

LANGDON, KANSAS  
THE AGING OF A RURAL TOWN

BY

JAMES E. SHEROW

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## PREFACE

The following thesis is an historical analysis whose main theme is the development and decline of a rural Kansas town. This study concerns itself with the origins and development of the townsite at Langdon, Kansas from its beginnings to 1912, the time of its highest degree of prosperity from 1912 through 1920, and its decline from 1920 until 1950. The author's interest in Langdon stems from the fact that his ancestral roots are there. Though not living there now, the author still has some familiarity with the remaining town residents and a continuing interest in its history. The experiences of these people and the history of their ancestors provide a unique opportunity to obtain knowledge about a particular way of life and to assess the reasons for its disappearance. As a result of numerous walks through what remains of the townsite, the author has developed a strong desire to reconstruct Langdon's past. The author became intrigued by the question of why it never fulfilled its founders' dreams of growth, commercial development and permanence. As a result, some two and one-half years ago, he began a research project to unravel the reasons for its failure.

Many social scientists argue today that the rural community is dying. Numerous hypotheses have been presented to explain the causes of rural decline. Langdon, Kansas is one of thousands of rural towns which have failed to survive. Because of the large amounts of available source materials and the author's extensive personal knowledge of that town, it is hopeful that this study will reveal much about the causes of

its rise and fall, and by extension, the implications of those processes for those interested in the quality of present and future life in rural America.

Before proceeding, the author would like to acknowledge the generous help with this project he has received from a number of people. A deep debt of appreciation goes to Belinda, his wife, for her understanding, patience and help throughout the course of this study. Most important was the indispensable continuing support and guidance of my thesis advisor, Dr. James Duram. Without his constant helpful criticism, knowledge, concern, and energy, this project would not have been possible. A special thanks also goes to Dr. William Unrau for reading the rough drafts and adding his valuable criticisms to them. In finding records at the Kansas State Historical Society, Jack Traylor has proved to be of invaluable assistance. In working in the Reno county courthouse, the employees were most kind, especially Ms. Rosa Mary Woods in the Reno county register of deeds. Guilford Railsback of Langdon, Kansas was very helpful in pointing to many leads for the author to follow with regards to Langdon's history. They always proved fruitful. In addition, Guilford Railsback and Violet Sherow Warren of Hollywood, California, provided the author with the photos included in this thesis. The author at present time, has either copies or negatives of the photos in his possession. I would also like to acknowledge the support of the other members of my thesis committee, Drs. Phillip Thomas, John Harsberger and Harry Corbin. Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to those people who allowed me into their homes for the oral interviews. These people have been very helpful in the preparation and writing of this paper.

While all of the above have left their imprint on this work, the author alone bears full responsibility for any errors that appear herein.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks are due to the many individuals who have assisted in the preparation of this book. In particular, I wish to thank the following: [The text is extremely faint and largely illegible, but appears to list names and institutions.]

Finally, I wish to thank my family for their support and encouragement throughout this project. Their love and understanding have been a constant source of strength and inspiration.

1. See, for example, *The Age of Engraving* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1971), p. 10.

## INTRODUCTION

Langdon is a small rural town. Located in south central Kansas, it lies on state highway 61 between two cities, Hutchinson and Pratt. It shares this distinction with five other small rural villages all placed along the Rock Island railroad line which parallels the highway. Langdon bisects this line on which each town is spaced no less than seven miles apart or greater than eleven. Moreover, it is a dying town.

Langdon, like the Rock Island railroad, has experienced better days. Both the railroad and the small town have been romanticized and have had numerous myths created about them in American folklore. Often, it is hard to separate myth from reality. They both share one thing in common; they represent an age gone by. Ray Ginger astutely entitled the period when they flourished, the late 19th and early 20th century, an "age of excess."<sup>1</sup> An age where a seemingly endless abundance of resources were there for the taking.

Technological change in that period was rampant, altering peoples' life styles and changing morals and thinking patterns previously established. It gave the promise of a better quality of life than ever before realized in America. Not all shared in the wealth or the waste of that age. For many it was a time of severe suffering and strife, caused in part by the excesses which Ginger narrated. Nevertheless, this was the age in which Langdon and the Rock Island flourished.

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<sup>1</sup>See: Ray Ginger, Age of Excess (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1975), passim.

Langdon arouses little interest from the passing tourist. Since it lies off to the north side of the highway, it would be entirely overlooked if not for its town sign and grain elevator. If, by chance, one decided to drive through it, one would find a filling station, a post office, an antique store, and the grain elevator comprising the entire extent of its business enterprises. The post office is the best kept building in the town. The others show their age and many years lack of upkeep. The red brick of these and other former houses of business have weathered and in places the mortar which holds them together is beginning to crumble. A few of the buildings are abandoned as their usefulness has faded with the years. The roof of one is collapsed showing the iron griders which once held its ceiling in place. The old movie theater is stripped completely bare of its interior, and instead of housing anxious children awaiting a Saturday matinee, it shields farm equipment from the seasons. The first high school built in Langdon township is now a school bus garage for the unified school district of the area. The high school building which was later built and the gymnasium-auditorium building erected next to it, now stand vacant with broken panes of glass in many of the windows. The Methodist church was razed in 1976 because of its dwindling congregation. This leaves only the Christian Church of Christ. The population of Langdon is elderly; and as each year passes, the inevitability of death takes some of Langdon's residents. So as the years pass, its population continues to decline.

Less than a mile to the north of Langdon stands the consolidated, unified high school building. As school enrollments declined in small towns around Langdon, it was decided in the 1960's by the voters of nearly the entire western half of Reno county to unify their school

districts so as to broaden the property tax base for high school education and to provide better quality of education for their young. Many people in Langdon actively worked toward this end. Now though, as the unified school is still losing population, it stands to lose nearly \$100,000 in state funds. Plans have been discussed for the creation of a Reno county school district to offset this financial dilemma. The people of Langdon are suspicious of such ideas, especially when they originate in Hutchinson. They fear big city and big government encroachments upon a rural people's rights to determine what is best for themselves. Nonetheless, in the near future something will have to be done to alter this trend or the unified high school will face the same future as Langdon's.

Town government in Langdon might be described as farcical. About fifteen people in the town are eligible for its offices, but none want to encounter the wrath of friends and acquaintances by enforcing the town ordinances. Furthermore, law enforcement in the community is costly and the cost of taking the case to the magistrate court in Hutchinson would obliterate city revenues for quite some time to come. As a result, officers are figureheads, giving little credence to the town's government. Most people in Langdon feel the end is near for their town. Some presume the post office will be closed and with such an event, most think it will be the death knell for Langdon.

In the township, the farms around Langdon have become concentrated into large operations. The new breed of farmer will quickly tell you that the farmer who farmed as a way of life is a vanishing character. No longer does one operate a farm on a quarter or half a section and maintain a family unit on their land as a self-sufficient operation.

This mode of life is being replaced. For example, the sand hills to the northwest of Langdon have been turned into large corn producing acreage. Huge wheeled self-propelled irrigation units and the application of chemical fertilizers have made it profitable. Some are financed by persons or banks in Hutchinson, making this a speculative venture. The local farmers who irrigate are more concerned about the quality of water pumped than the question of a lowered water table. Some of the water has a high concentration of brine and would cause grave ecological damage to the soils if used. Regarding the question of a limited supply in the water table, their answer is, if it becomes a problem they will quit pumping. Others see it as already a threat, as one old-timer claims there has been a four foot drop in his well in recent years.

A self-sustaining farm must consist of at least a section. Most will tell you that producing wheat is unprofitable, and supplement their operations by raising hogs, cattle and feed grains. Considering the rising land values, as even acreage in the sand hills goes for as high as \$500 an acre, property taxes are of a real concern to the farmer. They may be able to avoid some income taxes with credits for machinery and various other items, but there is no avoiding the property tax. In short, the farmer feels that they are paying for a lot and receiving very little in return.

Since Langdon is too far from Hutchinson or Pratt to become a bedroom community, and since the city lacks public utilities and cannot attract industries, it seems only a matter of time before its dissolution comes. As it approaches "its journeys end," Langdon seems a particularly challenging and exciting place for a historian of the small town. By studying the factors which gave rise to this small town and the forces

which caused its decline, we can come to a better understanding of the rural town in this part of Kansas. By implication, the ramifications may explain the small rural town in the middle frontier. At best, it might help us better understand ourselves, where we have come from and where we are headed. On this account, the following pages comprise a history of this town and the surrounding area.

The area now known as Leander township went through a long process of geologic development. The township lies in what is known as either the "Great Sand Sand Plains area," or the "Great Sand Sand physiographic division" of the "Central Great Plains." It borders to the west, the "High Plains section" and to the south, the "Red Hills division" of the Great Plains.

Over a long period of time this area was subjected to powerful natural forces that caused uplifts and subsidence. Sometimes it was land and at other times it was the bottom of seas. Between 200 and 300 million years ago, the heaviest layer of permanent rock was deposited to a total thickness of around 1,500 feet. These Pacific rocks are the base upon which all subsequent layers covering this vast area and the oldest outcropping rocks in Leander township. The layers of rock deposited during the Mesozoic Era were all removed by erosion during the Tertiary time of the Cenozoic Era, some 70 million to one million years ago. Following this phase came the Pleistocene Series, upon which

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Edward F. House, Louis W. Dowd, Ivan Kretzschmar and James H. Eckers, Soil Survey of Reno County, Kansas (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1936), p. 1 have the area located within the Great Sand Sand Plains, whereas C. K. Barnes, Geology and Mineral Water Resources of Reno County, Kansas (Topeka, Kansas: Ford College of State Printer, 1936), p. 11 terms the same area the Great Sand Sand physiographic division.

## CHAPTER I

### BEGINNINGS

The area now known as Langdon township went through a long process of geologic development. The township lies in what is known as either the "Great Bend Sand Plains area," or the "Great Bend lowland physiographic division" of the "Central Great Plains." It borders to the west, the "High Plains section" and to the south, the "Red Hills division" of the Great Plains.<sup>1</sup>

Over a long period of time this area was subjected to powerful natural forces that caused uplifts and submersions. Sometimes it was land and at other times it was the bottom of seas. Between 200 and 300 million years ago, the nearest layer of permanent rock was deposited to a total thickness of around 3,500 feet. These Permian rocks are the base upon which all subsequent layers covering them rest and are the oldest outcropping rocks in Langdon township. The layers of rock deposited during the Mesozoic Era were all removed by erosion during the Tertiary time of the Cenozoic Era, some 70 million to one million years ago. Following this phase came the Pleistocene Series, upon whose

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<sup>1</sup>Edward F. Bouse, Louie W. Dowd, Ivan Ratcliff and James J. Rockers, Soil Survey of Reno County, Kansas (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966), p. 1 have the area located within the Great Bend Sand Plains, whereas C. K. Bayne, Geology and Ground-Water Resources of Reno County, Kansas (Topeka, Kansas: Ferd Voiland, Jr., State Printer, 1956), p. 11 terms the same area the Great Bend lowland physiographic division.

alluvial deposits the soil was formed making the central plains.<sup>2</sup>

This was the time of the great mammals and glacial ice. Charles Bayne and Howard O'Connor offer a good description of those times.

Worldwide periodic climatic fluctuation was the most characteristic phenomenon of the Pleistocene Epoch. Four periods of continental glaciation and four interglacial intervals are recognized. The glaciations resulted in worldwide lowering of sea levels and cycles of erosion and deposition on the continents.<sup>3</sup>

During the second period, called the Kansan stage, what is known as the Meade formation was deposited over the entire area. The next period, known as the Illioian stage, saw the deposition of the Sanborn layer. Both of these layers are characterized by gravel, sand and silt. It was also during this period that the streams in the area took their present courses. The Wisconsinian, the last of the four glacial stages, deposited much of the surface material now in Langdon township. The period known as "Recent times," ten thousand years ago to the present, saw top-soil development throughout the township and dune sand formation in the northwest portion of it.

These [dune] sands are believed to have been carried and deposited by the Arkansas River. After they were deposited, they were reworked by wind, and as a result, the topography is now hummocky and dunelike.<sup>4</sup>

The formation of soil is a complex occurrence involving five basic factors. They are (1) the mineralogical composition of the parent rocks, (2) the climate, (3) the plant and animal life living in and on it,

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<sup>2</sup> Bayne, Geology and Ground-Water Resources of Reno County, Kansas, pp. 18-23.

<sup>3</sup> Charles K. Bayne and Howard G. O'Connor, The Stratigraphic Succession in Kansas, ed. Doris E. Zeller (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Publications, 1968), p. 60.

<sup>4</sup> Edward F. Bouse, Louie W. Dowd, Ivan Ratcliff and James J. Rockers, Soil Survey of Reno County, Kansas, p. 53. Also, see p. 12, a map showing rock depositions underlying the soil in Langdon township.

(4) the lay of the land, and (5) the length of time soil development forces have worked. The good soils of the township have been formed by the combination of two major factors, the climate and the plant and animal life.

The . . . [township] has a continental type of climate typical of that in the subhumid Great Plains. The seasonal variations in temperature are wide; annual rainfall is moderate, about 29 inches, and the average frost free period is about 185 days. The air is dry. . . .

In the past the climate of this county was favorable for the growth of a large amount of vegetation, and this vegetation has influenced the characteristics of the soils. . . . In addition, rainfall is highest during the growing season, which has helped produce vegetation. . . .  
 . . . The climate in this . . . [township] favors grasses, and the original vegetation was wholly mid and tall grasses. Such vegetation encouraged vast numbers of worms, insects, rodents, and grazing animals to occupy the area. Decaying grass roots and stems, as well as the remains of animals, furnished large amounts of organic matter.<sup>5</sup>

The major soil types in Langdon township are: the Farnum, which is a Brunizem soil, the Clark and Ost which are Chernozem, and the Shellabarger, which is a Reddish Prairie soil. These soils easily support grasses, grains, wheat and sorghum.<sup>6</sup>

The other general soil associations in the township "reflect the dominant influence of local factor of topography or parent material over the effects of climate and living organisms."<sup>7</sup> The Pratt-Carwile association and the Plevna-Slickspots association are marginal crop producing soils. Often they are best left as grasslands. The Pratt-Carwile under proper management can produce crops, but wind and water erosion make it a risky venture. This soil appears in the area known

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 54.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 54.

as the sandhills. Where the Tivoli series of soils is present, it is best not to even break the soil, as these soils are too sandy to farm effectively. This soil series is present in sections six and seven of the township.<sup>8</sup>

The native grasses of the area are composed mostly of Buffalo-grass, some Big and Little bluestem, Indiangrass and sideoats grama.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, an abundance of wildlife once inhabited this area, chief among the mammals was the buffalo. The fowl native to the area are duck, quail, dove, meadowlarks, blackbirds, hawks, herons and pheasant, among various other birds. Coyotes, rabbits and rattlesnakes once thickly inhabited the area. However, many people feared or hated them and hunted and destroyed these animals in large numbers. In addition, Langdon township was marked by the same prairie dog villages which dotted much of the Great Plains.

The first people to inhabit the Great Plains occurred during the "Recent times." Early archaeological records suggest that the first people were nomadic hunters and are simply referred to as "Big Game Hunters." They hunted most notably the mammoth and bison which ranged the Great Plains about ten to seven thousand years ago.<sup>10</sup> The extinction of these game animals resulted in the disappearance of these hunters and the emergence of a new group of people. They are called the "Archaic" and thought to be a hunting-gathering people. Very little is known about them, but they lived on the Great Plains somewhere between seven to two

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., plate 65. Also, see p. 10, a map showing the locations of the general soil associations in Langdon township.

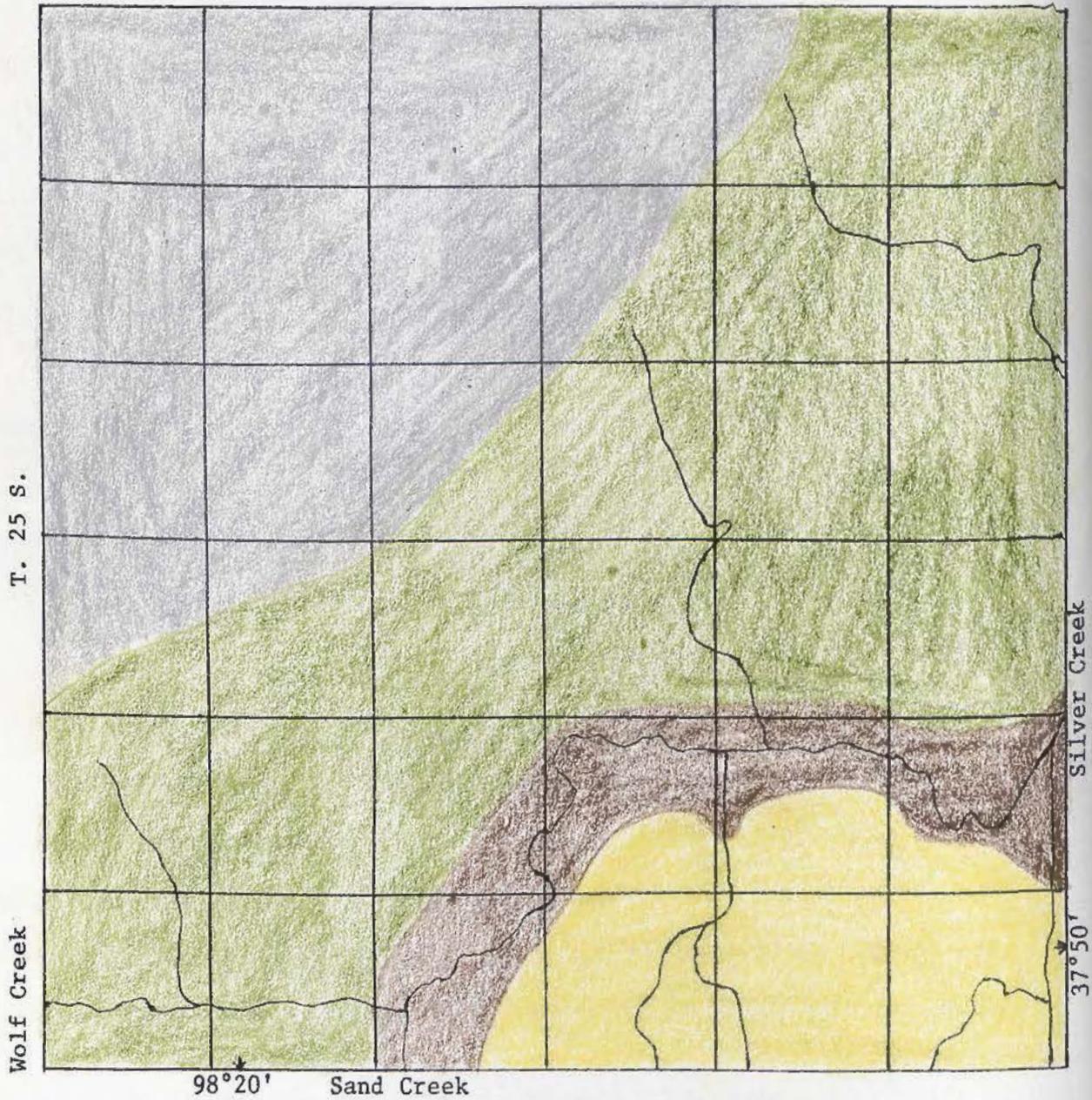
<sup>9</sup> Interview with Mr. Joy Royce, Langdon, Kansas, 13 July 1977.

<sup>10</sup> Robert E. Bell, "Precolumbian Prairie Settlement in the Great Plains," Great Plains Journal 2 (Fall 1962): 23.

