

Full History

The following is taken from William G. Cutler's *History of the State of Kansas*, which was first published in 1883 by A. T. Andreas, Chicago, IL. It provides a view of Osage City as it existed 120 years ago. The pictures are provided courtesy of the City of Osage City and the history archives at Wichita State University.



Osage City is the metropolis of Osage County, and is pleasantly situated on the level valley lands, on the north side of Salt Creek. The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad passes through the central part of the city from northeast to southwest.

The population of the town within its corporate limits is about 2,500, but adjoining are several tracts, laid off in lots, and occupied by residences, which, though outside the corporation, properly belong to the town, and will swell the population to fully 3,400.

The streets of the city are provided with lamps at each corner, are wide, and are kept in good order. A great many of both the business houses and residences are large structures, neat in design. Along the business streets are many large and costly buildings of brick and stone. All branches of business are carried on, and all are prosperous. The educational and religious institutions are of a very superior order.

The greater part of other town site is on Section 26, Township 16, Range 14 east. The original town site was nearly all on the west side of the railroad. The principal additions, are Wetherell's and Dodd & Boyd's Additions on the east; Dodd's and Dodds & Martin's Additions on the south of the last named; east of which is Rosenberg's Addition. East of Wetherell's Addition is Jennings'. North of the original town is Wetherell's Second Addition.

The first settlement made in the neighborhood of Osage City, was at a point about one and one-half miles west, by E. Kibbe and family, in March, 1865. The next was in June, 1866, by C. S. Martin and family. After that settlement progressed quite slowly until the town was surveyed. There were, however, many farms opened in the vicinity, previous to that time, many of them by Swedes.

Osage City was surveyed and platted late in the year 1869, after the route of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad had been fixed, but before it had been built to that point. T. J. Peter, then superintendent of the Railroad Company, had purchased a large tract of land of John N. Wetherell, and had agreed that a railroad station should be located on the land of the latter. The original town site, west of what is now the business part, was surveyed by the Arkansas Valley Township Company, which was composed generally of officials of the above named railroad. About the same time Wetherell made an addition on the east, and began selling lots, through John F. Dodd, his agent.

Building began at once. The first lumber for the store of Bothel & Ryus, was hauled on December 3, 1869. The store was finished and opened in January, 1870. A little before this John F. Dodd's Hotel, west of the railroad track was finished and opened. It now forms a part of the City Hotel which occupies the same site. Several buildings were commenced during the winter, the second store being that of Drew & Playford, opened in March, 1870. Soon after, John A. Martin opened the first hardware store. In the fall of 1868, a post-office had been established, less than one mile distant from the present Osage City, and was called Onion Creek. Thomas Martin was postmaster. In March, 1870, the name of the office was changed to Osage City, and John F. Dodds was appointed postmaster. The first sermon preached in Osage City, was by C. S. Martin, in February, 1870.



During the year 1870, the town grew quite rapidly. The first regular train of cars passed through in May. John F. Dodds, as agent for the Arkansas Valley Town Company, and for J. M. Wetherell, was very active in the sale of lots, and inducing settlers to locate. The greater number of buildings were erected on Wetherell's Addition, and this has ever since been the business center of the city. In the summer of 1870, the first coal mines were opened

by the Osage Carbon, Coal & Mining Company.

In 1870, a large two story brick schoolhouse was erected, which was afterwards blown down, and one story again built up, and now is used as one of the ward schools. The first marriage in the vicinity of Osage City, was that of James H. Kibbe to Hannah Martin, October 13, 1867. The first on the town site was that of Mr. Fowler and Mrs. Giggsby. The first birth was a child to Dr. and Mrs. McCormack. The first death was that of Mrs. Samuel Shaffer.

After the township was surveyed it grew very rapidly for about three years, after which a somewhat dull period was experienced for a few years and during which time it progressed but slowly. As soon as business throughout the country began to revive, the town again began to grow rapidly, and its improvement and development has since progressed steadily.

In June, 1874, the town was visited by a sever wind-storm. The two story brick schoolhouse and the Catholic Church were blown down, the Swedish Church was blown off the foundation, a few barns and small buildings blown down, and several business houses and residences slightly damaged.

During the history of the town there have been but few fires. There have been instances where one or two buildings were destroyed at a time, but not until November 2, 1882, was the town visited by a general conflagration. The fire broke out about four o'clock, on the morning of the above date, on the north side of Market Street, between Fifth and Sixth. It was not long until the half square from the post-office to the railroad

track was on fire. The only aid in extinguishing it was a Babcock Extinguisher, and a hose. A large number of men soon gathered, and every effort was made to save the buildings on the opposite side of the street, and the post-office building. This was accomplished only with the greatest difficulty. The buildings on the south side of the street were damaged considerably. The total loss by the fire is estimated at \$35,000.

