).

17. Personal oral history with Lowell Thierer, May, 1986, (casette recording in author's possession).

18. "Married," 15 January 1926; 14 June 1929; 5 October 1926; Robert V. Hine Community on the American Frontier: Separate but Not Alone (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980) pp. 132-3.

19. Atherton, Main Street, p. 237.

20. "Volland," Alma Enterprise, 14 December 1926; Personal oral history with Keith Schultz, May, 1986, (casette recording in author's possession); "Automobile Licenses Due," Alma Signal, 8 January 1925; "Volland," Alma Enterprise, 13 September 1925, and Adolph Mass "Died," Alma Enterprise, 12 March 1926 are but two examples; "Volland," Alma Enterprise, 25 October 1929; "Volland," Alma Signal, 3 February 1927.

21. "Volland," Alma Signal, 14 December 1926.

22. Both the Alma Enterprise and the Alma Signal carried theater advertisements; "Volland," Alma Signal, 27 March 1913; "Volland," Alma Enterprise, 21 November 1930.

23. "Volland," Alma Enterprise, 6 December 1926; both the Alma Enterprise and the Alma Signal show an increase in advertiseing for tractors and machinery.

24. Personal oral history with Hulda Schmanke, May, 1986, (casette recording in author's possession); Personal

oral history with Vernon Kratzer, January and May 1986, (casette recordings in author's possession; "Wabaunsee Telephone Company," Alma Signal, 30 September 1926.

25. "Volland," Alma Signal, 12 February 1925.

26. "Royal Neighbors," Alma Enterprise, 23 April 1926; "Royal Neighbors," Alma Signal, 16 December 1926; "Royal Neighbors Have Party," Alma Enterprise, 22 October 1926.

27. "Volland," Alma Enterprise, 24 September 1926; 25 October 1929; 10 December 1926; 6 December 1929.

28. District 26 Records, County School Records, Register of Deeds, Wabaunsee County Courthouse, Alma, Kansas.

29. "New High School," Alma Enterprise, 14 June 1929.

30. Personal oral histories with Mabel Grasche Hurt and Myrtle Horne Strand, May, 1986, (casette recordings in author's possession); "Volland," Alma Enterprise, 9 September 1929; 13 September 1929.

31. "Volland," Alma Signal, 4 February 1926; "Volland," Alma Enterprise, 2 July 1926.

32. "Volland," Alma Enterprise, 30 May 1929.

33. Both the Alma Enterprise and the Alma Signal reflect the change in sports popularity; "Volland," Alma Enterprise, 30 May 1929.

34. "Frank Munzer is Dead," Alma Enterprise, 4 October 1929; "Kratzer Home Burns," Alma Enterprise, 21 November 1929; "Train Wrecked at Volland," Alma Enterprise, 1 November 1929; "Plenty Dutch Cleanser Free," and "Volland,"

Alma Enterprise, 8 November 1929.

35. "Motors on Rock Island." *Alma Signal*, 8 July 1926.

36. The discussion of the Valencia station is but one example, *Alma Enterprise*, 29 November 1929; "Volland," 19 December 1930.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

1. Oliver O. Jensen, American Heritage History of Railroading in America (New York: American Heritage, 1975) p. 282,299.

2. "Attorney General Invites Comments Concerning Sale of Rock Island Railroad," and "Southern Pacific Wants to Purchase Rock Island Railroad," Alma Signal-Enterprise, 1979. from the Wabaunsee County Historical Society file on Railroads.

3. "Dismantling Rock Island Line Postponed," Alma Signal-Enterprise, 17 June, 1982; "New Railway Traffic Control System Between Herington and Topeka, Alta Vista Journal, 6 January 1983, from the Wabaunsee County Historical Society file on Railroads.

4. District 26 Records, County School Records, Register of Deeds, Wabaunsee County Courthouse, Alma, Kansas; Personal oral history with Bill and Mary Schultz, May, 1986, (cassette recording in author's possession).

5. District 26 Records.

6. "School Officers Meet," Alma Signal, 7 November 1913.

7. Wayne G. Fuller, The Old Country School: The Story of Rural Education in the Middle West (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982) p. 230.

8. Public auction announcement, Alma Signal-Enterprise, 6 May 1971.

9. John C. Hudson, Plains Country Towns (Minneapolis:

University of Minnesota Press, 1985); Lewis E. Atherton, Main Street on the Middle Border (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1954); Robert V. Hine, Community of the American Frontier (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980).