General Soil Map

Langdon Township

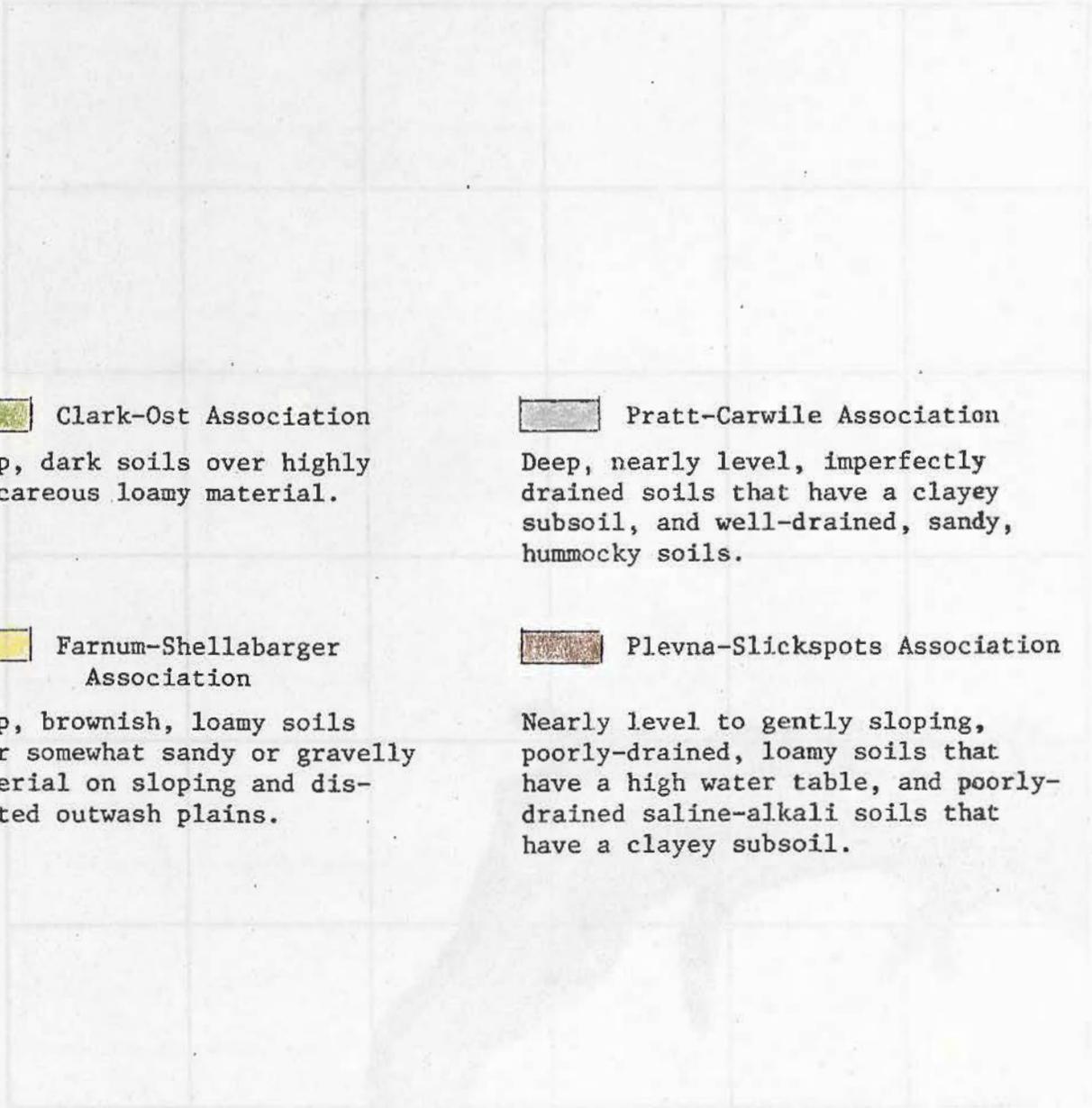
R. 9 W. Twp. 25



Map was reconstructed from a General Soil Map of Reno County found in Bouse et al., Soil Survey, Reno County, Kansas, following p. 72.

Soil Geology of Logan Township

A. S. M. Top. 23



 Clark-Ost Association  
 Deep, dark soils over highly calcareous loamy material.

 Pratt-Carwile Association  
 Deep, nearly level, imperfectly drained soils that have a clayey subsoil, and well-drained, sandy, hummocky soils.

 Farnum-Shellabarger Association  
 Deep, brownish, loamy soils over somewhat sandy or gravelly material on sloping and dissected outwash plains.

 Plevna-Slickspots Association  
 Nearly level to gently sloping, poorly-drained, loamy soils that have a high water table, and poorly-drained saline-alkali soils that have a clayey subsoil.

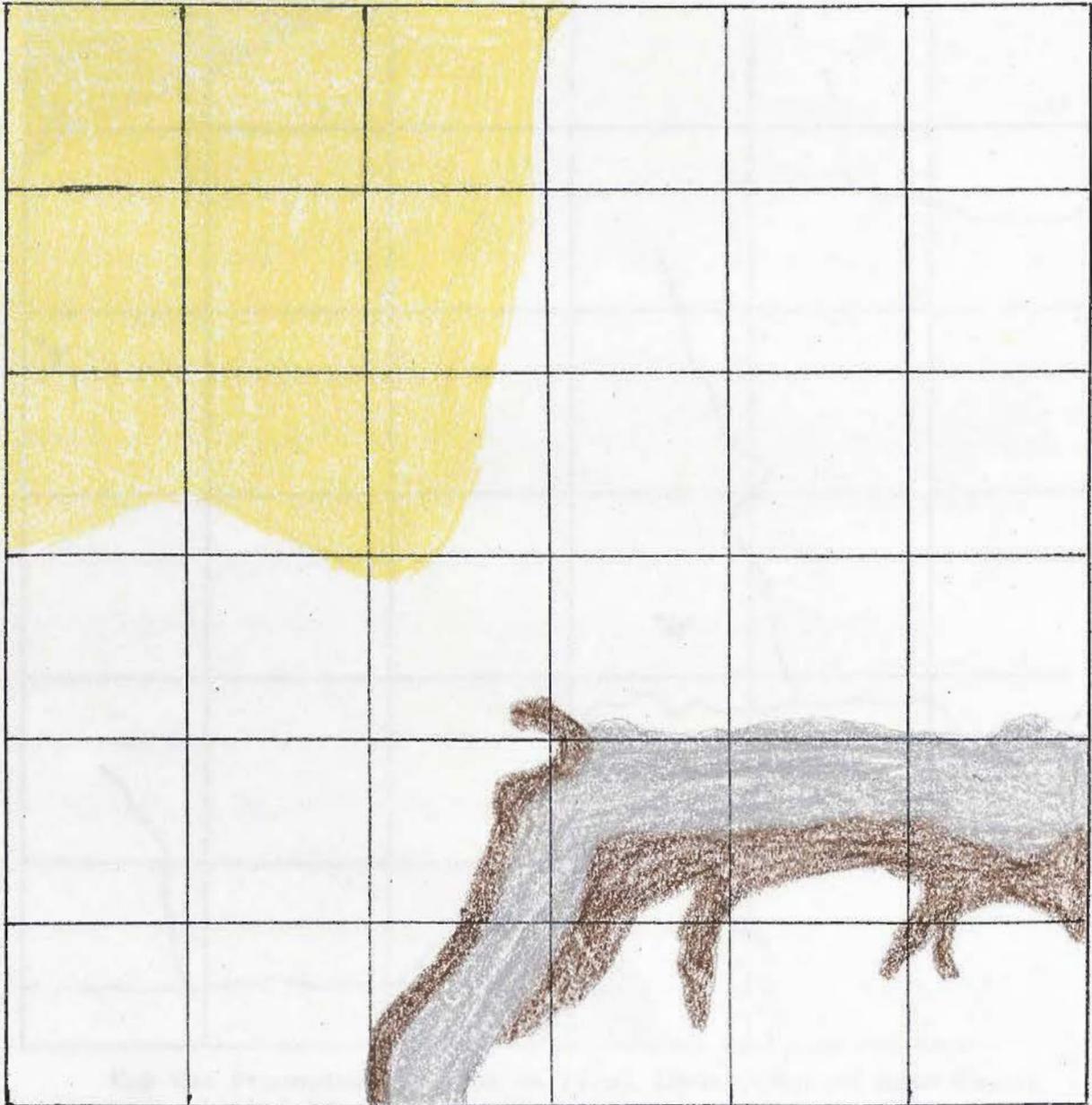
Map was reconstructed from an aerial photograph of Logan Township found in the back-folio of U. S. Geological Survey and General Land Office Resources of Reno County, Kansas.

 Data Sand  
 Seaborn and  
 Neada Formation

 Alluvium  
 Shale

## Areal Geology of Langdon Township

R. 9 W. Twp. 25



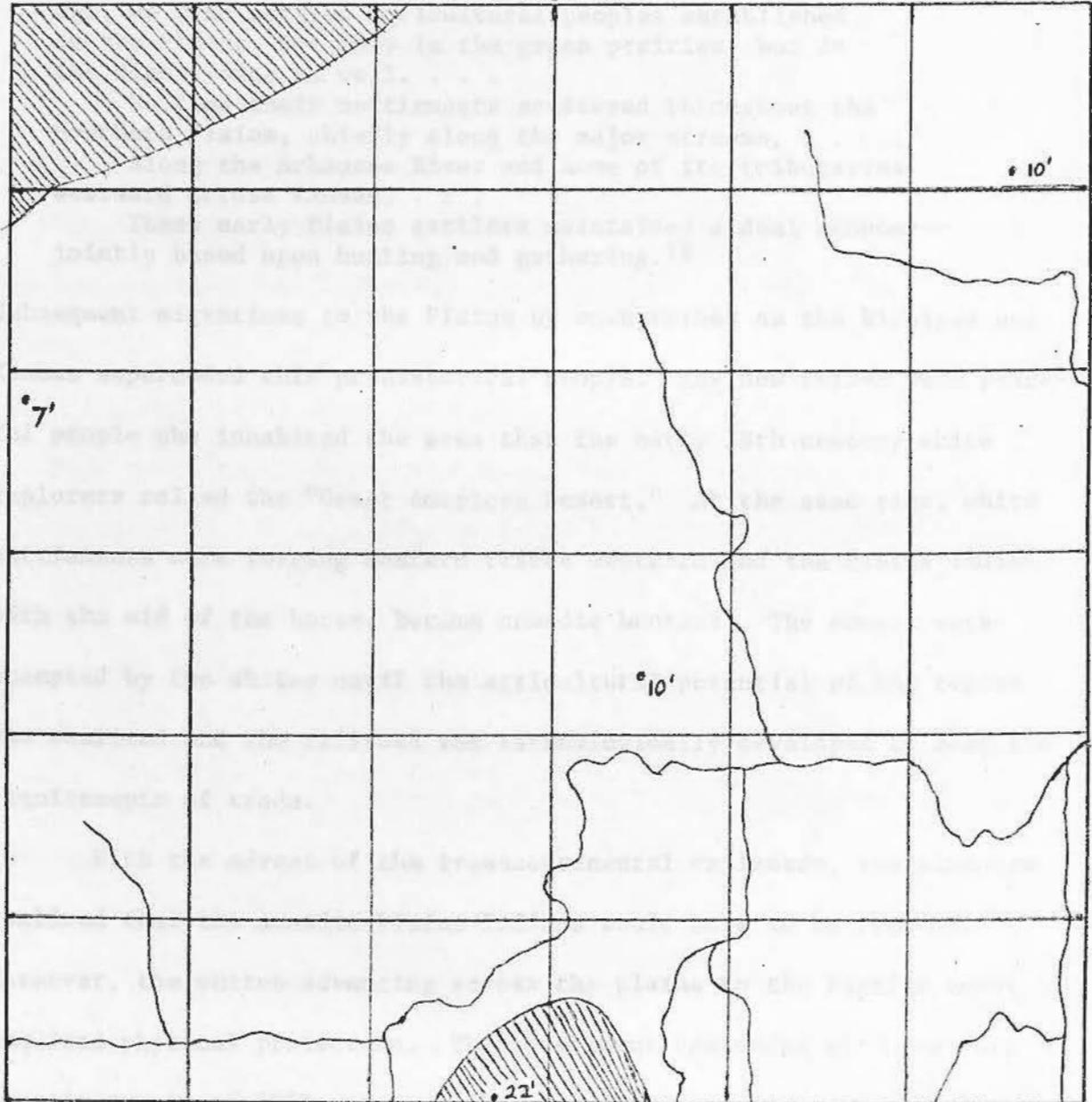
Map was reconstructed from an Areal Geology Map of Reno County found in the back-folio of C. K. Bayne, Geology and Ground-Water Resources of Reno County, Kansas.

- |   |                                |   |          |
|---|--------------------------------|---|----------|
|  | Dune Sand                      |  | Alluvium |
|  | Sanborn and<br>Meade Formation |  | Permian  |

## Map of Langdon Township Showing the

## Depths of the Water Table

R. 9 W. Twp. 25



Map was reconstructed from an Areal Geology Map of Reno County found in the back-folio of C. K. Bayne, Geology and Ground-Water Resources of Reno County, Kansas.

 Below 20 Feet

 20 Feet or Less

thousand years ago.<sup>11</sup>

Another people followed this group and may have inhabited land near or around Langdon. Robert E. Bell offers a description of them.

By 800 years ago, possibly as early as 1000 years ago, we find settled agricultural peoples established on the Plains, not only in the grass prairies, but in the High Plains as well. . . .

We find their settlements scattered throughout the Southern Plains, chiefly along the major streams, . . . .

Along the Arkansas River and some of its tributaries westward across Kansas. . . .

These early Plains settlers maintained a dual economy--- jointly based upon hunting and gathering.<sup>12</sup>

Subsequent migrations to the Plains by such tribes as the Wichitas and Kansas superceded this prehistorical people. The new tribes were peaceful people who inhabited the area that the early 19th century white explorers called the "Great American Desert." At the same time, white settlements were forcing eastern tribes westward and the Plains Indian, with the aid of the horse, became nomadic hunters. The nomads were accepted by the whites until the agricultural potential of the region was realized and the railroad was technologically developed to meet the requirements of trade.

With the advent of the transcontinental railroads, the planners realized that the nomadic Plains Indians would have to be removed. Moreover, the whites advancing across the plains to the Pacific coast required physical protection. The government responded with the Fort Laramie treaty of 1851. Each tribe was given a territory in which they could hunt, and the government was allowed to build forts along the major trails leading westward. Two tribes, the Cheyennes and the

---

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 24-25.

Arapahos were moved south between the Arkansas and North Platte rivers. Another result of the treaty was as Wilcomb E. Washburn observed, "With the Plains tribes moved aside and contained, the weaker border tribes, including the Otos, Omahas, Iowas, Sac, and Foxes were removed from their homes in eastern Nebraska and Kansas."<sup>13</sup>

By the late 1850's and early 1860's, as the settlement of Kansas progressed beyond the free state question, many speculators became aware of the wealth that could be derived in central Kansas if a rail system was devised to market its produce. By 1860, as William Frank Zornow noted:

... the political alignment of anti- and pro-slavery forces in Kansas was altered by the railroad and Indian land question. In many cases, politicians, who had quarreled most vehemently over the question of freedom, joined forces to encourage railroad construction and to raid the remaining Indian lands.<sup>14</sup>

In 1861, the federal government had negotiated the Fort Wise treaty, which gave the Cheyennes and Arapahoes a "faricically small" reservation in the southwest corner of Colorado. With the advent of the Civil War, the federal troops were removed from the area and the Indians ignoring the Fort Wise treaty provisions returned into the state. In fact, the discontent of these Plains tribes with the Washington government was shown by some with their affiliation in the Confederate army. This gave speculators and legislators the perfect pretext for the complete removal of all Indians from Kansas.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Wilcomb E. Washburn, The Indian in America (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1975), p. 193.

<sup>14</sup>William Frank Zornow, Kansas: A History of the Jayhawk State (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), p. 96.

<sup>15</sup>Information concerning the Fort Wise treaty from James L. Haley, The Buffalo War: The History of the Red River Indian Uprising of 1874 (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1976), p. 8, and the

William T. Hagan stated that pressure was applied on Lincoln's administration by the 1862 Kansas delegation ". . . to shift Kansas' Indian population south."<sup>16</sup> However, the Lincoln administration, deeply involved in the war effort, ignored the Indian removal question until the end of the conflict.

Indian discontent on the Plains, whether justified or not, helped hasten their departure from Kansas. Discontent culminated in November, 1864, when Major John Chivington destroyed Black Kettle's peaceful band of Cheyennes on Sand Creek in eastern Colorado. Responding to this event, the federal government decided to negotiate another treaty before the Plains situation got out of hand. There were other considerations supporting a peace initiative with the Indians, for example, Samuel Pomeroy's interest in what became the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railroad. William Unrau explains why this was so important.

Clearly, if lands along the Arkansas river were to constitute an attraction for settlers it was central to the interests of the railroad crowd that the Indian problem be disposed of immediately. Indian depredations were bad publicity and hardly an encouragement to town development.<sup>17</sup>

What resulted is aptly described by James L. Haley.

The Cheyenne-Arapaho and Comanche-Kiowa affiliations made their first joint treaty with the whites in October 1865, at the mouth of the [Little] Arkansas River. In it the government gave them a huge but unfortunately bogus reservation covering parts of Kansas and Colorado and nearly all the Texas panhandle. Senate amendments clipped off the Colorado and Kansas lands, and in Texas the federal government owned not one acre of land to give anybody,

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Civil War from Washburn, The Indian in America, pp. 199-200.

<sup>16</sup> William T. Hagan, American Indians (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 102.

<sup>17</sup> William E. Unrau, "Indian Agent vs. The Army: Some Background Notes on the Kiowa-Comanche Treaty of 1865," Kansas Historical Quarterly 30 (Summer 1964): 147.

thus rendering the Indians officially homeless in their own homeland.<sup>18</sup>

General John Hancock, in quelling subsequent Indian malcontents, made a supreme blunder of his peace-keeping role in Kansas. He, like Chivington, could not resist attacking unarmed Indian bands. He was quickly recalled and a government commission was formed to make an ultimate effort to negotiate a workable treaty. In October, 1867, the government commission completed a treaty that extinguished all Indian land rights in western and central Kansas. During the proceedings, Satanta, a Kiowa, voiced the Indian position towards their lands. Henry M. Stanley's account of Satanta's speech quotes him as saying that: "All the land south of the Arkansas belongs to the Kiowas and Comanches, and I don't want to give away any of it. I love the land and the Buffalo and will not part with any."<sup>19</sup> While Indians' desires were heard, the whites' demands were met.

The Medicine Lodge treaty, also known as the "Treaty with the Cheyenne and Arapaho, 1867," set new boundaries and conditions for the Plains tribes. Article two of the treaty stated:

The United States agrees that following district of country, to wit: commencing at the point where the Arkansas River crosses the 37th parallel of north latitude, thence west on said parallel--the said line being the southern boundry of the state of Kansas--to the Cimaron [sic] River . . . , to the Arkansas River; up the Arkansas River, . . . , to the place of beginning, shall be and the same is hereby set apart for the absolute and undisturbed use and occupation of the Indians herein named, . . . .<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Haley, The Buffalo War, p. 10.

<sup>19</sup>Robert W. Richmond, Kansas: A Land of Contrasts (Saint Charles, Missouri: Forum Press, 1974), pp. 91-92.

<sup>20</sup>J. Charles Kappler, ed., Indian Treaties, 1778-1883 (New York: Interland Publishing Inc., 1953), p. 985.

Article eleven stated:

The tribes who are parties to the agreement hereby stipulate that they will relinquish all right to occupy permanently the territory outside of their reservation as herein defined, but they yet reserve the right to hunt on any lands south of the Arkansas so long as the buffalo may range thereon in such numbers as to justify the chase; and no white settlements shall be permitted on any part of the lands contained in the old reservation as defined by the treaty . . . , at the mouth of the Little Arkansas, . . . , within three years from this date, and they, the said tribes, further expressly agree:

1st. That they will withdraw all opposition to the construction of the railroad now being built on the Smoky Hill River, . . . .

2d. That they will permit the peaceable construction of any railroad not passing over their reservation, as herein defined.<sup>21</sup>

The railroad interests and settlers had finally won out. The Indian no longer stood in the way of the development of south central Kansas.

By 1870, large migrations of settlers were reaching the territory now called Reno county. In 1872, the county was recognized by the state, and Hutchinson was becoming a town soon destined to be a major railway stop for the forthcoming Atchinson, Topeka, and Santa Fe railroad. To the southwest of Hutchinson, in the area now known as Langdon township, buffalo were numerous, but the days of this Great Plains animal were numbered. The Indians still supposedly had the right to hunt them in this area and farms could not be tilled on the plains with the buffalo roaming at large.

Two pretenses were used to justify buffalo pursuit: money and sport. In October, 1872, buffalo hides were valued at \$1.50 to \$2.50 apiece depending upon their quality.<sup>22</sup> The buffalo range began about twenty-five miles southwest of Hutchinson, which put it near or in

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 988.

<sup>22</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) News, 31 October 1872.

Langdon township. A few miles westward in the same area, buffalo were reported "in countless, thousands, blacking the prairie."

