

A SHORT EDUCATIONAL HISTORY  
OF LABETTE COUNTY, KANSAS

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION AND THE GRADUATE COUNCIL OF THE KANSAS STATE  
TEACHERS COLLEGE OF EMPORIA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF SCIENCE

By

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## PREFACE

With the roaring of an airplane  
Over fields of ripening grain,  
With the pattering of raindrops  
Of a brief mid-summer rain,  
I sit here and think and wonder  
Of events long past and gone  
That have shaped and made the present,  
From the past the future won.

Think of those who lived before us  
Founding school and church and state.  
Gave the people laws and customs,  
And the school the book and slate.  
Realized that education  
Is a vital part of life  
Can predict much of the future  
And prevent both grief and strife.

Though those schools were simply founded  
In a day quite long ago,  
From them grew our present system  
As great oaks from acorns grow;  
And I can but hope, in wondering,  
That our schools' prosperity,  
We as well as they may build it  
For our own posterity.

From the war-whoop of the Osage, the bellow of the buffalo, the howl of the coyote, and the crackling of prairie fires, to the roaring of airplanes, the whistling of fast trains, the chugging of combines, and the contented song of the robin in a ripening orchard, these indicate the completeness of a seventy-seven year transition period in the characteristic sounds of Labette County, Kansas. In 1860 Labette County was a wild land inhabited only by roving bands of Indians and a few scattered whites. In 1937 Labette County is inhabited by over 30,000 people who are supporting 129 schools which have a combined enrollment of approximately 7,000 pupils.

The following work hopes to give something of the history of the educational institutions that have made this change possible.

## CHAPTER I

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

#### THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. "No, I don't know when this school was first started." "A fire destroyed the records of our school several years ago." "I think this is one of the oldest schools in the county." These statements give an idea of the lack of definite knowledge concerning the schools in most sections of the country. The problem of this study is to collect data from every possible source concerning the educational institutions existing, or which have existed, in Labette County, Kansas.

Justification of the problem. In so far as the beginnings of most things are of interest and value, the investigator hopes that this study will contribute something of value for present and future educators. As all previous works dealing with the history of education were published prior to 1900 and as they disagree in many respects, the writer hopes that the present study will have a chance of definite contribution.

Scope of the problem. This study tries, in as far as it is possible, to give something of the origin and development of the various educational institutions within the county. Showing when they were founded, the people instrumental in the founding, and in as far as it is possible, their growth in enrollment, graduates, buildings, valuation, etc. The institutions studied included all rural schools, all graded schools, all high

schools, and all colleges which exist or have existed within the boundary of Labette County, Kansas.

Types and sources of data collected. The data collected in this study include dates, names, pictures, maps, and statistical information on enrollment, graduates, census, valuation, etc. The following sources were utilized in carrying out this study:

1. Biennial reports of State Superintendent of Public Instructors.
2. Reports of county superintendents.
3. Newspapers.
4. Early histories.
5. Pamphlets of local history.
6. Personal interviews.
7. Records and files of county superintendents.
8. Publications of Kansas State Historical Society.
9. School census reports.
10. Original maps.
11. Records and files of city superintendents.
12. Records of boards of education.
13. High school year books.

Method of procedure. All early histories of the county, pamphlets, newspaper clippings, county superintendent reports, and both the annual and biennial reports of the state superintendent were used to obtain the early histories of the county and its schools. Original maps, census

reports and records from the county superintendent's office were used to establish the validity of the information from the secondary sources. Bulletins and records of all city superintendents were examined and many personal interviews were arranged for the purpose of gathering information on the high schools and graded schools of the county. Visits were made to the Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas, to the county superintendent's office at Oswego, and to the offices of the superintendents and principals of all graded and high schools in the county for the purpose of gathering data.

Presentation of data. The work as a whole, and of each individual chapter has been arranged chronologically. Since the elementary schools were started and developed before the high schools or colleges, they are studied in an earlier chapter. Statistical tables, graphs, and maps are presented to show the growth by years from the first schools to the most recent.

#### RELATED STUDIES

Previous studies. The most extensive study relative to education in Labette County was made by J. I. Case. In his book History of Labette County, Kansas<sup>1</sup> he devotes one chapter to the formation of the early

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<sup>1</sup> J. I. Case, History of Labette County, Kansas (Topeka, Crane and Co., 1893), pp. 181-219.

district schools. The first schools and the people instrumental in their formation is covered in some detail. Case lists each district and town school and tells when it was started. In this work there is also mention made of the county high school at Altamont, Oswego college, Oswego college for young ladies, and literary societies and other auxiliary educational agencies. Andreas,<sup>2</sup> in his chapter on Labette County, gives a brief history of the schools in the county before 1880. He tells where the first schools were found and something of the formation. He also lists the individuals who were instrumental in the formation of the earliest schools.

Shortcomings of previous studies. All of the previous studies have failed to give anything of the formation and establishment of the schools beyond the elementary grades. Case<sup>3</sup> is the only investigator who presents an appreciable amount concerning the formation of the early district schools. Most of the authors fail to give the source of their information. In some instances their findings do not agree.

Proposed contributions of the present study. In this study the student hopes to give a reliable account of the formation and development of the various educational institutions of Labette County. It is hoped that the study herein presented may add information more recent than

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<sup>2</sup> A. T. Andreas, History of the State of Kansas (Chicago, A. T. Andreas, 1882) 11, 1450-1478.

<sup>3</sup> Case, op. cit.

previous studies, may discover the primary source, and may check the reliability of the information presented in previous studies.

## CHAPTER II

### SETTLEMENT AND FORMATION OF LABETTE COUNTY, KANSAS

Early Settlers. John Mathews, a native of Kentucky, was the first white settler in Labette County. "He came as a blacksmith for the Indians in 1840, settling near the place where Oswego is now located."<sup>1</sup> Here he maintained a trading post and erected several buildings. He was well liked by the Indians and lived among them as a trader for a number of years.<sup>2</sup> He became quite prosperous having a number of fine race horses and a private race track. Concerning the location of Mathew's settlement one writer says:<sup>3</sup>

He settled near the edge of the bluff in the east side of Oswego, where he maintained a trading post and erected several buildings. These buildings stood partly on what is now block 61, and extended north across Fourth avenue and on to block 60. They were used by him as a residence, a place where travelers were entertained, for his store, and warehouse, and for the care of his stock. The remains of the ruins of some of these buildings may still be seen in the street about 125 feet east of the north east corner of the park, on block 52.

Larkin McGhee,<sup>4</sup> another early settler, came from Spring Place, Murry County, Georgia, on January 17, 1847. He too established a trading post which was located at the place where Chetopa now stands.

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<sup>1</sup> J. I. Case, History of Labette County, Kansas (Topeka, Crane and Co., 1893), p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Frank W. Blackburn, Kansas (Chicago: Standard Publishing Co.) II 955.

<sup>3</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 25.



Upon his arrival he found five white families, a widow, Tianna Rogers and her seven children, also William Blythe, Finchel Monroe, Daniel Hopkins, and a man named Tucker. These were all white families except the wives of the last two and they were Indians.<sup>5</sup>

Another early settler who contributed much to the early development of the county was Dr. George Lisle.<sup>6</sup> He brought several men and settled at Chetopa on April 18, 1857. He soon erected several buildings, one of which he used as a drug store and for a doctor's office. He had much to do with the early growth of Chetopa and his letters and records have helped greatly in the preservation of the knowledge of the early happenings in the county.<sup>7</sup>

Other early settlers in the county were Abraham Evers, George Evers, Samuel Steel, Nelson Case,<sup>8</sup> S. W. Collins, A. T. Dickerman, and N. F. Carr.

Formation of the County. The actual formation of Labette County as such did not take place until 1867, almost twelve years after the territory now known as Labette County became a part of a Kansas' County, named Dorn.

By section ten of chapter thirty of the laws of 1855, all territory lying south of Allen County was organized into a

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<sup>5</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>6</sup> Blackburn, op. cit., p. 956.

<sup>7</sup> Case, op. cit., pp. 20-34.

<sup>8</sup> A. T. Dickerman, Oswego Democrat, (Oswego, Kansas, November 13, 1878.)

county and called Dorn. Its east line was 24 miles west of the Missouri line, and its width was 24 miles, (which was supposed to take it to the west line of range 18).<sup>9</sup>

This included all of what is now Labette County. Six years later in 1861, the name of the county was changed from Dorn to Neosho.<sup>10</sup> From the southern part of Neosho County, the Legislature on February 7, 1867, formed Labette County.

It was to include the territory extending from the 6th parallel on the north to the boundary of the state on the south and from the Cherokee neutral lands on the east to the Osage reserve on the west. The area of Labette County was 650 square miles and included 416,000 acres of land.<sup>11</sup>

Naming the County. There are two conflicting stories concerning the naming of the county. Everyone seems to agree that the county is named after Labette Creek, but there are two stories of the naming of Labette Creek. Case<sup>12</sup> says that the creek was named after Pierre Labette, the first white settler near its mouth. Concerning the naming of the creek Andreas writes as follows:<sup>13</sup>

The County was named after Labette Creek, the largest stream except the Neosho within its limits. According to tradition the creek obtained the name from the following incident: In the year 1845 some French trappers pitched their camp near a crossing of the creek. A meal was prepared and the Frenchmen had sat down to partake of it when a deer came in sight. A

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<sup>9</sup> Case, op. cit., p. 25.

<sup>10</sup> A. T. Andreas, History of Kansas (Chicago: R. R. Donnelley and Sons) II. 1453.

<sup>11</sup> Case, op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>13</sup> A. T. Andreas, op. cit., p. 1454.

general chase ensued and the deer was killed. During the absence of the trappers a polecat came along and made himself so disagreeable that they returned but to depart at once. One of them, who knew the cause of the difficulty, exclaimed as he turned away. Oh! La Bete! La Bete! Meaning Oh! the beast! the beast!

Early maps and early legislation on the formation of the county spell the work in two parts, La Bette.<sup>14</sup>

#### THE TOWNS

Oswego. The settlement of Mathews on the present site of Oswego has been previously discussed.<sup>15</sup> After his death in 1861, (Mathews was killed by a detachment of Union soldiers) there were no white settlers<sup>16</sup> until 1865. The first store was opened on the present site of Oswego late in 1865 by Clinton Rexford and N. P. Elsbree. Their building was a rough, log shanty and stood near what is now block 66. The growth of the town was quite rapid and two years later there were in Oswego ten frame buildings and eleven log houses. The population in 1865 was about 100. Concerning the actual forming of the town, Nelson Case who moved to Oswego in 1869, writes the following:<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> J. I. Case, loc. cit.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., Chapter II, p. 4.

<sup>16</sup> J. I. Case, op. cit., p. 153.

<sup>17</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 156.

Up to July, 1866, the place we now designate Oswego had been known as Little Town. Prior to the formation of the town company there were no records kept except upon slips of paper. I have been through these papers as they have been preserved and from them find the following facts. E. Talobtt, J. F. Newlon, William Hogaboon, and D. C. Rexford seem to have been the parties instrumental in organizing the town company.

By 1870 Oswego was a thriving town of 1, 196 people.<sup>19</sup> By 1890 the population had increased to 2,574. From this time on the growth in population was more retarded and by 1916 a rather decided drop in population could be noticed.

Chetopa. The first settler in what is now Chetopa was John McMurtly who settled on the Neosho river prior to 1856. The town company was formed in 1868 by George Lisle, George Hanson, N. S. Goss, Willouby Donuda, and others.

The permanent settlement of Chetopa really commences with the year 1866. In the spring of that year Ephraim Doudna and Dr. George Lisle built the first house upon the town-site. It was a "shake" house and stood on the west side of what is now Third street, and north of Maple street, near the alley. In this house Ephraim Doudna opened the first store in the town. Soon after this a man by the name of Hoffman built a cabin and blacksmith shop south of where Maple street now is and between second and third streets. These were the only buildings in town at the close of 1866. In February of 1867 Willough Donuda who had a sawmill in Neosho county moved it to Chetopa and located it on the west side of the Neosho near the foot of Maple street as afterward located. From this time on frame houses made of native lumber began to be built where before either log or "shake" shanties had been made to answer.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Atlas of Labette County, Kansas. (Des Moines, Kenyon Company, 1916), p. 60.

<sup>20</sup> J. I. Case, op. cit., p. 144.

The first hotel in Chetopa was built by Perry Barnes on the south east corner of Third and Maple streets. This same year (1868) another hotel, the California House, was erected. The first plastered house was a large two story frame house built by James H. Crichton, Chetopa's first attorney. Up to 1870 there had been nothing but wooden structures in the town but that year several brick businesses were started in the county and the first brick houses were built in Chetopa. In 1870 Chetopa was the end of the Missouri Kansas and Texas railroad and consequently many people came to Chetopa, not only those who intended to stay but also those who anticipated going farther. Chetopa, consequently, grew quite rapidly and by 1872 had a population of better than 2,000 and was the largest town in Labette County.<sup>21</sup>

Parsons. On June 19, 1869, W. K. Hayes located on the north half of the southwest quarter of section 19, North township, and in connection with Melton W. Eves opened a small stock of general merchandise. Mr. Hayes was on September 25, 1869, appointed postmaster of a new postoffice established at that point and named Mendota--"the place of meeting." Whether it was the place of meeting of the two branches of the Labette, or of the two branches of the M. K. & T., neither of the latter of which was then located, or of the traveling public, perhaps it is too early to write with interest. When a hundred years of tradition and myth shall have gathered around it, the future historian can write a chapter upon the founding of the office which will be read with delight. But as a sober, historical fact, and to somewhat curtail the wings of mythology, it may be recorded that it was because of the proximity of the site to the confluence of the Big and Little Labette that the name Mendota was chosen.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 147.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 169.

Mendota lay within the limits of what is now the city of Parsons and existed for a little over a year or until November, 1870, when the town-site of Parsons was located. From the start it was known that Parsons was to be a railroad town. On Sunday, November 6, 1870, C. H. Wait, a railroad engineer, located the connection of the Sedalia and Junction City branches of the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas railroad within the limits of the territory, which a few days later was laid out as the town of Parsons by L. F. Olney, a civil engineer.<sup>23</sup>

Isaac T. Goodnow, N. S. Goss, F. C. White, O. B. Gunn, Norman Eastman, and Robert J. Stevens, the incorporators of the town experienced considerable difficulty in securing title to and possession of the land which they wanted as it was already owned or occupied by settlers. They finally had to resort to strategy in appearing to abandon the project and were instrumental in having published in several newspapers stories concerning resolutions that the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railroad officials were establishing their shops elsewhere, thereby making the establishment of Parsons an unprofitable undertaking. As a result of these statements the town company was able to buy the land which it wanted without paying an enormous price for it.

By March 8, 1871, the sale of lots began. From the very start the growth of Parsons was rapid. "There was quite a strife for the honor

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 170.

of being the purchaser of the first lot."<sup>24</sup> The first lots sold were lots 14, 15, and 16 in block 42. They were purchased by Abraham Cary. The rapid growth of this city earned for it the title of "The Infant Wonder." By April 28, 1871, there were some 2,000 inhabitants.

Mound Valley. The first building on the town-site was put up in the summer of 1869, by the town company in connection with Alexander Honrath and Henry Rohr, the upper story of which was to be used as the town company's office and the public hall, and the lower story by Honrath & Rohr for a general store.<sup>25</sup>

Other stores followed almost immediately. Among those were a drug store by L. F. Nichols, a hardware and grocery store by J. B. Cramer, and a general store by E. R. Stevens who was made the first postmaster. The first doctor to locate in Mound Valley was Charles H. Lewis who settled on a claim in 1869. Other early doctors were named: Pattie, Woods, Towel, Wenner, Stansbury and McEwen.<sup>26</sup>

In 1883 a well was drilled in hopes of striking an artesian well to supply the town with water, but instead gas was discovered in sufficient quantities for commercial purposes. Two brick yards and a glass factory were started in 1905 utilizing the natural gas of the vicinity for heat.

The gas well referred to above was found to afford water highly impregnated with minerals which it was believed would be good for medicinal purposes. Authority was obtained from the Legislature to use

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 172.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 142.

<sup>26</sup> Ivy Norfleet, Personal Interview. (October 16, 1935)

the proceeds of the sale of the township railroad stock in the erection of a large house, which was done, and it became quite a resort for invalids.<sup>27</sup>

The Sanitarium mentioned above treated patients until 1900. The building still stands and is used by several families as residences.

Edna. On June 20, 1876, Mr. Booth and Alex. Patterson opened a general store in a claim shanty (11 x 14 feet) belonging to Jephtha Lackey, on the N.E. one-fourth of section 30, in Elm Grove township.<sup>28</sup> This was the start of the town of Edna. That same fall this firm brought from the town of Chanute the material of a frame building which they had torn down, and with it they put up at Edna, on the same quarter, the first store building in the place. This building still stands. Booth and Patterson continued to conduct the business until 1879, when they sold it to Frank Clark.

Other stores were opened from time to time. In 1883, Dunlap & Co. started a hardware store, but there were no very important enterprises started or any large amount of building done until the construction of the railroad through Edna in 1886, with the exception of the flour-mill, which was erected in 1883, by H. S. Wimmer and William Gear. This mill was put in operation in the spring of 1884, and has ever been

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<sup>27</sup> J. I. Case, op. cit., p. 144.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 138.



one of the most substantial features of Edna's prosperity. The town was not regularly laid off until the location of the railroad, in the summer of 1886. A plat of the town embracing a portion of sections 29 and 30, township 34, range 19, was filed August 21, 1886.

Altamont. Although a town company composed of I. N. Hamilton, H. G. Hamman, and J. J. Miles started negotiations to lay out a town in 1875, they were unable to do so and on September 5, 1879, a new company<sup>29</sup> was chartered for the same purpose. I. N. Hamilton and S. O. Noble were the leaders of this group and they succeeded in locating the town on the northeastern quarter of section 11, township 33, range 19. The land was purchased from Wm. Miller. The first house was erected on the town-site by S. O. Noble in October 1879.

In March, 1880, Jones, Burns & Wright opened a general store, and about the same time S. J. Hurshberger started the second general store. McCormick started a shoe shop, and L. F. Baker a blacksmith shop during the summer of 1880. In January, 1881, M. V. Watson built a<sub>30</sub> store room, in which he opened a stock of general merchandise.

Labette. The village of Labette was laid off in May, 1870, by a town company composed of several of the citizens living in the community, and railroad officials. J. Conner was made president of the company, and J. J. Waters, secretary. Labette is situated in the eastern part of Labette County, on the line of the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railroad, about midway between the cities of Oswego and Parsons. Prior to

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 139.

<sup>30</sup> A. T. Andreas, op. cit., p. 1485.

the establishment of this town, an attempt had been made by some of the citizens in the county, to start a town called Neola, about one and one-half miles south of Labette. This site was off the railroad and consequently was abandoned.<sup>31</sup>

The first house erected on the site, besides the claim houses, was that built by John Conner for a store room, in which he put a general stock of goods. Building was rapid, so that in about two months' time, following its establishment, about seventy houses were completed. Here it was said, was to be the junction of the Neosho Division and the main line of the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railroad. So rapid, indeed, was the progress of building, etc., that in about six months' time the place had attained a population of about 600, with about fifteen business houses of various kinds, and a large number of residence buildings. But, Alas! for its hopes and prospects, it was abandoned by the railroad company, and the rapidity of its decay was equalled only by the rapidity of its growth so that now it contains but three small stores, a postoffice, two churches and a few residences.<sup>32</sup>

Morehead. Morehead is a small town in the extreme north west corner of the county. The first house in Morehead was built in July, 1873 by J. K. Graves. It was a small one story building, used for business purposes. By the fall of 1878, the settlement had increased to about ten business houses, and in June, 1879, Morehead was surveyed and plotted by J. P. Nicholas. Several of the buildings had to be moved to conform to the new boundaries.