10. Hine, p. 19, 21-22, 25-26, 31.

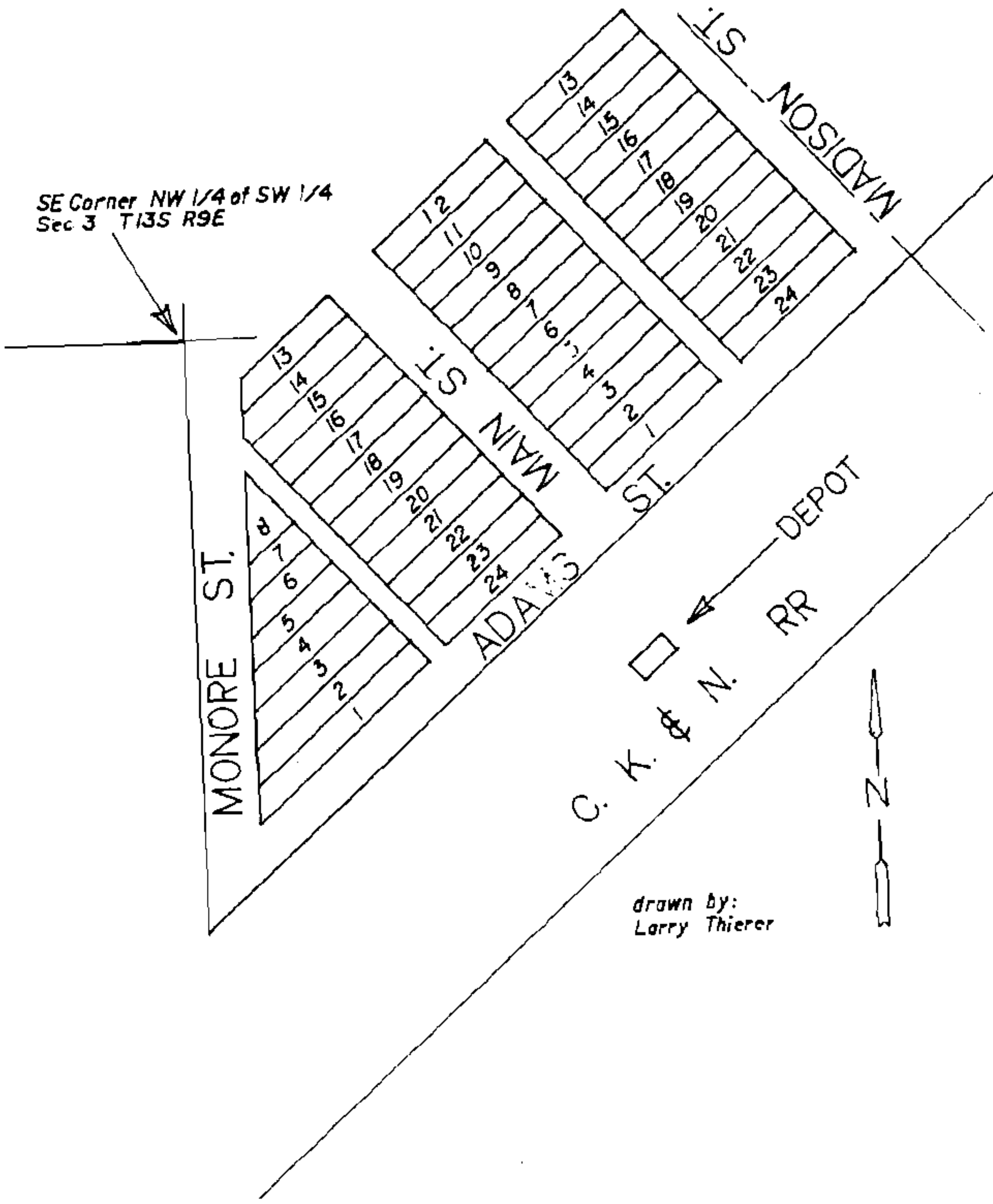
11. Wilbur Zelinsky, The Cultural Geography of the United States (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973) p. 13-14.

12. Roxane Fridirici and Stephen E. White, "Kansas Through the Eyes of Kansans: Preferences for Commonly Viewed Landscapes," Great Plains Quarterly, 6, no. 1,(1986) p. 53.

APPENDIX

1. Plat of Grafton
2. Plat of Grafton--Changed to Volland
3. Legal document changing the name of Grafton to Volland
4. Order Vacating Town of Grafton [For] Volland
5. Map of Volland
6. Map of Volland. Legend
7. Volland Trading Area
8. Map of Washington Township, 1919
9. Map of Wabaunsee. County Kansas
10. Layout of Old Store
11. Layout of New Store, 1913-1929
12. Layout of New Store, 1950-1960

PLAT OF GRAFTON



PLAT OF GRAFTON - - CHANGED TO VOLLAND

State of Kansas, County of Wabaunsee -- I, Henry Volland, do hereby certify that I am the owner of that part of the [undescribable] of the SW part of section (3) T. (13) S. R. (9) E of the 6th principal meridian in the County of Wabaunsee and State of Kansas. It being the land upon which the Town of Grafton, is situated and laid out and the Lots and Blocks so laid out are for the purpose of sale -- and the size of Lots in length and width are designated on the Plat. Also the numbers of the Lots and the numbers of the Blocks wherein they are situated.

That the length and width of streets and alley are also indicated thereon. That this description of the land so subdivided is in accordance with the wishes of said Henry Volland.

[Signed by] Henry Volland

Subscribed and sworn to this 8th day of February A. D. 1887.

[Notarized] J. F. Paffer

My commission expires September 28, 1890. Notary Public State of Kansas, Wabaunsee County

This Instrument was filed for record in this office on the 8th day of February, AD 1887 at 2 o'clock p m and duly entered in Book of Town plats at page 37.