One man with his team brought in eighty hides a few days ago. Some of the hunters are in quest of meat, but a very large majority hunt to kill for the mere sport of the thing. Experiments to see how much "lead" a certain buffalo bull can get away with are of common occurrence. This sort of sport seems to us the very acme of human cruelty and should be discouraged everywhere and at all times.<sup>23</sup>

The buffalo herds in the Langdon area were quickly reduced and those remaining went farther south. The Indians became concerned about losing the basic substance to their way of life and went on the warpath in a futile effort to stave off the complete destruction of the buffalo. "The Red River Indian Uprising of 1874," as termed by the Indian historian, James Haley, caused the settlers in and around Hutchinson some concern. John Pry, a homesteader in Langdon township, built a frame house that was to serve as a small refuge against Indian attacks. The walls of the house were filled with stone held together with mud mortar. This supposedly served as a protection from hostile rifle fire and arrows in the event of an Indian invasion.<sup>24</sup>

The "uprising" was put down by February, 1875, and the once-powerful tribes were then reduced to wards of the government. Nonetheless, Indian scares in and around Langdon were prevalent until about 1890. The fear of Indians imagined by the lonely settler out on the wide open plains without a tree in sight was extreme. Whenever it developed into a widely-believed Indian scare, its results reached tragic and preposterous proportions. One such Indian scare in 1885 left Langdon township and the surrounding area in disastrous shape as described by J.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 17 October 1872.

<sup>24</sup> Interview with Mrs. Ethel Miller, Langdon, Kansas, 13 July 1977.

Hubbart, local correspondent for the Hutchinson Interior Herald.

During the Indian scare, many people south and west of here, left their homes and went to the towns, leaving their effects behind. On their return home, a great many failed to find many things. During the scare there were some designing ones that made all of atrocities being committed and advised the people to leave on quick time, and then, no doubt, took advantage of their absences to pillage what was left. . . . Taking it all in all, its results is worse than that of any tornado or cyclone that has ever swept over Kansas soil, as any one can see by a trip through that portion of the state. Yet the people are calm and back on their farms trying to make repairs. Untold sufferings, hardships and many deaths, is the final result of the excitement.<sup>25</sup>

Indian scares aside, with the Indian and buffalo declining by 1870, the settlement and formation of Langdon township began. The Homestead Act of 1862 and the Timber Culture Act of 1873, provided many Union army veterans and other hardy souls with opportunities to fulfill their dreams of free or cheap land.<sup>26</sup>

The lure of free land brought some to south central Kansas to look for self-sufficiency and a life style of their own choosing. Many more, however, were stimulated by the publicity of railroads and land speculators and came to the prairie with hopes of farming relatively free land, reaping a bountiful harvest and selling it at a good profit in the markets promised by the railroads.

The people who came to Langdon township were poorly prepared for

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<sup>25</sup>Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 8 August 1885.

<sup>26</sup>A great many Union Army veterans settled this area. A list of these men is provided in Sheridan Ploughe's, History of Reno County Kansas: Its People, Industries and Institutions, 2 vols. (Indianapolis, Indiana: B. F. Bowen & Co., Inc., 1917). The Kansas State Census Bureau in its Decennial Census of Kansas, 1875, 1885 and 1895, provide the military background of the settlers enumerated in its report.

the harsh realities which greeted them. Life on the plains in south central Kansas in the 1870's and 80's was austere. The first settlers who came to Langdon township were mainly from the Midwest, some from Southern Border states, and a few from New England, the Great Lakes area and the Far West. The only foreign immigrants to the area were two Canadians.<sup>27</sup> Consequently, none of these people had little if any experience with growing crops in a subhumid environment, working relatively sandy prairie soils or transporting their wares with the railroad, which was the key to making farming on the middle frontier feasible. They came from wooded, humid and deep river areas where corn was the major crop. From a pioneer farm in those areas, one was naturally supplied with nearly everything they needed in which to build their homes, water their crops, or transport their produce. Langdon township, by contrast, lacked trees and a natural means of transportation. Rainfall averaged about twenty-nine inches a year, which made the area subhumid.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, these new settlers had to adjust to this new environment, or face disaster in their new venture.

One successful early settler in the Langdon vicinity was John Wesley Jones, born in Macomb, Illinois in 1856, who came to Hutchinson, Kansas in 1875, from Missouri looking for a homestead site. Hutchinson

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<sup>27</sup>The Kansas State Census Bureau, Kansas, Langdon Township, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1875, shows fifty-six heads of family from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa and Ohio; sixteen from Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee and Texas; eight from New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and New Hampshire; one person from California and two from Canada. Oddly enough, one Black inhabitant was recorded in the 1875 census. The total population of Langdon township, which was a township encompassing what would later become six traditionally sized townships of thirty-six sections each, numbered 324 people.

<sup>28</sup>Bouse, Dowd, Ratcliff and Rockers, Soil Survey of Reno County, Kansas, p. 54.

was at that time a small cluster of wood buildings on a treeless plain. Nonetheless, it was an important place in this area as it was a major rail stop for the A.T.&S.F. railway company, and served as the Reno county seat. Upon arriving at Hutchinson, Jones' gaze fell towards the west. He noticed that the land shifted ever so slightly in a broad V shape towards the southwestern part of the county. He decided it was there that water and good grass would be found, as the contour of the land suggested a water drainage pattern. He drove his covered wagon hitched to two geldings onto the prairie. That night, he met another traveler and traded him one of his geldings for two Morgan mares. With these mares, he eventually bred a fine stock of horses. He established his homestead claim, but at the time was too young to make it legal. This did not stop him from living on it. Before his homestead started to prosper, he scoured the countryside for a source of income for the buffalo bones which he found in great quantities in that part of Kansas, and for cow chips, which he traded at Sun City for fence posts and other supplies.<sup>29</sup>

Jones was luckier than most early settlers in the Langdon vicinity, for he received financial support for his homesteading efforts from relatives in Illinois. In fact, he was supported to the extent that he could afford a steam thresher with which he did custom threshing for the farmers in the area. He was able to build a four-room-framed, two-story house, whereas most others at the time were living in dugouts and sod houses. During threshing season he arose at four o'clock in the morning, and since there were no trees or roads, he would guide himself to his destination by the stars, as if he were on an open ocean. Many others

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<sup>29</sup> Interview with Mrs. Ethel Miller, Langdon, Kansas, 5 July 1977, and the Langdon (South Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, 11 June 1926.

who had enough money to afford the trip back to their original homeland when they failed to adapt to plains living, would pass Jones on the Sun City trail on their way back east. During the 1880's many of these people would come up to him and say something like the following:

Come on Jones, let's go back to God's country [Illinois or wherever they might be headed back towards]. [His reply was this:] I'd sure like to go, but I'm so deeply in debt I can't go. I've got to stay here and pay my debts.<sup>30</sup>

Others, like Jones, who came out to this area could not afford to leave once they settled. Everything they possessed was tied up in their homesteads. These people had perserverance, but they often suffered grave deprivations. One woman walked three miles from where she lived to Robert Miller's dugout in hopes of obtaining a little flour with which she could feed her hungry family. Miller took the woman in and fed her dinner, then divided what beans and flour he had with her. Worse yet, it was not uncommon for children, or even adults, to go shoeless during the winter months. Shoes were expensive in the 1880's for these early settlers. Mrs. Ethel Miller, John Jones' daughter and long-time resident of the Langdon area, can remember her father telling that it once took a whole wagon load of wheat to purchase five pairs of shoes for the children. In addition, he had to drive the wagon twenty-eight miles to Hutchinson just to make the transaction.<sup>31</sup>

By 1883, Jones had a 180 acre farm comprised of a half acre in a tree grove, one acre in a fruit orchard and 120 acres under cultivation. Fifty acres were planted in fall wheat which yielded 1,700 bushels in 1882. Even though he thought wheat paid best, he planted more corn than

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<sup>30</sup> Interview with Mrs. Ethel Miller, Langdon, Kansas, 5 July 1977.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

wheat since corn was used primarily for feed and was not sold. Corn was planted in April and cultivated twice. When harvested, it averaged twenty bushels to the acre. This, along with his millet, which averaged two tons per acre, fed 100 head of cattle, six horses and fourteen hogs. He had ten acres planted in oats which yielded 450 bushels. By any standard of measurement, John Jones was indeed one of the fortunate ones during the early days in the Langdon area.<sup>32</sup>

Whether one was wealthy or not, all of the early settlers suffered many hardships. For example, the prairie fire was a hazard feared by every settler on the Plains, for in a few short minutes, with little notice, everything a settler had built could go up in smoke. In 1877, the Reverend G. W. Alexander wrote an account of one fire occurring in Langdon township.

Prairie fires have done considerable damage in our township recently. On Tuesday, March 20th, a fire swept through the neighborhood, regardless of roadways, hedges and firebreaks, the wind being very high. The loses in this immediate neighborhood were as follows.

David Elliot, stables and grain; Mr. Dunkin, stable and reaper, and a horserake . . .; Jesse Sinclair, stable, Marsh harvester and plow; Wm. McKee, stable and two horses; Wm. Beaman, stable, reaper, hay and harness. My stable and some of my farming implements were destroyed. The cause of the fire is at present unknown. We hope to be spared the calamity of more prairie fires in the future.<sup>33</sup>

With dry spells not uncommon to this area, and the risk of losing so much in so short time to fire, the early settler had to be especially vigilant. Plowed furrows around one's home and a sharp eye for smoke on the horizon had to be maintained. In case of prairie fire, every neighbor worked quickly to ensure the safety of each others homes.<sup>34</sup> After 1890, with

<sup>32</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior, 26 April 1883.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 5 April 1877.

<sup>34</sup> Interview with Mrs. Ethel Miller, Langdon, Kansas, 5 July 1977.

most of the native grasses plowed under for farm crops, the dangers of prairie fire were greatly diminished.<sup>35</sup>

The most devastating of all natural disasters in this area was the grasshopper plague of 1874.<sup>36</sup> Alfred Bradshaw in his local history, When the Prairies Were New, graphically described its effects.

Without warning the grasshoppers came in thick clouds, darkening the sun like a heavy rain cloud. They settled everywhere, eating everything that was green, . . . . They ate the small limbs off of little trees. They liked the leather harness for the oil and salt that was in it. Some of the early housewives even claimed they ate their window curtains. Sometimes the grasshoppers settled so thick on the steel rails of the railroad tracks that the engine could not start the train because of the wheels slipping.<sup>37</sup>

To ease the destitution caused by the plague, Kansas governor Thomas Osborn asked the state legislature for a relief plan. Professor Robert Richmond has described the plan as not "sufficient," and as a result, the governor made a plea to all Americans for aid.<sup>38</sup> In and around the city of Hutchinson, there was talk of organizing a buffalo hunt to

<sup>35</sup>The last account of a prairie fire in the Langdon area read by this author was in the Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 22 March 1890. It read in part: "Yesterday Mr. Ewing thought he would have a little fire, a match applied and, with the assistance of a good breeze and dry atmosphere, it was soon on its way of destruction and Mr. Ewing, to his dismay, saw it was a roaring success. In short time it had burned over a mile square of territory, . . . what further damage it did we have not yet heard, but Mr. Ewing and his little match was a success anyhow, affording as it did, a prodigious amount of exercise, that warm day, for some twenty or thirty men and teams."

<sup>36</sup>James C. Malin, in Winter Wheat in the Golden Belt of Kansas (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 1944), p. 58 states that "The spectacular aspects of the grasshopper raids have diverted attention from the chinch bug which was currently rated as more widespread and serious in its ravages." This author has found no evidence of the chinch bug's destruction in Langdon township, although it is certain that the township suffered from it. Therefore, his evidence restricts him from elaborating upon the effects of the chinch bug.

<sup>37</sup>Alfred B. Bradshaw, When the Prairies Were New (Turon, Kansas: by Arthur J. Allen, 1957), p. 16.

<sup>38</sup>Richmond, Kansas, p. 133.

supply food to the hungry throughout the county. However, nothing ever came of this proposed grandiose scheme of relief. There was no federal relief and the private aid provided was paltry. What aid that did come to the people of Langdon township was distributed at the "Langdon Store."

Before the county was legally formed, there existed a small trading store in the far western side of what was to become Arlington township. It was owned by a man with the last name of Langdon, hence the name of the store. Langdon township and town also derived their names from this otherwise unknown man.<sup>39</sup> Probably before 1872, another man by the name of John Ulmer bought out Langdon and managed the store and a newly-founded post office. J. A. Fehr recorded in his local history, Arlington, that

This post office also served as a store for arms and ammunition for the government in case of an invasion by the Indians. It was also used by our government to distribute supplies to the needy at the time of the grasshopper invasion when the country was made destitute. Orlando Spencer, who lived at Alcott, [sic Olcott] Kansas, walked eighteen miles to get his share of supplies from this station. It consisted of a piece of bacon, three by four inches, and one half pint of beans. On his way home, he became so hungry when he reached the Adolph Wendling place, east of [present] Langdon, he built a fire with buffalo chips, roasted his bacon and parched his beans.<sup>40</sup>

If these ordeals were not enough to test one's willingness to live on the Plains, sickness was.

Diseases seldom encountered by most Americans today reached epidemic proportions at Langdon. Mrs. Miller recalled how a girlfriend of hers died

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<sup>39</sup>Throughout the entire course of this author's research, he was not able to determine who Langdon was, where he came from or when he left Reno county. What information there is about Langdon comes from Mary Adams, "History of Langdon, Kansas" (Presented to the high school assembly, Langdon, Kansas, 1922), pp. 1-2.

<sup>40</sup>J. A. Fehr, Arlington (Wichita, Kansas: The Wichita Eagle Press, 1937), p. 54.

quite suddenly of diphtheria.<sup>41</sup> Mr. Floyd Hobbs told of how typhoid fever was common because of poor well systems.<sup>42</sup> Another epidemic occurred at the school in Jordan Springs, at one time a small hamlet one and one-half miles southwest of present Langdon. In February, 1885, the directors of the school ordered it closed on account of an outbreak of measles.<sup>43</sup> During the same year, there were many reports of diphtheria and deaths caused by it in the township.<sup>44</sup> It almost goes without saying that during the winter months, pneumonia was widespread. All in all though, it seems from accounts in the paper that diphtheria was the number one killer in Langdon township.

While the aforestated hazards proved difficult for the early settlers, adapting to the Plains environment also posed severe challenges. Materials used in building a homestead had to be transported to the settlers. Around Langdon township, lumber was a scarce commodity, and the settler had to transport themselves what they needed from Hutchinson or Medicine Lodge.<sup>45</sup> Until settlers could afford to build a home from imported lumber, they adapted to the Plains environment by building either sodhouses or dugouts.

Much has been written about the construction of the prairie sodhouse, how the sod was cut, how some of the better ones had raftered roofs, and how all had dirt floors and few with glass windows. Little

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<sup>41</sup> Interview with Mrs. Ethel Miller, Langdon, Kansas, 5 July 1977.

<sup>42</sup> Interview with Mr. Floyd Hobbs, Langdon, Kansas, 18 July 1975.

<sup>43</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 28 February 1885.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> During the interview with Mr. Floyd Hobbs, Langdon, Kansas, 18 July 1975, he described how his father and other neighbors drove a team and wagon to Medicine Lodge to buy lumber needed to build their homes and farm structures.

has been written about the other form, the dugout, which resembles what many today would call a stormcellar. The manner in which a dugout was constructed is described in Bradshaw's local history. The construction was achieved by digging a hole

. . . into the ground usually about six or eight by ten feet square, sometimes smaller. In building the roof they would use a ridge pole and rafters, using 2 by 4's or sometimes poles hauled from Barber county, close to Medicine Lodge. On top of the rafters brush would be laid. This brush was gathered along creeks from small willows. On top of the brush the longest and toughest slough grass that could be found was spread evenly six or eight inches thick. On top of this they would put the sod, the same kind that was used in building sod houses. The furniture was not moved very often, the bed and stove never. When digging the hole of a dugout a shelf, about two feet high and the right size for a bed, was left in one corner, and the bed clothes were just spread on this.<sup>46</sup>

The dugout was the least sturdy of the three forms of early housing and there were accounts of large animals, e.g., buffalo, wandering across the roofs and causing grievous destruction to their contents as they fell through. Though this was the case, the dugout did serve an important function. It fulfilled the legal requirements for a residency and allowed a settler to file and to maintain his claim on his homestead. Still yet, the dugout and sodhouse were miserable dwellings, and as soon as the settler was able to build a frame house, however crude, it was done.<sup>47</sup>

One must assume that the early forms of frame housing in Langdon township were crude. An account rendered of one home that was remodeled in 1885 and considered "grand" illustrates that point. "Will Deffenbaugh's house is being remodeled, fence-board paneling for the east room, tar

<sup>46</sup> Bradshaw, When the Prairies Were New, pp. 13-14.

<sup>47</sup> Allen G. Bogue, Money at Interest (New York: Russell & Russell, 1955), p. 2.

paper covering for the roof, and everything that is grand."<sup>48</sup> Another account of the poor housing in early Langdon township came from Lamont Tibbits, an early settler. In his later years, he told his daughter about the hard winter of 1885-86. When Lamont's family came to Langdon, they took up a deserted homestead and lived in a claim shanty, 12 x 14 feet. Lamont slept on the floor and kept warm as best he could. He remembers it being so cold and windy that the hogs lost the flesh off their backs. For a boy of eleven, it was an ordeal which he long remembered.<sup>49</sup>

Besides the poor living conditions, it was very hard to adjust to planting. In the spring of 1880, one discouraged settler reported to the editor of the Interior Herald how poorly the crops around Langdon township looked.

Still dry and windy.

Wheat about gone. Think it will be a total failure. Some corn planted; some quit plowing and planting waiting for rain; some going to the railroad to work.

. . . We have learned some economy since coming here in Kansas, we sew our boots with wire.<sup>50</sup>

Another account during the same year bemoaned the same situation.

The wheat crop of this locality is a failure this year on account of the drouth. Corn is looking as well as could be expected.

The farmers of this locality are talking of stock raising hereafter, as they have not succeeded well at farming.

There will not be much wheat sown in this locality this fall unless there be some way provided for the farmers to get seed wheat, for most of them are not able to buy the seed, and a number will be obliged to go away and work to support their families.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 19 September 1885.

<sup>49</sup> Interview with Mrs. Lucille Dunn, Langdon, Kansas, 28 July 1977.

<sup>50</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior, 29 April 1880.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 8 July 1880.

In 1885 during the spring, nearly one-half of the wheat planted suffered from winter-kill. Nonetheless, the successful season the year before inspired many to enlarge their operations. But when harvest time passed and threshing began, yields were reported at very low levels. Yields of six and seven bushels per acre were reported for wheat. This seemed to indicate that the farmers in the Langdon area were not yet adjusted to winter wheat growing. But this is not to say that all were failing at farming. J. Bainum's homestead was a good example of farm development under the right circumstances and management. Aside from the Interior Herald's obvious boosterism, the following account tells the story.

Mr. Bainum has a well improved homestead of 480 acres in section 12--Langdon township; 240 acres of it improved; it is water [sic] by creek, never failing; there is a planted grove of 7,000 trees and 25 acres in orchard, cottonwood, walnut, honey locust, coffee bean, mountain ash, pear, peach, plum, cherry, strawberry, raspberry, blackberry, gooseberry, all doing well and small fruits bearing; 105 acres are in pasture; . . .; forty acres in fall wheat; yield 817 bu., corn planted middle of April, plowed two and three times, average 30 bu., gen. average 25; millet averaged two tons per acre; from the success of timothy put out five years ago he is induced to put out some more this spring; he has 30 head of hogs, 35 head of cattle and 9 horses; . . .; he has about 500 bu. wheat in granary, corn farming implements, etc., has only been in Kansas eight years and has made all his property here except \$1,000 which would clear him of incumbrance.<sup>52</sup>

Added to the early settler's struggle with nature, disease and adaptation problems were encounters with land speculation.<sup>53</sup> Land settlement patterns in Langdon township proper in 1875 reveal certain traits.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 22 March 1883.

<sup>53</sup>When this author writes about the speculator, it is that type whom Leslie E. Decker has termed the "speculator-capitalist." "The Great Speculation: An Interpretation of Mid-Continent Pioneering," as quoted in: The Frontier in American Development: Essays in Honor of Paul Wallace Gates, ed. by David M. Ellis (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1969), pp. 362-363.

Initially, the early settler realized which government lands had the best potential for raising crops, and these were settled first. The sand hills thus proved to be the last public lands claimed in the township.<sup>54</sup> Yet it does not follow that these people knew how best to utilize these tracts. Secondly, not only in Langdon township but throughout the entire county, the railroad lands were purchased at a later date than the government homesteads lands. The A.T.&S.F. railroad may have been spending money in advertising their lands, but they were in no hurry to realize profits from them. Considering the art of speculation, it behooved the railroad's land agents not to sell early. They waited until most of the public lands were disposed and developed and then sold the railroad lands. By these means they achieved a higher price than if they sold when the public lands first became available.

In 1883, the A.T.&S.F. railroad company sold 11,327 acres of land in Reno county to Alexander Forsha et al. for a relatively cheap sum of \$33,363.98.<sup>55</sup> Section one of Langdon township was a part of this acreage and when James Tough came to Langdon township in 1884, he bought 160 acres in it from Forsha. So as it was then, instead of the A.T.&S.F. selling directly to the settler, which is the generally accepted story, they sold to a land company. The settler then had to contend with the land company instead of the railroad. Tough bought his land at \$6.00 an acre, which was a fair price in 1883.<sup>56</sup> As soon

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<sup>54</sup> See map of Langdon township in 1875, p. 32.