Other Towns. There are many other towns in Labette county that either were abandoned soon after their establishment or have dwindled in population and enterprises until they are of little importance as

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 1486.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 1487.

trading centers. These are listed as follows: Dennis, Montana, Barton, Valeda, Angola, Mathewson, Fishkill, Timber Hill, Snow Hill, Crouse, Arnold, Cecil, Deerton, Bartlett, Ripon, Minerva, and Kingston.

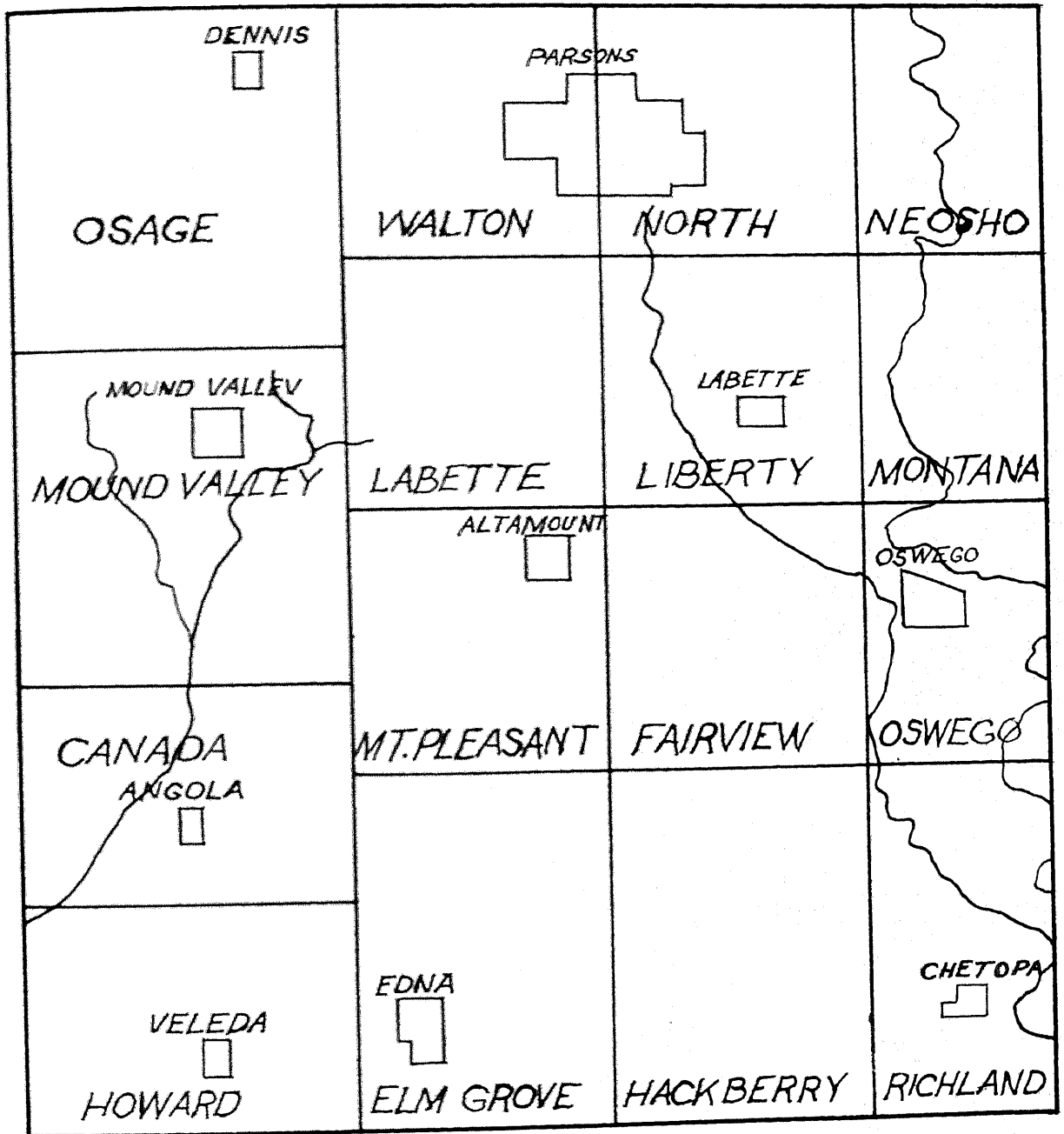


FIGURE 1

MAP OF LABETTE COUNTY, KANSAS.  
SHOWING TOWNS AND TOWNSHIPS

## CHAPTER III

### ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Although Oswego<sup>1</sup> is usually credited with the first school in Labette County in 1867, there is sufficient proof to credit Chetopa with the first school some nine years earlier in 1858. Dr. George Lisle, one of the founders of this school, wrote to Nelson Case as follows:<sup>2</sup>

On or about the middle of May, 1858, James Childers, George Walker, William Blythe, Larkin McGee, Benjamin Todd, Millard Rogers, John McMurtre, James Hellingington and myself got together and concluded to build a schoolhouse that would be large enough to have preaching in as often as we could get the preacher. A committee was appointed to select a site and fix upon size of house and call the people together to approve of same. The next Saturday was appointed, and everybody turned out and agreed to build it at a small spring in a branch, one and one-half miles south of where Chetopa now stands. The people agreed to meet and go to work on Monday morning, which they did with such success that by Saturday night they had a house, 22 by 24 feet square, floored with puncheons, seated and desked with the same, covered and lined with shaved clapboards: door and window fastenings were of boards cut with a whip saw; and on Sunday it was dedicated in order. On Monday, Joseph C. Henery commenced a school by the month, which he kept up almost one year; then Jeff. Jackson taught one term of three months; Pleasant McGee taught one term; and Helen Hardin was teaching when the war broke out and ended our school, but not its effects.

As has been previously stated in Chapter II, all the inhabitants were forced to leave during the war so there were of course no schools. After

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<sup>1</sup> A. T. Andreas, History of Kansas (Chicago, R. R. Donnelley and Sons), 11, 1455.

<sup>2</sup> Nelson Case, History of Labette County, Kansas (Topeka, Crane and Co., 1893), p. 181.

the return of settlers to the county in 1867 the organization of schools and districts soon got under way.

At the first election in the county, held on April 22, 1867, Dr. John F. Newton<sup>3</sup> was elected County Superintendent for two years and although he made no report to the State Superintendent, the county records<sup>4</sup> show that he assisted in the formation of some twenty or more school districts. The county being newly organized, there was no public money and, therefore, no public schools<sup>5</sup> before the fall of 1867. However, several private schools were organized in various parts of the county during the spring and summer of 1867.

These schools were all subscription schools and were located in what are now districts one, two, eleven, thirteen, nineteen, and twenty-four. The first of these, which was in district one, is described below and the others are discussed later in the chapter under the district number. Figure 2 is a map of the county showing the location of the twenty districts which were organized in 1867, and also the location of the six schools which were started in 1867. Table I shows the year in which school started in each of the one hundred-fifteen districts of Labette County.

On June 24, 1867, Mrs. Augusta Herbaugh<sup>6</sup> started teaching a school

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<sup>3</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>4</sup> Records, (County Superintendent's office, Oswego, Kansas).

<sup>5</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 182.

<sup>6</sup> News Item in the Oswego Independent, May 14, 1881.

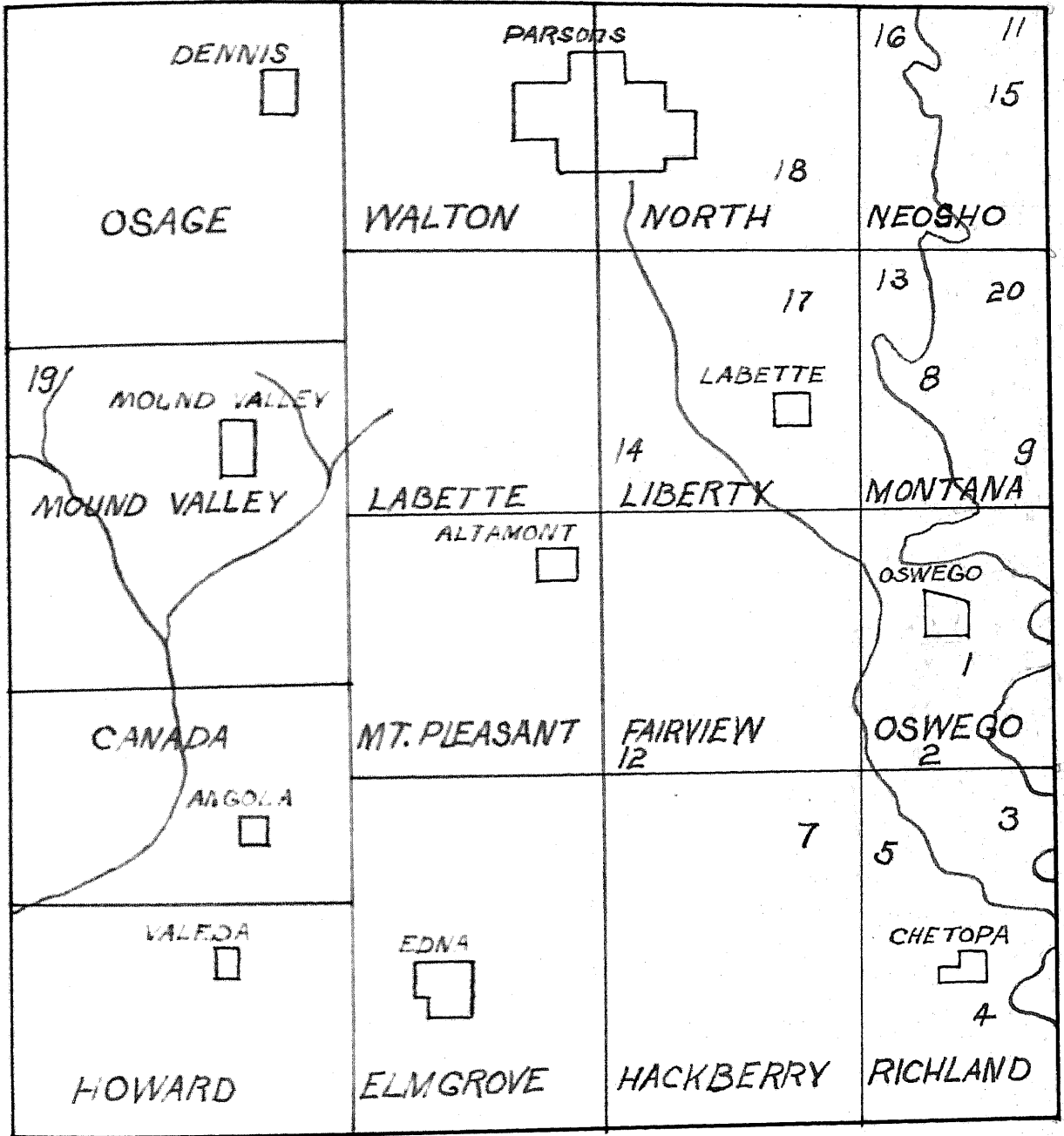


FIGURE 2

A MAP OF LABETTE COUNTY, KANSAS,  
SHOWING THE LOCATION OF THE  
FIRST SIX SCHOOLS, 1867

south of Oswego in District No. 1. The school was located on what is now the southeastern part of the town. The schoolhouse was made of logs with no floor. It was a private subscription school, each pupil paying \$2.50 per month. There were seventeen boys and fifteen girls enrolled in the school.<sup>7</sup> This school continued until about the first of November when the first public school was organized which was supported by taxes.

At that time there was standing on lot 1, block 33, now occupied by Mr. Summer's drug store, a small frame building-- The Board secured the use of this building for school purposes, and "bee" slabs were furnished with legs, thus were provided.<sup>8</sup>

In this building was taught the first public school in the county. A report<sup>9</sup> in the County Superintendent's office dated September 14, 1868, and signed by J. F. Waskey, Clerk, shows that there were 176 children in the district, 77 of whom had attended a three-month school, taught by R. J. Elliott the previous winter. The average daily attendance was 41. Mr. Elliott's salary was \$50 per month.<sup>10</sup>

From six schools operating in the county in 1867, the growth was rapid and two years later in 1869, there were 45 districts holding school with a total enrollment of 1,167 and an average daily attendance<sup>11</sup> of 752.

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<sup>7</sup> Records, op. cit., 1323.

<sup>8</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., 1, 68.

<sup>9</sup> Records, op. cit., p. 323.

<sup>10</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>11</sup> Annual Report of State Superintendent of Public Instruction, (Topeka, Kansas Publishing Co., 1869).



By 1882 there were 105 school districts<sup>12</sup> with a total enrollment of 7,062 and an average daily attendance of 4,045. This number approached the maximum for the county as the number of districts under operation<sup>13</sup> was 113 in 1901 while in 1910 and 1921-25, there were only 105.

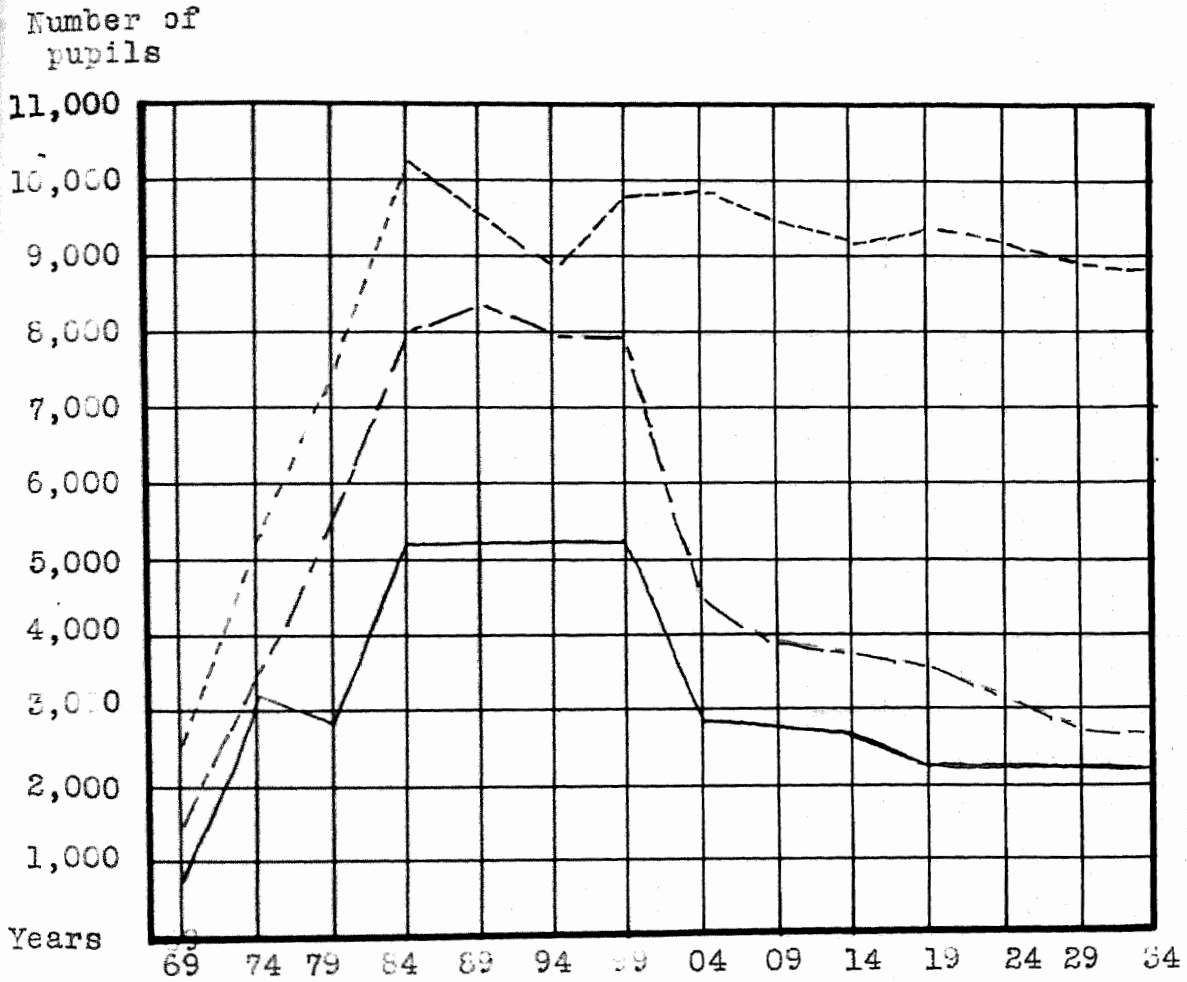
An understanding of the relationship of the pupil of school age to the number enrolled from 1869 down to the present may best be gotten by a careful study of figures 3 and 4. Figure 3 shows by five-year periods the number of pupils of school age; number of pupils enrolled in the elementary schools, and the average daily attendance.

Figure 4 shows the percentage of enrollment in the elementary schools. This was found by dividing the average daily attendance by the number of pupils of school age. A rather rapid drop in average attendance from 61 in 1894, to 28 in 1904 is best explained by the fact that during this period enrollment in the high school was rapidly increasing.

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<sup>12</sup> Third Biennial Report of Superintendent of Public Instruction  
(Kansas Publishing House, Topeka).

<sup>13</sup> Thirteenth Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Instruction  
(Kansas Publishing House, Topeka).



Legend:  
 - - - - - shows total school census.  
 - . - . - shows total school enrollment.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ shows average daily attendance.

FIGURE 3  
 A GRAPH SHOWING THE NUMBER OF PUPILS OF SCHOOL AGE,  
 PUPILS ENROLLED, AND AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE  
 IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF LABETTE COUNTY, KANSAS.