J. E. Henderson
Register of Deeds

by J. R. Henderson
Deputy

The State of Kansas — 21st Judicial
Wabaunsee County — District

At a session of the District Court sitting within [undecipherable] for said County of Wabaunsee begun and held at the Court House in the City of Alma in said County on the 5th day of March 1888 as by statute required there being present Hon. R. E. Spielman Judge of said Judicial District and J. M. Russele Sheriff and Theo. S. Spielman Clerk of the District Court of said County.
The following proceeding were had:

In the matter of the petition of F. M. Faber et. al. for an order Changing the name of Grafton's town in the County of Wabaunsee and State of Kansas to Volland

Order

Now on this 22nd day of March A.D. 1888 the above named matter came on to be heard upon the petition and the evidence there being no answer demurrer or other resistance to the petition. Jury waived and trial by the Court finds that statutory notice of the making of the application prayed for in said petition was duly made in the Alma Enterprise a paper publishable & of general circulation in said County of Wabaunsee Kansas and that the allegations contained in said petition are true, and that the granting of the prayer of said petition will promote the interests of the petitioners and the residents of the said town of Grafton.
It is therefore ordered and adjudged that the name of the Town of Grafton in said County of Wabaunsee and State of Kansas be and the same hereby is changed to the name of Volland, and it further ordered that the petitioners pay the costs herein.
State of Kansas Wabaunsee County:

Theo. S. Spielman Clerk of the District Court in and for said County do hereby certify that the within and forgoing is a full true and correct copy of certain proceedings held in said court in the case herein entitled as the same [undecipherable] of records in my office

Witness whereof have hereunto....