<sup>55</sup> Reno County, Kansas "Register of Deeds Numerical Index, Range No. 9, Township No. 25," 1 June 1872-1 June 1924.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., to get the figure of \$6.00 an acre, the author took the price paid for the land and divided by 160 to arrive at the stated figure.

Map of Langdon Township, 1875, Showing  
Land Settlement Patterns

R. 9 W.



This map was reconstructed from a map of Reno County found in the Kansas Department of Agriculture, First Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1877-1878, p. 382.

- A.T.&S.F. Railroad Lands
- Public Lands
- Claimed Lands

as he bought, he turned around and mortgaged his land for \$758.<sup>57</sup> It is not known whether this was for capital improvements, which it probably was, or to pay the initial cost of \$960 for the land. Whichever it was, the company which held Tough's mortgage was Forsha and Logan, and the money came from Logan's Bank of Greenwood, Missouri.<sup>58</sup> What now becomes apparent is that the same people who bought the land from the railroad were also reaping a dual return from such mortgage payments. These were set at four annual payments amounting to \$192 at 8% annual interest.<sup>59</sup> What is not clear about this transaction, but somewhat intriguing, is Forsha's connection with the land agents of the railroad, John B. Brown and L. A. Bigger. It is known that Forsha and Brown often worked together in their dealings. It would be interesting to know what connection, if any, existed between the two with regards to the \$33,363.98 land transaction.<sup>60</sup> Unfortunately, this part of the story will probably never be revealed.

Even the homesteading settlers often found themselves involved with the land speculator. For a fee, a land speculator would locate a homestead site for a settler and take care of the preparation of the legal documents concerning the site selected. Brown and Bigger located over 250,000 acres of homestead land in Reno county.<sup>61</sup> This was over one-fourth of the entire county, and one must also consider that this

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<sup>57</sup> Reno County, Kansas "Mortgages, Book #15," p. 604.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> The Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 21 November 1885, reported that Brown and Forsha together had sold about five-hundred steers that month. As also reported in the Herald, 19 September 1896, Forsha was in Brown's office "transacting business" when the latter suffered a stroke and died.

<sup>61</sup> A. T. Andreas, History of the State of Kansas (Chicago: by the Author, 1883), p. 1373.

did not include the railroad lands of the A.T.&S.F. which they also had under their management. Consequently, Brown and Bigger did very well for themselves from both public and railroad lands.

People still came to Langdon township seeking farms irregardless of natural disasters, sickness and the speculators. To be sure, people left when the going got rough, but more came in than left. In 1875, the township's population was 324 and by 1880 it had reached 509. These two figures are misleading though as they represent Langdon township when the land area which composed it was far larger than thirty-six sections.<sup>62</sup> In 1883, when Langdon township had been reduced to normal township proportion--thirty-six sections--the population was 257, which is an accurate base figure upon which to chart subsequent population growth.<sup>63</sup> By 1885, the township was showing a steady growth numbering 294 people.<sup>64</sup>

In 1875, there was a total of eighty-one families in the township, and they possessed sixty-three horses and thirty-eight mules.<sup>65</sup> It seems likely that not all of the families were engaged, at that point, in agricultural pursuits. It is probable that not all the claims were permanently

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<sup>62</sup> Before a township could be organized, it had to meet the following requirements. A county board petitions the county into townships making sure that first, each area of land involved is not less than thirty square miles, and second, that the population of the area numbered at least two-hundred electors. Therefore, as Langdon township's population increased, its land area became less, until it reached its present boundaries. See: James W. Drury, Township Government in Kansas (Lawrence, Kansas: Government Research Center, University of Kansas, 1954), p. 3. Population figures come from the Kansas State Census Bureau, Kansas, Langdon Township, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1875, and the United States Census Bureau, U.S., Population Schedule for Langdon Township, Kansas, 1880.

<sup>63</sup> Kansas Department of Agriculture, Fourth Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1883-1884 (Topeka, Kansas: Kansas Publishing House, 1885), p. 339.

<sup>64</sup> Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1885.

<sup>65</sup> Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1875.

settled even though the settlers who had the claims were counted as part of the general population. Since horses and mules were the main means of transportation and the sole source of power to operate the farm equipment of that day, their numbers would not have seemed adequate to service eighty-one families. Whereas by 1885, after Langdon township had become more permanently settled, horses numbered 933 and mules and asses numbered sixty-one.<sup>66</sup>

While not one single acre was fenced or hedged in 1875, substantial quantities of corn, wheat, oats, rye, and barley had been planted.<sup>67</sup> Corn was the predominant crop of the township with 2,206 acres planted as opposed to wheat, which was second in predominance with 727 acres planted. The combined planted acreage of oats, rye and barley amounted to less than four-hundred acres. The fodder crops of Langdon township were millet, with fifty-four acres planted, and corn. As the leading crop of the area, corn served as the main feed for the township's 104 head of cattle (the combined total of beef and milk cows), and the corn cobs were saved for heating fuel. The scarcity of traditional heating fuel, i.e., coal and wood, and the lack of an adequate transportation system to deliver them, necessitated the development of such alternative means.<sup>68</sup>

By 1885, the open range began to disappear as 4,333 acres were fenced, slightly more than one-fifth of the township. Corn was still

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<sup>66</sup> Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1885.

<sup>67</sup> Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1875. Regarding fencing, apparently the lack of fencing was not an impediment to planting crops. Walter P. Webb, The Great Plains (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1931), p. 287, states that without fencing the farmer could have no crops. Langdon township either was not harassed by a cattlemen-farmer conflict or was an exception to Webb's thesis.

<sup>68</sup> Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1875. Interviews with Mrs. Ethel Miller and Mr. Floyd Hobbs, Langdon, Kansas, 18 July 1975. Both explained the necessity of saving cobs for heating fuel.

the main crop with approximately the same acreage as planted in 1875, which in reality, since the township boundaries encompassed less area than in 1875, represented an increase. Winter wheat was gaining acceptance with over 1,500 acres planted.<sup>69</sup>

The rise in the number of acres planted in corn reflected the increase of cattle and swine in the township. Fatted cattle and milk cows numbered 796. Swine increased from nine in 1875 to 717 by 1885. The number of sheep were always minimal in proportion to cattle and swine and accounted for only a small percent of the livestock production in the area. Livestock production accounted for a good percent of the farm income. In 1885 the value of fattened stock sold for \$5,226. Also, by this time there were approximately 30,000 trees planted in the township, including such varieties as apple, pear, peach, plum, cherry, cottonwood and a few walnut and maple.<sup>70</sup>

In 1875 not one school building existed in the township.<sup>71</sup> By 1880, there were two school buildings there, and a third at the site of Old Langdon.<sup>72</sup> The Maple Grove school district had an estimated value, including school-house grounds, of \$200. The value of the school furniture was \$10. There is no record of what kind of structure this

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<sup>69</sup>Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1875.

<sup>70</sup>Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1885.

<sup>71</sup>Although the Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1875 does not enumerate either church or school in the township, there did exist a school building at Old Langdon. Interview with Mrs. Ethel Miller, Langdon, Kansas, 5 July 1977, revealed that her mother, who had been a college graduate, taught school at Old Langdon.

<sup>72</sup>The school district records indicate that there were three schools in operation by 1880. For the location of each district, see the map on p. 53. The development of the Old Langdon school district will not be traced, because its location provided more of a service for Arlington than it did for Langdon town and township.

building was, but one might guess that it was a frame one. The expenditures for the school were unbelievably low. For example, in 1879, the amount paid to the one male teacher for a six-month term was \$72. There was \$1.35 spent for repairs, fuel and incidentals. These two figures represented the total expenditures for the school district, There were nineteen students enrolled in this school and they ranged in age from six years to eighteen years old. The Appleton text was used for the first through the fourth grade reader while the McGuffey was used as the fifth grade reader. The Swinton text was used for writing and printing.<sup>73</sup>

The other school district was Jordan Springs. It had one school-house structure which was constructed of sod and had an estimated value of \$75; its one teacher received a monthly salary of \$15. One cannot trace the financial statement of this school district as the person who conducted the annual report noted: "Cannot fill out this. The Clerks and Treasures [sic] Book does not fully show the financial standing of the District." Although the exact receipts and expenditures are unknown, the district was financed on twenty mills against a combined assessed valuation of personal and real property of \$4,607.<sup>74</sup>

There was not a single unabridged dictionary in the school for the students use. The McGuffey text was used for reading in grades first through the fourth. The other texts used were the Spencerian for writing

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<sup>73</sup> Reno County, Kansas, "Annual Report of School District No. 62, For the Year Ending July 31st, 1880," 12 August 1880.

When the relative values of the Jordan Springs and Maple Grove schools are compared, the differences in values suggest that the structure at Maple Grove was more substantial than the one at Jordan Springs. There were no brick school structures in the township until after 1913.

<sup>74</sup> Reno County, Kansas, "Annual Report of School District 57, For the Year Ending July 31st, 1880," 20 August 1880.

in the primary grades, Swinton for history, Robinson for algebra, Mitchel for geography and Green for grammar in the advanced grades. There were twenty-two students enrolled with an average daily attendance of fifteen students. The twenty-two students enrolled out of an eligible twenty-six suggests that there was a degree of importance attached to a basic education.<sup>75</sup>

In 1875 neither school nor church existed in Langdon township.<sup>76</sup> Since much of the early frontier social life was tied to these institutions, it was apparently not well developed. In the later 1870's Sunday conventions were held occasionally in some of the early school houses.<sup>77</sup> Although by 1885 there were fifty members in three different churches, this represents only a small portion of the total population of the township, and meant that formal church affairs were not well developed.<sup>78</sup> Probably many early frontier settlers viewed Sunday as another day demanding their toil on their farms. Although this seemed to be the case, as soon as the economics of the area improved, population increased and the people adapted to the Plain's environment, they took their firmly-maintained Christian beliefs and channeled them into formal church affairs.

It seems hard to understand just why one might wish to endure what these early settlers did; but one finds that they had a love of their land, hope for the future, faith in themselves and a belief in progress. A letter from Mary Watkins of Langdon township in May of 1877 to the editor of the Interior Herald illustrates these feelings.

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

<sup>76</sup>See: Note 71.

<sup>77</sup>Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior, 3 May 1877.

<sup>78</sup>Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1885.

I would rather read letters from other correspondents than write one myself, but after a short ramble through the maple and peach grove this morning, after the dark gloomy rain clouds had been dispelled, I was prompted to write a few sentences in regard to the luxuriant growth and prolific prospect of vegetation generally. The fields are dressed in the verdure of spring, cheering and encouraging the hearts of husbandmen and bidding fair for an abundant crop; also beautiful trees in which the weary song birds find a pleasant retreat, and flowers, the most beautiful and of many different kinds, are springing up over the green carpeted prairies. Animating and cheering are the beauties of spring. For indeed it is pleasant to hear the birds sing. Gardens look well. The country we live in is as beautiful as ever the sun shone upon. Our Sunday school seems to be in a flourishing condition with now and then one or more new scholars which aids in swelling our numbers. Oh! what a contrast in social and religious privileges we enjoy at present compared with what we enjoyed two or three years ago. How vast the improvements in every respect. Our songs of adoration and praise should ascend in fervent and melodious strains to that Divine Author who has kindly preserved our lives and again permitted us to witness the return of another joyous spring.<sup>79</sup>

People may have had praise and faith but they also knew how to complain about certain conditions. Three problems seemed to bother people in Langdon township. Marketing their wheat for a good price has always been a source of concern with the farmer. In November of 1877, Arthur Dewhrist wrote a letter to the editor of the Interior Herald stating his case.

About two months ago I offered some of my wheat for sale in Hutchinson, but could not find a buyer. One person offered me forty cents per bushel, and then declined buying at any price. I took the wheat to the Hutchinson mill and got 15 pounds of XXX flour per bushel. I have just returned from the mill at Arlington where I took some of the same kind of wheat which I had ground and received 34 pounds of XXXX flour to the bushel besides paying one-eighth toll.<sup>80</sup>

Many also felt that they were not being fairly represented in the county elections.<sup>81</sup> But the major problem seemed to be a lack of transportation

<sup>79</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior, 31 May 1877.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 22 November 1877.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 1 July 1880. "From excessive modesty, or some other cause,

to the area. A letter from the Langdon area in 1880 succinctly states the grievance.

We would like to have haste in our Chicago Nebraska & Kansas railroad through this country in order to give poor people work so as to keep them here. We are bound to seek some other port unless there is a change.<sup>82</sup>

The railroad did not come as soon as this person had hoped, but by October 1885, railroad construction through the southwestern part of Reno county was imminent.

Sumers of the Chicago, Kansas and Nebraska railway and the Denver, Memphis and Atlantic railway building through southwestern Reno county were commonplace in that region in 1885. The majority of the people in the southwestern townships were excited at the prospect of better rail-road transportation and the anticipated commercial benefits. Not only would the farmer of the area profit from the railroads' place to build, but construction also opened the door for speculators to utilize their special talents. When the two lines were constructed through Reno county in 1884 and 1887, they stimulated land speculation, land sales and the transfer of property. The district of Langdon was the result of a struggle between two other good towns, Loring and Loring, to locate the passage of the C.R. & N. railway line through their respective townships.

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Langdon and adjoining townships of the southwest, have always allowed themselves to be slighted in the district election of the county offices. . . . We have many good men in all of these townships who are abundantly capable of filling any of the offices (save county attorney) that are to be provided for this fall."

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., 29 April 1880.

## CHAPTER II

### THE IRON HORSE BRINGS THE MIDAS-MAN

I'll take from the blind and I'll get up  
Ahead, and I'll sneak up behind and I'll steal.  
I'll take all that you have and then all you've concealed.  
I'll take anything I can get--I'll make you,  
I'll break you, and I'll make you sweat.  
Nothing is worth nothing unless it's  
Made for Midas-Man.

Renaissance, "Midas Man"

Rumors of the Chicago, Kansas and Nebraska railway and the Denver, Memphis and Atlantic railway building through southwestern Reno county were commonplace in that region in 1884.<sup>1</sup> The majority of the people in the southwestern townships were excited at the prospect of having railroad transportation and the anticipated commercial benefits. Not only would the farmer of the area profit from the railroads' plans to build, but construction also opened the door for speculators to employ their special talents. When the two lines were constructed through Reno county in 1886 and 1887, they stimulated land speculation, boom towns and the promise of prosperity. The birth of Langdon was the result of a struggle between two other boom towns, Lerado and Turon, to secure the passage of the C.K.&N. railway line through their communities.

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<sup>1</sup>Bradshaw, When the Prairies Were New, p. 30. For the sake of clarity, the Chicago, Kansas and Nebraska railway company will be referred to as the C.K.&N. and likewise the Denver, Memphis and Atlantic as simply the D.M.&A. The C.K.&N. was a branch line of the Rock Island railroad company and at times referred to in the contemporary newspapers as the Rock Island. The reader should keep in mind that these two were one and the same.

Before the building of the railroad, southwestern Reno county was dotted by small post office sites. Generally, they were comprised of not more than two or three buildings. A general supply store, sometimes a school house and a post office with the latter often times doubling as private residences, were all that composed these sites.<sup>2</sup> Jordan Springs, Old Langdon, Buffalo and Arlington were towns of this nature. Arlington was more substantial than the others, for it was on the Sun City trail which was the major trade route through the area. The town was also situated near a bend in the Ninnescah River and served as a watering hole for Texas' cattle on their way to Abilene when the surrounding area was open range.<sup>3</sup> Three of the above-named sites were to disappear with the coming of the railroad, while the other had changed from a mere post office site and occasional watering hole to a railpoint.

In 1885, with the winds of change blowing more robustly, Dr. John A. Brady arrived in the area. He had been a physician and president of the Ohio Valley Cement Company in Louisville, Kentucky.<sup>4</sup> He came to south central Kansas with hopes of creating a great rail center. He began his undertaking by buying land south of Buffalo and started building the boom town of Lerado. By October, 1885, Lerado was well on its way as indicated by a report to the Hutchinson Interior Herald.

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<sup>2</sup>The Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 4 April 1885, gave this brief description of Jordan Springs in one of its wedding announcements. The description was also typical of Old Langdon and Buffalo. "Mr. Coopedge, the Jordan Springs merchant, and Mrs. Garrett have been made one since last report. They keep a general supply store, and distribute the newspapers at the postoffice." One other structure existed in this tiny burg, and that was the school house.

<sup>3</sup>Fehr, Arlington, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Mary E. Winter, Kentucky Historical Society Library, personal letter to author, 30 June 1977. Ms. Winter checked the 1882 Louisville City Directory and found the following entry: Brady, John A., physician, 550 3d, and pres. Ohio Valley Cement Co., 4 544 2d.

The town site of Lerado was bought and surveyed six or eight weeks ago. The present status of the place is, several buildings, a lumberyard, a concrete brick-yard, stage line to Kingman, and a weekly newspaper. This week Dr. Brown will start a boarding house, the material is on hand for Jenk's new building, while a stage line to Hutchinson and a loan and insurance office is talked of. Old Buffalo town is not moved down yet. The town plat is beautiful, being nearly covered with fine trees.<sup>5</sup>

Although Brady seemed to have the best prospects for a successful boomer, one other town's developers were in competition with Lerado for the D.M.&A.

Turon also hoped to attract the railroad. This site was not as well developed as Lerado. Nonetheless, other factors besides sizable brick buildings affected the outcome of the contest that determined who would gain the passage of the railroad. Thus, at the same time when Lerado was boasting of its fine buildings, Turon confidently asserted that it had virtually secured the D.M.&A.'s route through its town limits. This was expressed by one Turonite in the Interior Herald in October, 1885.

Our people are almost sure of a railroad now. Our neighboring town of Lerado, appears certain of the same road, but it is all up a stump, as the D.M.&A. have decided to come to Turon, if they can get the necessary bonds.<sup>6</sup>

The matter of obtaining bond issues proved to be a crucial factor in the struggle for the railroad.

Unlike the A.T.&S.F., which mainly financed its construction costs with generous land grants and bonds and stocks, the C.K.&N. and the D.M.&A. were solely financed with county and township bonds and general stock.<sup>7</sup> With the coming of the railroads through this area, the fate

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<sup>5</sup>Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 3 October 1885.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>The A.T.&S.F. was one of the last roads through western Kansas to

of towns depended on whether or not they could attract railroads to build through their communities. Consequently, the pressure to vote and secure bond issues to insure the passage of a given line was tremendous. It was this concern which set the stage for an intense struggle between the boom towns of Lerado and Turon.

With the D.M.&A. representatives aware of the competition between the two towns, it is possible that they played both ends against the middle. The D.M.&A. was building from Kingman in the south to St. John to the north. Some people believed it was to pass somewhere near Jordan Springs as well as Lerado or Turon. In fact, Jordan Springs had little chance of securing the D.M.&A.; but the D.M.&A. attempted to convince them otherwise. During the later part of October, 1885, this report from Jordan Springs was printed in the Interior Herald:

The D.M.&A. railroad has made a preliminary survey of its line. The depot is to be one mile north of Jordan Springs and it is thought by many that it will make the most promising town between Kingman and St. John.<sup>8</sup>

It is probable that the railroad encouraged this rumor to get Turon and Lerado moving on the bonds.

Apparently though, by January, 1886, things looked bleak for Lerado. It was reported that Brady had become disenchanted with his Lerado enterprise when it seemed plausible that he was not going to secure the D.M.&A. line and that he had sold his interest in the town.<sup>9</sup> However, Brady hung on, and by July, 1886, he had received encourage-

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be awarded federal land grants. William Zornow explained in his history, Kansas, p. 143, why the practice of land grants to the railroads was discontinued. Also, the A.T.&S.F. was the only rail company that had land grants recorded in the Reno County, Kansas "Register of Deeds, Numerical Index, Range No. 9, Township No. 25," 1 June 1872-1 June 1924.

<sup>8</sup>Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 24 October 1885.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 2 January 1886.

ment about the prospects for Lerado when once again the course of the D.M.&A. seemed headed through Lerado. Bonds seemed to be at the heart of this matter once again as this report to the Interior Herald exemplifies.

The president of the D.M.&A., in company with Dr. Brady, visited Lerado this week, had a talk with the people, and submitted a proposition to build his road into this town within six months, provided bonds were voted.<sup>10</sup>

By the middle of August, Lerado appeared to have secured the D.M.&A. line according to a report in the Interior Herald.