City Government



Osage City was incorporated as a city of the third class about the 1st of April, 1872. The first city officers were John A. Martin, Mayor; A. C. Sine, Clerk and Marshal; S. M. Barry, Attorney; J. C. Williams, Police Judge; T. J. Mathews, Treasurer; Samuel Reed, Assessor; Samuel Slusser, Street Commissioner. The first City Council were Samuel Slusser, W. H. Hobbs, Thomas Jenkins, T. J. Mathews, and O. J.

Sweadman.

On May 27, 1879, Osage City was incorporated as a city of the second class. The first officers were: James Gilson, Mayor; D. O. Crane, Clerk; W. H. Dodds, Treasurer; J. W. Jackson, Police Judge; C. S. Martin, Attorney. The City council was as follows: First Ward. - Joseph Stott, and O. E. McElfresh; Second Ward - John Ogren, and A. J. Richmond; Third Ward. - John Gray, and Charles Leander; Fourth Ward. - W. H. Smith, and John A. Martin. Of the Board of Education, H. Kirby was President; and W. W. Miller, Treasurer. The remainder of the Board were J. V. Admire, P. Hanberg, H. O. Anderson, G. Johnson, E. Mills, T. B. Edwards, and W. L. Schenck. The present officers are -: Mayor, A. B. Cooper; Clerk, C. D. O. Crane; Attorney, C. S. Martin; Police Judge, J. W. Jackson; Watch, William Jackson; Justices of the Peace, Elijah Mills, A. M. Hale; Constables, L. W. Learn, W. J. McMillen; Councilmen; First Ward - A. J. Bolander, Charles Stackhouse; Second Ward - H. I. Doom, Benjt. (*sic*) Olson; Third Ward-John Gray, Thomas Kimball; Fourth Ward - Samuel Marshall, T. G. Randall.

Fire Department. - The only appurtenances are a Babcock Extinguisher and a hook and ladder truck. J. N. Williams has charge of the department.

Schools, Churches, and the Press

Before the beginning of Osage City a school district had been formed, and a schoolhouse had been built within a mile from the town site. This was in 1868. In the fall of 1870, the schoolhouse was moved to the new town. E. Mills was the first teacher. The two-story brick schoolhouse was completed soon after. Different departments have been added, until now, including the City, Superintendent of Schools, eleven teachers are employed. There are now 1,062 pupils of school age in the district. In the central part of the city is the large two-story brick schoolhouse erected in 1880, at a cost of \$20,000, in which eight departments are taught. The other schools are taught in smaller houses in

various parts of the city. The school is in a very prosperous condition, each department in charge of a competent teacher. In the high school an academic course of study is pursued.

The City Board of Education is as follows: J. V. Admire, Chairman; E. Mills, Clerk; D. W. Morgan, H. O. Anderson, T. M. Truitt, Asher Adams, T. M. Gruwell, Robert Craig, Sam Slusser, W. H. Scott, J. M. Abbott, Superintendent of Schools.

The citizens of Osage City have ever kept up religious organizations and their institutions have always been liberally supported.

The Presbyterian Church was organized soon after the beginning of the town. The church was built in 1872, and stands on the corner of Lord and Seventh streets. Rev. W. W. Curtis is pastor.



The Methodist Episcopal Church was organized at an early day. The church is a large brick structure, on the corner of Sixth and Lord streets. The class is a large one. Rev. S. G. Griffis is pastor.

The United Brethren Church is in a prosperous condition. The church was built in 1874, and stands on Elmwood street.

The Baptist Church is located on Lord Street, between Sixth and Seventh. Services are held regularly. Rev. G. W. Melton is pastor.

The First Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church has quite a large membership. The church is located on the corner of Holiday and Second streets. Rev. C. V. Vestling is pastor.

St. Patrick's Church (Catholic) has a large membership, and a large church edifice on the corner of Lakin and Sixth streets. Thomas C. Moore, D. D., is rector.

The Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church is situated on Elmwood Street, between Fifth and Sixth. The society has about twenty-five members. Rev. J. T. Evans of Arvonnia, is the pastor.

The Welsh Congregational (or Independent) Church has about eighteen members. Regular meetings are held in the Calvinistic Methodist Church. Rev. H. Davies, of Arvonnia, is pastor.

The Evangelical Church Association holds regular meetings at Hunsicker's Hall, on Sixth Street. Rev. S. H. Dunkelberger is pastor.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church is located on Holiday street, between Third and Fourth; Rev. John Young is pastor.

The Christian Church was formed in April, 1880, with thirteen members, which have been increased to twenty-six. There has never been a regular pastor, but C. S. Martin, under whose lead the church was organized, officiates. This society is in a prosperous condition and regular services are held.