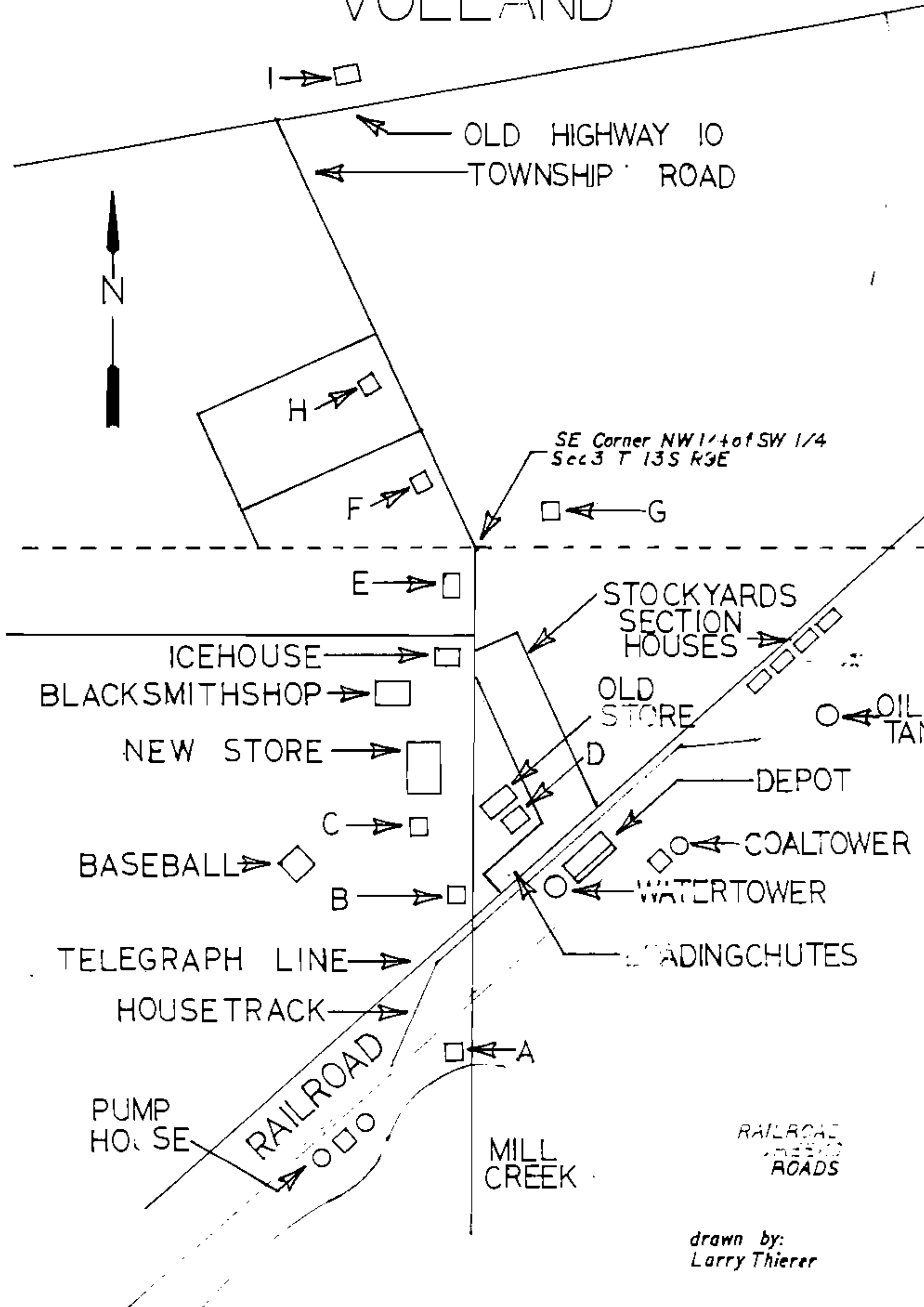
signed

ORDER VACATING TOWN OF GRAFTON [FOR] VOLLAND

In the matter of the petition of Henry Volland praying for the vacation of the streets alleys and public reservations in the Townsite of Grafton, Wabaunsee County, Kansas. And on this 7th day of January 1890, the petition of Henry Volland being presented to us, the Board of County Commissioners of Wabaunsee County, in regular session assembled, praying for the vacation of Main Street, Madison Street and Adams Street up to where said Adams Street intersects with Monroe Street so as to leave Monroe Street open and public Street - and all the alleys and other public reservations in the Townsite of Grafton, Wabaunsee County Kansas and hearing the evidence offered in support of said petition, and upon due and deliberate consideration thereof--we find: That said petitioner Henry Volland is the sole and exclusive owner of said Townsite of Grafton, situated in Wabaunsee County, Kansas, and that said townsite is wholly unimproved; and we further find; That said petitioner Henry Volland gave due notice by publication for four consecutive weeks, as provided for by