Last week President Burns and Contractor Mallory of the D.M.&A., passed through Lerado on their way to St. John, looking over the proposed route and yesterday the engineers completed the survey from Kingman to Lerado.<sup>11</sup>

In terms of development, Lerado was certainly the best candidate for the railroad. During this time, the town was in a period of rapid growth. As its own newspaper, the Lerado Weekly Ledger, attested:

We have a \$25,000 system of water works with three miles of water mains. We have a large steam flouring mill. We have three massive and substantial brick buildings and a fourth undergoing construction.

Listed among the businesses of the town were a bank, the newspaper, brick company, restaurant, drug store, grocery stores, dry goods and clothing store, blacksmith, lumber yard, hardware store, hotel, bakery, three physicians, meat market, livery barn, lawyer and veterinary surgeon.<sup>12</sup>

The fourth building undergoing construction was an opera house, which was described in the Interior Herald.

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 24 July 1886.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 21 August 1886.

<sup>12</sup>Lerado (Kansas) Weekly Ledger, 11 November 1886.

Lerado is building an opera house sixty by eighty feet, two stories high, with galvanized iron front. The lower story will be divided into three rooms for business purposes, while the upper story will be one room. It will be provided with raised seats, stage and other appurtenances of a first-class opera house, and is to be completed by the first of January.<sup>13</sup>

This was quite an impressive structure by any standards for this area.

Moreover, the water system, considering that Lerado was a boomer, was quite unique to the area. Alfred Bradshaw, a local historian of the area, presented the following description of the system.

In the summer of 1886 the Town Company contracted with Fairbank and Co., of St. Louis, for a complete water system for Lerado. . . . This was on a hill and the water was pumped by a huge windmill. The water tank was made of wood, 20 feet deep and about 20 feet in diameter. The tank was set on top of a tower 40 feet high, built with wooden timbers 40 feet long and twelve inches square . . . and about a mile of six inch cast iron water pipes were delivered and distributed over the town site. The company also ordered 4,000 feet of small pipe to connect business places and homes with the mains.<sup>14</sup>

Typhoid fever was a real problem in Kansas in the 1880's and much of the drinking water in this area was too close to the surface and not pure enough to drink.<sup>15</sup> Lerado, simply by the establishment of a water system, made itself seem progressive by comparison to the surrounding towns. Nonetheless, as Lerado was soon to find out, it took more than a water system and a group of growing businesses to lure a railway line.

This was evident by October, 1886, when the following brief statement appeared in the Interior Herald. "Many of our farmers are working

<sup>13</sup>Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 13 November 1886.

<sup>14</sup>Bradshaw, When the Prairies Were New, pp. 32-33.

<sup>15</sup>Mr. Floyd Hobbs recounted in his interview, Langdon, Kansas, 18 July 1975, that his father was the first in Langdon town to build a cased water well to a depth of over thirty feet. When asked why the well had to be of such a depth, the reply was, to avoid typhoid fever which plagued a great many settlers in that area.

on the D.M.&A. railroad, which is nearly graded through Grove township."<sup>16</sup> A glance at a map of Reno county reveals that Lerado does not lie within Grove township.<sup>17</sup>

The causes for the railroad's change of plans can only be deduced from several of clippings from the local newspapers in the two boom towns. The editors of the two papers developed a war of words over respective advantages of their communities and both shared little fear of overstatement and boasting. The Turon Rustler proclaimed the following in October 14, 1886.

. . . [T]rack is being rapidly laid this side of Kingman and will probably reach Turon in about fifteen days. The branch of the D.M.&A. from Turon to Iuka will be pushed rapidly, and no doubt completed this fall if the bond propositions carry in Pratt county. . . .<sup>18</sup>

A few days later, on November 11, 1886, the Ledger retorted:

. . . in the faces of their defeat, however, the Turonites have worked themselves into the belief that the D.M.&A. has made them a proposition to the effect that if they will extend the time ninety days and give in addition to the township bonds, \$5,000 and 51% of their town site, that the road will be completed to the point. . . .<sup>19</sup>

This statement is interesting because the line, as the editor tacitly admitted, was not going through Lerado either. However, he tried to brush this fact off lightly:

Mr. Mallory of the D.M.&A. was anxious to build the main branch of the road to Lerado, but was compelled to go west of us on account of the contract with Kingman county.<sup>20</sup>

Obviously, Turon was disappointed with the delay of the building

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<sup>16</sup>Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 16 October 1886.

<sup>17</sup>See: map on p. 53.

<sup>18</sup>Turon (Kansas) Rustler, 14 October 1886.

<sup>19</sup>Lerado (Kansas) Weekly Ledger, 11 November 1886.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

by the D.M.&A. Nevertheless, Turon paid the additional price for the road's passage. The Turon editor showed a better awareness of the current state of affairs as exemplified by the following statement in the Rustler.

To say that we are not disappointed in the failure of the D.M.&A. to build into Turon on the bonds voted would be to state what is untrue, but it does not mean that we have lost the road, it is only delay.<sup>21</sup>

The optimism of the Turon editor was soon justified for the D.M.&A. extended its tracks to the town limits of Turon by December 23, 1886. Christmas was a happy time in Turon.

The people of Lerado, led by Brady, were understandably distressed with the turn of events. Brady had moved quickly to protect his interests. He was a stubborn man who was determined to obtain a railroad for the commercial success of his town, even if it meant building one himself. The plan was spelled out in the Ledger in November 4, 1886.

Last week the Wichita, Dodge City and Trinidad Railroad Co. was formed to construct a line from Wichita to Dodge City and thence westerly, an estimated length of 258 mi., Capital Stock, \$5,220,000. Directors: Amos Harris, N. H. English, William Kipp, of Wichita; Dr. John A. Brady, Horace Scott, of Louisville, Ky.; H. C. Linn of Topeka; William Griffenstein, of Wichita.<sup>22</sup>

Brady presumably had serious intentions to build as two of the men from Wichita, N. H. English and William Griffenstein, were prominent speculators and had contributed substantially to the growth of Wichita, and Horace Scott of Louisville was a genuine railroad contractor.<sup>23</sup> Even

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<sup>21</sup>Turon (Kansas) Rustler, 18 November 1886.

<sup>22</sup>Lerado (Kansas) Weekly Ledger, 4 November 1886.

<sup>23</sup>N. H. English and William Griffenstein were two of the more prominent land speculators in the Wichita area. They had much to do with early Wichita development and personally controlled large assets. It is the opinion of this author that Brady, who had so much invested in Lerado, wanted to secure his envisioned railroad, which would have staved off the

though there seemed to be money backing this enterprise, nothing became of Brady's envisioned enterprise; for it was bought out by a larger trunk line.<sup>24</sup>

According to Ray Ginger in his Age of Excess, this was not an uncommon practice. Lines such as the ". . . West Shore or the Toledo, Peoria, and Warsaw were not built so that their owners could try to operate them at a profit--but so that existing lines would buy them out at an exorbitant price to avoid the threatened competition."<sup>25</sup> Whether this was the case or not, the Wichita, Dodge City and Trinidad never materialized; it remained nothing more than a paper railroad.<sup>26</sup> This left the C.K.&N. as the cornerstone of Lerado's hope for a future. If that line did not build through to Lerado, the consequences would be grave for the community.

It came as no surprise when M. A. Low, president of the C.K.&N., visited Hutchinson in August, 1886, and decided to name Hutchinson a point on his railroad.<sup>27</sup> Shortly thereafter, the bond vote for the

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impending disaster of Lerado, by buying in with these two men from Wichita, and with Horace Scott of Louisville, thus assuring him of needed financial support and the benefits of their experience.

For an account of English and Griffenstein, see R. M. Long, Wichita Century: A Pictorial History of Wichita, Kansas 1870-1970 (Wichita, Kansas: Wichita Historical Museum Association, Inc., 1969), pp. 22, 73.

The information on Horace Scott was furnished by Mary E. Winter, Kentucky Historical Society Library, personal letter to author, 30 June 1977. Ms. Winter checked the 1882 Louisville City Directory and found the following entry: Scott, Horace Col., railroad contractor, r 826 2d.

<sup>24</sup>Lerado (Kansas) Weekly Ledger, 9 December 1886.

<sup>25</sup>Ray Ginger, Age of Excess (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1975), p. 34.

<sup>26</sup>Kansas State Historical Society, Manuscript Division, Topeka, "Barnes Railroad Collection." This is a collection of all the railroad companies in Kansas that never became more than paper railroads.

<sup>27</sup>Hutchinson (Kansas) Daily News, 17 August 1886.

C.K.&N. was taken and the voters of Langdon, Grove and Bell township, even without knowing the exact route the road was to take through the county, voted overwhelmingly for the bonds to support its funding. Grove township carried the bond measure by a 117 to two vote, as Langdon similarly did a sixty-three to four count. Bell township showed a degree of hesitation in supporting the bond issue when compared to the other two townships. They registered eighty votes for and fifteen against the proposal.<sup>28</sup> The election approved a bond of \$4,000 per mile of track laid, and the C.K.&N. soon came to Reno county.<sup>29</sup>

As early as July, 1886, a petition was circulated through Langdon township asking Arlington to become a point on the C.K.&N. line.<sup>30</sup> Arlington, though, did not feel secure about obtaining the railroad until November 11, 1886. At that time the Rustler's editor<sup>31</sup> announced: "The permanent location of the Rock Island has been established from Hutchinson to Arlington and the contract for building let clear through the county."<sup>32</sup>

When the C.K.&N. survey team first charted its proposed road, it passed some five and one-half miles north of Lerado. Lerado thought it

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 21 August 1886.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 24 July 1886.

<sup>31</sup> It should be noted that the editors of these boom towns acted more like an advertising agency for their towns rather than as objective reporters of local news. The Hutchinson (Kansas) Daily News, 19 October 1886, offered a good description of the Rustler's editor. "The Turon Rustler, a new paper just started at the booming young town of Turon, by J. O. Graham, is on our exchange table. It is a neatly printed, and ably edited five column quarto. Mr. Graham is an old hand at the business, and will give Turon the regulation newspaper puffs."

<sup>32</sup> Turon (Kansas) Rustler, 11 November 1886.

had the road and was thus upset by this first survey. An Arlington citizen commented to the editor of the Interior Herald:

The Rock Island surveyors are here locating the depot and establishing the grade through the town and across the bottom by the river.

Dr. Brown and Mr. Martin, of Lerado were in town interviewing the Rock Island surveyors Monday. Lerado is still on the ragged edge about the railroad.<sup>33</sup>

At the same time, M. A. Low and C. L. Ewing, the right-of-way man for the C.K.&N., were in Hutchinson securing the right-of-way throughout the countryside. As the Hutchinson Daily News noted: "They [the grading crews of the C.K.&N.] will begin at Partridge and grade through to Turon first and then grade this end of the road when that is completed."<sup>34</sup> Nonetheless, the battle as to who would secure the road was far from over.

Apparently, Brown and Martin successfully accomplished their lobbying mission with surveyors. A second survey was undertaken and the Ledger on December 9, 1886, had this report:

. . . [L]ast Monday evening the Rock Island surveyors arrived in town, having run their line from Arlington to a point one mile north of us. Tuesday morning they returned to Arlington and ran a second survey, the last time running in the northern suburbs of the town proper.<sup>35</sup>

It looked like Lerado had finally acquired its future. On December 23, 1886, a short feature appeared in the Daily News entitled, "On to Lerado," which stated:

Dr. John A. Brady, of Lerado, is in the city today. He says it is now definitely settled that the Rock Island goes to Lerado, and in a conversation, by telephone, with Mr. E. L. Preston that he was ordered by the company to

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<sup>33</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 20 November 1886.

<sup>34</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) Daily News, 22 November 1886.

<sup>35</sup> Lerado (Kansas) Weekly Ledger, 9 December 1886.

locate the road to the city of Lerado immediately. This will give Lerado quite a boom. If there is any man in Kansas, who deserves success, it is a rustler like Dr. Brady.<sup>36</sup>

However, not all shared such optimism, as expressed in the Daily News.

The Interior Herald sadly noted that:

It will be a terrible joke on Turon if the Rock Island railroad goes to Lerado, as the citizens of that place claim it will. But we suppose Lerado will enjoy it.<sup>37</sup>

The Rustler, as could be expected, printed some very bitter rejoinders.

The Lerado Ledger is now rejoicing over the fact that the Chicago, Kansas & Nebraska road has been located to Lerado.

It is common practise in the "dense forest" to count their chickens before they are hatched and this is one of the cases in which they have done so. The C.K.&N. has not located a single mile of road this side of Arlington, but why they do it will be to Turon. . . .<sup>38</sup>

A "dense forest" correspondent in the Ledger in that benighted region, says they feel even more certain of getting the Rock Island than of Brady being called to the throne of Bulgaria. Brady never had a ghost of a showing to be king of Bulgaria until the Rustler advocated his claim and if he stands in with the Rustler, we will get it for him yet, but as for the Rock Island, we won't run it through swamps and forests in Kansas, consequently it will be run on an air line from Arlington to Turon.<sup>39</sup>

Soon thereafter, Brady must have felt he had a better chance of becoming the King of Bulgaria than he had of securing the passage of the C.K.&N. He was not willing to pay the price demanded for the C.K.&N.'s passage, so consequently, he lost the road for his town.

Bradshaw in his local history explained what happened to Brady's dream.

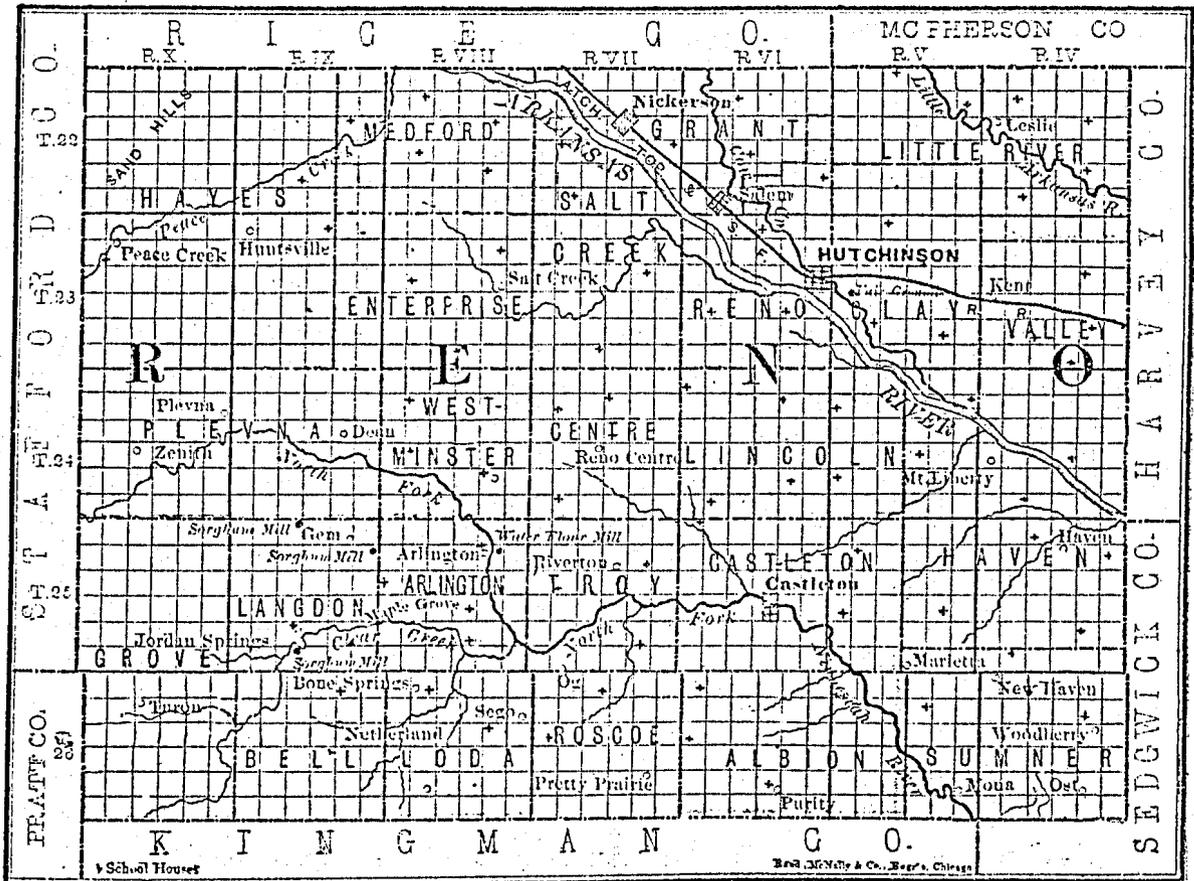
<sup>36</sup>Hutchinson (Kansas) Daily News, 23 December 1886.

<sup>37</sup>Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 1 January 1887.

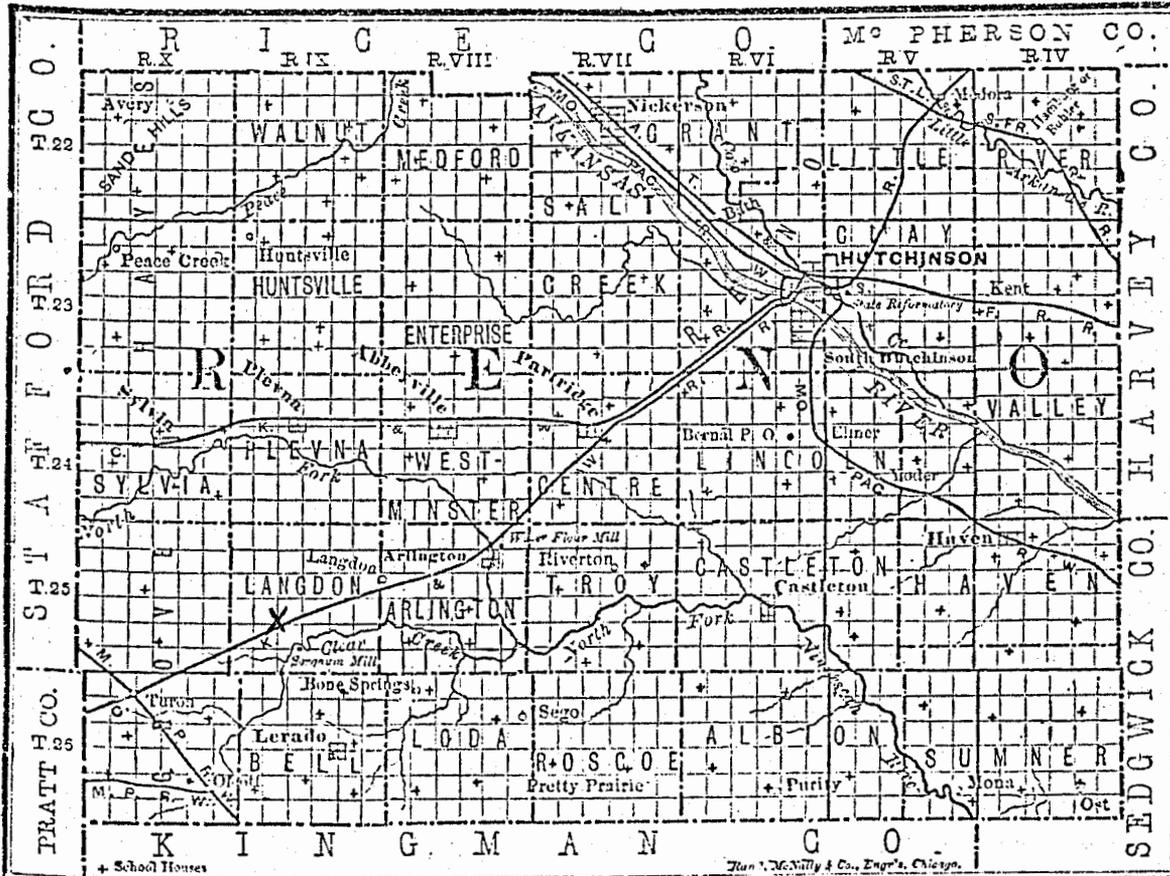
<sup>38</sup>Turon (Kansas) Rustler, 13 January 1887.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., 20 January 1887.

MAP OF RENO COUNTY, 1882.



This map shows how Reno county appeared before the Rock Island railroad was built. The towns of ARLINGTON, LERADO and TURON are shown in the southwestern portion of this map. Also shown on this map are the school building sites of the Jordan Springs district, Maple Grove district and the Old Langdon district (which appears under the A of the town's name Arlington). This map of Reno county was published by the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Third Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1881-1882 (Topeka, Kansas: Kansas Publishing House, 1883), p. 91.



This map shows how Reno county appeared after the Rock Island and the Missouri Pacific were built. It is of interest to note that on this map LERADO is more developed than TURON. The site of OLD LANGDON is marked on this map. The development site of LANGDON is marked on this map with a large X. This map of Reno county was published by the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Sixth Biennial Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1887-1888 (Topeka, Kansas: Kansas Publishing House, 1889), p. 398.