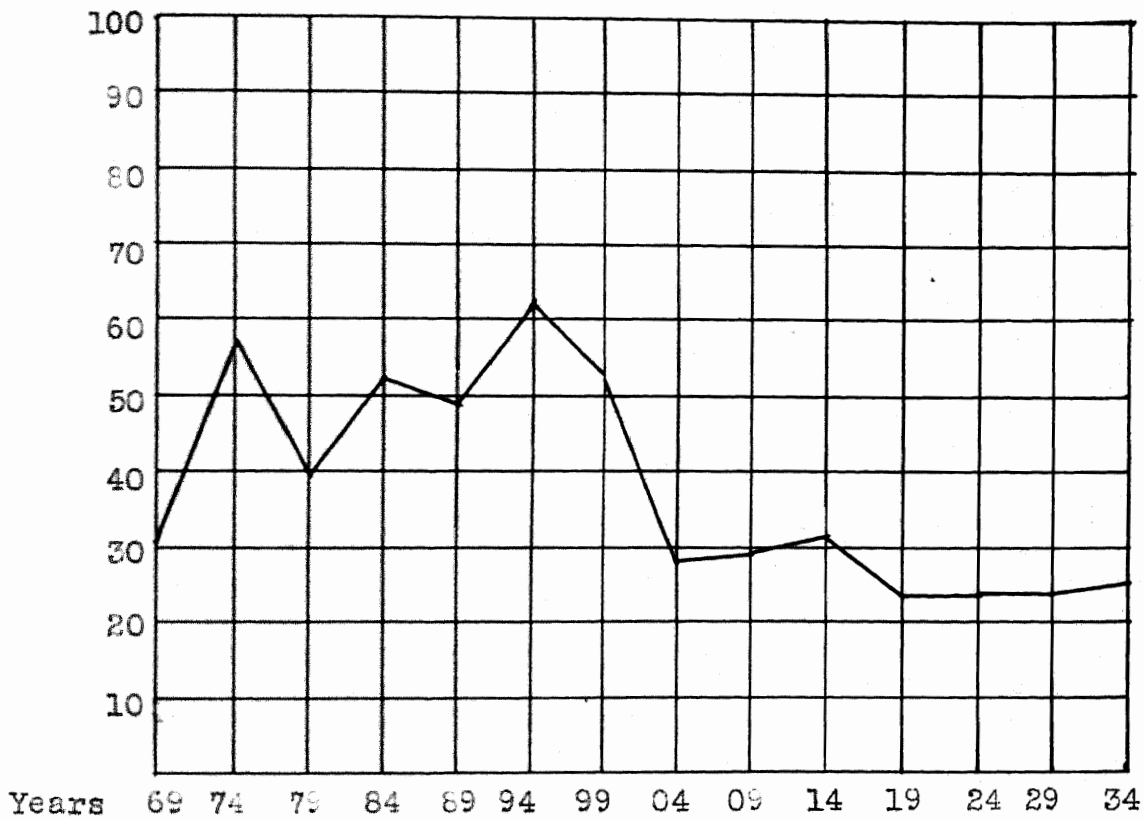


FIGURE 4  
 A GRAPH SHOWING THE PERCENT OF THE CHILDREN  
 BETWEEN THE AGES OF 5 AND 21 THAT WERE  
 ENROLLED IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS  
 OF LABETTE COUNTY, BY FIVE YEAR  
 PERIODS FROM 1869 TO 1934

## RURAL SCHOOLS

Superintendent Newlon organized the first twenty districts in 1867 and although there was some changing of district numbers and location later, most of these original twenty still exist as organized. By 1880 one hundred districts had been organized. Of the one hundred fourteen districts that have been organized in Labette County, Case<sup>14</sup> gives something of the formation and early works of one hundred eleven of these districts.

The writer in attempting to supplement Case's work has been able to obtain much information on some districts but on others the records of the organization, first school, erection of new buildings, and early teachers could not be obtained.

STICE DISTRICT, NO. 2. The original order for the formation of District No. 2 shows that it was located in the southeast corner of Oswego township. The first report of the district is dated August 9th, 1867, signed by William F. Mason, clerk, showing 48 children in the district, 26 being in attendance in a private school taught by Mrs. Sarah Braught. Mrs. Braught taught in her own cabin, situated on section 34, in Oswego township.<sup>15</sup>

The Stice school was named after the Stice family upon whose land the first school house was built in 1868. W. Leonard taught the first school in this building at \$25 per month.

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<sup>14</sup>

Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 182-213.

GORE DISTRICT, NO. 3. District No. 3 was probably organized in 1867, as there was a petition presented to the county authorities for a change of boundary and dated that year. The first district report was made November 9th, 1867, and was signed by M. J. Lee, clerk, showing 25 male and 20 female children in the district and shows that Cass Steel had taught a school that year.<sup>16</sup>

In 1870, land was given by Clinton Gore and J. F. Hill, for a school ground,<sup>17</sup> and on June 12, 1869, bonds to the extent of \$350 had been voted with which to build a school house. This money was used to buy a store building from L. D. Bovee of Labette which was moved into the district and was used as a school house until 1893, when a new school house was built on the same location. This building was used until the summer of 1919 when the present building was erected.

Other early teachers besides Mr. Steel were: Lizzie Kingsbury, John F. Hill, and Ellen Rose.

WATSON DISTRICT, NO. 5. Mr. Newlon, the first county superintendent of Labette county, evidently made several mistakes in his defining and numbering of the early school districts. There is no record of District No. 4 ever having been formed but the description of the formation of District No. 5 exactly fits what is now District No. 4 and in a like

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<sup>16</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 186.

<sup>17</sup> Schools of Labette County (unpublished historical and pictorial record, county superintendent's office, Oswego, Kansas), p. 18.

manner the description of District No. 6 on the early records exactly fits what is now District No. 5. Mr. Nelson Case<sup>18</sup> in his examination of the records for the formation of District No. 6 says that the formation of the district was brought about by the efforts of Moses Powers, John Kenney, William Shay, John N. Watson and S. R. Southwick. These men were all residents of District 5. The school was named after one of these men, Mr. John N. Watson.<sup>19</sup>

The first school<sup>20</sup> in the district was taught by Matilda Quinby in 1868. This school was a subscription school three months in length. There were twenty six children in the school, which was taught in a log cabin. The first school meeting was held on the open prairie of the J. N. Watson claim and the first school board elected was composed of William Shay, director; S. R. Southwick, clerk; and John Kenney, treasurer. The first school house was built during the spring of 1869.

BLACKFORD, DISTRICT NO. 6. Due to the mix up in the numbering of districts four, five, and six, there was no District No. 6 in the first twenty districts organized by County Superintendent Newlon. District No. 6 is located two miles south of Valeda and was formed by an order<sup>21</sup> dated

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<sup>18</sup> Case, op. cit., p. 188.

<sup>19</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 28.

<sup>20</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>21</sup> Case, op. cit., p. 187.

March 17, 1872, at the home of E. R. Lee, the following officers were elected: R. M. Roberts, director; John Morse, clerk; William Stevenson, treasurer. The first school house was built in 1873. In 1899 this building burned.<sup>22</sup> It was replaced with a new building in 1900 but a location was selected one-half mile east of where the old building previously stood.

HACKBERRY, DISTRICT NO. 7. A District (No. 7) was formed in 1867 in the south-west corner of Oswego township but no school was ever taught there and it soon became absorbed by other districts.<sup>23</sup> On December 17, 1869, sections 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 in Hackberry township were formed into a district which was designated as No. 7. A school house was built in the fall of 1870 and was called Bishop School. The name was changed from Bishop to Hackberry<sup>24</sup> when the new school house was built in 1886. The first school<sup>25</sup> taught in this district was in 1889. This was before the school house was built and was held in the house belonging to Henry Pore who lived in section 10.

SHILOH, DISTRICT NO. 8. This district is located in the southwestern part of Montana township. The first report of this district is dated September 1, 1868, and is signed by R. L. Cornisl,<sup>26</sup> clerk, and shows

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<sup>22</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 29.

<sup>23</sup> Case, op. cit., p. 188.

<sup>24</sup> George Bishop, personal interview. (March, 1936)

<sup>25</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>26</sup> Case, op. cit., p. 190.

37 children of school age in the district but no school having been taught therein. The first school in the district was taught in the spring of 1869 by A. A. Biggs. There were twenty-one pupils enrolled. A log school house was built in 1868. It was used until 1871 when a frame building was constructed. This building is still in use and is in fair condition. In 1882, eighty pupils were enrolled and attended this one-room school. The highest salary ever payed to a teacher was \$100.00 a month and the lowest salary was \$24.00 per month.<sup>27</sup>

RED BUD, DISTRICT NO. 9. This district is in Montana township east of the Neosho River. It was probably formed in 1867 although Mr. Case<sup>28</sup> could find no record of its formation. The date of the first school is indefinite as there are no reports from the district prior to 1871. Residents<sup>29</sup> of the district state that the first school was in 1869. The school house built for this first school was destroyed<sup>30</sup> by fire on December 5, 1881. A new school house built by subscription was erected in 1882.

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<sup>27</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 32.

<sup>28</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 191.

<sup>29</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 33.

<sup>30</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 192.





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FIGURE 5  
A PICTURE OF THE ORIGINAL BUILDING IN  
DISTRICT 8

JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT, NO. 11. This is a joint district at the northern edge of the county. Most of the district, and the school house is in Neosho County. Concerning the early formation Case says: <sup>31</sup>

On September 12, 1867, David Evans, clerk, reported that Jennie McDonald had taught a three-months school at a salary of \$23.33 per month, with an enrollment of 15 scholars, and an average daily attendance of 9. The following year O. Herraman and A. J. Kennedy, the former at a salary of \$60.00 and the later \$25.00 per month, taught a four-months school with a total enrollment of 55.

BOWMAN DISTRICT, NO. 12. The order <sup>32</sup> for the formation of this district was dated February 11, 1870. The first officers as shown by the records were I. W. Patrick, clerk; Frank Williams, director; and A. S. Spalding, treasurer. There is no record or report of the first school in the district and none of the present residents of the district is sure of the date or the circumstances.

CENTRAL DISTRICT, NO. 14. The original order for the formation of this district is not to be found; but a petition dated March 6, 1868, signed by J. H. Hart and some twenty more residents of the district, seems to have been granted March 9, 1868. The first report is signed by James F. Molesworth, clerk, and dated September 1, 1868. It shows 18 children in the district and that a public school was then in progress. It was taught by Mrs. Almeda Molesworth in a cabin standing on the southeast quarter of Section 17, belonging to S. T. Cherry. The school house was built in 1869. It was a frame building covered with walnut siding. <sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>32</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 193.

Either Mr. Case was at fault in stating that the first school house was a frame building or the memories of the older<sup>34</sup> residents of the district are at fault in remembering it as a log house. This old building whether frame or log was replaced by a new building in 1884. The ground was purchased from D. V. Reed for \$18.50 and the building was built by S. W. Carter for \$400.00. There have been forty-five teachers who have taught in this school. The longest that any teacher taught was five years.

CONCORD DISTRICT, NO. 16. This district<sup>35</sup> was formed on a petition presented by L. A. Rogers and James W. Galyen, January 29, 1868. The first report which was dated August 1, 1868, shows that there were thirty-three children in the district with thirty-one attending school. The average daily attendance was sixteen. The first teacher was Mrs. Pauline Ames, who taught for three months at a salary of \$20.00 a month. The first school house was a log house built in 1868 by the settlers of the district. This building was located on section 7 in Neosho Township. Between five and ten years later the site was changed to section 12 in North Township<sup>36</sup> and a good frame building was constructed. There is no record of this move and no one living now in the district can remember the exact date.

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<sup>34</sup> J. O. Hendrix, personal interview. (April, 1936)

<sup>35</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 194.

<sup>36</sup> Loc. cit.

LIBERTY DISTRICT, NO. 17. The first report of this district is signed by W. B. Jones, clerk, and is dated September 14, 1868. It shows twenty-one children in the district and nothing more. In a report dated September 14, 1869, it is shown that fifty-three children live in the district and that ten of these attended a three months school which was taught by Miss Mary Bowlu at a salary of \$12.00 per month.<sup>37</sup>

WOODS DISTRICT, NO. 18. This is another district that was probably formed early in Superintendent Newlon's administration but the records were lost or destroyed before any written records or studies were compiled. The first report,<sup>38</sup> dated September 8, 1868, was signed by Aaron Midkiff, clerk, and shows twenty-four children in the district but no school. The first school was taught in the fall of 1873 in a new school house that had been erected the previous spring at a cost of \$1,000.00. The land was donated by a Mr. Woods after whom the school was named. This building was replaced in 1892 by a new brick building.<sup>39</sup> Mr. Whitaker, a brick maker, built the building from bricks which he made.

CUNNINGHAM DISTRICT, NO. 19. This district was formed October 7, 1868, according to records now on file. The first report dated October 15, 1868,

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<sup>37</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>38</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>39</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 41.

was signed by William Jones, clerk, and shows that there were eighteen children in the district but no school.<sup>40</sup> The first school building was a log house with a dirt floor. This first school was taught by Mrs. Mollie Courtney and started in September, 1859. In 1875 bonds were voted for a new school house. This was a frame structure, which was built on the Clate Cunningham farm and since then has been known as the Cunningham School. The present brick building was built in 1915. The first teacher to teach in this building was James Tanner.<sup>41</sup> It was made a standard school in 1929.

CENTER VALLEY DISTRICT, NO. 20. The original order for the formation of this district is in the handwriting of Superintendent Newlon, and seems to be the last district formed under his administration. .... The first report on file is dated September 12, 1870, signed by James White, clerk.<sup>42</sup>

The first school taught was a subscription school taught by Mrs. W. R. Moore. In 1887 the first school house was built.<sup>43</sup> The investigator has been unable to gain any information concerning the date of the first school. In 1901 the name of the school was changed from Wild Cat to Center Valley.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 195.

<sup>41</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 42.

<sup>42</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>43</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 43.

<sup>44</sup> Oscar Himan, personal interview. (October 3, 1936)



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FIGURE 6  
A PICTURE OF THE BUILDING IN  
DISTRICT 20

FAIRVIEW DISTRICT, NO. 21. This district was formerly known as Red Elm district and is located in the southwest corner of Neosho Township. There is no record showing when it was organized.

The first report on record dated September 10, 1868, and signed by Newberry Cooper, clerk reports that they have had no school but will if the building is completed. This report shows 54 children in the district. Mr. Cooper reports again September 15, 1869, showing 68 children in the district 47 of whom have attended a three-months school taught by Miss Mary Slane who received \$2.00 per scholar there being no public money in the district.<sup>45</sup>

SPRING HILL DISTRICT, NO. 22. This district was formed January 19, 1869, when a petition was presented by Harvey Cox. It is located in the southwest corner of North Township. The first election was held at the home of Harvey Cox who was elected clerk of the first board of education. In 1870 a frame school house was built which was used until 1897 when it was replaced with a brick building.<sup>46</sup>

OAK GROVE DISTRICT, NO. 22. A petition was presented on March 11, 1869, by W. S. Newlon, R. W. Bagley, S. H. Holbrook, C. Montague and F. Swanwick, for the formation of this district, it was located in the north part of Oswego Township. The first school was a subscription school, taught by Miss Amanda Powers, the board members being C. Montague, director; Henry Lively, clerk; F. Swanwick, treasurer. This is shown by a report dated September 14, 1869 which is signed by Henry Livley. This report also shows 42 children in the district, 38 in attendance. In January, 1870 a log house was built at the southwest corner of section 33 and was used for both a church and a school.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 193.

<sup>46</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 196.

On September 27, 1873 it was voted to change the school house site to section 5 where a stone building was erected and is still in use. It is one of the oldest buildings in the county.<sup>48</sup> The building is still in daily use after 64 years of service.

BREECE SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 25. Breece school was formed by a petition presented February 15, 1869 by C. M. Fentriss, M. Huntley, G. W. Yandle, and L. W. Leak. It was located in the northwest corner of Richland Township east of Labette Creek. The first report was in 1870 when Lewis W. Leak, L. F. Summers, and H. C. Hardway were the board members.<sup>49</sup> The first school was taught by John Lawrence in a small building only twenty feet by thirty feet. This building was built in 1870 and was used until 1899 when the present building was erected. Breece<sup>50</sup> became a standard school in 1929.

HYATT DISTRICT, NO. 26. April 17, 1869, an order was made for the formation of District 26 in Hackberry Township. The first meeting was held at the home of G. W. Franklin, April 30, 1879. In September of that year James McRoberts, clerk of the district, reported forty children in the district. This report also showed that no school had been taught. In 1870 the first school was taught under the direction of a board

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<sup>48</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 46.

<sup>49</sup> Nelson Case, Loc. cit.

<sup>50</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 47.



consisting of J. M. McGorn, director; G. W. Franklin, clerk; and George S. Downing, treasurer.<sup>51</sup>

DICKERMAN DISTRICT, NO. 27. On April 18, 1869 this district was formed in the central part of Fairview Township, extending as far east as Labette Creek. The first meeting was held in the home of Joseph Barker on April 6, 1869. A. S. Patter, clerk, on September 7, 1869 reported 56 children in the district. In the fall a subscription school was taught by Esther Biggs in a log house on the northwest quarter of section 23. Thomas Bulwar was director; A. S. Potter, clerk; and E. Wiggins, treasurer of the district. The first public school was taught in 1870 by Miss Mary Dickerman in a frame house on the northwest quarter of section 27. This building was used for only one year.<sup>52</sup>

A new building was erected in 1871 and burned down May 21, 1885. The building being used in this district at present was built in 1886. It was built on land owned by A. T. Dickerman after whom the district was named.<sup>53</sup>

LOCKARD DISTRICT, NO. 28. This district was located in 1870 and situated in the center of Hackberry Township south of Hackberry Creek. The first official report was dated August 31, 1870, and was signed by John Shumaker, clerk of the board. Mr. Shumaker reported that there were twenty-three children in the district but that no school had been held.<sup>54</sup> There is no written record available of the first school taught in the district and no one in the district seems to have any definite information on the subject.

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<sup>51</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 197.

<sup>52</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>53</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 47.

<sup>54</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 198.

STOVER DISTRICT, NO. 29. This district was formed April 29, 1869 on a petition by J. P. D. Mourequand, I. M. Logan, and George Pfaff, located in the northwest of Fairview Township extending west from Labette Creek. The first election was held in the house of J. S. McManis on May 11, 1869. M. H. Logan, clerk, reported 34 children in the district but no school taught.<sup>55</sup>

The first school was taught by Elizabeth Wilson in her own home, a log house. In 1871 a frame building was built by C. M. Monroe. The same teacher, Elizabeth Wilson, taught the first school in this building. She had married Joe Stover upon whose land the school was built and after whom the school was named.<sup>56</sup>

This old frame building was replaced in 1886 by a new building which was also built by C. M. Monroe. This building was used until the spring of 1914 when it was razed and replaced by a brick structure which is now in use.<sup>57</sup>

CARPENTER DISTRICT, NO. 30. This district is located in the central part of Osage Township. A log house was used as the first school house in the district, William Jeans being the first teacher.<sup>58</sup> In the summer of 1871 a new frame building was erected and John Stroud, who secured his certificate at Oswego, was the first teacher.<sup>59</sup>

The first school board consisted of Leroy F. Dick, director; William H. Carpenter, clerk; and Henry Reed, treasurer. The building

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55 Loc. cit.

56 Loc. cit.

57 Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 49.

58 Case, op. cit., pp. 197-198.

59 Loc. cit.



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FIGURE 7

A PICTURE OF THE ORIGINAL BUILDING  
IN DISTRICT 30

site was given by William Carpenter for whom the district was named. In 1914 the school building was remodeled, however the frame is the same as when first laid down.<sup>60</sup>

PRAIRIE VALLEY SCHOOL, DISTRICT NO. 31. There is no official record concerning the organization of this district but it is thought that it was in 1869. The first record on file shows the board members in 1871 were: S. Hardman, director; James Harris, clerk; A. J. Ingraham, treasurer.<sup>61</sup> In 1894 a new building was erected with Miss Rose Williams as teacher. There was an enrollment of 60 students. It became a standard school in 1928 when much new equipment was added with Lowell Cannon as teacher.

STONE PALACE SCHOOL, DISTRICT NO. 32. This district is situated in the northern part of North Township. The record of its organization has been lost. The first record on file is a report made August 31, 1870, by A. Fagan, clerk, which showed they had 50 children in the district with 30 in attendance at school. In 1871 the board was composed of George Miner, I. C. Neurin, and C. W. Rictor.<sup>62</sup>

WHEATLAND SCHOOL, DISTRICT NO. 34. This district was formed July 8, 1869 and located in Mound Valley Township west of Pumpkin creek. The

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<sup>60</sup> Lloyd Sperry, personal interview. (October 10, 1936)

<sup>61</sup> Case, Loc. cit.