law, in the Wabaunsee County News, a weekly newspaper of general circulation, published at Alma, Wabaunsee County, Kansas. That he would on January the 7th 1890, present his said petition to said Board of County Commissioners, praying for the vacation of said Streets, Alleys and other public reservations in the Townsite of Grafton, said County. And we further find that no private vested rights will be injured or endangered and that the public will suffer no loss or inconvenience[sic] by reason of the vacation of the Streets, Alleys and public reservations as prayed for in said petition.

It is therefore ordered adjudged and decreed by the said Board of County Commissioners of Wabaunsee County, Kansas, in regular session assembled, That Main Street, Madison Street and Adams Street, up to where said Adams Street intersects with Monroe Street so as to leave Monroe Street an open and public Street and all the Alleys and other public reservations in said Townsite of Grafton, Wabaunsee County, Kansas, be vacated and that the County Clerk of said County enter this order ...."

MAP OF VOLLAND

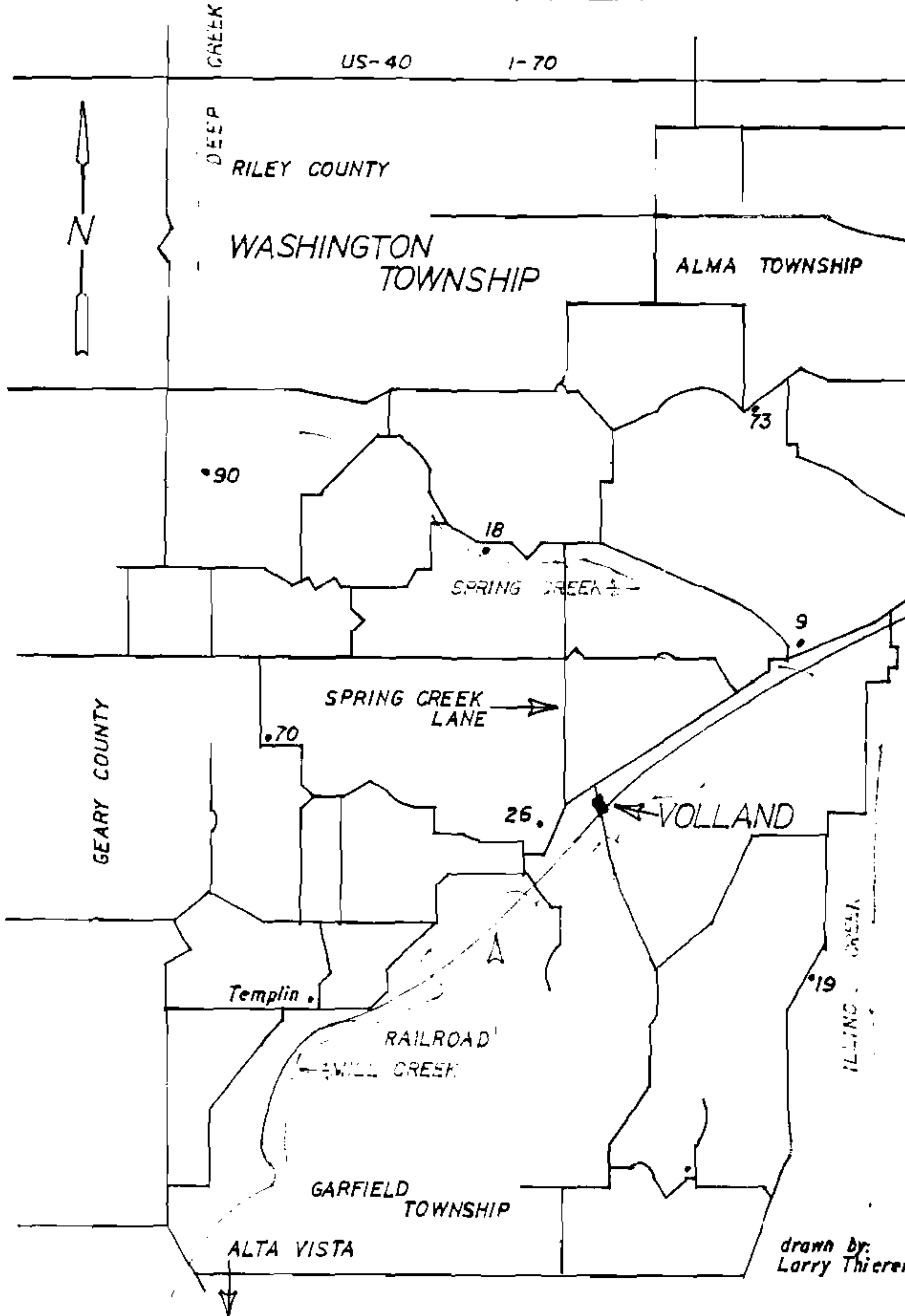


MAP OF [illegible]