However, the Rock Island Co. demanded fifty-one percent<sup>40</sup> of the holdings of Lerado Town Company and land right of way and switch yards for coming through Lerado. John A. Brady, president of the Town Company refused, thinking they would come through anyway. He offered them land for right of way, depot and switch yards. The railroad company would not accept this offer. Brady was stubborn and would not give a thing more. He thought he could bluff the railroad company. He thought they would build through his town anyway, but he was mistaken.<sup>41</sup>

Even though this is probably the best reason stated for the C.K.&N.'s failure to pass through Lerado, another factor could have been considered by the company. It might well have been more costly to build the line to Lerado instead of Turon.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, by the end of January, Brady seemed to have recognized impending disaster was at hand for his enterprise. On January 31, 1887, the Daily News reported on some of Brady's new investments.

Dr. J. A. Brady, Lerado's leader and boomer, was in the city Saturday, and realizing our future greatness, invested in \$6,500 worth of city lots in G. C. Millar's addition. . . .<sup>43</sup>

The disappointed developer had not lost his taste for land speculation.

The construction of the railroad from Arlington was resumed as the Arlington Enterprise reported on February 25, 1887. "Last Friday

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<sup>40</sup> It was the accepted norm for the railroad companies to demand 51% of any established town company's interest before they would consent to build their lines through the community. For example, Arlington had to pay this price as did many others. See: Kansas State Historical Society, Manuscript Division, Topeka, Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railway Company, "Land Sales Records, Vol. 2: Arlington," p. 1

<sup>41</sup> Bradshaw, When the Prairies Were New, p. 33.

<sup>42</sup> Floyd Hobbs in his interview, Langdon, Kansas, 18 July 1975, stated that there were too many streams and soft lands for the C.K.&N. to have built over them in an economic manner. This might have been the case, but the author feels that the evidence supports the main theme stated in this paper, that is, town competition and railroad manipulation were paramount in the selection process.

<sup>43</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) Daily News, 31 January 1887.

Mr. C. L. Ewing, . . . was here and purchased the right of way. . . .

It is now definitely settled that Turon gets the railroad, and work west of town has begun. . . ."<sup>44</sup> The Turon paper reported its victory in a rather matter-of-fact manner by announcing that:

the Rock Island company have located their line to this place, have bought the right of way and will most likely be grading here by the time this is published. This road will be completed and in operation sometime during the coming summer.<sup>45</sup>

As the editor of the Interior Herald succinctly stated: "It looks a good deal like Turon had busted Lerado in the Rock Island railroad fight."<sup>46</sup>

Brady was finished. He abandoned his dreams for Lerado and moved back to Louisville, Kentucky.<sup>47</sup> In March, 1887, the D.M.&A. was purchased by the Missouri Pacific and became a part of Jay Gould's empire; Turon's fortune and future appeared bright.<sup>48</sup> On March 16, 1887, the Rustler reported that a number of Lerado's citizens were moving to its town. The details of this "move" were sent to the Interior Herald by a Turonite and noted in its March 19, 1887, edition:

Tuesday a party of Lerado gentlemen were over here to see what kind of proposition they could get to move their business and residence houses to Turon. The matter was talked over and our citizens made them a proposition. Yesterday M. H. Potter and H. H. Carr went over there and the contract was signed to move over eleven residence and four business houses. The moving will be commenced immediately.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Arlington (Kansas) Enterprise, 25 February 1887.

<sup>45</sup>Turon (Kansas) Rustler, 24 February 1887.

<sup>46</sup>Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 26 February 1887.

<sup>47</sup>Turon (Kansas) Rustler, 24 February 1887.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 16 March 1887.

<sup>49</sup>Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 19 March 1887.

Further evidence of Lerado's disintegration appeared on October 20, 1887, when the Ledger announced it was giving away town lots to those who would stay on or develop the property.<sup>50</sup> By the end of July, the track had reached Hutchinson and in four more weeks it had reached Turon's city limits.<sup>51</sup> Although the C.K.&N. had become a reality in southwestern Reno county, there still remained one problem left for the railroad to solve.

There existed among those who planned and built these railroads the conception of the need for a trade center, or town, for approximately every ten miles of track laid.<sup>52</sup> With the death of Lerado, a void occurred between Arlington and Turon. Many felt that there should be a town there. The railroad was prepared to capitalize with such sentiments. The vehicle through which it approached this subject was the Reno Town Company. The Daily News gave a description of this company's intended operations, in September, 1886:

The Reno Town Company was incorporated Wednesday, with headquarters in this city. The company is formed for the purposes of laying out towns along the line of the Rock Island railroad in this county. . . . The capital stock is one-hundred thousand dollars.<sup>53</sup>

J. B. Brown and L. A. Bigger, two men known for speculative activities in the area, played a major role in this scheme. Bigger, during this same period, was the mayor of Hutchinson. It was said of him in the Daily News: "When . . . [he] is caught napping, when it comes to business acumen and enterprise, you will find a weasel asleep."<sup>54</sup> So it

<sup>50</sup> Lerado (Kansas) Weekly Ledger, 20 October 1887.

<sup>51</sup> Turon (Kansas) Rustler, 11 August 1887.

<sup>52</sup> Lewis Atherton, Main Street on the Middle Border (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1954), pp. 5-6.

<sup>53</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) Daily News, 11 September 1886.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 19 October 1886.

was in 1887, that Bigger and Brown working closely with the C.K.&N. company, made plans to buy land and start a new town.

Quick to catch wind of a land deal, three farmers in Langdon township, Adolph Wendling, Samuel Wendling, and R. C. Miller tried to entice Bigger and Brown into a cooperative venture. Informing Bigger and Brown that they owned land in a contiguous area, the three farmers extolled its virtues as a good location for a town site. According to Mary Adams' 1922 paper on Langdon:

He [Bigger] finally agreed to come out and look over the ground--which he did. He like the location but said they would not locate there unless the company owned the land. They then offered to give the company fifty-one percent of the lots, which he refused. Afterward Samuel Wendling and R. C. Miller offered to sell the company two hundred and forty acres of land, and Adolph Wendling agreed to put one hundred and twenty acres of land, taking the value of the land in stock of the company. To this they agreed, and the townsite located.<sup>55</sup>

The C.K.&N. maintained complete control over this enterprise by two methods: first, by writing its own corporate hierarchy into the Reno Town Company charter; second, by controlling the purse strings of the town company.<sup>56</sup> The land sale for Langdon was financed by the C.K.&N. which defrayed 25% of the accrued cost. For this they received control of 51% of the stock in the town company.<sup>57</sup> The land was purchased from

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<sup>55</sup>Adams, "History of Langdon, Kansas," p. 4.

<sup>56</sup>The list of persons named on the corporation board for the Reno Town Company found in the Kansas Secretary of State, "Corporations," Vol. 23, Topeka, Kansas State Historical Society, Archives Division, were compared with that in the "Officers and Offices of the Companies Operating," in the Railroad Commission, Fifth Annual Report of the Railroad Commissioners, for the Year Ending 1 December 1887 (Topeka, Kansas: Kansas Publishing House, 1887), p. 409. This comparison reveals that three officers of the C.K.&N. railway company were on the Reno Town Company charter. They were the President, M. A. Low, the Vice President, H. A. Parker and the Secretary and Treasurer, C. F. Jilson.

<sup>57</sup>Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Manuscript Division, Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railway Company, "Land Sales Records, Vol. 46: Langdon," p. 1.

the three sellers for a total of \$9,720, of which \$2,520 was the stock value of Adolph Wendling's share. The town company sold the land back for a grand total of \$14,915 which enabled its officers to make a tidy profit from town lots and excess land sales.<sup>58</sup> Instead of the railroad partially owning a town, as would have been the case with Lerado, it now was able to buy and control the entire town of Langdon. The depot at the present site of Langdon was under construction by June of 1887.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>The total of \$14,915 was achieved by adding the recorded land sales of the Reno Town Company to individual buyers. See: Reno County, Kansas, "Register of Deeds Numerical Index, Range No. 9, Township No. 25," 1 June 1872-1 June 1924. The account of Wendling's transaction was taken from Adams, "History of Langdon, Kansas," p. 4.

<sup>59</sup>Turon (Kansas) Rustler, 2 June 1887.

### CHAPTER III

#### OFF TO A SLOW START, 1887-1912

Although the building of the train depot at Langdon and a number of other factors seemed to indicate that town development would proceed at an accelerated pace, Langdon in fact, grew slowly. Twenty-five years would pass from the time that Langdon was platted in 1887 before the town legally incorporated as a third class city in 1912. Since Langdon township and town development were interconnected, when the rural township failed to prosper, so likewise did the town which served as its service center. Therefore, the slow growth of Langdon town can be explained more clearly by examining its relationship to economic conditions in the township.

The railroad created a temporary boom in the township which acted as a stimulus to the population, and the agricultural development of the land surrounding the town. Its population increased from 294 in 1885 to 387 by 1888, and by 1890, it had reached 450. The population of the township remained stable from that year until it began slowly increasing again in 1898. During the period 1885 through 1905, population density and wire fencing quickly sealed off the last remnants of the open range. Langdon township reflected dramatic increases in fenced acreage, whereas in 1885 there were only 4,333 acres under fence by 1895 there were 8,321 acres fenced, and by 1905, 15,792 acres, which was over three-quarters of the entire township. Hedge never amounted to an important means of fencing

in the township, enclosing 1,640 acres at its greatest extent in 1905.<sup>1</sup>

Along with the increase in fencing came corresponding increases in crop production. Winter wheat acreage remained approximately at the same levels from 1885 through 1895 with a little over 1,500 acres in cultivation. From this point on, however, winter wheat, with the introduction of such varieties as Turkey Red, became a viable crop for the area. The planted acreage of it increased rapidly, and by 1905 it numbered 6,870 acres and surpassed corn as the major crop in the township. By 1915, winter wheat was planted at a record high acreage of 10,867 acres, a figure which was not surpassed until 1930. Corn, as the other major crop of the township increased from 2,311 acres in 1885 to 7,980 acres in 1895. Again, as has been previously noted, corn had fallen to second place in acreage by 1905 with a marked decrease to 4,438 acres. By 1915, nearly all traces of a corn dependent economy in Langdon township had disappeared with only 2,534 acres of it planted. During the period when corn production decreased, it was replaced by four other fodder crops, tame grasses for hay, alfalfa, kafir and sorghum. Eventually, sorghum and tame grasses became the predominant fodder crops.<sup>2</sup>

Likewise, as fodder crop production increased, it reflected a rise in cattle production within the township. Fatted cattle and milk cows rose in numbers from 796 in 1885 to 1,137 by 1895. By 1905, there were 1,896 head of cattle, but by 1915 there were only 1,264. In swine

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<sup>1</sup>All statistical information was taken from the Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1885, 1895, and 1905. The population figure for 1888 was taken from the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Sixth Biennial Report, p. 399.

<sup>2</sup>All statistical information was taken from the Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1885, 1895, and 1905. The 1915 figures are taken from the Kansas Department of Agriculture, "Agricultural Statistic Rolls, Langdon Township," 1915.

production the township reflected a similar pattern to that of cattle production. In 1885, swine were enumerated at 717, rose to 1,157 by 1895, and peaked in 1905 at 1,748. By 1915, their numbers had fallen off to 888. In economic terms, the value of fattened stock sold for slaughter continually rose from 1885 when it amounted to \$5,226, to \$14,410 in 1895, \$21,861 in 1905 and reached \$32,200 in 1915.<sup>3</sup>

Township development was also enhanced by the numbers of trees planted. Not only was the planting of trees on the plains encouraged by the federal government in the Timber Culture Act of 1873, but many of the early settlers felt an affinity towards trees.<sup>4</sup> By 1895, where there had been at one time no trees to break the plain's panorama, approximately 24,000 trees were planted in the township including such varieties as apple, pear, peach, plum, cherry, cottonwood and a few walnut and maple.<sup>5</sup> So as the years passed from 1875 to 1915, the once treeless, endless appearance of the plains in Langdon township took on a new appearance with the increases of population, wire fencing, planted crop acreage, livestock production and planted trees.

Another figure which reveals township development is the numbers of horses and mules. In 1885, horses in the township numbered 933 and the number of mules and asses was 61. During those days, horses were not only a source of farm power and general transportation, but they also

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Mrs. Lucille Dunn in her interview, Langdon, Kansas, 28 July 1977, recalled of her father, Lamont Tibbits: "He was a great one to plant trees. It wasn't that he knew about shelter belts especially, but that he thought it was every generation's obligation to plant trees. He said it was such a barren prairie that . . . every generation has this obligation."

<sup>5</sup>Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1895.

denoted a general prosperity as they were also a status symbol. In this light, it is of interest to note that by 1895, when Populism was very strong in this area as well as in many other sections of Kansas, the number of horses dropped to 356. The number of mules and asses, which were considered essential for farm power, stood at the same level as in 1885. The luxury of owning extra horses disappeared as economic conditions worsened, but the necessity of maintaining the work animals remained and their numbers were unchanged. Even though the number of horses increased to 559 by 1905, their numbers would never again match the 1885 total. From 1905 onward, the number of horses in the township started to gradually decline year by year, and in 1915 they numbered 505. In opposition to this trend, the number of asses and mules remained at the same level in 1885, 1895 and 1905. In the following years their numbers increased and in 1915 they were enumerated at 250. The advent of the automobile in the township after the turn of the century and the slow introduction of the tractor explains the earlier and later ownership trends of these animals.<sup>6</sup>

Another developmental aspect of Langdon township is the settlement pattern. Those people who obtained their final receipt when homesteading fell into two groups, those settling in the sandhills and those residing in the rest of the township. The lands outside of the sandhills were settled first; and consequently, the majority of final receipts were achieved on these lands by 1884. In contrast, the majority of the people who obtained their final receipts on the sandhill lands did so between 1884 and 1891.<sup>7</sup> Both areas show considerable turnover in land ownership

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<sup>6</sup>All statistical information was taken from Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1895, and 1905, and Kansas Department of Agriculture, "Agricultural Statistic Rolls, Langdon Township," 1915.

<sup>7</sup>See Appendix G.

during the times that these people were obtaining their final receipts. However, what is most striking about their selling out is the price that they asked for their lands. Typically, those who sold out quickly after receiving their final receipts did so for under \$1000 for 160 acres. The majority of people who sold out a few years later always did so for more than a \$1000, but these people cannot be considered petty speculators as the amount received never seemed to justify the work required to earn it.<sup>8</sup> For example, even if a person was able to

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<sup>8</sup>Allen G. Bogue, in his Money at Interest (New York: Russell & Russell, 1969), pp. 4-5, figured the cost of establishing a homestead on the middle frontier. "The western settler who homesteaded 160 acres of land, bought his farming equipment, erected farm buildings of a sort, hired someone to break forty acres of prairie, fenced it, and finally drove a forty-foot well, had incurred cash costs of almost \$1,000. In addition he had to support his family and himself for at least a year before he could expect the farm to provide the income with which to purchase household supplies." Leslie E. Decker, in "The Great Speculation: An Interpretation of Mid-Continent Pioneering," as quoted in: The Frontier in American Development: Essays in Honor of Paul Wallace Gates, ed. by David M. Ellis (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1969), pp. 379-38, makes a grave, common overstatement. "On the mid-continent frontier, then, almost all the early comers to any area were speculators first and homeseekers second or not at all." Since many people sold their lands in Langdon township for less than \$1,000 for 160 acres, then the question that arises is, how can these people be considered speculators? What seems to be the case in Langdon township is that many found that their free homesteads were not free, and encountered grave adjustment problems in farming the lands in the middle border environment. Consequently, many sold their holdings simply due to distress. This type of selling is not speculation and many cases of this existed in Langdon township. Furthermore, if a settler works the lands, improves them or develops their lands, then are they not entitled to profit from their labor? The answer is undoubtedly yes, and the sums received for these farms were not outrageous or even speculative. Only one period of time in Langdon township's history was speculation widely carried out and that was during 1900-1903, when development of the town itself was at its highest level of activity.

It may also be pointed out, that to speculate successfully, one must be making some sort of profit. It appears that the profit incentive was almost nonexistent in Langdon township. If the "speculator-capitalist" was losing money on their investments, which they were not in Langdon township, then they would have quit what they were doing. Then what was the motive to keep the petty speculator going when all around they saw others losing out? It is not even self-serving to speculate on such miserly returns of money.

sell an 80 acre farm for \$1,200 in 1900, when the return for years of labor is figured, he reaped a poor return for over sixteen years of work.<sup>9</sup> What this seems to suggest is that many people upon encountering the difficulties of life on the plains opted to sell at whatever price they could obtain after they received their final receipt. Up to that time, at least they had a rent-free, payment-free, tax-free piece of land upon which they could live without being forced off. This is not to say that the petty speculators did not exist in Langdon township. There is evidence that they did. It is just that their numbers were never very great in proportion to those who tried to farm their lands, but who failed for one reason or another. Moreover, after 1895, in both areas of the township, farm turnovers decreased and a semblance of stability appeared.<sup>10</sup>

Once the final receipt was received by a homesteader, he began to pay taxes on his land, and he had the opportunity to mortgage it for capital improvements or to obtain funds for a better farm. In any event, most homesteaders mortgaged their lands once the final receipt was obtained. Mortgaging in Langdon township shows a small upward curve in numbers from 1875 when the first mortgage was taken out in the township for \$260 to 1880 when there were seventeen first mortgages initiated amounting to the total sum of \$9,260. The curve falls off for about

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To be sure, the petty speculator did exist in Langdon township. The point is not to prove their nonexistence, but to show that other motives prompting people to sell their lands and leaving were present besides speculation. People did, in fact, come out to Kansas to build a home, improve their lands, develop a successful farm and establish a community where they themselves could be an integral part of its growth and success. Some might call this speculation; this author prefers to regard it as building a better home and future for themselves.

<sup>9</sup> Reno County, Kansas, "Register of Deeds, Numerical Index, Range No. 9, Township No. 25," 1 June 1872-1 June 1924.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

three years and then picks up quickly in 1884 with nineteen first mortgages at a value of \$15,356. In the succeeding years until 1890, there was a high level of mortgaging in the township. The largest dollar amount mortgaged during these years was a total of \$38,528 in 1890. The most acres to come under mortgage during this same time span in any one year was approximately 3,920 acres in 1886, and the greatest number of first mortgages taken out in any one year was twenty-nine in 1888. The totals for the other years reflect a great deal of mortgage activity in the township, which did not end until after 1890,<sup>11</sup>

Beginning in 1891, the number of mortgages took a perceptible decline in numbers, dollar amounts and acres falling under mortgage. This trend did not reverse itself until 1899.<sup>12</sup> Those who contracted mortgages during the last half of the 1880's fell on hard times during the first half of the 1890's. This, no doubt, was brought on by two major causes. The first was the general economic depression of the early 1890's and secondly, the settlers' incomplete adaptation to farming in the plains environment. With these two forces in motion, it is little wonder why mortgaging activity fell off during these years. A good indicator of whether or not farmers were having a difficult time in meeting their mortgage debts is the number of sheriff deeds issued in any one given year. Basically, what the sheriff deed represents is the inability of the mortgagee to repay the contracted debt to the mortgagor.

Prior to 1890, in Langdon township there were only eight sheriff deeds issued, whereas between and including the years from 1890 through

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<sup>11</sup>See Appendix E.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

1896 there was a total of twenty-one sheriff deeds issued in the township. This one period in the history of Langdon township represents the greatest number of sheriff deeds issued during one grouping of succeeding years.<sup>13</sup>

Although the increasing number of these shows a trend, it must be kept in mind that they do not represent the total number of farmers who lost their land through mortgage debts. Often, they sold out before their lands were foreclosed, and the number of those who did is not included in this paper. Consequently, the total numbers of farmers losing their lands because of indebtedness is not discussed in this paper. Sheriff deeds do stand as an economic index for the farmers' credit situation.

Another remarkable feature illustrated by the sheriff deeds is that of the numbers issued, a greater share fell upon lands other than the sandhills.<sup>14</sup> The most reasonable explanation for this is that more of the non-sandhill farmers over-extended themselves on their own ability to pay off their debts than did those farmers in the sandhill area. It is also very probable that those persons farming the lands, other than in the sandhills, saw more promise or potential in their lands than did the sandhill farmers, and therefore, were inclined to mortgage their lands for a greater dollar amount. As the potential, for one reason or another, did not materialize, their contracted debts became too much of a burden to be met, and they ended up losing their farms.