<sup>62</sup> Case, Loc. cit.

first election was held in the home of C. Lyverly, July 2, 1869. I. M. Richardson was the one principally interested in the organization of the district. The first school was taught in his house by his son I. M. Richardson, Jr.<sup>63</sup>

Bonds were issued and a school house was built in 1870. The district was named Hard Pan. The board members were: I. M. Richardson, director; W. Reeder, clerk; John B. Campbell, treasurer. Maude Campbell was the last teacher to teach in this building, the original building.

In the summer of 1918 this building was torn down and a new one erected. The name of the district was changed to Wheatland. Maude Campbell was the first to teach in this new building. The school was standardized in 1930.<sup>64</sup>

SNOW HILL DISTRICT, NO. 35. Snow Hill district was formed July 9, 1869. It is situated in the southwest part of Osage Township. The first election was held July 20, 1869, in the house of P. W. Cook. When part of the territory was annexed to Montgomery county the district was disorganized. Later in 1872, a new district was organized in the extreme southwestern corner of the county. Its board members were W. Maberey, director; A. S. Getsyendinger, clerk; W. B. Roberts, treasurer. Mr. Maberey was director for 14 years.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Case, op. cit., p. 200.

<sup>64</sup> Maude Campbell, personal interview. (February 13, 1937)

<sup>65</sup> Case, op. cit., p. 201.

MT. ZION SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 36. This district was formed July 10, 1869 located in the southwest part of Osage Township. Miss Josephine Davis was the first teacher. School was held in a log cabin. The school was named by P. B. and I. C. Darling. The first board members were S. C. Hockett, W. John, and Charles Baggs according to records on file.<sup>66</sup> This building was torn down and a new building erected which was located one-quarter mile south and one-quarter mile west of the first site.

The first teacher in the new building, which was built in 1872, was Mr. Hockett. This building<sup>67</sup> was destroyed by fire in 1907 and in the summer of 1908 a new brick building was constructed which is still in use.

TIMBER HILL DISTRICT, NO. 37. July 10, 1869 this district was formed and located in the southern part of Osage Township. The first election was held July 20, 1869. The fall of 1869 E. D. Graybill induced the settlers to put up a log house on the southwest corner of Timber Hill Townsite. He taught the first school the following winter. The next winter school was taught by W. A. Starr.<sup>68</sup>

The next building was built in 1872. It was first located on the west side of Timber Hill road but was later moved to the east side where it now stands. There was an enrollment of seventy-five pupils at that time.

In 1914 the building was enlarged and refinished.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Case, loc. cit.

<sup>67</sup> Louise Sligenwalt, personal interview, (February 6, 1937.)

<sup>68</sup> Case, op. cit., p. 210.

<sup>69</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 108.

WHITTIER SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 39. This district was formerly known as the Bradford district and was formed on April 6, 1870 and located in the north west corner of Walton Township. The first meeting was held in the home of M. D. Mason on April 16, 1870 at which George T. Walton, M. S. Mason, and John Lunciford were elected to the board.<sup>70</sup>

ENTERPRISE DISTRICT, NO. 41. "This district was formed May 12, 1871 and was located in southeastern corner of Mound Valley Township."<sup>71</sup> The petition for the first meeting, which was held May 27, 1871, was signed by Joseph Moore, Alexander Honrath, John Campbell, S. W. Slorume and E. Tanner.

The first school was taught in 1879 by Miss Della Wilson. A cabin on section 23, belonging to the Rev. F. L. Walker was used for a school building until 1880 when a new building was erected.<sup>72</sup>

SALEM DISTRICT, NO. 42. "On June 7, 1870, E. P. Emry and W. R. Ables, petitioned for a district in the southwestern corner of Walton Township."<sup>73</sup> The district was formed and the first school, a subscription school, was conducted by Miss Siphronia Emery in a log cabin.

In 1871 a school house was built on the B. P. Clark claim. Members of the school board were: J. A. Jones, G. B. Huges and S. B. Shaffer. A new building was constructed in 1889 and is still in use.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Case, loc. cit.

<sup>71</sup> Case, op. cit., p. 202.

<sup>72</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>73</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>74</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 116.

CATALPA SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 44. In 1870 the petition of John Connor and John W. Logan was presented for the formation of a district in the southwest corner of Liberty Township, this being granted the district was organized on January 29, 1870.

The first meeting was held at the home of W. J. Iliff, February 11, 1870, and the board members elected were: William F. Cross, K. J. Iliff, and S. W. Collins. Miss Jenny Wright was selected as the first teacher.<sup>75</sup>

In 1902 the building was blown from its foundation but as it was only slightly damaged it was replaced on the same foundation and is still being used.<sup>77</sup>

ELLIS SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 45. Ellis district is situated in the north eastern corner of Elm Grove Township. There is no record of this district prior to 1871 except the names of the board member for 1870, who were: Daniel McIntyre, John Lane, and Madison Sharp.

The first school in the district was taught by Miss Sarah Ackerman in the summer of 1870, in her own claim cabin on the northeast quarter of section 14. A new school house was built in 1872. Lon Blanchard was the first to teach in this building.<sup>78</sup>

The building now in use<sup>79</sup> was built in the summer of 1922.

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<sup>75</sup> Case, loc. cit.

<sup>76</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>77</sup> Ella Oneil, personal interview. (February 13, 1937)

<sup>78</sup> Case, op. cit., p. 203.

<sup>79</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 125.



NEOSHO VALLEY DISTRICT, NO. 46. There is no record on file as to the date of the formation of this district. The earliest record to be found is a report in 1870 showing the board members to be, E. H. Taylor, Samuel Frank, and E. H. Wells.

This district when first organized was called Hardscrabble,<sup>80</sup>

HIATT SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 47. On March 24, 1870, this district was formed and was located in southwest corner of Liberty Township. Caleb Haskill and T. M. Gibson presented the petition for its formation, December 30, 1860. The first school meeting was held at the house of C. T. Haskill April 4, 1870. P. M. Gibson, Edward Hiatt and C. F. Haskill are the officers reported for 1871.<sup>81</sup>

A new building was erected in 1900 the first one having been destroyed by fire that year. The first person to teach in this building was E. B. Miles. This building is still in use.<sup>82</sup>

PLEASANT VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 48. This district has had various names. It was organized in 1870 and was situated in the northeast corner of Liberty Township and in the northwest corner of Montana Township. The first school was taught in an old log-house building belonging to George Metcalfe. Miss Sidney Johnson was the first teacher and it was a subscription school. An old store building was moved to the site in 1871 this being the first school house. The first school board members were: James Morning, director; S. S. Saytor, clerk; George Morning, treasurer.

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<sup>80</sup> Case, loc. cit.

<sup>81</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>82</sup> Loc. cit.

This building was later moved to the James Morning farm where it was named the Morning School.<sup>83</sup> Later it was moved to the Jess Bunnel farm who gave an acre of land for this purpose. The building had so many knot-holes, it was called the "Knot Hole" school by local patrons.

In 1880 a new building was erected and was called Pleasant Valley, this building is still being used except that the old double seats were replaced by new single seats in 1929 and the school was standardized that year.<sup>84</sup> After forty-nine years of use the old seats were showing some wear.

RIPON SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 49. This district is situated in the central-southern part of Elm Grove Township, bordering on the state line. I have no means of telling from the public records when this district was formed. The first official paper relative to it which I have been able to find in the report made by Jones Burris, on August 31, 1870 showing 48 children in the district, with an average attendance of 21 at school. I find among the records a letter signed by Ben M. Smith, dated September 8, 1870, in which he says that the district is composed mostly of single men; that the school has been kept but two weeks, the teacher having been paid off and quit; and that in reality the district has no organization. The officers reported for 1870 were: Colton B. Pratt, director; B. M. Smith, clerk; and W. D. Scoggins, treasurer. It is therefore likely the report made by Mr. Burris should be credited to some other district.<sup>85</sup>

The name was given by Charles Clark who was proprietor of the Ripon Inn, a stopping place for many years on the stage line. Material for the first building was hauled from Chetopa, the land was given by

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<sup>83</sup> Case, loc. cit.

<sup>84</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 127.

<sup>85</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 204.

W. D. Scroggins. The building was completed in the spring of 1872. The first teacher was Mrs. Sarah Mars who received \$25 a month for her services.

The old building lasted 58 years and was replaced in 1930 by a new standard building.<sup>86</sup>

STAR SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 50. In 1870 this district, located in the southeastern part of Elm Grove Township, was formed. Miss Unthank taught the first school in the house of Harvey Jones. The first board members were: Ira Pech, director; Dr. D. P. Lucas, clerk; and George W. McGeyer, treasurer.

In the winter of 1871 and 1872 the first public school in the district was taught by Miss Frank Hall.<sup>87</sup> The school house was built in 1872.

RAYBURN SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 52. This district, located in the central-eastern part of Mount Pleasant Township, was organized under an order made June 8, 1870. The first election was held at the home of John R. Eldridge on June 20, 1870. The following officers were elected: Henry Stover, director; G. A. W. Grant, clerk; John Eldridge, treasurer. In the fall of 1870 Susan Story taught a subscription school in the Marrison claim house. John Hamblin<sup>88</sup> taught the first public school

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<sup>86</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 128.

<sup>87</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>88</sup> Loc. cit.

in the district in a building built in the spring of 1871.

O'BRIEN SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 53. On June 13, 1870 this district was organized and it was located in the central-northern part of Walton Township. The first school meeting was held at the home of James Cahill, June 25, 1870. Board members elected at that time were William O'Brien, James Cahill, and Timothy O'Conner.<sup>89</sup>

The school house was built in 1872, receiving its name from William O'Brien, who gave the land on which it was erected. The first teacher was Miss Anna Pilkington.

The original district included what are now the districts of English, Vincent, Progress and O'Brien and at one time 80 students were enrolled. Benches were used for seats and pupils took turns at standing along the wall or sitting on the platform. The plastered wall, painted black was the black board.<sup>90</sup>

In 1878 an effort was made to move the building one half mile farther east but the law-suit which resulted was unsuccessful and the building remained in its original place.<sup>91</sup>

MAPLE GROVE DISTRICT, NO. 54. Earnest Wadsack, John Richardson, and some twenty more residents of the territory petitioned for the formation of a school district in the north east corner of Fair View Township June 20, 1876. This petition was granted July 6 and District 54 was organized. The first school in the district was taught by Mrs. W. S. Park, in a cabin on the Dike farm in the winter of 1870.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>90</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>91</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>92</sup> Loc. cit.

FRANKLIN DISTRICT, NO. 55. Through the efforts of Mr. Ballentine this district was organized in 1868, and was situated in the northwestern corner of North Township. In the fall of 1868 the people of the district built a small board shanty in which Miss Elirra Bingham taught the first school.

In 1870 the district was enlarged and in 1872 a new school house, costing \$700, was erected. The first board members were: George Skelton, director; Samuel Ballentine, clerk; and Robert C. Livesay, treasurer.<sup>93</sup>

The present building was erected in 1900 after the old building had been demolished by a cyclone.<sup>94</sup>

ANGOLA SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 56. In the central part of Canada Township, July 13, 1878, District No. 56 was organized. The first meeting was held August 19, 1878.

There was evidently a building erected at this time, altho I find no record of it.<sup>95</sup>

In 1906 a new brick building was constructed in which Miss Frances Hodge was the first teacher. This school is now a standard school and is one of the best equipped schools in the county.<sup>96</sup>

CAMPBELL DISTRICT, NO. 57. This district, which was originally called the Campbell school, is located in the central part of Oswego Township, and was organized in 1870. On August 31, 1870, T. Clark reported 47 children in the district with 41 attending school. The officers for 1870 were: John Overdeer, and William Steel.

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<sup>93</sup> loc. cit.

<sup>94</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 133.

<sup>95</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>96</sup> Schools of Labette County, loc. cit.

Miss Alice Spaulding taught the first school in 1871 in a new building which had been erected for that purpose.<sup>97</sup>

PRAIRIE HALL DISTRICT, NO. 58. This district was formed July 23, 1878 and located in the eastern part of Canada Township. The first meeting was held August 21, 1878. Little is known of the history of this district.

PIONEER DISTRICT, NO. 59. In 1880 this district was formed and located in the northwest corner of Mt. Pleasant Township. In 1870 the board members were: B. F. Jones, S. M. Canady, and O. B. Oark. The first school house was built in the summer of 1871. Mrs. H. Pottinger was the first teacher.<sup>98</sup>

The first building burned in 1914 being replaced by the one that is now in use. Ed Metz was the first teacher in this building.<sup>99</sup>

LAKE CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 60. There is no definite record as to the time of the formation of this district. It is located in the central western part of Hackberry Township. In 1871 the board members were: R. M. Roberts, John M. Morse and William Stevenson.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p. 206.

<sup>99</sup> Schools of LaBette County, op. cit., p. 135.

<sup>100</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 207.

The district must have been organized later in 1871 or early in 1872. Lois Wilson and Hazel Margans<sup>101</sup> say the district was organized in 1872 and a building was built in 1873. The first teacher was Luther Lockard.

The present building was built in 1914 and immediately became a standard school. At the time this building was constructed the board members were: R. M. Noble, J. C. Murphy, and C. W. Knowles.<sup>102</sup>

UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT, NC. 61. A petition was presented for the formation of a school district in the southwest corner of Richland Township, this petition was granted and the district formed in 1870. The board members for that year were: J. F. Chamberlain, F. M. Mendenhall, and Samuel Hull.

VALLEY DISTRICT, NC. 62. This district was formed May 18, 1872, and was situated in the southeast corner Neosho Township and called Frog Pond district. The first building was built of wood and located off the main road set back in a wooded, marshy, section inhabited by frogs, hence the name Frog Pond.<sup>103</sup>

The Kansas Gas and Electric Power Company located a service plant in this district and a new brick building was erected and located three fourths of a mile northeast of the plant. At this time the name was

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101 Personal Interview. (February 13, 1937)

102 Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 135.

103 Nelson Cass, loc. cit.

changed to Valley. Daisy Murphy was the first teacher in the new building. In 1929 it was given a superior rating being the only superior school in Labette County. This is one of the richest rural districts<sup>104</sup> in the state, having a valuation of \$4,438,295.

MR. TRIUMPH DISTRICT, NO. 63. James E. Kinsaman and Isaac Wylch presented the petition for the formation of this district, which was organized June 18, 1872 and located in the central northern part of Mound Valley Township. It lies in both Osage and Mound Valley Township.

The building was erected in the summer of 1881 and is still in use though it has stood there fifty-six years. There have been repairs including a new foundation, new windows and a concrete porch.<sup>105</sup>

VINCENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 64. This district<sup>106</sup> was formed in June, 1870, on a petition by James Cahill, William O'Brien, and Timothy O'Connor. It is situated in the north central part of Walton Township. The first election was called by William M. Rogers and was held November 10, 1871.

GLOBE DISTRICT, NO. 65. There is no record<sup>107</sup> stating when this district was organized but the first school was taught by Miss Ida Stevenson in a

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<sup>104</sup> Records, (County Superintendent's Office, Oswego, Kansas.)

<sup>105</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 137.

<sup>106</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 206.

<sup>107</sup> Loc. cit.



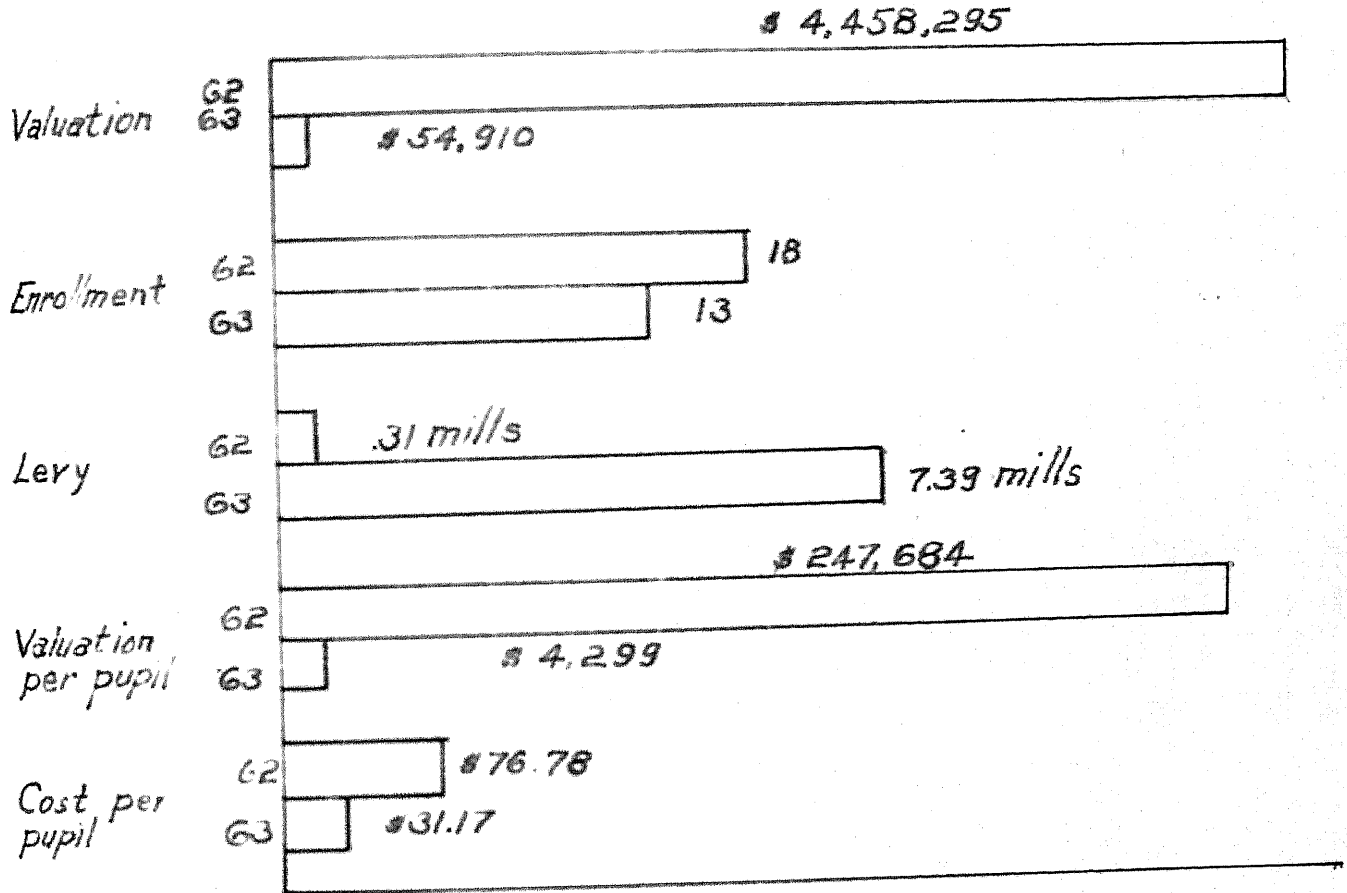


FIGURE 8

A GRAPHICAL COMPARISON OF  
DISTRICT 62 AND DISTRICT 63

small claim-building in 1870. The record shows the board in 1870, which must have been the first to exist, consisted of: C. Ames; O. F. Presson; and George McDole. The first public school was taught by Mrs. H. A. Coleman in one of the rooms of her home in the fall of 1871. The school had neither chairs nor desks and pupils sat on logs, flattened on one side and rounded on the other with four pegs for legs.