LEGEND

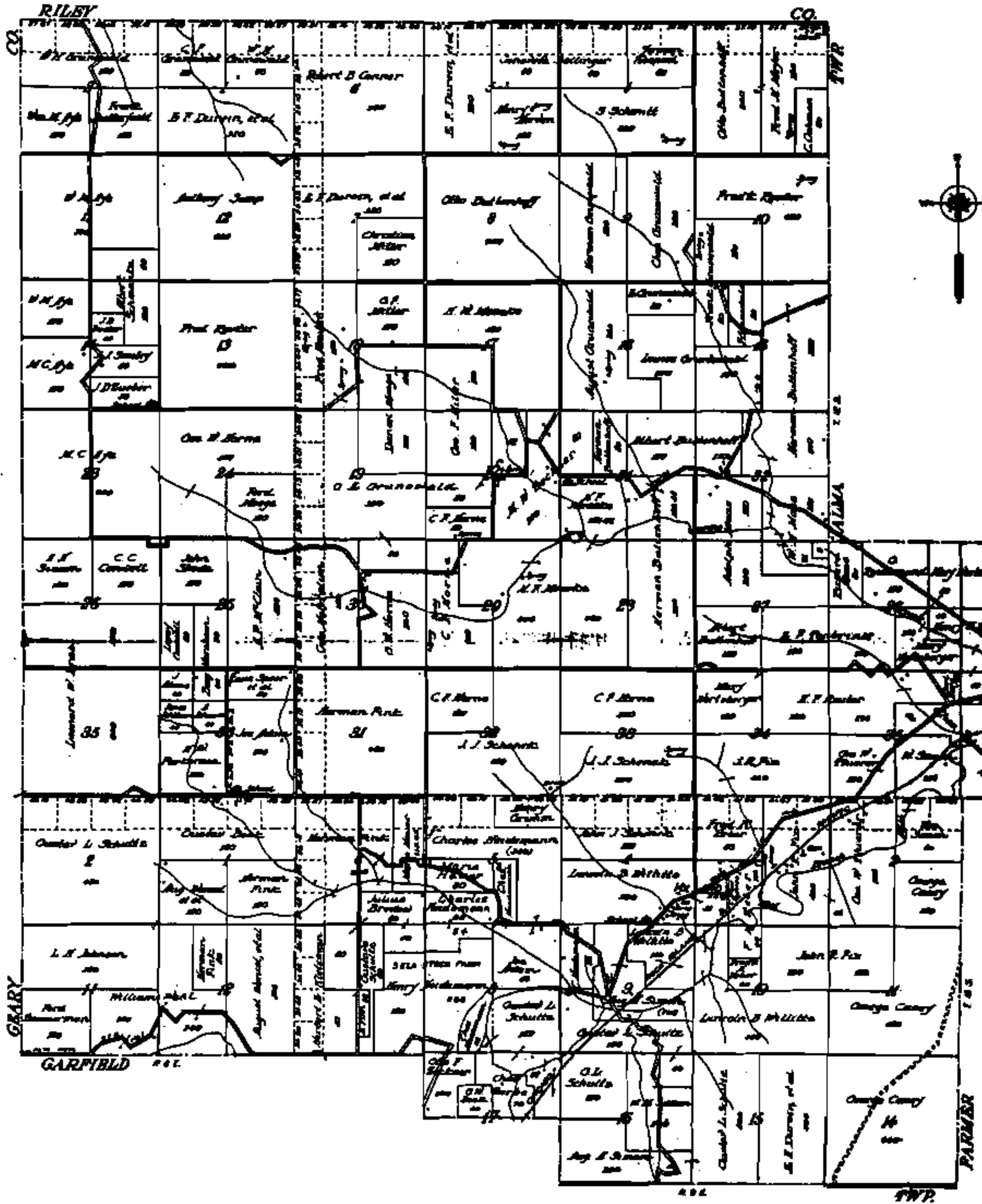
Rental House	Lived in by railroaders until 1946, 1946-1949 occupied by Lowell and Myrtle Thieren, early 1950s moved to just east of Manhattan.
Rental House	Later moved to location behind new store.
Kretzer Residence	Built 1917, burned 1929, foundation still there.
House	First located on the J. R. Fix farm, used as a rental for railroaders. Moved to site indicated as D, lived in by merchants operating old store. Later moved to site indicated as F.
House	Initially owned by John Cromer, later used as a rental house, sat empty, purchased 1952 by George and Jessie Wall.
House	See D, as of 1990 used as a weekend home.
Rental House	Lived in by railroaders, now residence of Keith and Carol Schultz.
Rental House	Lived in by railroaders, as of 1990 used as a weekend home.
House	Fred Feber residence, sold to Art Schultz in 1930, now residence of Sophie Schultz. Part of the community but not part of the town.