As the agricultural development of the township progressed from 1900 through 1915, mortgaging was carried on routinely. The economic

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<sup>13</sup> See Appendix F.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

conditions during this time span were good for agriculture in the township, hence, very few failures as represented by sheriff deeds were recorded. In fact, from 1900 through 1915, only two sheriff deeds were recorded in the township. The dollar amounts of the mortgages increased during this period for the same amount of acreage that was mortgaged in previous years, which meant that farm values were increasing which allowed for the higher loan amounts. For example, in 1887, there were twenty-seven first mortgages on approximately 3,540 acres, with a mortgage value of \$20,783, whereas in 1909, twenty-six mortgages were counted on approximately 3,220 acres, with a mortgage value of \$67,875. This aspect of Langdon's farm economy indicated that Langdon township shared in the national economic prosperity during those years.<sup>15</sup>

Interest rates, as previous authors on the subject have noted, gradually declined from around 11% in 1877 to approximately 5-6% from 1900 onward through 1915. Long-term loans, as a general rule, were consistently at a lower interest rate than were short-term loans. Money loaned from local sources, as Professor Allen Bogue has noted, was at a higher interest rate than out-of-state money. However, some local companies did offer viable competition to out-of-state companies. As the general economic trend of the entire country from 1877 through 1900 was deflationary, this largely accounts for the decrease in loan interest rates.<sup>16</sup> However, after 1900, other factors entered the economic picture

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<sup>15</sup> See Appendixes E and F.

<sup>16</sup> See Appendix E. The author figured the general trends relating to interest rates for each year by taking four mortgages each year contracted by different companies or individuals, and averaged the four rates to get an interest rate which he feels generally reflects the average rate for one year. This was figured in this manner to establish the general trend year by year, not so as to have figured some exact number, which still yet may not reflect the exact percent one might have paid for interest in any one given year, since short-term loans and their

which helped keep interest rates low. One, was that the individual mortgages were for larger amounts of money and payments were extended over longer time periods. What this did was to give mortgagors better returns on their money than they had previously received through the decades prior to 1900. Furthermore, the agricultural economy was fairly stable during those times and adaptation to the plains environment, at least in farming the land, was nearly achieved with the introduction of hard winter wheat and other crops more suitable to the environment. Consequently, the mortgagor had very few fears of foreclosing on any mortgages. Times seemed to be advantageous for both the mortgagor and the mortgagee.

In gleaning an understanding of the township it is also necessary to examine aspects of the government and governmental spending. Langdon township government consisted of the traditional form noted by James W. Drury:

The elective township offices are those of trustee, clerk, treasurer, two justices of the peace, and two constables. The trustee, clerk, and treasurer meet as the township board. In all townships the board also sits as the township audit board, in which capacity it has the general management and supervision of the township finances.<sup>17</sup>

The board also had the responsibility for the operation and conduct of elections, e.g., choosing an election judge, grading returns or receiving ballots.<sup>18</sup>

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interest rates raise an average even if their total numbers are small.

This author also owes to Allen Bogue's, Money at Interest, pp. 246-255, the acknowledgement of his work in shaping many of the interpretations which he found useful in making sense of mortgage statistics.

<sup>17</sup> Drury, Township Government in Kansas, p. 21.

<sup>18</sup> Langdon Township, Kansas, "Record of Trustee's Annual Settlement with Township Officers, 1876-1931," January 1896 entry.

Langdon township was first governed by an official board in 1876. In that year, the board spent \$76.03 on various unrecorded expenses.<sup>19</sup> Throughout the years most of the expenses in the township were for road work--hauling lumber, bridge construction, lumber purchases and road work with a team. As the township developed economically and land values rose, tax revenues increased. As more money was received, spending increased. Examples of wages paid for township work are: in 1895, J. L. Deffenbaugh, J. Applegate and Wm. Davis each received \$15.00 for ten days of road work. In 1896, F. Hoffman received \$1.75 for one day's road work with his own team.<sup>20</sup> Even though these are just four arbitrary examples, they typified the spending of the Langdon township board.

Property taxes were used to finance the development of schools in the township. Jordan Springs was the poorer of the two districts. (The other district, Maple Grove, moved to Langdon town in 1893, and its development will be considered with the town's development.) The Jordan Springs district in 1890 had forty-one students and two teachers. One instructor taught for twenty-four weeks, while the other completed the remaining twelve weeks. Their salaries were differentiated by sex, as both had been certified at the same grade. The female teacher received \$35 a month while the male received \$40 a month.<sup>21</sup>

The school building was the usual one-room structure. Expenses were paid by a nine mill district tax levy which netted only \$310.05. This amount was added to state and county appropriations of \$47.70 and to the balance from the year before of \$57.15, which totaled a mere

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., October 1876 entry.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., October 1895 entry and October 1896 entry.

<sup>21</sup> Reno County, Kansas, "Annual Report of School District No. 57, For the Year Ending June 30, 1890," 4 August 1890.

\$414.90. Of this amount, \$345 was spent for teachers' salaries; \$41.15 for fuel, repairs and incidentals; and \$14 for the building and furniture. There was a balance of \$14.75 to be applied to the following year's budget. It must be noted that no money was spent for school apparatus of any kind, or for library materials. It was very probable that this school lacked a library of any description at this time.<sup>22</sup>

By 1904, the situation in the Jordan Springs school district had improved in some areas and not in others. There were far fewer students at the school with a total of twenty-one reported for 1904. Four factors in the district though, had improved since 1890. First, the mill levy was down to eight mills which at the same time was bringing in a greater amount of money to the district since property values were on the increase. Second, the teacher's salary had increased to \$60 a month. Third, the schoolhouse structure was more accommodating with its four rooms. Fourth, the teacher employed in 1904 was certified at one grade higher than had been the teachers of 1890. These improvements aside, the district had yet to spend any money for library improvements and school equipment.<sup>23</sup>

Education was very different in those days than it is now, as can be seen from Ethel Miller's recollections:

I went to school at Jordan Springs out here. [She relates how her sister was sent to college by her parents and that she was not. Her sister lacked about twenty college credit hours from obtaining her degree when she started teaching.] . . . When I went to teach, I made more money than she did all the time. She was slender and not very well and I was big and strong, and I guess maybe that had something to do with it. Cause the first school I taught was down at Haven, . . . and they were mostly German people and they [students] had run out a thirty-two year old man

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<sup>22</sup>Reno County, Kansas, "Annual Report of School District No. 57, For the Year Ending June 30, 1904," June 1904.

<sup>23</sup>Reno County, Kansas, "Annual Report of School District No. 62, For the Year Ending June 30, 1904," 29 June 1904.

out of that school before I went there. I didn't know it, they didn't tell me at all, and they thought I was twenty-one and I was sixteen. Well, I just fought my way through that school. [The school board offered to renew her contract, but she decided otherwise.]

[Next, she tells of her teaching experience at Maple Grove.] We lived three miles west of here [Langdon town] and that [the school house] was two miles and a half east, and I drove that everyday in an open buggy. . . . I had eight grades and I had thirty-two pupils there. . . . Well, we went there in the morning by eight o'clock and started the fire and then after school we always swept the schoolhouse; took care of it. . . . What did we teach them? Mostly reading, writing and arithmetic. No, we taught them higher arithmetic, algebra; I taught physical geography and United States history and Kansas history, and all the younger kids, of course, just had grammar. We didn't have social studies then, we had what we called grammar. And you really learned something once you got through those books, and the McGuffey's fifth reader, you really knew something when you had it. I can pretty near say the poems that I had to learn then. When I was in the fifth grade, they wouldn't let you off without learning anything.<sup>24</sup>

Other aspects of rural life evident in both township and town were politics, disease and religion. This area was staunchly Republican from its beginning for a number of reasons. Not only was Kansas traditionally Republican,<sup>25</sup> but also the 1885 Kansas census noted that of the Civil War veterans in the township, seventeen out of nineteen had served in the Union Army.<sup>26</sup> When the Union Army Civil War veterans marched down Main street and to the cemetery about one mile east of town on Memorial Day, it was difficult to be a Democrat. These two factors are probably the primary reasons why this area was Republican, and of the two, "waving the bloody shirt" had the most popular appeal. It was

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<sup>24</sup>Interview with Mrs. Ethel Miller, Langdon, Kansas, 5 July 1977.

<sup>25</sup>Paul W. Gates, Fifty Million Acres: Conflict Over Kansas Land Policy, 1854-1890 (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1954), p. 5, presents the best reason given for Kansas' traditional Republicanism. "Nothing conspired to repel Kansas from the Democratic Party more than the efforts of Democratic leaders to extract revenue from the lands."

<sup>26</sup>Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1885.

as Floyd Hobbs, a long-time Langdon resident, recalled:

My dad, he voted the straight Republican ticket; every Hobbs in the whole family, every generation, have never voted anything but a straight Republican ticket. As far as being a southerner, . . . all my mother's people were. Oh, perhaps, well you couldn't have got Thomas Lee [his grandfather] in the Union army, save his soul. Paid off to keep from going all the time, . . . He didn't have no use of Negroes; he didn't have no use for Abe Lincoln, no sirree. . . . Grandma thought all them Northerners were the terriblist people in the world. Of course, when I was a little ol' kid, I was just like any kid, just listening to what I was hearin'. So when I got askin' Dad all about it, he said: 'Well son, some day you'll learn all about it, there's quite a bit more.'<sup>27</sup>

Floyd Hobbs recounted how he became interested in United States history. What he learned about Lincoln and the Republicans winning the Civil War affected his voting--Hobbs always voted "a straight Republican ticket."

Moreover, the Republicanism of Langdon township is clearly illustrated in its election statistics. In 1878, the popular Republican governor, John P. St. John, was favored in the township by a fifty-seven to twelve vote over his nearest contender. A straight party ticket vote gave all of the Republican candidates in Langdon township the same margin as St. John.<sup>28</sup> In the 1880 gubernatorial and Presidential elections, similar straight party ticket voting occurred, when the Republican Presidential candidate Garfield and Governor St. John each received fifty-seven votes while their Democratic opponents received nineteen and eighteen each respectively.<sup>29</sup>

The 1884 election's results in Langdon township were somewhat unusual occurring as they did during a time of economic improvement.

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<sup>27</sup> Interview with Mr. Floyd Hobbs, Langdon, Kansas, 18 July 1975.

<sup>28</sup> Lynn J. Aldrich, "A History of Reno County Elections," (Project presented to the faculty of the division of Social Sciences, Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, Kansas, 1970), pp. 53-56.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., pp. 59-60.

The Republicans did not lose, but the votes separating the Republican from the Democrats were closer than normal. Cleveland, the Democratic candidate for the Presidency, lost to James G. Blaine by only three votes. St. John in his bid for the Presidency under the Prohibition banner, received five votes. It appears that St. John's votes were drawn from those persons who normally voted Republican, thus narrowing the gap between Blaine and Cleveland. The other local and state races also showed smaller margins dividing Republicans and Democrats, although there is no certain answer as to why this occurred. Perhaps, the reasons for this are to be found outside of local economic conditions. It might be related to local issues or perhaps, the voters were showing their disgust with James Blaine's involvement in the Credit Mobilier Scandal.<sup>30</sup>

However, by 1888, the voters had reestablished their Republican preference in a nearly straight party vote. Republican Presidential candidate Benjamin Harrison carried the township with sixty-one votes to twenty-one for his opponent. The township gave Lyman U. Humphrey, the Republican candidate for Governor sixty-four votes with only eighteen for John A. Martin, his Democratic opponent. The Union Labor Party was shut out in Langdon township.<sup>31</sup> Even though the tradition of Republicanism was strong in Langdon township in the eighties, it can under serious challenge with the growth of agrarian discontent and the rise of Populism.

In the decade of the nineties, marked as it was by the depression of 1893 and its long aftermath, Langdon township's economic growth

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., pp. 69-75.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., pp. 75-78.

faltered. The total assessed valuation of property in the township fell from \$113,410 in 1888 to a value of \$92,653 in 1890 and continued to fall, perhaps because of increased mortgage encumbrances through the late eighties, and the subsequent inability of the local farmers to make good on their debts.<sup>32</sup> Economic conditions seemed to affect the township's population after 1891. From 1888, when the population was recorded at 387, it had reached 461 by 1891. By the time of the 1892 elections however, the population had dropped to 437 and correspondingly, the total assessed valuation of the township had slipped to \$88,022.<sup>33</sup> Other statistical data, e.g., crop values per bushel in the state of Kansas, followed a national trend and started falling in 1890 and hit their lowest levels by 1896.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, in Reno county, the acres planted in crops generally increased each year from 1890 through 1902, despite the fact that crop production values for the same time period varied from a high of \$3,034,818 in 1891 to a low of \$1,274,297 in 1893. It was not until 1898 that crop production valuation in the county began to rise heralding a return to farm prosperity lasting well beyond the turn of the century. Similarly, the value of farm production in the county dropped from the 1889 level and did not

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<sup>32</sup> See Appendix A. Since the large majority of farms in Langdon were 160 acres or smaller, the fall in assessed property values may be explained by Robert W. Richmond, in his history, Kansas. "By 1890 more than 60 percent of the taxable acres in Kansas were mortgaged, which meant that most farms of 160 acres were under heavy indebtedness," p. 175. What this fails to explain is that mortgaging in Langdon township was a common practice. What mortgaging during times of depression meant was that farmers were having their lands foreclosed. Mortgaging by itself was not uncommon to the average farmer, it was just when he encountered difficulty in paying off his debts the cry against the mortgage broker was heard.

<sup>33</sup> Kansas Department of Agriculture, Eighth Biennial Report, p. 206.

<sup>34</sup> See Appendixes C and D.

show signs of recovery until 1898.<sup>35</sup> These state and county trends visibly affected the economy of Langdon township precipitating a depressed agricultural condition which lasted from the beginning of the 1890's through the decade.

Early indications of farmer discontent in Langdon township appeared in the columns of the Interior Herald in February, 1890. A Langdon correspondent writing under the pseudonym of "Mataafa" gave his thoughts about the Kansas senator, John Ingalls.

I guess soon as the weather moderates Ingalls will try and organize a Kansas army to invade Mississippi. He says it can't be put off any longer. While the nabobs of the American "House of Lords" are striving to keep alive sectional hatred in order to divert the minds of the people from their real wrongs, the farmers of Kansas and Mississippi, and of the whole south and west, are joining hands in friendship. Politicians will learn something new in politics before long.

Mataafa<sup>36</sup>

The Kansas Alliance was a factor throughout Reno county during the 1880's, and in March, 1890, a sub-alliance was formed in Langdon township. Carl Mitchell was the first president of the Alliance and the meetings were held at the Maple Grove school house.<sup>37</sup> The Alliance quickly became the springboard from which political discontent transformed itself into the People's party. The majority of the Langdon Alliance actively supported Jeremiah (Sockless Jerry) Simpson in his 1890 bid for congressional office as expressed by one alliance member in the Interior Herald.

"The fact that a man has been city marshal is no reason why he should not be sent to congress, but in the district there is an abundance of good reason why Jerry Simpson will not. He is a democrat, union labor jaw-smith. Is not that

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<sup>35</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>36</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 8 February 1890.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 22 March 1890.

reason enough?"

The above is a sample of several articles appearing in the Interior Herald of late. Well now, old man, what do you think of yourself, anyhow? Can you not bring any specific charge against the character of the man? Then keep quiet. Do you expect the farmers to tolerate such bitterness, and continue giving their support to a paper so radically opposed to the candidate they have chosen and honor? Why man! It would be suicidal. . . . The boycott is a weapon which the farmer may soon learn the use of. Knowing the feeling of the alliance better than you, I send this friendly note of warning, go slow.<sup>38</sup>

By June of 1890, the transformation of the alliance into the People's Party was complete. Support for the party seemed to be increasing in Langdon township as reported by J. L. Deffenbaugh in the Interior Herald. "Never, since the country was settled were the farmers of the neighborhood so well organized, so determined to overthrow fraud in politics; or so unanimous and enthusiastic in support of any party as they are now for the people's party."<sup>39</sup> Although Jerry Simpson failed in his 1890 bid for election, by 1892 winds of change in Kansas politics were blowing strongly.

In the 1892 election, Langdon township voters registered their discontent by voting in large numbers for the entire People's Party ticket. They gave Populist James B. Weaver seventy votes against fifty-three for the Republican Benjamin Harrison in the Presidential race (Cleveland's name was not even on the ballot.) Sixty-eight votes were cast for Lorenzo P. Lewelling, the Populist candidate for Governor and fifty-four votes for the Republican candidate, Abram W. Smith. All other Populist candidates won by similar margins.<sup>40</sup> Although the Populist candidates won in Langdon township, their triumph was shortlived because

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 28 June 1890.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 30 August 1890.

<sup>40</sup> Aldrich, "A History of Reno County Elections," pp. 83-89.

the township shifted back to its traditional Republicanism two years later in 1894.

In 1893, Langdon township Republicans sent R. W. Coppedge and S. D. Wyman to Hutchinson for the county convention. The convention platform which they and their fellow delegates drew up was a direct challenge to their newly-found rivals, the Populists. The following is section four of that platform:

That the so-called populist party not only advocates financial and economic theories which would bankrupt the country and produce widespread ruin if realized in practice, but said party has shown a wanton defiance of law. We refer to its attempt to seize the last state legislature by illegal and revolutionary force, . . .<sup>41</sup>

The Republicans were out to recoup their losses.

Changes in the economic climate assisted the Republicans to achieve their goals. Farm and crop production values in Reno county stabilized in 1894 following the panic of 1893.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, in 1894, an increase to \$102,349 occurred in the assessed property valuation of the township.<sup>43</sup> Since the Democrats controlled the Presidency and the Populist the Kansas Governorship during the 1893 panic, both suffered losses of popularity. Robert W. Richmond presented an additional reason for the Republican victory in 1894.

Despite their success in the 1892 elections, the Populist and the Democrats decided that they could go their own way in 1894 and the Democrats nominated David Overmyer with a platform that was against both prohibition and woman suffrage. The Populists renominated Governor Lewelling. The Republicans, realizing their mistakes of 1892, reunited their factions and nominated Edmund Morrill, a Hiawatha banker, who won easily.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 26 August 1893.

<sup>42</sup>See Appendix A.

<sup>43</sup>See Appendix B.

<sup>44</sup>Richmond, Kansas, p. 180. There were other probable reasons why

Although this seems to be a logical conclusion, a close look at the voting pattern in Langdon township revealed it to be otherwise, even though the margin by which Morrill beat Lewelling was only eight votes, the combined votes of Overmyer the Democrat, who received six votes, and Lewelling, the Populist, fell two short of matching the vote for Morrill, the Republican.<sup>45</sup> The Prohibitionist never received anything more than a few votes in Langdon township. Given the traditional strength of Republicanism in the township and, as William F. Zornow commented, the fact that in 1881 the Republican party "became committed to prohibition," the Prohibitionist never accumulated the strength to become a viable party.<sup>46</sup> The effects of this election were as stated by a gleeful Republican from Langdon to the editor of the Interior Herald.

Our people have about recovered from the campaign fever and are now settling down to the regular business. The pops are very quiet considering their natural tendency to croak.<sup>47</sup>

Nonetheless, the Populist party was not dead, and with the fusion of the Democrats and Populists in 1896, the vote again swung away from the Republicans in Langdon township. Helping to explain this shift was the drop in total assessed valuation of the township from its 1894 level

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there was a decline in Populist strength in Langdon. Probably due in part to internal factionalism, it was reported to the Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 1 September 1894, that the county Populist convention lacked "the usual amount of enthusiasm" and was poorly attended. Furthermore, it seems William McKinley was laying the ground work for 1896 by working for hard-pressed Republican candidates in 1894. He was to speak in Hutchinson, and the following note was sent from Langdon township to the Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 29 September 1894: "I wonder how many pops will go to hear Governor McKinley next Wednesday. They will miss something good if they don't go."

<sup>45</sup> Aldrich, "A History of Reno County Elections," p. 91.

<sup>46</sup> Zornow, Kansas, p. 192.

<sup>47</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 1 December 1894.

to \$99,490 by 1896.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, it was easy for farmers to see that depressed wheat prices neutralized the value of increased crop production in the township. Thus not surprisingly, in the 1896 elections, a majority of the voters in the township gave their support to the gifted orator William Jennings Bryan, who in his "Cross of Gold" speech of 1896 affirmed:

You come to us and tell us that great cities are in favor of the gold standard; we reply that the great cities rest upon our broad and fertile prairies. Burn down your cities and leave our farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country.<sup>49</sup>

The voters in Langdon township gave Bryan a sixty-nine to sixty-three edge over William McKinley. The rest of the Populist Party candidates carried the township vote by larger margins.<sup>50</sup> However, even though Langdon township and Kansas went for Bryan, the nation as a whole did not and the delicate strings which bound the fusionist alliance of the Democrat and Populist parties together quickly snapped. It was as Vesta Holmes, a lifetime resident of Langdon, recounted when asked about her father's flirtation with the Populists: "Oh yes, he tried them [the Populists] out for awhile, but he returned to the Democratic Party."<sup>51</sup>

By 1898, prosperity began to return to Langdon township, as personal property assessments climbed in value from \$5,190 in 1896 to \$9,470 in 1898. Although land value slipped from \$62,050 in 1896 to \$58,970 in

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<sup>48</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>49</sup> Harold C. Syrett, ed., American Historical Documents (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1960), p. 311.