In 1873 a school house was built. It was patterned after G. J. Coleman's granary and soon was called the Granary School.<sup>108</sup> Mr. Coleman painted a globe and the district number 65, on a sign in front of the building so the name was changed to Globe.

In 1904 this building was struck by lightning and burned; a new brick building was erected the next year and is in use at the present time.

LEE'S SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 66. This district is situated in the north west corner of Labette Township. In 1872 Alfred H. Lee, E. D. Graybill and John B. Daniel were reported as board members.

The first school<sup>109</sup> was held in 1876, in a claim-cabin. In 1877 a meeting was held, at the home of Mr. Lee, and bonds were voted for the erection of a building. This building was constructed by Alfred Lee and Alexander Mossman. Mr. Grearson, who had been a soldier in the Union Army, was the first teacher.

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<sup>108</sup> School of Labette County, op. cit., p. 138.

<sup>109</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 217.

In 1916, a new house was built in which Eva Michs was the first teacher.<sup>110</sup>

TRENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 67. On December 15, 1870 this district, located in the southeast corner of Howard Township, was organized. The first meeting was held in the home of E. B. Baldion on April 8, 1871 at which the following officers were elected: W. J. McClintock, director; E. B. Baldion, clerk; Benjamin Wade or J. M. Hart, treasurer. This district was the first one organized in Howard Township. The first school was taught by J. M. Hart in a little cabin on his place in the winter of 1871. This was a subscription school.<sup>111</sup>

A new school house was built in 1872, and the first public school commencing April 22, 1872, was taught by W. J. Milicken. This building was used until 1877 when it was destroyed by fire. A year later another building was erected and was used until 1900 when it too burned down. The present building was then built and called Trenton, the district had been called McClintock up to this time.<sup>112</sup>

EAST FAIRVIEW SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 68. C. H. Lesley, E. Stapleton and Alexander Moore were instrumental in the organizing of this district, located in the western part of Mound Valley Township. The order for its formation was made December 30, 1870. The first school house was built by subscription, out of native lumber, and school was taught by Mrs. Hess, in 1871. Bonds were voted, and the house was remodeled so as to be used for winter. In 1883 the district<sup>113</sup> was divided, additional bonds were

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<sup>110</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 139.

<sup>111</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>112</sup> Schools of Labette County, loc. cit.

<sup>113</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

voted and a new school house was built in 1884. Hannah Hess received a salary of \$25 per month. There were twenty-five students enrolled in the first school. School was held for a three month term. The second teacher was J. M. Richard and he taught three three-month terms. The first board members were: Elisha Stapleton, J. J. Dickens and A. Moore. The present building was built in 1884.<sup>114</sup>

UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 69. This district is located in the south west corner of Labette Township, and was formed January 31, 1870. The first meeting was at the house of Isaac Padget, February 20, 1871. The first school house, which was the first one in the Township of Labette, was built in the summer of 1871. Miss Carrie M. Beggs was the first teacher beginning her term the first of December, 1871. Andrew J. Heaton, Robert Vance and S. M. Hinshaw were the first officers.<sup>115</sup> The original building is still in use. There was an enrollment of forty pupils the first term but it dwindled to eleven pupils in 1932.<sup>116</sup>

FOLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 70. This district was formed February 8, 1871, and lies in the eastern part of Hackberry Township and the western part of Richland. The first meeting was held in February, 1871, at the house of Isaac Butterworth. Samuel Cellars, L. H. Reed, and L. H. Lockwood were the first school board members. In the fall of 1871 the first

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<sup>114</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>115</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>116</sup> Schools of Labette County, loc. cit.

school house was built, but not plastered. James Dickey taught the first school in the winter of 1871.<sup>117</sup> A new building was built in 1928.<sup>118</sup>

NEWELL SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 71. On May 1, 1871 this district was formed and located in the northwest corner of Hackberry and the southwest corner of Fairview Townships. The first meeting was held at the home of G. W. Williams and the following board members were elected: James Newell, director; Samuel B. Good, clerk; James Pottinger, treasurer. The first school was taught in a building belonging to James McCoy.<sup>119</sup>

VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 72. This district, lying in the east central part of Elm Grove Township, was formed May 3, 1871. The first meeting was held at the home of Henry Pitman, May 15, 1871, and there is a record of only two board members, they are: L. Edmondson and D. S. Robbins.<sup>120</sup> There is no record of the erection of the first building or any building up to the year 1917, when the present one was built at a cost of \$1,550. At the time this school house was built the members of the board of education were: Treasurer, G. H. Michaelis; Director, Albert Foster; Clerk, Neil McNeal. The County Superintendent at this time was Ida B. Marley. The first teacher in this building was Velma Candle. She taught an enrollment of thirty pupils.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 208.

<sup>118</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 141.

<sup>119</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>120</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>121</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 142.

ELMWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 75. Located in the central northern part of Mound Valley Township, District 35 was formed on the petition of Josephus Moore, Seth Well, and R. W. Simpson, dated May 12, 1871. The first meeting was held May 25, 1871. S. W. Slocum, William Robbins, and Henry Terwilliger were the first board members. In the summer of 1871, the first school house was built and was used the following winter for a three month school taught by Mr. Jones, at a salary of twenty-five dollars a month.<sup>122</sup> Both spring and winter terms were taught after the first year. The present building was built in 1892.<sup>123</sup>

ST. JOHN SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 76. This district is situated in the central-western part of Osage Township. There is no record of its formation, neither are there any early settlers or other persons able to give this information.<sup>124</sup> Its formation was evidently made in 1871 and it is said that the first teacher was Miss Sadie Chambers.

PLEASANT HILL SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 77. J. A. Jamison, George W. Blake, and P. Stevenson petitioned for a district to be located in the south-east part of Osage township, July 27, 1871. The organization was completed October 20, 1871. The first school meeting was held at the house

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<sup>122</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>123</sup> Schools Labette County, loc. cit.

<sup>124</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 209.

of J. L. Hills, and board members elected were: J. T. Hills, George W. Blake, and P. Stevenson.<sup>125</sup> The school site was bought from F. H. Darrom for \$5.00. The building, costing \$607.85, was built in 1872. School started in the spring of 1873, the first teacher being Justine Barton, who received \$22.00 a month. Ex-governor Clyde M. Reed taught his first term of school here in the year 1888, for a salary of \$35.00 per month. In the spring of 1891 this building was destroyed by fire, being replaced the same year by a new building. F. H. Haper was the first teacher in this building, which is still in use.<sup>126</sup>

SYLVANDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT, No. 79. Located in the northwest part of Osage Township this district was organized in 1870 on a petition by William Padget. Miss Maxwell was the first teacher and Maggie Adams and Edna Blake were also early teachers. The first officers were David Lensy, Paulus Sisley, and A. H. Lock Hark.<sup>127</sup>

The school was named for the Sylvandale Post Office which was situated in the eastern part of the Bender Mound district in the early seventies. The historical and notorious Bender family received their mail at this post office, their place of business being located about three and one-half miles distant.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>126</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 148.

<sup>127</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>128</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 149.

ELSTON SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 80. A petition was presented December 19, 1870, by J. T. Waller, John Eston, J. O. King and Thomas D. Bickman for the organization of the district which was formed January 3, 1872. It was located in the adjoining corners of Fairview, Liberty, Labette and Mount Pleasant Township. The first meeting was held January 20, 1872, at the house of M. O. B. Watson and the following board members were elected: Silas Prayther, M. O. B. Watson and J. O. King.<sup>129</sup>

A small town was once started here but was later moved to the present site of Altamont.

CALDWELL SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 82. This district was formed January 10, 1872, and was located in the northeast corner of Labette Township. The first meeting was held at the house of John M. Caldwell January 5, 1872. The following persons composed the first board of education: L. A. Wood, John M. Caldwell, and James Martin. The first school was taught by Miss Carrie M. Beggs in a private claim-house.<sup>130</sup> At the time the district was formed it was sparsely settled and as there was a shortage of pupils of school age, children four and five years of age attended school. The first school house burned in 1914 and a new brick building, which is in use at present, was erected.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>130</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 210.

<sup>131</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 150.



HENDERSON SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 83. E. M. Reeder petitioned for a district in the central western part of Labette Township on May 15, 1872. An order for its formation was made and the first meeting was held May 30, at the house of William Collins. Miss Carrie M. Beggs taught the first school in a claim-house. This was a summer term.<sup>132</sup> A building was built in 1883 and school started in the fall with Miss Beggs as teacher. There were twenty pupils enrolled. In 1885 a twelve-foot addition was built on the north end of the building. Miss Anna Higgenbottom taught from 1885-1887, when she became County Superintendent. A new school house was built in 1921 and in 1926 the school was standardized.<sup>133</sup>

EMMONS SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 84. Located in the northwest part of Canada Township, this district was formed March 5, 1872. The first election was held at the home of J. Herrington on March 28, 1872. Althe Wilson was the first teacher. Bonds were voted and a school house was built in the fall of 1873. Alexander Duncan taught the first school in this building. The first board members were, J. J. Higgin, Alexander Duncan, and James Sweet.<sup>134</sup> The present building was built in 1902. In 1900 the district was divided and part of it added to Blue Ribbon district. When the first school was held there were not many books and some of the pupils read from the Bible as a text.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>133</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 151.

<sup>134</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>135</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 152.

LEIB SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 85. On March 28, 1872, Christian Leib petitioned for a school district in the southeast part of Canada Township and the northeast part of Howard Township. The formation was made May 15, 1872. The first election was held May 30, 1872, at the home of Christian Leib. The school house was built in the summer of 1872. J. K. Russell taught the first term. The first board members were: Christian Leib, for whom the school was named, John D. Vance, and Jonathan Pearson.<sup>136</sup>

SUNNYSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 86. In the territory adjoining Chetopa on the north, this district was formed June 3, 1872. The first meeting was held at the home of J. C. Wright June 14, 1872, at which time the following officers were elected: J. C. Wright, L. D. Bovee, and J. B. Sartain. A school house was built this same year.<sup>137</sup>

LIGGETT SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 87. Liggett District is situated in the southwest corner of Hackberry township. The record of its organization and early history is all blank. A house costing \$500 is said to have been built in 1872; and the first officers are said to have been William Liggett, director; W. B. Trissel, clerk; A. J. Barnes, treasurer.<sup>138</sup>

EXCELSIOR SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 88. This district, located in the northern part of Mound Valley Township, was formed May 3, 1873. The first meeting was held July 30, 1873. Samuel Mayginnes, J. D. Ellison, and J. F. Butts were the first board members. The first school was held in the home of

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<sup>136</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>137</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., p. 211.

J. F. Butts in 1873. The school house was built in 1874. The building site was given by John Edgar. The first teacher in the building was Mr. George Leslie. In 1919 a new standard type school house was built and it is still being used. Miss Hazel Brachelor was the first to teach<sup>139</sup> in the present building.

NOBLE SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 89. A petition was presented in 1872 for a school district to be located in the southeast corner of Mount Pleasant Township. The formation was made in the spring of 1873. The first meeting was held and the officers were elected May 27, 1873. Hiras Nole<sup>140</sup> was the first teacher and Elfora Canary was the second one. The first few years the pupils sat on long seats made of split logs. The only books used were a reader and an arithmetic.

PARKVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 90. Located in the northwest corner of Elm Grove Township, this district was organized April 26, 1873. On July 5, 1873, the first meeting was held.<sup>141</sup> This school was first called Keeler. The first school structure was built in 1873 being replaced by a new building in 1904. It was remodeled and standardized in 1930.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 153.

<sup>140</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>141</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>142</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 155.

BELLEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 91. December 31, 1873, this district<sup>143</sup> was formed in Mount Pleasant Township. The first meeting was held January 31, 1874.

HAWKINS SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 92. The southeast corner of Elm Grove Township embraces this school district which was formed January 29, 1874. The first meeting<sup>144</sup> being held March 3, 1874. The first building was built in that year on a farm owned by Thomas Hawkins. The first school term 1875-1876 was taught by Miss Nanny Powell at a salary of \$30 per month. There were nine pupils enrolled. Scott Hine was elected treasurer of the board in 1877 and served in that capacity for 27 years. Some one of his descendants has been a pupil in this school every year since 1885. The school was standardized on March 27, 1929.

TWIN MOUNDS DISTRICT, NO. 93. On April 4, 1874, this district was formed in the northwestern part of Osage Township. The first meeting<sup>145</sup> was held May 23, 1874. The building, which is still in use, was built in 1878. The school was named for the two mounds which are near the school house.<sup>146</sup>

RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 94. Richland District was formed June 18, 1874 and the building was built in the fall of that same year. This

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143 Nelson Case, loc. cit.

144 Nelson Case, loc. cit.

145 Loc. cit.

146 Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 157.

district is located in the northern part of Canada Township.<sup>147</sup> The first teacher was Richard McKenzie. The school was standardized April 5, 1929.

JANESVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 95. April 15, 1872, W. H. Mapes and others petitioned for the formation of a district in the southwest corner of Mount Pleasant Township. The order was made June 18, 1874, and the organization completed August 1, 1874. The first school meeting was held in the home of Noah Buyman. John Hulse was elected director, and Nils Hildreth clerk. The first school was taught in the summer of 1874 by Mrs. Mary Owens.<sup>148</sup> Her salary of \$25 per month was for a school term of four months. As the years passed and the number of pupils increased it became necessary to enlarge the building. At one time there was an enrollment of fifty-four pupils.<sup>149</sup>

MCKENNON SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 97. This district was formed in the north-west part of Howard Township, March 11, 1873. The first meeting was held April 10, 1873. The school house in this district was built on the west side of Pumpkin Creek<sup>150</sup> and was later moved to the east side of the creek where an acre of land was given by Mr. Milligan for a building site.

BAYLOR SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 98. This district, located in the south-eastern part of Hackberry Township, was formed<sup>151</sup> March 12, 1873. In

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<sup>147</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>148</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>149</sup> Schools of Labette County, p. 188.

<sup>150</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 212.

<sup>151</sup> Loc. cit.

1873 Mr. Baylor gave an acre of his farm to the district to establish the school which bears his name. The first teacher was Anna Williams. The first school board was Mr. Baylor, Mr. Aggers and Mr. Lewellen. A new school house was constructed in the year 1916, Miss Emma Wulfe was the first teacher to teach in the new building. The board members at that time were Jim Wright, W. F. Toney and John Phelps.<sup>152</sup>

BELL MOUND SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 99. This district was formed in the southeastern part of Mound Valley Township, March 14, 1873. The first meeting was held April 11, 1873. The first officers were Cyrus Hopkins, M. T. Wakefield, and Ira Ross. In December, 1873, Herman Wade opened the first school. Colin Hodge was treasurer of this district for a number of years.

PIFTY HILL SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 100. This district was formed in the southeastern part of Richland Township, April 15, 1873. The first meeting was held May 22, 1875. That fall a school house costing \$900 was erected.<sup>154</sup> In the year 1901, school opened with Charles W. Robinson as teacher. The enrollment was twenty-seven. The term of school was then three months. In the year 1920, a new school was erected and the old one sold. Mrs. Mable Layton was the first person to teach in this building.<sup>155</sup>

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152 Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 159.

153 Nelson Case, loc. cit.

154 Loc. cit.

155 Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 160.

ECLIPSE SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 101. Notices of formation of this district were posted October 8, 1880. Officers were elected and organization was completed November 8, 1880. This district is situated in the western part of Oswego Township.

In 1881 it was taught by J. M. Riker.<sup>156</sup> The only improvements that the school has had, in the line of playground equipment, are a merry-go-round, a few board swings, and a fire extinguisher. Later a drinking fountain was placed in the school house.<sup>157</sup>

MAPLE GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 102. Located in the western part of Osage township. The first school of this community was erected in 1881. It occupied the same place on which the present building now stands.

The length of the first term was three months. H. H. Williams was the first teacher. The school board was then: John McCrum, M. E. Sparks, and McKecher. In 1931 an addition was made to the school ground. At one time there were 50 students enrolled. In 1913 the new building was built. It is the same one which is in use at present.<sup>158</sup>

COOK DISTRICT, NO. 103. This district is situated in the southern part of Richland Township, and was organized July 28, 1881. The first meeting was held at the home of William Cook, July 28, 1881. Dannil Corell,

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<sup>156</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>157</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 162.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., p. 163.

E. C. Albrook and a number of other parties petitioned for the formation of this district. The order<sup>159</sup> is dated June 18, 1881.

N. K. AND T. DISTRICT, NO. 104. This district is located in the north-western part of North Township, and was organized June 10, 1882. The first meeting<sup>160</sup> was held at the house of S. E. Cornelus, June 10, 1882. At that time, W. Childester was county superintendent. The board members chose Mr. Charles Getten to perform the duties as first teacher of the school. About 1884 a new school house was built at the present site,<sup>161</sup>

SUNNYSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 105. This district is located five miles west of Mound Valley on Highway 96. Case<sup>162</sup> states that the district was organized December 8, 1883, but he has made a mistake in saying that the district is located in the eastern part of Mound Valley Township. It is in the extreme western part of Mound Valley Township and extends to the western line of Labette County. According to Case a school house was built in 1884, and evidently five years later another was built, in 1889. This one is the same as when built except that two cloakrooms were built onto the building in 1898. In 1920 the school house caught fire, resulting in a \$25 damage. The Misses Katie Petter, May Bellairs, Nannie Walkins and Messrs. Collins, A. W. and Chas. Patter were the first teachers.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 213.

<sup>160</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>161</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 165.

<sup>162</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>163</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 166.



BALLOU SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 106. This district is situated in the northern part of Labette Township. It was organized<sup>164</sup> February 16, 1884. On August 14, 1884, North Craig and wife deeded the land to erect the Ballou school house. The building was begun at once, and finished in time to begin school that following fall. Fifty pupils were enrolled. Jim Bonebrake was teacher.<sup>165</sup>

ROSEDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 108. This district<sup>166</sup> is located in the western part of Fairview Township. The school house was built in 1884. Due to the crowded conditions in the Stover school the people decided to build a school house and have the two different districts. The name was suggested by George Bringle, one of the earlier settlers living in that district. Jas. Greene was the first teacher in this school. There were twenty pupils in school at that time. Some of the early teachers were: Jas. Greene, Ida Bell, L. C. Santee, Noah Vincent, and Casey Wells.

ROSE HILL SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 109. This district is located in the south-central part of Elm Grove Township. It was organized April 30, 1884. The first meeting<sup>167</sup> was held April 30, 1884. This school house was built in the seventies, when Elm City, which is one-half mile north on the Missouri Pacific railway, was quite a little village and the children from there attended school at Rose Hill, which made for a large attendance.

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<sup>164</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>165</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 164.

<sup>166</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>167</sup> loc. cit.

MAPLE VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 111. This district, located in Osage Township, was organized about forty years ago under the following condition: The Whittier school house burned, and the members voted to move the school location one-half mile north, where it now stands.

A part of the Whittier, Salem, and Dennis districts were all put together and named Maple Valley. The name originated from the fact that the school grounds were located in a small valley and the roads were bordered by maple trees. The first meeting was held August 5, 1892. The board members, elected for one year, were as follows: Wm. Turner, W. M. Scott, and J. A. Juboe. Bonds were soon issued, and a new school house costing \$500 was erected on the southeast corner of section 13, in Osage Township, in which, on October 10, the first school was opened by Lillie Nellie.<sup>168</sup>

PROGRESS SCHOOL DISTRICT, NO. 114. This district is located two and one-half miles west of Parsons on state highway No. 160. The school was built in the springtime of 1925 and was completed in time for the pupils to attend the fall term. The first school board was: Frank Taudree, O. Y. Chamberlain, and Mrs. Dora Rice. Mrs. Rose Patrick and Miss Lucy Gillete were the teachers of the first year. Fourteen pupils attended school the first term. The school is equipped with city water, electricity, sidewalks and a shale drive. The library has about one hundred volumes.