VOLLAND TRADE AREA

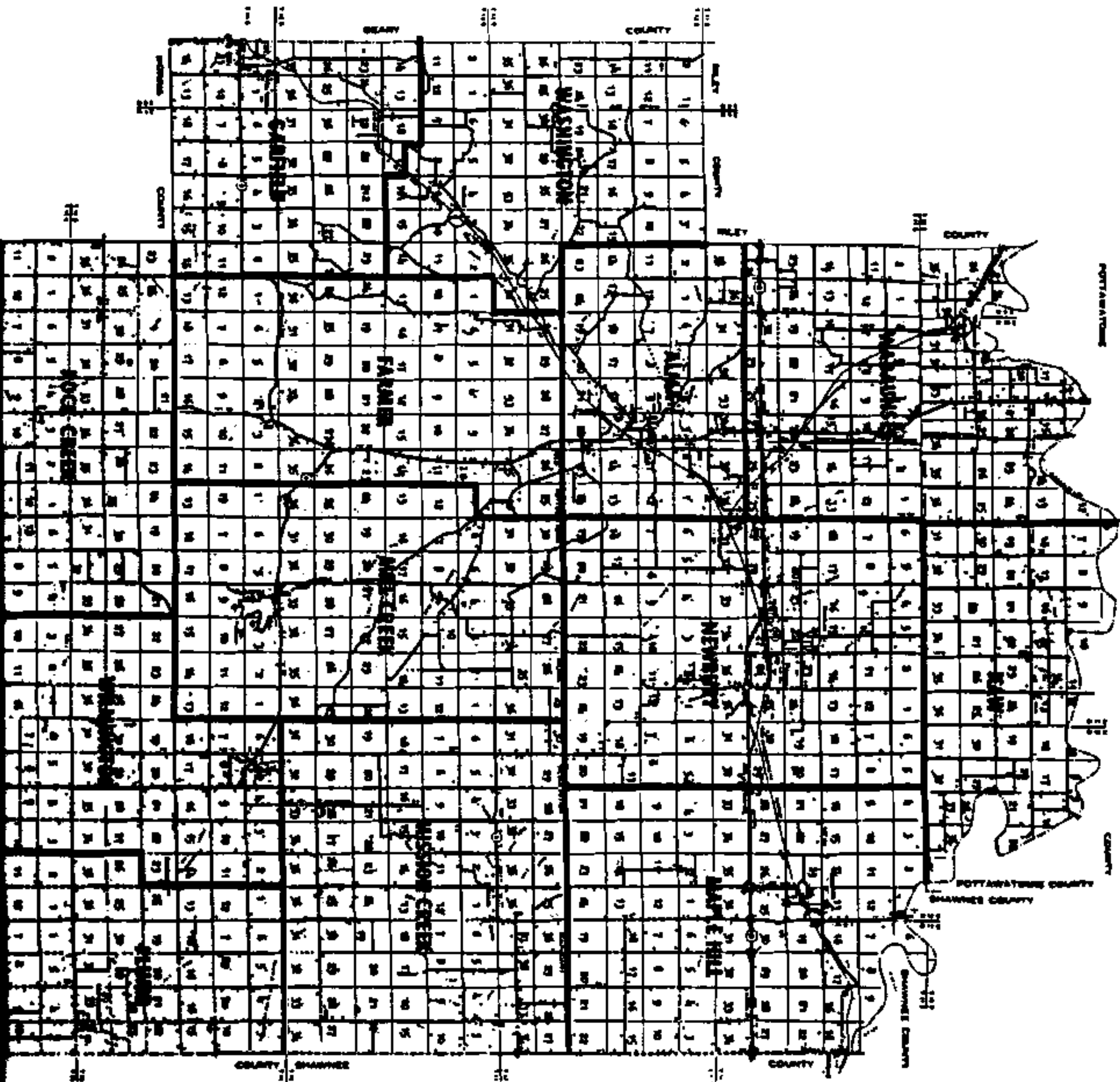


MAP OF WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP

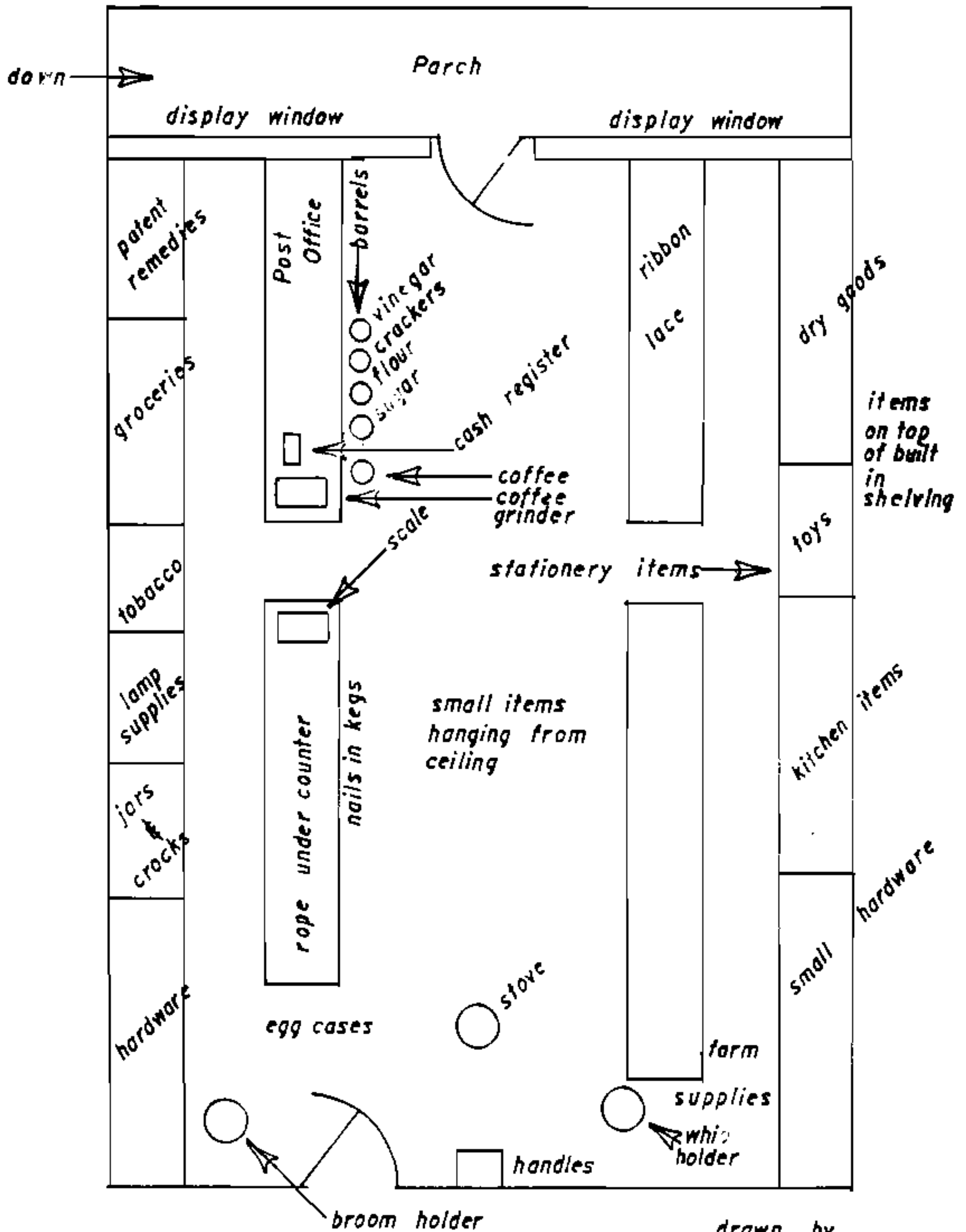
Part of Townships 12 and 13 South, Ranges 8 and 9 East of the 6th P.M.