The Swedenborgian Church was organized in May, 1873, by Rev. Adam Peabody, the State Missionary, with twelve members. The society now numbers twenty-three members, and services are held regularly in the old "Free Press" building.

The Osage City Free Press was established in August, 1871, by W. H. Morgan and A. B. Cooper. It was then called the *Osage City Shaft*, but in March, 1875, John P. Campbell purchased it and changed the name to the *Free Press*. After publishing the paper about a year he sold it to W. H. Morgan, who continued it until March 1, 1881, when it was purchased by the present editor and proprietor, J. V. Admire. This paper is an eight-column folio, and Republican in politics. It is printed on a Campbell steam-powered press. Under its present editorial management it is considered one of the leading newspapers in the State.

The Osage City Republican is a weekly newspaper, established, June 9, 1882, by D. J. Roberts. It is an eight column folio paper and is printed "all at home." It is Republican in politics.

Societies

Signal Lodge, No. 41, A., F. & A. M., was instituted in February 1873, under dispensation, and was chartered on the 16th of the following October. The first officers were: S. L. Myers, W. M.; T. B. Haslam, S. W.; D. M. Clemmer, J. W.; W. L. Smith, Treas.; W. H. Dodds, Sec.; W. A. Cotterman, S. D.; H. B. Miller, J. D.; J. N. Watkins, T. The above were the only charter members. The membership is now about sixty, and the lodge is in a prosperous condition. For the close of the year 1882, H. B. Miller is W. M., and Eli Bernheimer, Sec.

Charity Lodge, No. 55, A., F. & A. M., (African) was instituted June 16, 1878, with fourteen members. It now has but thirteen. Of the first officers, C. Pullam was W. M., and William Gleves, Sec.

Osage Royal Arch Chapter, No. 46, R. A. M., was instituted early in the year 1880, with the following officers; T. B. Haslam, H. P.; D. H. Danhauer, K.; William Hoggatt, S; D. A. Hanks, Sec.; Jacob Metz, Treas.; J. H. Sowell, C of H.; A. McCulloch, P. S.; S. L. Myers, R. A. C.; E. N. Terrill, M. 3d. V.; T. M. Gruwell, M. 2nd. V. The above named were all the charter members. The charter was dated February 13, 1881. The lodge is now in a prosperous condition with nineteen members. The officers for the close of 1882, are: A. J. Utley, H. P.; H. B. Miller, K.; T. B. Haslam, S.; W. L. Schenck, Treas.; W. A. Cotterman, Sec.; J. H. Sowell, C. H.; A. McCulloch, P. S.; S. L. Myers, R. A. C.; S. B. Enderton, M. 3d V.; T. M. Gruwell, M. 2nd V.; D. M. Clemmer, M. 1st V.; H. W. Jenness, T.

Osage City, Lodge, No. 82, I. O. O. F., was instituted in January, 1872; with twenty members. The lodge now numbers ninety-six members, and is in a prosperous condition. The present officers are: - M. B. Campbell, N. G.; M. Hanson, V. G.; S. Jones, Rec. Sec.; Eli Bernheimer, Per. Sec.; L. W. Brown, Treas.

Order of Chosen Friends. - this society has a good membership and is in a flourishing condition. The officers are: W. W. Miller, N. W. Laubach, P. C. C.'s; Dr. W. L. Schenck, C. C.; Mrs. A. J. Bolander, V. C.; Rev. W. W. Curtis, Rec.; H. B. Hubanks, Treas.; Rev. W. W. Curtis, Chap.; James Froud, Mar.; A. R. Bothel, Warden; J. S. Sisson, Guard.

Osage City Lodge, No. 73, A. O. U. W. was instituted April 23, 1881, with seventeen members. The first officers, were as follows: D. Ainsworth, P. M. W.; W. H. Dodds, M. W.; J. M. Hershey, F.; C. J. Coleman, O.; D. H. Van Derverter, G.; G. C. Horning, Rec. J. C. Jones, F.; M. L. Campbell, R.; L. W. Learn, I. W.; J. W. Williamson, O. W.; W. B. Artz, M. E. This lodge is in a prosperous condition and now has twenty-three members. D. H. Van Deventer (*sic*) is M. W., and D. O. Crane, Rec.

Harmony Lodge No., 1049, K. of H. was instituted in April, 1878, with sixteen members. It is now in a flourishing condition, with thirty-three members. The officers for the closing months of the year 1882, are: G. Marple, Dictator; John W. Letter, As'st Dict'r; Rev. G. W. Melton, Chap.; Robert J. Hill, Rep.; L. Learn, F. R.; A. J. Bolander, G.; Robert Tuchman, G.; I. S. Spencer, S.; Robert J. Hill, Treas.