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<sup>168</sup> ibid., p. 214.

<sup>169</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 175.

TABLE I

SCHOOL DISTRICTS OF LABETTE COUNTY, KANSAS,  
SHOWING YEAR OF THE FIRST SCHOOL

DISTRICT	YEAR	DISTRICT	YEAR	DISTRICT	YEAR
1	1867*	39	1870	77	1873
2	1876*	40	1870	78	1871*
3	1868*	41	1879	79	1873
4	1868	42	1870*	80	1874
5	1868	43	1872	81	1869*
6	1869	44	1870	82	1870*
7	1869	45	1870	83	1870*
8	1870	46	1871	84	1872
9	1869	47	1871	85	1872
10	1868	48	1870*	86	1872
11	1867	49	1870	87	1872
12	1874*	50	1870*	88	1873
13	1867*	51	1868	89	1873
14	1868	52	1870*	90	1873
15	1869	53	1869*	91	1874
16	1868	54	1870	92	1875
17	1869	55	1868	93	1875
18	1868	56	1868	94	1875
19	1867	57	1870	95	1874
20	1870	58	1878	96	1873
21	1870	59	1871	97	1874
22	1870	60	1871	98	1873
23	1870	61	1871	99	1873
24	1867*	62	1871	100	1875
25	1871	63	1871	101	1881
26	1870	64	1871	102	1881
27	1869*	65	1870*	103	1881
28	1872*	66	1876	104	1882
29	1870	67	1871*	105	1889
30	1871	68	1871	106	1884
31	1871	69	1871	107	1884
32	1871	70	1871	108	1884
33	1869	71	1871	109	1884
34	1869	72	1871	110	1889
35	1885	73	1872	111	1892
36	1870	74	1873	113	1913
37	1870	75	1871	114	1925
38	1870	76	1871		

Read table thus: District 1 was founded in 1867. It was a subscription school. Read in a like manner for other schools.

\* Subscription schools

† Approximate date

## GRADED SCHOOLS

The graded schools include all elementary schools in which there are two or more school rooms in the buildings being taught by two or more teachers. The first graded school was built in Oswego in the spring of 1869. There are now eighteen graded schools in Labette County. Five of these are in the Parsons District. Chetopa and Oswego each have two graded buildings, while Altamont, Edna, Mound Valley, Dennis, Bartlett, Montam, Valeda, and Labette each have one graded school. English District, No. 113, located at the west edge of Parsons, also has a graded school.

OSWEGO DISTRICT, NO. 1. In the introduction to this chapter facts concerning the formation of this district and its first school were presented.

In the summer of 1868 a subscription was taken up among the business men for the purpose of building a school building. In this building, in December, 1868, Rev. Cornelius V. Monfort and Sallie Elliott started a term of school.<sup>170</sup> Although there were two teachers at this time there is no evidence to indicate that more than the one room was being used for school purposes. Because of this it is questionable whether this could be considered as a graded school.

In the summer of 1869 a two-story stone building was erected. In this building there were four school rooms. Late in the fall of this year

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Loc. cit.

the first school, definitely graded, in Labette County was opened. George C. Sarvis was principal of the school. Miss Louisa M. Allen taught the intermediate grades and Miss Sallie Elliott the primary grades. In this same year, 1869, Mr. Sarvis reports a total enrollment of three hundred and fifty pupils.

Prior to 1883 the superintendent of the Oswego schools was not on the teaching force but had the general direction of school affairs. The early superintendents under this plan were; Nelson Case, Mary A. Highby, W. S. Nelson, W. A. Starr, F. H. Atchinson, D. H. Mays, and M. Chidester. In 1883 M. Chidester, who had acted as superintendent the previous year, was made a teacher also. He served in this capacity for three years. Mr. Chidester was succeeded by J. W. Meltner, who served four years. Other early superintendents were Evelyn Baldwin and H. C. Long.<sup>171</sup>

On March 10, 1869, bonds in the sum of \$5,000 were voted for a new building to be located on the west half of block 16. Dr. R. W. Wright took the bonds to Leavenworth and obtained the money to build the building as needed. It was a two-story, four-room structure, built of stone, and was capable of seating two hundred students. George C. Sarvis was the principal, and the enrollment grew to three hundred fifty students. In 1882 bonds in the amount of \$12,000 were voted and a new brick building was located on Block 4, Cowell's Addition, now the site of the West grade building. In 1912 this building was condemned and the new modern structure, in use today, was erected. This building is complete with assembly room, gymnasium, and playground equipment.

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171

loc. cit.

In 1892 a separate building for colored students was erected on the corner of Third and Iowa streets. This building was torn down and a new one completed in 1921 at a cost of \$19,000. In addition to classrooms it is equipped with an assembly room, stage equipment, and gymnasium, and it is modern in every way.<sup>172</sup>

CHETOPA DISTRICT, NO. 4. All of the original records we have in reference to the formation of the early districts in the county are now on slips of paper. There is no record whatever now on file of the formation of a district in the county numbered 4; but the original records describing district No. 5 completely fit the territory which has ever since been recognized as District No. 4, and the description of District No. 6 fits the territory which was thereafter recognized as District No. 5; and as there is no record of any business in District No. 6 prior to the establishment of such a district in 1872, it may be fairly inferred that the superintendent, in writing out these orders, made a mistake in numbering them, leaving out No. 4 entirely. I shall assume that the original order for the establishment of District No. 5 was intended for and was thereafter uniformly applied to District 4.<sup>173</sup>

This district was two miles in width extending from the east line of the county to Labette creek on the north and to the state line on the south. Thus it is located in the extreme southeast corner of the county. The first report, dated August 14, 1867, and signed by Henry Shannon, reports twenty males and sixteen females of school age in the district.

There is nothing in this report to show that school was taught up to this time. During 1868 the school board consisted of William Craft, Daniel J. Do len, and Z. A. Woodard. The report, dated August 29, 1868, shows the school population to be 137 and that a three months'

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<sup>172</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>173</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 186.

school was held. Miss Ellen Craft was teacher, her salary being \$25 per month. No school building had as yet been erected, but early in 1869 a contract was made for the erection of a school building. On December 5, 1869, the school was opened in Spaulding's Hall, in charge of Newton Bowles and his daughter, Miss Eva Bowles. The new frame building was dedicated February 3, 1870, and on February 7, 1870, school was opened in this building, which even then was found to be too small to accommodate the children who were ready to attend. J. J. McBride was appointed principal for the following year but in January he resigned. Miss M. L. Ela, one of the teachers, was put in charge, but in March she resigned and Mr. Griswold was elected principal. J. M. Cavaness and Edward Mason were also early principals.<sup>174</sup>

On June 10, 1882, bonds were issued to build a new \$25,000 building. This building was dedicated July 11, 1883. There was also erected a separate building for the colored children.<sup>175</sup>

In 1922 the present building was constructed. It is a combined grade and high school building with a gymnasium and auditorium between. In the same year a modern, two-room brick building was built for the colored pupils in the south part of town.<sup>176</sup>

LABETTE CITY DISTRICT, NO. 10. This district was organized by Superintendent Newlon, is located in Labette and Liberty Townships, and covers a five-mile square. William cline, the first clerk, reported on

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., p. 187.

<sup>175</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>176</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 24.

September 11, 1867, that no school had been taught, but that there were forty pupils of school age in the district. William Cline taught the first school in the district in 1868 at a salary of \$33.33 a month. School was taught in a claim cabin belonging to A. W. Richardson. There were thirteen pupils enrolled in school. In the winter of 1868 James F. Molesworth taught a three months' school at a salary of \$35 a month. This school was taught in a new log schoolhouse which had just been erected on the southwest quarter of Section 35. This house was built by subscription and the subscribers were repaid when the district raised sufficient funds.

The town of Labette was started in June, 1870, and thereafter school was taught in town, being conducted first in a rented room on the east side of the railroad tracks, October 6, 1870, by J. L. Williams. In December a two-story frame building was purchased by the board. The lower part of this building was occupied by the publishers of the "Sentinel," as a printing office. School was held in the upper room of this building, and Mr. Williams and his wife, Rachel Williams, both taught. In June, 1868, this building was blown down and entirely destroyed by a tornado. A new building was erected and was ready for occupancy that fall.<sup>177</sup>

MONTANA DISTRICT, NO. 13. The first report of this school district was in 1867, signed by B. B. Bennett, clerk, and shows the district to be located in Big Hill Township. The report shows nothing more except that there were eighteen pupils in the district. The next report, dated

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid., p. 191.



August 31, 1868, shows forty-two pupils in the district and that there had been a private school of three months' duration taught by an un-qualified teacher. This was a subscription school, taught by Alice Biggs in the summer of 1867, in an old log store building belonging to B. F. Simons. This was the first house built on the town site. The following year, 1868, Mr. Minor reported eighty-two children of school age in the district. A three months' school had been taught by John Hudson, the salary being \$26.33. This, the first public school in the district, was taught in an old log house in the spring of 1869. In 1870 bonds in the sum of \$3,000 were voted and a new schoolhouse, costing \$2,200, was erected. It was dedicated November 19, 1870. The first school in this building was taught by E. D. Graybill.<sup>178</sup>

The building now in use is a one-story, two-room frame structure which was built in 1898.

PARSONS. The Parsons school district, No. 33, was organized almost a year before the town company was formed and two years before the first house was built in the town.

A petition dated February 23, 1869, made by R. T. Caldwell, Anson Kellogg, A. Midkiff, S. N. Fultz, Maria Hussey, George Brock, and several others, was presented to the superintendent, on which he soon thereafter made an order for the organization of District No. 33, embracing in addition to the territory now composed in the district, several additional sections. The first meeting was held at the house of Aaron Midkiff, at which the following officers were elected: Anson Kellogg, director; George Wilson, clerk; Joseph Simpson, treasurer. September 10, 1869, George Wilson, clerk, reported twenty males and fourteen

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<sup>178</sup> Ibid., p. 192.

females in the district on the 31st of August, fifteen of whom--- ten males and five females---were enrolled in a school. The average daily attendance was ten. The school was taught by Maria Hussey, at a salary of \$16.66 per month. The school was taught in an out-house belonging to A. Midkiff on the southwest quarter of Section 19, North Township.<sup>179</sup>

The first public school was taught, in a log house, by Miss Sophronia Emery, from September to December, 1870. On September 17, 1870, the people voted bonds to the extent of \$1,000 to build a schoolhouse. The building, a one-story frame structure, was built during the winter and spring of 1871. Before the building was completed, on May 8, 1871, Miss Kate Squires and Miss Sophronia Emery, started a subscription school in the building. It was later completed and enlarged, and in the fall of 1871 school opened with Miss Emery and E. H. Taylor as teachers.<sup>180</sup>

Almost immediately the school was filled to capacity and there arose a need for more room. "On October 3, 1871, on a vote to issue \$15,000 in bonds with which to erect a new schoolhouse there were 108 votes in favor of the proposition and but five against it."<sup>181</sup> After some trouble with several contractors the building was finally completed and ready for use in the fall of 1872. In 1880 a new building was erected in the third ward, between Belmont and Corning Avenues, costing \$10,000. In 1881 another building was completed in the first ward on

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid., p. 198.

<sup>180</sup> A. T. Andreas, op. cit., p. 1456.

<sup>181</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 199.

Block 111 at a cost of \$6,000. In 1884 a building was erected in the fourth ward, west of Block 160, and costing \$12,000. A fifth building was constructed in 1889 on Block 210 at a cost of \$10,000. All of the above buildings were of brick and were torn down to make room for the buildings which now are in use.

In 1889 the five school buildings in use housed 1,758 pupils, in school property valued at \$19,634.31. Thus in twenty years the Parsons schools had grown from a small village school to a striving school system. The growth of the Parsons schools in terms of enrollment was gradual but always upward. It reached its peak of 3,600 pupils in 1920. Two thousand nine hundred of these were enrolled in the elementary schools.<sup>182</sup> Since 1920 the total enrollment has fluctuated between 3,300 and 3,600.

DENNIS DISTRICT, NO. 39. On July 10, 1869, this district was formed. It is located in the central part of Osage Township and includes the present town site of Dennis. In the spring of 1870 a log house was put up in this district and Mrs. Lapham taught a three months' school. After the location of Dennis in the district a new frame schoolhouse was erected in town in the summer of 1885. The district board members in 1870 were: N. P. Lapham, George W. Major, and Jacob Beaty.<sup>183</sup> This building was destroyed by fire and a new one built in 1888. Some of the early teachers were Miss Ida Marshall, Miss Luella Bowman, Mr. Clarence Neal, Mr. Eli

<sup>182</sup> A Review of the Parsons City Schools. (A manuscript in the office of the Superintendent of Schools, Parsons, Kansas).

<sup>183</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 201.

McKinley, and Miss Ida Nixon. In 1919 the district built a new school-house, the cost of which was \$15,000. It is now a standard school.<sup>184</sup>

MOUND VALLEY DISTRICT, NO. 40. This district lies in the central-eastern part of Mound Valley Township, and includes the town of Mound Valley. It was formed<sup>185</sup> in 1870. The year previous to this the pupils in the town of Mound Valley attended Wheatland School, which was located about three miles distant.<sup>186</sup> The first annual report was made August 31, 1870, by Alexander Honrath, clerk; it showed thirty-three children in the district, twenty-two in school, with an average attendance of eleven. In 1870 the board was composed of Josephine Moore, Alexander Honrath, and L. C. Wilmoth. A new two-story building was erected in the summer of 1882, and in 1885 an addition was made.<sup>187</sup> A new, modern and well-equipped building was erected in 1930. This is a combination grade and high school building. There is a separate building for a gymnasium and auditorium which is used by both the high school and grade students.

ALTAMONT DISTRICT, NO. 43. Located in the southeast corner of Labette Township and the northeastern corner of Mount Pleasant Township, including the town of Altamont, this district was formed October 4, 1869. In 1870 the board members were G. Connor, J. C. Murphy, and John Elston. The first building was built in 1872, and was used until the number of scholars

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<sup>184</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 109.

<sup>185</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

<sup>186</sup> I. M. Hinds, personal interview, (April 2, 1937.)

<sup>187</sup> Nelson Case, loc. cit.

became so great that the building was entirely too small to accommodate them. In 1800 a new building was erected on the same site. The district again outgrew the building and in 1864 another room was added. It was used until 1891, when a new two-story brick schoolhouse was erected. Three rooms of this building were used for grade purposes and one room was used for the high school work. The school became standardized in 1929. In 1933 this building was replaced by a new, well-equipped building, which is a one-story brick structure.<sup>188</sup>

VALEDA DISTRICT, NO. 51. This district was formed December 29, 1875, and the first election was held on March 6, 1876. The first schoolhouse in the district was an old store building bought and moved from Parker. In 1886 this building was sold and changes were made in the boundary of the district. The town of Valeda was just being started at this time. A new schoolhouse was erected<sup>189</sup> in 1888. Miss Anna Burns was the first teacher. The building soon became overcrowded and another room was added and an additional teacher employed in 1912. In 1926 the people voted to build a new building. This is the present building and is made of brick. It has six rooms, two halls, a gymnasium and an auditorium.<sup>190</sup>

EDNA DISTRICT, NO. 73. On May 3, 1871, an order was made for the formation of this district. It is located in the central part of Elm Grove Township. An election was held May 15, 1871, at the home of Owen Wimmer.

<sup>188</sup> Schools of Labette County, op. cit., p. 119.

<sup>189</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 204.

The district failed to organize under the order, and on May 30, 1872, a new order was made and an election was held at the home of F. C. Goodwin, May 30, 1872. The building was erected in the fall of 1872, and was completed in December of that year. W. J. Milliken opened the first school in the district. This building had to be moved in 1886 to make way for the railroad. A new four-room building was erected in the fall of 1886. The cost of this building, complete with furnishings, was \$2,000.<sup>191</sup> There was an addition to this building in 1901. On December 3, 1917, the present building was completed and put into use. This is a two-story building of brick. It contains fourteen rooms. It is used for both grades and high school. The grade school was standardized in 1930.

BARTLETT DISTRICT, NO. 110. This district is situated in the central part of Hackberry Township, and includes the town of Bartlett. It was organized June 3, 1889. The schoolhouse was built that fall, and J. L. Edmundson<sup>192</sup> taught the first school in the district, beginning in December, 1889. In 1896 a second room was added to this building. After this addition was completed, the Rev. Mr. Brundridge taught the upper grades and his daughter, Hattie Brundridge, taught the primary grades. This building was moved away in 1914 and was replaced by the present building, which is a four-room brick structure.<sup>193</sup>

<sup>190</sup> Schools of LaBette County, op. cit., p. 130.

<sup>191</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 208.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., p. 213.

<sup>193</sup> Schools of LaBette County, op. cit., p. 171.

ENGLISH DISTRICT, No. 113. In the summer of 1907 a meeting was held in the home of Grant Hume to see how many people wanted a school. They voted in favor of the proposition, and a tract of land was taken from Progress, Harmony, Vincent, and O'Brien districts. The district was organized that same summer. Miss Belle English was county superintendent at the time of the organization of this district and the school was named for her. The first school board consisted of Grant Hume, George Fancher, and Will Duvall. Miss Louva A. Turner taught the first half of the term and Miss Jodie Beckman taught the last half. The first school was held in a small, two-room house on Thirty-Second street. The new building was built during the 1907-1908 school term. It was ready for use in time for the 1908-1909 term, and school was taught by Miss Edna Hume. During the 1918-1919 term, while Miss Eva Cruzan was teacher, the school was standardized, this being the first standard school in the county. In the summer of 1926 a meeting was held for school patrons and they decided to build another room, which was added during that summer.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>194</sup>Ibid., p. 193.