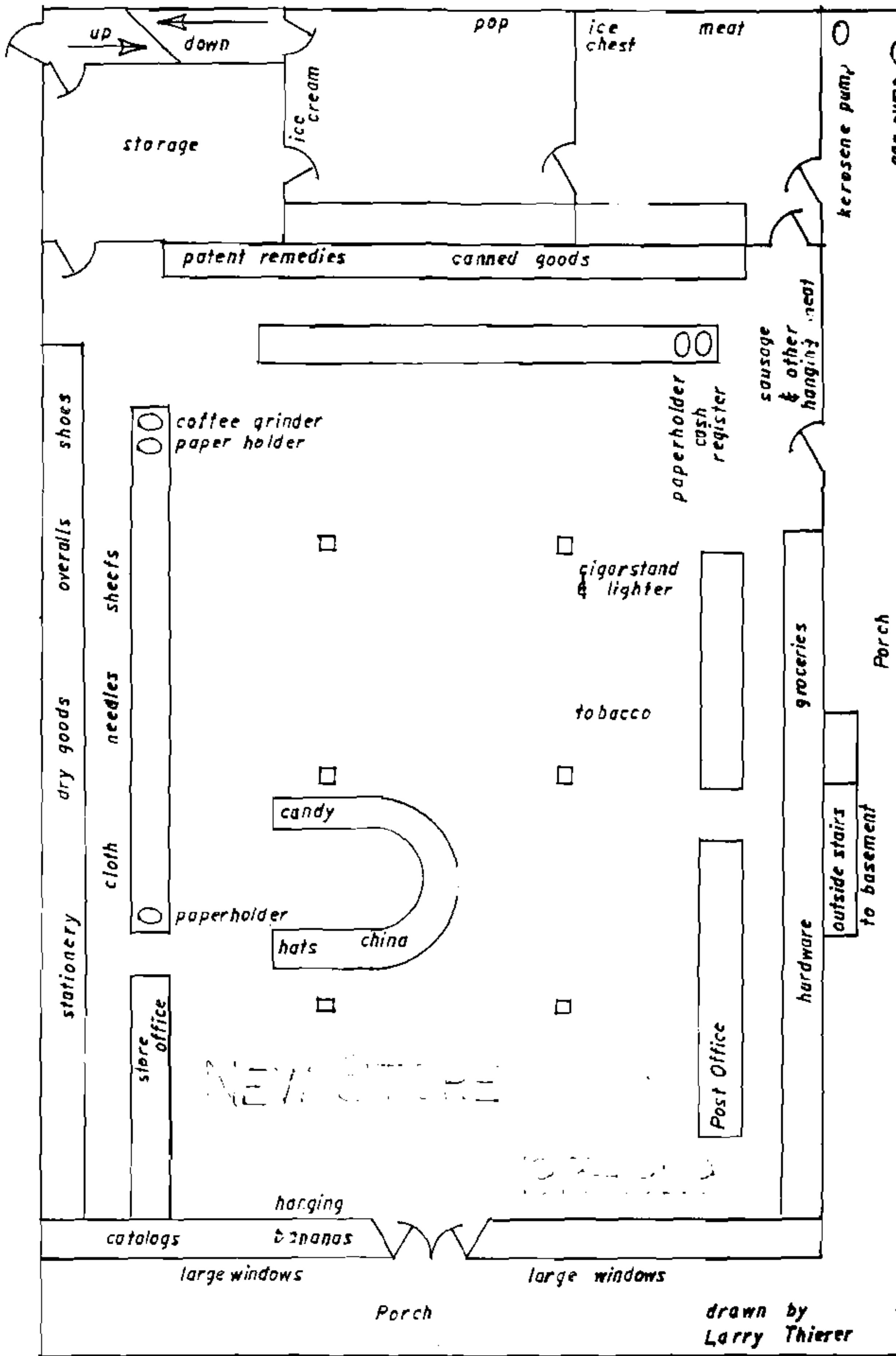
WABAUNSEE COUNTY, KANSAS

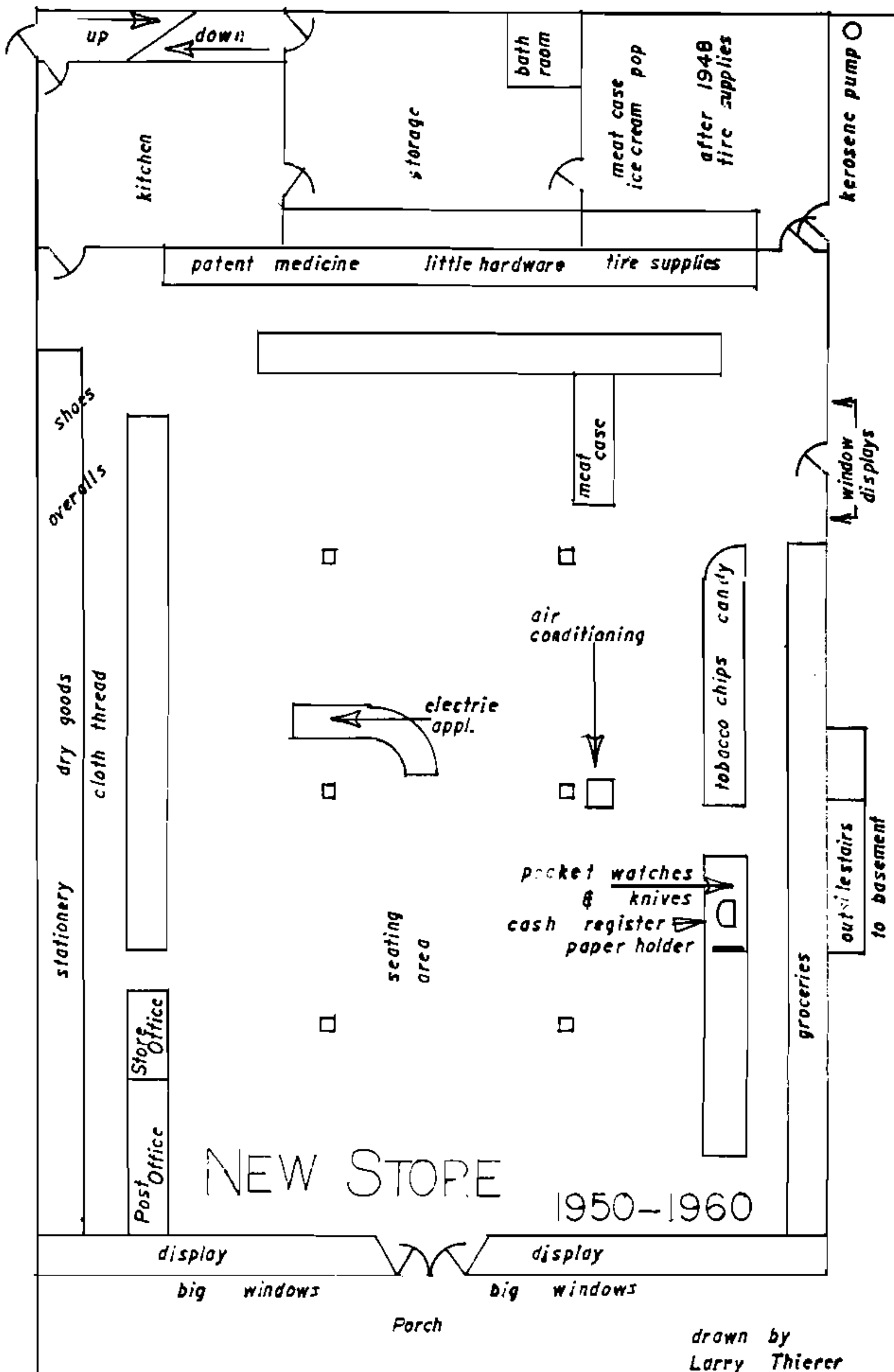


OLD STORE



drawn by
Larry Thierer


up
down
pop
ice chest
meat
storage
ice cream
kerosene pump
patent remedies
canned goods
sausage & other hanging meat
paperholder
cash register
coffee grinder
paper holder
shoes
overalls
sheets
cigarstand & lighter
dry goods
needles
tobacco
groceries
Porch
candy
cloth
paperholder
outside stairs to basement
hats
china
stationery
hardware
store office
Post Office
hanging
catalogs
bananas
large windows
large windows
Porch
drawn by Larry Thierer


up
down
kitchen
storage
bath room
meat case ice cream pop
after 1948 tire supplies
kerosene pump
patent medicine
little hardware
tire supplies
shoes
overalls
meat case
window displays
air conditioning
tobacco chips candy
electric appl.
dry goods
cloth thread
pocket watches & knives
cash register paper holder
outside stairs to basement
stationery
seating area
groceries
Store Office
Post Office
NEW STORE
1950-1960
display
display
big windows
big windows
Porch
drawn by
Larry Thierer