Eureka Lodge, No. 34, K. of P. was instituted on February 26, 1881, with eighty members, forty of whom were old knights. The first officers were: George Calhoon. C. C.; Philip Burke, V. C.; Edwin Thomas, K. of R. & S.; Alexander Jarvie, M. E.; John Nicklin, M. T.; H. Kirby, P.; William Irving, M. of A. In February, 1882, the lodge was incorporated under the laws of the State. For the last part of the year 1882, Edwin Thomas was C. C.; J. T. Connel, V. C.; S. Ledoux, K. of R. & S.; John Slusser, M. of F., Joseph Charvoz, M. at A, Joseph Stott, M. of E.; John Laing, I. G.; A. C. Ledoux, O. G.; L. S. Sprague, Pr.; H. Kirby, F. A. Peak, and Charles Tustin, Trustees. The membership of the lodge is now ninety-four.

Canby Post, No. 11, G. A. R., was organized October 26, 1881, with a membership of twenty-six, which has since been increased to seventy-eight. The present officers are: T. L. Marshall, C.; W. H. Mossman, S. V. C.; C. E. Bridesall, J. V. C.; H. Kirby, S.; J. V. Admire, C.; E. W. Hanslip, Q. M.; D. O. Crane, Adj.; S. S. Everhart, O. D.; John E. Stone, P. G.; James A. Drake, S. M.; William Roady, Q. M. S. The first officers were the same as now except that C. S. Miller, was J. V. C.; W. J. Meskinen, O. D.; and Ashker Adams, S. M.

Fidelity Assembly, No. 849, Knights of Labor, was organized in November, 1878. It now has upward of fifty members. Joseph Stott is W. M., and William Bloch, R. S.

Mining Companies, Banks, and Hotels

Osage City is the center of the coal fields of the county, and the mining interest being developed makes the city the thriving and busy place it now is. During the first year of the history of the town mining was commenced, and this has developed from year to year until there are now twenty-eight shafts, which when running in full capacity yield 1,600 tons per day, and employ upward of 1,200 men. These figures represent the working capacity in the busiest season. Besides the shafts are a large number of drifts and strippings, which employ many men and teams, and add much to the mining interest of the town.

The Osage Carbon Company succeeded *The Osage Carbon, Coal and Mining Company*, which was the first to open shafts here. The officers are W. B. Strong, President; E. Wilder, Treasurer; L. Severy, Manager; and Robert Craig, Superintendent. The number of men employed are 600; the number of shafts worked, 12; tonnage mined per day 750.

The Superior Coal Company has the following officers: Asher Adams, President; P. Lyon, Vice-President; Charles Tustin, Secretary; John Sherley, Treasurer; John Gray, Superintendent. The number of men employed are 150; number of shafts worked, 4; tonnage mined per day, 200.



The Western Coal and Mining Company has the following officers: Gust. Johnson, President and Superintendent; B. M. Johnson, Secretary and Treasurer. The number of men employed are 200; number of shafts worked, 6; tonnage mined per day, 300.

The Scandinavian Coal and Mining Company has the following list of officers: A. B. Cooper, President and Superintendent; M. A. L. Olsen, Secretary and Treasurer. The number of men employed are 150; number of shafts worked, 4; tonnage mined per day, 200.

The Pittsburg Coal Company operates but one shaft, works 75 men and has a capacity of 100 tons per day.

Dougherty and Maynard's Shaft. - This mine has been lately opened. A number of men are employed, and its capacity will average about the same as the other shafts.

The Osage County Bank was chartered November 19, 1880. It has a capital stock (paid in) of \$50,000. A general banking and collection business is carried on. The officers are as follows: W. W. Miller, President; L. Severy, Vice-President; T. L. Marshall, Cashier;

T. J. Peter, L. Humphrey, P. I. Bonebrake, William B. Strong, Joab Mulvane, M. W. Martindale, Directors.

The Osage City Bank is the oldest established in the city, and was one of the J. S. Danford banks that failed in 1881, causing so great excitement at the time. Osage City is the home of Danford, and those most intimate with his business are still in doubt whether he had lost the depositors' money in imprudent speculation, or that he robbed them of the money and retained it. Heavy losses in reckless speculation was probably the real cause of the failure of all his banks. This bank is still open settling old business, but this is about all that is done.



The Palace Hotel is one of the leading hotels of the city, and is located on the corner of Market and Sixth streets. O. E. McElfresh is the proprietor.

The Osage City Hotel is the oldest established hotel in the city, a portion of it having been built by John F. Dodds in December, 1869. It is now a large house, nearly opposite the depot. W. C. Harding is proprietor.

The Osage City Flouring Mill was built and set in operation in 1871, by Martin & Clemmer. In 1873, C. S. Martin assumed the sole proprietorship, and controlled it a number of years. It is now owned by the Wetherell estate. The mill has four run of burrs, and a good quality of flour is made.