TABLE II  
 STATISTICAL TABLES FOR THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS  
 OF LABETTE COUNTY  
 1869-1934

Year	No. of District	Children of School Age	Children Enrolled	Av. Daily Attendance	No. of Teachers	Total Expenses	Av. Term Taught
1869	45	2,280	1,167	752	35	\$ 19,210	4.0
1870	60	3,132	1,634	1,138	43	15,577	3.5
1871	72	3,932	2,774	1,453	52	63,174	4.16
1872	87	4,256	3,404	2,153	85	48,379	4.5
1873	88	4,619	2,204	1,640	99	30,978	5.5
1874	90	5,151	3,694	3,081	108	56,268	4.8
1875	95	5,191	3,428	2,041	112	34,291	4.5
1876	95	5,781	3,729	2,178	121	31,881	5.8
1877	95	5,976	4,378	2,582	177	35,088	4.5
1878	95	6,415	1,114	680	105	36,063	5.
1879	97	7,273	5,249	2,812	140	36,960	5.2
1880	100	8,430	6,021	3,170	120	53,225	5.3
1881	102	8,240	6,609	3,571	152	45,605	4.5
1882	105	8,661	7,062	4,045	163	64,808	4.8
1883	106	9,200	7,732	4,175	179	52,276	6.4
1884	110	10,189	7,960	5,253	157	71,137	6.3
1885	110	10,412	8,617	4,876	183	65,679	8.
1886	110	10,495	8,357	4,920	184	62,281	7.3
1887	110	10,524	8,266	4,965	184	69,795	7.08
1888	110	10,053	8,390	4,856	164	69,109	10.5
1889	110	10,250	8,260	5,037	194	75,970	10.2
1890	110	10,086	8,364	5,096	181	70,790	10.3
1891	111	9,970	8,423	5,207	168	65,888	7.08
1892	112	10,165	8,072	5,126	125	95,770	7.
1893	111	9,427	8,212	5,044	168	89,525	6.5
1894	111	8,737	7,920	5,303	170	71,063	6.52
1895	111	9,824	8,394	5,313	186	77,560	6.5
1896	111	9,872	7,810	5,122	197	78,364	6.5
1897	111	10,005	7,999	5,324	187	65,543	6.75
1898	121	9,651	7,866	5,228	188	65,543	6.7
1899	111	9,861	7,926	5,135	186	42,666	6.52
1900	113	9,605	7,838	5,091	180	73,955	6.47
1901	113	9,871	7,909	5,156	179	72,367	6.47
1902	112	9,842	7,911	5,313	186	72,989	6.6
1903	107	9,531	4,284	2,679	123	76,335	6.8
1904	107	9,946	4,205	2,808	121	121,540	6.75
1905	107	10,256	4,068	2,646	121	87,089	6.75
1906	107	9,615	3,955	2,793	122	101,191	6.75
1907	107	9,422	3,845	2,664	122	95,782	6.5
1908	109	9,168	3,954	2,739	123	105,683	6.5
1909	111	9,460	3,999	2,721	123	111,100	6.75
1910	105	9,287	3,837	2,812	93	45,556	6.75
1911	107	9,182	4,009	2,628	123	54,682	7.5
1912	107	9,302	3,955	2,704	124	59,682	7.4
1913	107	9,215	3,940	2,712	126	69,582	7.75
1914	107	9,008	3,863	2,767	137	63,905	7.6
1915	107	9,096	3,815	2,797	122	72,406	7.75
1916	107	8,915	3,815	2,699	122	74,322	7.5
1917	107	8,934	4,394	2,697	124	45,481	7.8
1918	107	8,951	3,464	2,502	122	105,157	7.7
1919	106	9,374	3,605	2,315	121	87,732	6.85
1920	107	9,515	3,443	2,438	123	95,445	7.52
1921	105	9,448	3,172	2,430	108	92,125	7.53
1922	105	9,448	3,129	2,348	106	104,954	7.9
1923	105	9,437	3,120	2,401			8.
1924	105	9,399	3,070	2,357			8.3
1925	105	9,360	2,941	2,232	123	134,581	8.5
1926	112	8,665	2,909	2,341	127	169,341	8.5
1927	106	9,115	2,717	2,234	127	195,120	8.2
1928	108	9,027	2,794	2,310			8.2
1929	111	8,905	2,814	2,236	127	175,887	8.3
1930	111	8,964	2,912	2,226			8.2
1931	111	9,074	2,742	2,202	124		8.
1932	111	9,252	2,672	2,270	124		8.5

Read table thus: In 1869 there were 45 districts in Labette County holding school. There were 2,280 children in these districts of school age. 1,167 of these were enrolled in school and the average daily attendance was 752. Thirty five teachers reported a total expenditure of \$19,210 with an average term of four months.



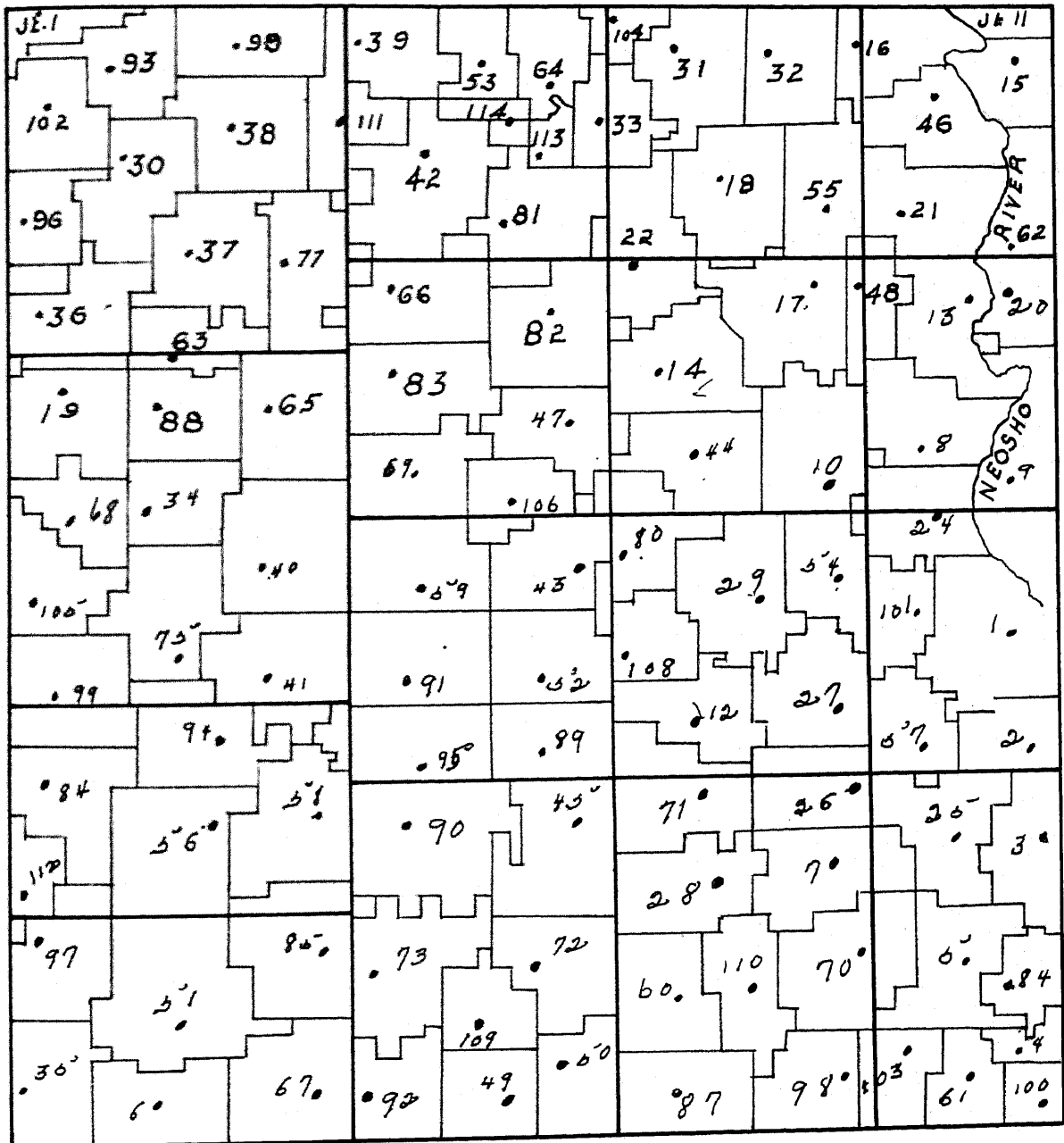


FIGURE 9  
A MAP OF LABETTE COUNTY  
SHOWING DISTRICTS.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ESTABLISHMENT AND GROWTH OF THE HIGH SCHOOL

The history of the growth of the high school in Labette County shows that this institution had more than its share of struggle and strife. It is a community-high school county and one that is generously sprinkled with small towns. Each has tried to operate, at one time or another, its own high school. At present there are seven four-year high schools in the county, having a combined enrollment of one thousand eight pupils and employing seventy-seven teachers.

The struggle has been on the part of the high schools in the small towns to maintain an existence and the strife has been between these schools and the Community-High School at Altamont. The first strife was back in 1893 when the school was first placed at Altamont. Its placement there was fought from two sides; by those not wanting a school at all, and by the other towns of the county which wanted the school. An injunction<sup>1</sup> was sought by this opposition early in 1893 against the payment of taxes, but the district court and the state supreme court held the levy to be legal. From 1893 to 1923 the county school levied a tax on the entire county. In 1923 a law was passed changing the County-High School to a Community-High School and taking away from its taxable valuation all the districts maintaining a high school of their own. This law also

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<sup>1</sup> A True School of Kansas, (manuscript in office at Labette County Community High School), p. 5.

provided that the Community-High School would pay \$72.00 per year for each pupil from its district, who attended another high school. This law has caused considerable squabbling over pupils.

There are in the county four class "A" schools. They are Parsons, Oswego, Altamont, and Chetopa. Two of these, Oswego and Parsons, belong to the North Central Association.<sup>2</sup>

The courses of study in the high schools of Labette County have much in common yet they have many differences. Table III lists the subjects taught in each of these schools. All of them offer subjects in the field of English, mathematics, commerce, social science, physical science, and home economics. All of the schools except Demis give special training in music, and with the exception of Mound Valley and Edna, all offer some kind of shop work.

Teachers' salaries show a wide variation. The lowest salary is \$450.00 a year paid a teacher at Chetopa and the highest is \$2,292.00 a year paid to the highest salaried teacher in Parsons. Parsons has the highest average salary as shown by Table III but it is closely followed by Altamont and Oswego. Chetopa with an average wage of \$540.00 a year (excluding the superintendent's salary) is by far the lowest.

Parsons. Parsons quite early recognized the need of education higher than the elementary school. Ten years after the organization of its first school district the Parsons schools were offering work in

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Kansas Educational Directory, 1936-37.

TABLE III

A TABLE SHOWING THE SALARY SITUATION IN THE  
HIGH SCHOOLS OF LABETTE COUNTY, KANSAS,  
1936-1937

School	Average Salary	Lowest Salary	Highest Salary
Altamont	\$1,450.00	\$1,200.00	\$2,100.00
Chetopa	540.00	450.00	697.50
Dennis	945.00	720.00	1,350.00
Edna	955.00	720.00	1,440.00
Mound Valley	819.00	675.00	1,215.00
Owego	1,025.00	810.00	1,500.00
Parsons	1,495.00	1,300.00	2,292.00

Read table thus: In the Altamont School the average yearly salary is \$1,450.00. The lowest salary is \$1,200.00. The highest salary is \$2,100.00. Read in like manner for the other schools.

TABLE IV  
 STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON THE HIGH  
 SCHOOLS OF LABETTE COUNTY, KANSAS

School	Number of Teachers	Teachers with Master's Degree	School Enrollment	Pupil Load Per Teacher
Altamont	19	4	402	21
Chetopa	6	1	144	24
Dennis	4	0	43	11
Edna	5	0	55	13
Round Valley	5	0	64	13
Oswego	7	3	150	21
Parsons	31	17	1040	33
Totals	77	25	1908	

Read table thus: In the Altamont School there are nineteen high school teachers. Four of these hold masters' degrees. There are four-hundred-two pupils enrolled in the school, an average pupil-teacher load of twenty-one.

advance of the regular eight year work. Mrs. S. M. Gregg, who as Maude Kayser was the first graduate from the Parsons High School, writes as follows:

My first year in the Parsons' Schools was the term of 1879-80. The High School was then located in the third ward building up-stairs and consisted of one large room with an adjoining recitation room. The Principal was M. Childester with O. V. Hays Assistant. The High School proper occupied the first row of seats on the East and the rest of the room was given to the 1a (the 8a of today), and 1b and the 2a. There were about 100 pupils in the room and each was numbered. We were known by our numbers and not by our names.<sup>3</sup>

In the spring of 1881, the High School moved to the new building in the first ward. At this time the High School was officially organized with a two year course of study. Mr. Lee Tomlin was the superintendent. There were six pupils enrolled. Four were Juniors and two were Seniors. One of the Seniors dropped out of the school leaving only one, Maude Kayser, to graduate.<sup>4</sup>

In speaking of the furnishings of the High School, Mrs. Gregg says, "Our principal's office contained one chair and a table which answered the purpose of a desk. Our chemical apparatus was far in the future. In our astronomy, we had to look 'to the stars through difficulties'. We had no 'periods' it was simply before or after recess."<sup>5</sup>

In 1883 there were two graduates and the next year there were nine. From that time on the growth of the school was quite rapid. In 1893 there were 85 pupils enrolled in school.<sup>6</sup> Table V gives the

<sup>3</sup> Mrs. B. S. Curry, Scrap Book (Parsons, Library), I, 68.

<sup>4</sup> Editorial, Parsons Sun (May 6, 1902.)

<sup>5</sup> Mrs. Belle S. Curry, op. cit., p. 70.

<sup>6</sup> Rees H. Hughes, A Review of the Parsons City Schools (Unpublished manuscript in office of city superintendent of schools).

enrollment in the Parsons High School from 1879 to 1935.

OSWEGO. Oswego High School was organized in 1882 with M. Childester as Superintendent.<sup>7</sup> Minnehaha Canady<sup>8</sup> who was graduated in 1887 says that it was organized as a three-year high school, but other early graduates think that it was a two-year high school, until 1887 when the third year was added.<sup>9</sup> It continued as a three-year high school until 1893 when it became a four-year high school. In 1882 a building was built to house the elementary school and the high school. This building was used until 1912 when it was torn down and a new building was built replacing the old one. This building is still standing and although it is no longer used as a high school it still is used as an elementary school building. In 1921 the present high school building was built. At the time, it was considered the most modern and completely furnished building in South-eastern Kansas.<sup>10</sup>

There were four graduates from Oswego High School in 1884.<sup>11</sup> This was the first graduating class. Between 1884 and 1911 there was little increase in the number of graduates although the population of the town increased considerably. Between 1911 and 1926 there is a considerable increase in graduates--from eight to forty-six--although there is little

<sup>7</sup> Records. Oswego High School, Oswego, Kansas.

<sup>8</sup> Personal Interview. (October 4, 1936.)

<sup>9</sup> Anna M. Cook, Personal Interview. (June 10, 1936.)

<sup>10</sup> Dick S. Maskey, Personal Interview. (June 10, 1936.)

<sup>11</sup> Records, loc. cit.

TABLE V  
 ENROLLMENT IN PARSONS HIGH  
 SCHOOL, 1879 TO 1935

Year	Enrollment	Year	Enrollment
1879	3	1908	231
1880	5	1909	256
1881	6	1910	250
1882	4	1911	273
1883	6	1912	290
1884	12	1913	298
1885	20	1914	320
1886	32	1915	331
1887	50	1916	346
1888	75	1917	353
1889	104	1918	367
1890	120	1919	396
1891	136	1920	416
1892	154	1921	438
1893	165	1922	493
1894	187	1923	562
1895	193	1924	602
1896	205	1925	602
1897	203	1926	644
1898	221	1927	678
1899	236	1928	640
1900	242	1929	771
1901	261	1930	655
1902	264	1931	679
1903	200	1932	697
1904	188	1933	707
1905	201	1934	740
1906	212		
1907	231		

Read table thus: In 1879 there were three pupils enrolled in the Parsons High School.



or no increase in population. Table VI shows the relationship between the population of Oswego and the number of graduates from Oswego High School.

MOUND VALLEY. The Mound Valley High School was organized as a one year high school in 1885 through the efforts of Superintendent A. Moore.<sup>12</sup> The first class was graduated in the spring of 1886 and consisted of two boys and one girl. This school functioned with only one year of work until 1894 when the tenth year was added and the school became fully accredited for two years of high school work. During the nine years between 1885 and 1894, twenty-five pupils were graduated from the one-year course. Three of these were regraduated when the two year course was added.<sup>13</sup>

The school continued with the two-year course of study until 1908 when the eleventh and twelfth grades were added. During 1908 and 1909 the school had a full four year course. It was voted to discontinue the eleventh and twelfth grades at this time so thirteen other pupils, who had completed either the tenth or eleventh grades, were recognized as graduates.<sup>14</sup>

The eleventh and twelfth grades were added again in 1911 and the school has continued as a four-year school ever since. A total of 395

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<sup>12</sup> Year Book (Mound Valley, Kansas, Mound Valley High School, 1925.)

<sup>13</sup> Mrs. Sallie Prescott Lear, History of Mound Valley High School Alumni, (read at a reunion in Mound Valley, May 23, 1917.)

<sup>14</sup> Loc. cit.

TABLE VI

POPULATION OF OSWEGO, GRADUATES FROM OSWEGO  
HIGH SCHOOL, AND NUMBER OF GRADUATES  
PER THOUSAND POPULATION, 1884  
TO 1934, TWO-YEAR  
PERIODS

Year	Population of Oswego, Kansas	Number of High School Graduates	Graduates per Thousand
1884	1,230	4	3.3
1896	1,873	6	3.2
1888	2,164	9	4.1
1890	2,574	4	1.9
1892	2,654	12	4.5
1894	2,767	9	3.2
1896	2,769	16	5.9
1898	2,801	10	3.6
1900	2,840	12	4.2
1902	2,983	7	2.4
1904	3,008	12	4.0
1906	3,196	1	.3
1908	2,983	5	1.7
1910	2,920	6	2.5
1912	2,699	23	8.5
1914	2,503	17	6.7
1916	2,388	11	4.6
1918	2,264	12	5.3
1920	2,122	23	10.8
1922	2,090	33	15.2
1924	1,954	29	14.8
1926	1,926	46	23.3
1928	2,102	45	21.4
1930	1,942	32	16.4
1932	1,839	36	19.5
1934	1,846	30	16.2

Read table thus: In 1884 the population of Oswego was 1,230. There were four persons graduated from the Oswego High School that year. This averaged 3.3 graduates per thousand population. Read in a like manner for the other years.



FIGURE 10

A PICTURE OF THE FIRST HIGH SCHOOL  
BUILDING IN OSWEGO

pupils have been graduated from this institution, 79 of whom have attended institutions of higher learning.<sup>15</sup>

CHETOPA. The first graduating class at Chetopa<sup>16</sup> was in 1883. This quite evidently was a two-year high school although there are no definite records preserved. The following quotation would indicate the existence of a ten-year course extending from the first grade through the sophomore year of high school.

The building was completed July 4, 1873, the first graduating class consisted of E. McKinley, Allie Horner, Jessie Sellman, and Harry Sterling. This class went out in 1883.

At this time Chetopa had a population of 3,000 and was the largest town in the county.<sup>17</sup> The school building, built in 1873, was a two story structure with eight rooms and was considered the finest in the southeastern part of the state.<sup>18</sup> In 1885, because of the increased negro population, a two room elementary school was built for the colored population. The present high school building was completed in 1924.

EDNA. Edna has the most recently developed high school in the county.<sup>19</sup> No provision was made for education beyond the eighth grade until 1911. There were four persons in the first graduating class in

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<sup>15</sup> Records, (Mound Valley High School, Mound Valley, Kansas.)

<sup>16</sup> Martha Bennett, Personal interview. (June 10, 1936.)

<sup>17</sup> J. I. Case, History of Labette County (Chicago: Biographical Publishing Co.) p. 450.

<sup>18</sup> Editorial, in the Chetopa Advance, (February 1, 1934.)

<sup>19</sup> W. E. Staig, personal interview. (April 20, 1936.)

TABLE VII

A TABLE SHOWING THE NUMBER OF GRADUATES OF MOUND VALLEY  
HIGH SCHOOL WHO HAVE ATTENDED COLLEGE,  
AND THE COLLEGE ATTENDED

COLLEGE	1877-1896	1897-1916	1917-1936	TOTAL
Baker	4	8	3	15
Coffeyville Jr. College			6	6
Drake University		1		1
Kansas State Teachers, Euporia	1	5	1	7
Keuper		1	3	4
Kansas University	1	7	3	11
Ottawa University	3	4		7
Park College		2		2
Parsons Jr. College			15	15
Kansas State Teachers, Pittsburg		10	11	21
Total	9	38	42	89

Read table thus: Four graduates of the Mound Valley High School attended Baker between 1877 and 1896, eight graduates between 1897 and 1916 and three between 1917 and 1936.

1914. Three years later, in 1917, the present high school and grade school building was built. Two hundred fifty-eight pupils have graduated from Edna High School.<sup>20</sup>

ALTAMONT. The county high school at Altamont was organized in 1892 with an enrollment of eighteen boys and fifteen girls. Each pupil was charged two dollars per month tuition.<sup>21</sup>

T. B. Hanna of the Kansas State Normal School was persuaded to take over the tuition school at the request of County Superintendent Lucy Best and others interested in the project. During the first year, before county wide recognition was actually tendered the school, he was the only teacher and taught three courses himself: normal training, commercial and college preparatory . . . . The first year's classes were held in a single room of the old town grade school building, recently torn down. The room was furnished by residents of Altamont. . . . The equipment was exceedingly crude compared to its present status, but by the end of the term the enrollment had increased to sixty-four students.<sup>22</sup>

After much strife between the various towns in the county, the county high school was finally located at Altamont in 1893 by an act of the state legislature. Under the provisions of this act the county commissioners appointed a board of six high school trustees. This board first met in April, 1893. The town volunteered to furnish suitable rooms until a building could be erected. The board then rehired Mr. Hanna as principal and also hired, to assist him, J. E. McDavid of De Pauw University, Greencastle, Indiana; Miss Catharine Swope of Ohio Wesleyan

<sup>20</sup> School Records, (Edna High School, Edna, Kansas.)

<sup>21</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 216.

<sup>22</sup> A True School of Kansas, (a manuscript in the principal's office, Altamont, Kansas), p. 4.

University, Delaware, Ohio; and Miss Josephine Moon of the Kansas Normal at Emporia.<sup>23</sup>

As a county school it was supported by a tax levied on the entire county. This included those cities already possessing schools of their own. This caused considerable opposition to the school. Prior to the opening of the school in the fall of 1893 an injunction was sought on the collection of taxes levied under the provisions of the act. The levy was held to be legal by Judge J. D. McCus of the district court but an appeal was taken to the state supreme court, where the decision of the district court was sustained.<sup>24</sup>

The single room in the grade school building was soon outgrown and classes were held in the churches and vacant business houses. Early in the school year of 1894 the new school building was ready to be occupied.

This new building was the talk of the county. Situated in the east part of Altamont, it was almost in the exact center of its district. The building was the same as the present administration building except for the library wing which was added in 1915. The auditorium was an object of pride, and the entire plant was modern and up to date in every possible respect.<sup>25</sup>

The first class graduated in 1895. There were nineteen in the class. Seventeen of these were graduated from the normal training course and one each in the general and college preparatory courses. At this

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

time graduates from the normal training course were entitled to a second grade teacher's certificate and were also credited with a full year's work in the state normal school.

The dawn of the twentieth century saw the school still growing. The faculty at that time consisted of six teachers and the enrollment was one hundred fifty-three. W. M. Kyser was new head of the school. The graduating class had increased to thirty-five. Instrumental music was added to the curriculum. This was the birth of what has come to be one of the most important departments in the school. Today, every pupil is given the opportunity to take private lessons without cost on any instrument he desires. Instruments owned by the school are rented or furnished to the pupils.

And so the school waxed with the history of southeast Kansas. Continually it grew and expanded. The faculty was increased with the enrollment. More courses were added to the curriculum and more activities offered the students. Principal Kyser remained at the school until 1907 when he was followed by T. M. Wood. The latter was at the head of the institution until 1900 when Mr. Kyser returned and remained until 1916.

In 1916 the first vocational work was started in the Labette County High School. Its first Smith-Hughes vocational work was in Agriculture in 1918. Mr. C. M. Miller who became the principal of the school in 1916 started into develop the science and vocational works. Domestic Art, domestic science, elementary woodworking, wood turning, farm mechanics and blacksmithing were added to the course of study.



In 1916 the normal training course was still the most popular but college preparatory, commerce and vocational courses began to be selected by a larger number of pupils. In 1917 the labette, the first of the school annuals, was started.

Prior to 1916 German and latin were the foreign languages offered by the language department. The study of German was stopped during the war and was replaced by French. The enrollment by 1916 had increased to one hundred sixty-seven and the faculty was increased to ten.<sup>27</sup>

In 1920 D. L. Katterjohn the present principal of the school came to Altamont to take over the county school.

He immediately launched a progressive attempt to secure Smith-Hughes aid for other subjects. He was successful in obtaining this aid for home-making and mechanics. As a result of these efforts, Labette County Community High School now has the co-operation of the federal government on all three of these courses of study and has welded them into the foundation of a complete trade school.<sup>28</sup>

In 1923 the second year of mechanics was added. The printing and journalism department was also added that year. The trade courses were increased each year until in 1935 the following courses were offered.<sup>29</sup>

Mechanics  
Tool-making  
Auto-motive mechanics  
Auto-motive electrician  
Mechanic-electrician  
Blacksmithing  
Acetylene welding

Industrial Art  
Agriculture, Smith-Hughes  
Homemaking, Smith-Hughes  
Radio Telegraphy  
Commerce  
Drafting  
Printing

<sup>27</sup> Catalogue of the Labette County School, (1916-17.)

<sup>28</sup> A True School of Kansas, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>29</sup> Catalogue, The Labette Trade School, (1935-36.)

Heat-treating  
Chemistry  
Biology

Radio  
Sheet Metal

A total of one hundred thirty-one teachers and librarians have been hired in the Labette County Community High School. Miss Celia Pennington who taught from 1902 to 1935, a total of thirty-two years, has contributed the longest period of service to the school. Five of the nineteen teachers now teaching in the school have had ten or more years of service in the institution.<sup>30</sup>

DENNIS RURAL HIGH SCHOOL. In 1917 Dennis District, No. 38, added two years of high school work to its school.<sup>31</sup> In 1919 a new two-story brick building was constructed, at a cost of \$15,000. In this new building the two-year high school was continued until 1927 when it was absorbed in the organization of the Dennis Rural High School.

The boundaries for the Dennis Rural High School district were approved by the county superintendent and the board of county commissioners on February 16, 1927.

This district contains fifty-four and one-fourth square miles and has an assessed valuation of \$1,128,037.00. The district has never erected a building of its own but rents the building owned by District 38. Figure 11 shows the boundaries of the Dennis Rural High School District. On September 5, 1927, Dennis Rural High School opened, with Mr. R. S. Handley as principal. Two suitable buildings downtown were sufficiently

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<sup>30</sup> Records, (Principal's Office, Altamont, Kansas.)

<sup>31</sup> Schools of Labette County, (unpublished historical and pictorial record, county superintendent's office, Oswego), p. 109.

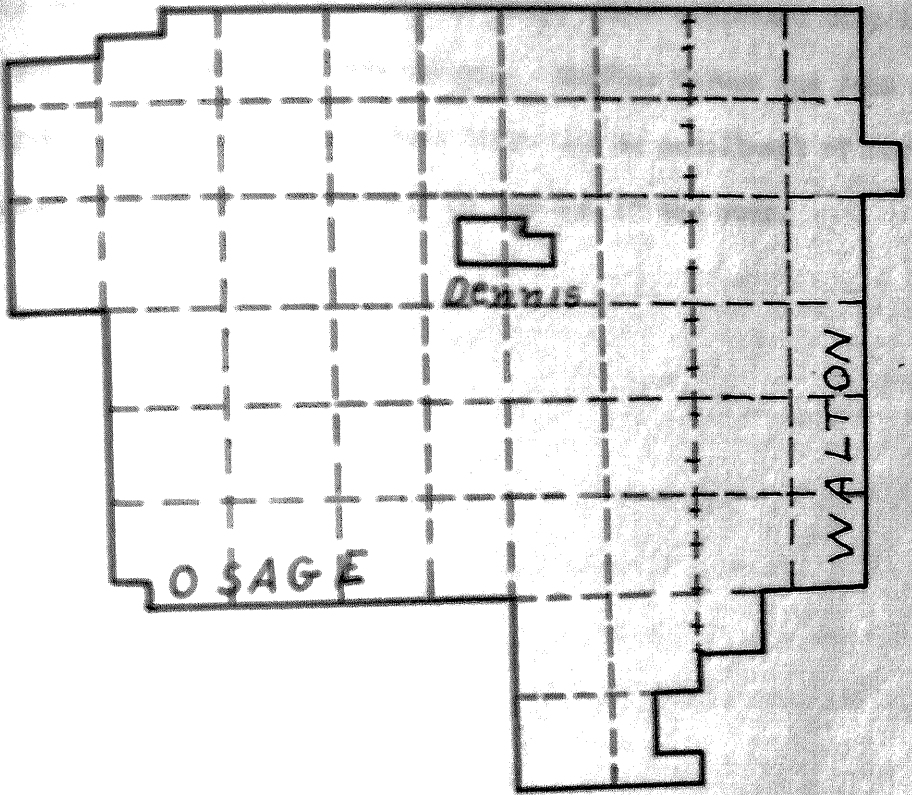


FIGURE 11

OUTLINE MAP OF DENNIS RURAL  
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

equipped for manual training and farm shop instruction. The typewriting, science, and home economics rooms were furnished with standard equipment. All of the equipment purchased amounted to about \$4,000. An extensive course of study was established and the school was accredited its first year. Basketball and football necessities were purchased for students taking part in athletics. The library, which contained only 150 books, has been increased to 1,000 volumes. Mydene Carson and John Craft were the graduates. The second term there was an enrollment of forty-eight students with eight graduating at the end of the year.

CHAPTER V

THE HISTORY OF THE COLLEGE IN  
LANETTE COUNTY, KANSAS

OSWEGO COLLEGE FOR YOUNG LADIES. The germ of the Oswego College for Young Ladies may be found in a meeting of a few ministers, at Muskogee, in the Indian Territory in 1879; among these ministers were the late Timothy Hill, D. D. Rev. Samuel A. Sloddard and Rev. John Elliott. In talking over the needs for missionary works in our country, it was felt that the great demand was for a school for the training of teachers to labor among the Indians, Mexicans, and Mormons. . . . It was there determined to try and secure the establishment of such a school in the state of Kansas, somewhere near the border of the Indian Territory.

At a meeting of the Neosho Presbytery, held at Garnett, Kansas, October 3rd, 1882, the following resolution was adopted.

Resolved. That the time has come when Neosho Presbytery should take steps looking to the establishment of a christian school within its bounds.<sup>1</sup>

At the meeting mentioned above a committee was appointed to consider the above resolution. They reported that the Presbytery or Synod should establish a young Woman's Literary Institute and suggested that a committee of five be appointed to raise \$40,000 for this purpose. On October 6, 1882, this resolution was carried to a meeting of the Kansas Synod being held at Ottawa where the committee in charge made the following report:

Your Synodical committee would recommend that the Presbytery of Neosho go forward and at once establish their institution, as contemplated in the resolutions that have come up from the Presbytery.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Catalogue (Oswego College for Young Ladies, 1908), p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

Soon after the adoption of the above resolution a Provisional Committee of five was appointed to establish a school for the young ladies of the Neosho Presbytery. This committee, composed of A. Warner Fulton, W. B. McKee, McCune; W.C. Porter, Fort Scott; J. Talbott, Fulton and R. A. Williams Glendale met at Oswego, May 8, 1883 and located the school at Oswego.

The board of trustees elected at this meeting were Reverends C. H. McCreery, D. M. Moore, W. C. Porter, A. Warner, John Elliott, B. W. Perkins.

On December 23, 1883, the college was incorporated, a charter therefore having on that day been filed in the office of the secretary of state. On October 4, 1884, on the request of the Presbytery therefore the Synod of Kansas took the college under its jurisdiction.

In the fall of 1885 the citizens of Oswego purchased the N. W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of S. W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of N. E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of section 21, Township 33, Range 21, and presented it to the college as a site for the school. This property was at the time valued at \$17,000. It had upon it a fine brick residence which was considered one of the finest in the county. In December, 1885, Miss Louise Paul was elected principal of the faculty; and with the faculty thus chosen the school was opened in the brick residence above referred to, January 14, 1886. C. H. McCreery was elected president of the school, with the view of his taking entire charge of its financial management, and devoting his time to the raising of funds with which to make improvements and provide an endowment. His employment was in no way to affect the control of the principal in the management of the school proper. Mr. McCreery had served but a few months when family afflictions compelled him to resign. Miss Paul continued in charge until the close of the spring term, in June, 1887. Miss Susa H. Johnson was thereupon elected principal. The summer of 1887 a large, new frame building was erected upon the college grounds, at a cost of about \$12,000 exclusive of furniture. Miss Dr. J. F. Hendy was elected president of the college. Dr. William Bishop acted as president during the last half of the school year. At the opening of school in September, 1896, Dr. M. H. Reasor took charge and served as president for two years. During the school year of 1898-99 the college was under the presidency of Miss Delia

Proctor. She was succeeded by Miss Margaret L. Hill, who served one year. At the close of the school in 1900, the Board of Trustees did not see their way open to provide a faculty for the next year, and the school was closed.<sup>3</sup>

In 1904 the school was reopened by Miss Susan H. Johnson and her sister Miss Caroline E. Johnson, an editorial in the Oswego Blade<sup>4</sup> published April 20, 1905, states:

Last year the Misses Johnson leased the college for a term of five years and will continue to conduct it during that time. . . . The faculty has been selected with great care and parents entrusting their children here can do so with perfect confidence that no detail will be overlooked that could add to either comfort or best results. The teachers are: Miss Susan H. Johnson, Latin and French; Caroline Johnson, Mathematics; Katherine Davis, Expression; Evelyn Bargelt, Art; Ola Woods, German; Mrs. J. W. Marley, Music.

Miss Caroline Johnson<sup>5</sup> who makes her home in Oswego states that when she and her sister reopened the school in 1904 boys were admitted as day pupils and girls as either boarders or day pupils.

A catalogue<sup>6</sup> of the college published in 1908 shows work being offered by departments. Department I was composed of a four year college course. Admission to this college department was based on fifteen units of high school work which must include the following: Three years of Latin and German, three years of English, one year of Physical Science, one year of Biological Science, and one year of History. Department II

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<sup>3</sup> Nelson Case, History of Labette County, Kansas, (Topeka: Crane and Co., 1993.) p. 218.

<sup>4</sup> Editorial in the Oswego Blade, (April 20, 1905.)

<sup>5</sup> Personal interview, (Oswego, Kansas, August 10, 1936.)

<sup>6</sup> Catalogue, op. cit., p. 7.

was four years of seminar or high school work. The requirements being the same as the approved schedule for public schools of Kansas. Department III was termed preparatory or grammar school work and was designed especially for those who wished to have their children secure, in addition to their regular school work, special training in dramatics or music.

In this catalogue the tuition is placed at \$200.00 per year for girls boarding at the school. The tuition for day students was \$40.00 a year in the College Department, \$30.00 a year in the Seminary Department, and \$25.00 a year in the Grammar Department.

The Johnson sisters ran the school for five years until 1910, when it was turned back to the Neosho Presbytery. Reverend Dr. Marshal had charge of the school in 1912. He was followed by Reverend Dr. Mather. About this time (the investigator has been unable to find the exact date) the school was leased to a Colonel Terry for a boys Military Academy. This school, known as the Kansas Military Academy, operated until March 7, 1922, when the administration building and dormitory both burned. Colonel Terry then took his military boys to Illinois.<sup>7</sup>

OSWEGO COLLEGE. The first private school of a high grade established in the county was planned and inaugurated by Rev. R. P. Bukey, . . . .It was located on the southeast quarter of the northeast quarter of section 17, township 33, range 21, a little northwest of the city of Oswego. In the summer of 1870 Mr. Bukey erected a very nice-appearing two-story frame building, 20 by 36 feet, which contained two good school rooms. Under his employment Miss Mary A. Claypool opened the school the first week in September, 1870. She remained in charge of the school until the close of the school year the following June, and was the only

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<sup>7</sup> Caroline Johnson, personal interview. (August 1, 1936.)



teacher until the close of December. After the school opened the attendance was so good and the prospects were so flattering that Mr. Bukey planned to largely increase its capacity and to provide for boarding those who came from a distance. He secured the cooperation of John D. Gillette, who was a man of some means, and during the fall and winter of 1870 erected a 20x26 frame addition, and also a kitchen and accompanying rooms, which were ready for occupancy in January, 1871. The teaching force was increased by securing Prof. Allen C. Baker as teacher of mathematics. Rev. J. H. Leard was also elected president of the college but his relation to it was only nominal that year. The following year the faculty consisted of Rev. J. H. Leard, president; Prof. A. C. Baker, teacher of mathematics; Miss P. D. Bullock, teacher of languages; Miss Ella School, teacher of music. Judge S. P. Moore was announced as the teacher of commercial law but nothing was ever done in this department. . . . After the second year the school hardly had an existence. The original building was purchased by Mrs. Bettis who removed it to town and transformed it into a residence. The addition was also brought to town and out of the material a store was constructed.<sup>8</sup>

PARSONS JUNIOR COLLEGE. The Parsons Junior College came into existence in 1923 under the guidance of Mr. Rees Hughes, the present superintendent of the Parsons school system. In function it is an extension of the high school being housed with the eleventh and twelfth grades of the Parsons High School, in the new building which was built in 1926. It is under the direction of the high school organization, the principal of the high school being dean of the Junior College.

The first year that it was organized the enrollment was only seventy but the next year found this figure more than doubled, the enrollment being one hundred-fifty. Twenty-three of these were graduated. The next year the enrollment increased to one hundred seventy-four and

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<sup>8</sup> Nelson Case, op. cit., p. 217.



FIGURE 12

A PICTURE OF OSWEGO COLLEGE FOR  
YOUNG LADIES

the number of graduates to thirty-nine.<sup>9</sup> From that time on there was a gradual increase in enrollment each year until in 1931, when the enrollment reached three hundred ninety-nine. The greatest number of graduates was in 1933-34 when eighty-one completed the two-year course. There has been a total of six hundred seven graduates from the Parsons Junior College.<sup>10</sup> The Junior College offers advanced work in English, science, mathematics, history and social science, commerce, home economics, language, and education.

Seventeen of the thirty-one teachers in the school hold a master's degree.

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<sup>9</sup> Kansas Public Junior Colleges, (a manuscript in the office of the superintendent of schools, Parsons, Kansas).

<sup>10</sup> Review of the Parsons City Schools, (a manuscript in the superintendent's office, Parsons, Kansas). p. 58.

TABLE VIII  
 STATISTICAL DATA CONCERNING  
 PARSONS JUNIOR COLLEGE  
 1924 TO 1934

Year	Enrollment	Graduates	Operating Cost
1924	150	23	
1925	174	39	
1926	176	24	\$16,375.99
1927	188	29	16,518.17
1928	228	40	17,477.29
1929	241	37	21,300.66
1930	307	51	26,521.46
1931	399	70	23,780.77
1932	381	71	22,622.92
1933	359	81	20,688.19
1934	310	72	16,806.35

Read table thus: In 1926 there were 176 students enrolled in Parsons Junior College. Twenty-four of these graduated. The total operating cost for the year was \$16,375.99.

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