<sup>50</sup> Aldrich, "A History of Reno County Elections," pp. 94-102. In Reno county that year, the Presidential ballot included candidates of six different parties, the Governor's ballot had five, and the ballots for local offices either had two or three.

<sup>51</sup> Interview with Miss Vesta Holmes, Langdon, Kansas, 18 July 1975.

1898, there was an overall gain in assessed valuation for the entire township, increasing from a total of \$99,490 in 1896 to a value of \$100,995 in 1898.<sup>52</sup> Increases in the price of wheat also added substantially to the township's prosperity.<sup>53</sup> Consequently, reflecting this change in the economic situation and the shattered condition of the Populist party, the vote in the township swung back to Republican majorities in 1898. The Populist party had grown less viable, and its ability to win elections ebbed as John N. Leedy, the Populist candidate for Governor lost to the Republican candidate, W. E. Stanley, by a vote of fifty-six to sixty. Following the general trend of the state, the entire Republican ticket won in Langdon township.<sup>54</sup>

As economic conditions continued to improve in the township, the Republicans won a solid victory in the 1900 elections. Presidential candidate McKinley swept the township by an eighty-three to sixty vote margin over the Populist candidate Wharton Barker; and W. E. Stanley, the Republican candidate for Governor, polled eighty-one votes to sixty-one for the Populist John W. Breidenthal. The Socialist ticket did not receive a single vote in Langdon township, which seems to support the assumption that the farmer-Populist constituency of Langdon township was not basically anti-capitalist.<sup>55</sup>

By 1902 and 1904, the Republicans were in solid control of Langdon township. Only one race went Democratic because the candidate was himself from the town of Langdon. He ran for State Representative in the

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<sup>52</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>53</sup> See Appendix G.

<sup>54</sup> Aldrich, "A History of Reno County Elections," pp. 104-106.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., pp. 108-115.

81st district and won Langdon township by a vote of seventy to sixty-one; but he lost in all the other townships in the district.<sup>56</sup> In 1904, there was little doubt as to which party dominated the election. The township vote for Presidential candidate Theodore Roosevelt was unusually high. He polled ninety votes to only thirty-two cast for Alton Parker, his Democratic opponent. The rest of the Republican ticket carried by similarly large margins. Edward W. Hoch, the Republican candidate for governor, received eighty votes, while fifty-three were cast for his Democratic rival, David M. Dale. There was one interesting race which did not fit that election year's norm and that was the one for State Representative in the 81st district. The Democratic contender beat the Republican candidate by a seventy-five to sixty-five vote in the township, but the Democrats lost in all the other townships in the district.<sup>57</sup>

Considering the wide margin with which Republican Edward W. Hoch was elected over Democrat David M. Dale in 1904 for the governorship, the 1906 election would suggest that the progressive Republicans as represented by Hoch, were losing strength in Langdon township. Hoch split the township vote with the Democratic candidate William H. Harris at sixty-two votes each, but all the other Republican candidates won by larger margins. The voter margins in these races were similar to the pattern developed throughout the state.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., pp. 116-119. The person who ran for state representative in the 81st district was Joseph Sherow, the author's grandfather.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., pp. 121-127.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., pp. 130-131. The term "progressive" was used by both William Zornow and Robert Richmond to describe reform candidates, e.g., Edward W. Hoch or W. R. Stubbs. This author uses the term with the same connotation in this paper and it should not be confused with "Progressive," which denotes a political party.

By 1908, assessed property valuation growth in the township increased substantially from 1906 through 1908. Furthermore, by 1908, land values dramatically increased from \$95,000 in 1906 to \$665,590 and even railroad property rose from \$39,160 to \$300,703 during the same time span.<sup>59</sup> The population in the township fluctuated somewhat from 1903 through 1912, but it averaged about 640 persons.<sup>60</sup> Langdon township was beginning to reflect stability and economic prosperity.

And as would follow, once again, Langdon township followed the state wide voting trend and chose Republican William Howard Taft over William J. Bryan by a seventy-three to fifty-five vote. In the race for Kansas Governor, the state progressive Republican candidate W. R. Stubbs won by a sixty-nine to fifty-six margin over the Democrat Jeremiah D. Botkins. The one race which ran contrary to this Republican trend was the race for State Representative for the 81st district in which the Democratic candidate won over the Republican by a sixty-eight to fifty-seven vote. Since this was a local race of local personalities, it is

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<sup>59</sup>See Appendix A. What partially explains the tremendous rise in values between 1906 and 1908 is the different means by which the figures were determined for each year. In 1906, the Kansas Department of Agriculture used the county assessors' figures for their totals. The county assessor in Reno determined land values at 1/4 their actual value. Personal property was also figured at a value less than its real worth. This also had been the standard means by which land values had been recorded in the biennial reports prior to this time. In 1908, the assessed valuations recorded in the biennial reports were at their actual value.

An additional reason for the increase, which was substantial even when the 1906 figures are computed in the same manner as the 1908 figures, was given by the Kansas Department of Agriculture, in its Sixteenth Biennial Report, p. v. "In 1908 the field crops were worth over 44 percent more than those of the years 1893 and 1894 combined, and the total value of all farm products was 60 percent greater than the average for the twenty years ending with 1907."

<sup>60</sup>Kansas Department of Agriculture, Sixteenth Biennial Report, p. 903, Seventeenth Biennial Report, p. 935 and Eighteenth Biennial Report, p. 939.

possible that local issues and friendships rather than party affiliations, accounted for this vote.<sup>61</sup>

One can never really gauge the strength of progressivism in Langdon township as the 1910 election showed that the Republican Stubbs was barely edged by the Democrat George Hodges for the Governorship by a sixty-three to sixty-two vote. This, in spite of the fact, that Stubbs carried the state with 162,181 votes to 146,014 cast for Hodges. The Republican candidates for Congressman to the 7th district and State Representative to the 76th districts both lost to their Democratic opponents.<sup>62</sup> It is difficult to assess exactly what this vote indicates, except perhaps, that the progressive Republicans did not have as much strength in Langdon township as they did in many other areas of Kansas. It could also be that the farmers vented some discontent against state Republicans for the policies of President Taft, e.g., the tariff issue and his support of reciprocity for Canadian farm products.<sup>63</sup> Nonetheless, as this narrative tends to prove, Langdon township established itself early as a Republican stronghold which was disrupted only in times of economic distress, or occasionally when local personalities took precedence over party affiliations.

Disease, the second aspect which affected both township and town, seemed to be more prevalent in 1892 and early 1893 than in any other years. In January, 1893, this report was sent from Langdon to the editor of the Interior Herald. "There is sickness on everyhand, more than has been

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<sup>61</sup>Aldrich, "A History of Reno County Elections," pp. 138-140.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., pp. 141-143.

<sup>63</sup>See Frank Zornow's interpretation of the 1910 election and the fight between the "square dealers" and the "standpatters," in his Kansas, pp. 216-217.

known for years."<sup>64</sup> The Methodist meetings were even called off for some time due to the increased amount of sickness in the township.<sup>65</sup> Through the winter and spring of 1892, three diseases of severe consequence were reported in the township. They were whooping cough, diphtheria, from which deaths were reported; and scarlet fever.<sup>66</sup> Given the prevailing economic conditions at that time, disease contributed to the hardships of living conditions in the township.

The churches, the third aspect, were the dominant religious and social institutions in the town and township. Although in 1885 there was a Baptist church in the area, by 1895, only a Methodist and Christian Church of Christ remained. The oldest of the two, the Methodist church, was the first to locate a church building in Langdon town. The Reno Town Company encouraged the decision by asking only \$1 for the town lots on which the church was to stand. The church building was constructed in the same year and by 1895, the Methodists had a membership of forty-five with an assessed property value of \$1,300. The church's foundation construction cost the grand sum of \$15 and the cost of building the structure itself was \$970. As often was the case, the Methodist minister in this area did not serve one church alone and found himself at work with several in the local area. The Reverend H. C. Woodward, the Methodist minister in charge of the dedication of the Langdon town church, operated a circuit which included the Methodist churches at Turon, Olcott and Old Langdon.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 16 January 1893.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 23 January 1893, 13 February 1892 and 7 May 1892.

<sup>67</sup>Langdon (Kansas) Methodist Church, "A History of Langdon Methodist Church," n.p., 1967.

The other church, the Christian Church of Christ, proved to be the stronger of the two churches in terms of membership. The church itself was founded in 1889 at the home of J. F. Railsback with ten charter members.<sup>68</sup> During the same year, the members were predominantly women, which leads one to suspect that they may have greatly influenced the moral position of the town's social thought through their majority standing in the church and apparent concern towards organized religion. By 1890, the membership met regularly at the Maple Grove school house, and in 1892, the parishioners decided to build a structure in Langdon town. They received the same generous offer of lots from the Reno Town Company as had the Methodists'. By 1895, the Christian Church had a membership of one-hundred, which meant it was growing more rapidly than the Methodist.<sup>69</sup>

Both churches built at an inopportune time, considering the economic depression of the 1890's. As Vesta Holmes and Guilford R. Railsback noted concerning offering collections during those times: "During the summer of 1897, collections varied from 17¢ to 70¢ per Sunday, dipping as low as 12¢ on one Sunday in 1893."<sup>70</sup> With regard to the furnishing of the Christian Church's structure, they recorded that: "The money gave out before the house was seated and the Church ran into a depression in 1893, so for several years we sat on 2 x 10's"<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>Mr. Guilford Railsback, Langdon, Kansas, personal letter to author, 5 August 1977. Vesta V. Holmes and Guilford R. Railsback, ed., "A History of the Langdon Christian Church," n.p., 1967, p. 5.

<sup>69</sup>Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1895. Reno County, Kansas, "Register of Deeds, City Lots, Langdon, Kansas," July 1887-present.

<sup>70</sup>Holmes and Railsback, "A History of the Langdon Christian Church," p. 12.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

By 1915, both churches had firmly established themselves in the community. Their memberships had increased to ninety-three in the Methodist church and to one-hundred and eighty in the Christian Church of Christ.<sup>72</sup> Even though the combined membership represented less than half of the total population in the township, its influence was keenly felt in all aspects of life in the town and township.

To be sure, differences existed between the two churches and whether or not one would now term them fundamentally different is immaterial, for the two churches saw them as such. Moreover, at times differences of opinion existed within each church. For example, as Holmes and Railsback recorded about the Christian Church of Christ:

From the very beginning there had been two elements in the Church--one favoring instrumental music and organized missionary work and one which regarded such things as innovations. They had worked harmoniously together until 1899, when a Brother Loney from Lost Springs came at the invitation of the conservative element to hold meetings. The direct result of his preaching was a division of the Church. The conservative element went to the Maple Grove school house. . . . Each side gave the other credit for sincerity and honesty of purpose and personal friendships were not broken. After the division the going was hard for both congregations. Many members of the Maple Grove congregation moved away and in about two years they disbanded.<sup>73</sup>

However, when a difference occurred between the two churches, it often assumed a different means of expression.

Frequently, the two churches competed with each other, one trying to justify the validity of its beliefs over that of the other. Floyd Hobbs recalled that around 1896:

Well, these two churches here were just a little and still are, just as selfish as they could be; that's the

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<sup>72</sup>Kansas Department of Agriculture, "Agriculture Statistic Rolls, Langdon Township," 1915.

<sup>73</sup>Holmes and Railsback, "A History of the Langdon Christian Church," p. 9.

way I look at it. And this Methodist minister was getting a bigger job and more interest than the Christian Church was. And the Christian Church decided that he was wrong and they picked up a man in southern Arkansas, a big heavy fellar that weighed two and a half, a young man, that was supposed to be a very good scholar, that is, he had that type of reputation. And he came here to tell that fellar how wrong he was. . . . [The debate was held in a grove of trees near the present Christian Church on a platform erected for such occasions. It was held on a very hot day in the month of August.] The Methodist minister got up and just as good as called him a liar just flatly out and out, and just pitched over backwards dead as a nail.<sup>74</sup>

Moreover, the Christian church exerted an extreme influence upon its members to keep them in line with its doctrines, or else suffer the consequences. The church disciplined those members who wandered from its teachings with what was known as "withdrawing from," or in other words, expulsion from the church membership. Guilford Railsback explains the practice thusly:

From the very beginning, the Church practiced a policy of "withdrawing from" members who got out of line. Notes of Church Board meetings do not clarify the reason for these early expulsions . . . but Mrs. [Maud] Lyons [an early resident of Langdon who lived her life there] recalled that public drunkenness accounted for some of the removals and, in one instance, withdrawal resulted after a member had called his horse a "son of a bitch" on the streets of Langdon. The last expulsions took place in March 1914 after a young unmarried Sunday School teacher became pregnant. The Board first considered the matter, referred the matter of expulsion to the entire congregation, at which time withdrawal was voted to apply to the young woman and her fiance, whom she subsequently married. The formal charge was "misconduct" and vote was taken after the minister had, according to the Church Clerk's notes, "read the Scriptural Charges." . . . Although the two were "withdrawn from," hard feelings resulted and, just possibly, a lesson was gained. There is no further record of an expulsion.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Interview with Mr. Floyd Hobbs, Langdon, Kansas, 18 July 1975.

<sup>75</sup> Mr. Guilford R. Railsback, Langdon, Kansas, personal letter to author, 5 August 1977.

The open use of such disciplinary tactics suggest the importance of moral attitudes and conduct in the community.

With regards to secular thought in the township, it was often hard to distinguish between it and religious thought, as the moral influence of the latter directly affected the former. For example, the 1882 election illustrates the fundamental views that the inhabitants of the township shared about the issue of prohibition. The township voted for prohibition by a sixty-three to a twenty-three vote margin, whereas, in Reno county as a whole it carried by a far smaller proportion, with 1,006 votes for and 932 against.<sup>76</sup>

Moreover, when celebrations were held on the Fourth of July, drinking at these festivities were often reported. The editor of the Interior Herald received this account concerning one Fourth of July celebration in 1893:

Beer was sold in almost open defiance of law there on the fourth. No one was drunk, however, but that has nothing to do with the sellers violating the law. They should be prosecuted.<sup>77</sup>

As has already been shown, public cursing was enough to get one expelled from the Christian church, however, it was also a social concern. An account written to the editor of the Interior Herald in 1893 illustrates the point.

A few young men (?) in this vicinity, who are in the habit of using such dirty, low-down, vulgar language in public places, before the young, and sometimes in the hearing of ladies, should be unceremoniously ejected. It is not consistent with public probity to have such vile-mouthed cankers fastening their poisonous influences upon the young men of decent society.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>Aldrich, "A History of Reno County Elections," p. 63.

<sup>77</sup>Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 8 July 1893.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., 25 February 1893.

Attitudes towards horse racing and fighting also reflected a basic contempt for such activities. This was especially true about fighting when it occurred on Sunday. The Langdon correspondent to the Interior Herald in August 1894 attempted to bring public pressure to bear upon certain elements in Langdon. "There were two fights in Langdon on Sunday. Boys, remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."<sup>79</sup> The Langdon community took a more lenient attitude towards horse racing, but it was never un-animously endorsed as a popular pastime.<sup>80</sup>

Having traced Langdon township's development and those aspects relating to both town and township, it is appropriate to analyze the growth of the town of Langdon. As has been previously noted, the village was not incorporated for twenty-five years. This slow development can only be clearly understood within the context of its interaction with the township surrounding it.

An important reason for the slow growth of the town after the initial railroad boom in 1887 was the worsening economic conditions of the 1890's. Consequently, Langdon did not experience the rapid growth anticipated by those who had planned the town, or its early residents. Sam Wendling, one of the people who sold his land to the Reno Town Company, took his share of the money in March 1888, and established a pool hall in Arlington, rather than locate in Langdon.<sup>81</sup> The other two men who sold their lands to the company located in Langdon, Adolph Wendling

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<sup>79</sup>Ibid., 25 August 1894.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., 20 May 1893. "Horse racing on the public roads should be stopped. Those that must gamble by betting on horse races should build a track away from the public highway and not endanger the lives and property of law-abiding citizens."

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., 17 March 1888.

taking his share of the money and building a blacksmith shop and R. C. Miller building the first general store in the town.<sup>82</sup> After Miller had erected his building, John Coppedge moved his store from Jordan Springs to Langdon town, thus initiating the decline of Jordan Springs.<sup>83</sup>

By 1889, Langdon town's population was only fourteen people, not exactly a boomer increase! Nonetheless, by 1890, the little town did provide important services for the surrounding area through its two blacksmiths, two general stores, train depot, physician and wagonmaker.<sup>84</sup> Later in the same year a mercantile firm by the name of Collins Brother's located in the town.<sup>85</sup> However, Turon had the nearest bank, and Hutchinson, the county seat and major trade center for the area was twenty-eight miles to the northeast of Langdon.

Thus slowed by the depression, the town's population had reached only forty people by 1894. Business growth also failed to increase during these years.<sup>86</sup> Living with the conditions of economic depression and stagnation, the town did not offer bright prospects or social excitement. A statement sent to the Interior Herald's editor from Langdon reflected how dull life could be during those times.

The air was thick with the rumors of war on one day last week, but upon investigation it proved to be a couple of our citizens exercising their pugilistic powers. Any-

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<sup>82</sup> Langdon (Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, 3 June 1927, and 10 June 1927.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> R. L. Polk & Co., Polk's Kansas State Gazetteer and Business Directory (Chicago: R. L. Polk & Co., 1890), p. 741.

<sup>85</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 8 February 1890.

<sup>86</sup> Polk, Polk's Kansas State Gazetteer (Chicago: R. L. Polk & Co., 1892), p. 642. Polk, Polk's Kansas State Gazetteer (Chicago: R. L. Polk & Co., 1895), p. 606.

thing to break the monotony.<sup>87</sup>

During the same year a business prospect was reported to the Interior Herald which could have secured Langdon's future if it had materialized. "Langdon is the future site of the Rock Island round-house now located at Pratt. The date of its removal has not been fixed."<sup>88</sup> However, the round-house was not located at Langdon, and whatever had caused this ill-founded report will never be known. In fact, the only two aspects of the town which showed any signs of development during this time were the churches, already discussed, and the school.

By 1892, the people at Langdon began discussing the need for a school house for their children between Jordan Springs and Maple Grove.<sup>89</sup> Actually, the two school houses were not so far apart to warrant the building of a new one on those grounds, but in terms of securing Langdon town's future, a school appeared to be a necessity to its residents. The new school building was built in mid-1893, and ready by the fall of 1893 for its first students.<sup>90</sup> Also within the township, a real concern developed over the quality of teaching in their schools, as was reflected in this statement to the editor of the Interior Herald:

Supt. Dawson has raised the standard--exactly the right thing to do. I know persons (not teachers, of course) who have been satisfied with a third grade certificate, year after year, for at least five years. What an educator! The catacombs of Egypt are full of such, but we need a real live nineteenth century teacher, and educator and the above is the way to get him.<sup>91</sup>

In 1895, the school did have a teacher with a second grade certi-

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<sup>87</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 6 February 1892.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 26 November 1892.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 25 February 1893.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

ificate, and moreover, this school appeared to be much better off in terms of economics and quality than did that of the Jordan Springs' school. During the year, the district took in \$699.11, the combination of the previous last year's balance, receipts from the county treasurer, and state and county funds apportioned to the district. Clarence Clothier was paid \$40 a month for his teaching. Other expenditures were \$63.20 for school house repairs, fuel, and incidentals, and for the first time, \$50 was appropriated for the library and school apparatus. There were forty students in the district using the same textbooks as had been used years previous to this in the township.<sup>92</sup>

By 1900, a two-room school house in Langdon was operating with fifty-nine students enrolled. However, less money was taken in to support the district in 1900 than in 1895. The teacher at that time, Ring Boody, who had a first grade certificate received the same teaching salary as had Clothier in 1895. And still, in spite of less revenue, the district spent some money for the library and school apparatus. There was also a change of textbooks, with the student using what was called "the state series of text-books."<sup>93</sup>

In 1904, as the school reflected the growth of Langdon town, there were two teachers employed instructing seventy students. Once again, apparently the teacher salaries were determined on the basis of sex, as D. L. Young, who had a second grade certificate, was paid \$55 a month, whereas Lenona Lemle, who also had a second grade certificate, was paid \$40 a month. The district took in \$984.40 on a 15 mill tax levy,

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<sup>92</sup> Reno County, Kansas, "Annual Report of School District No. 62, For the Year Ending June 30, 1895," 29 July 1895.

<sup>93</sup> Reno County, Kansas, "Annual Report of School District No. 62, For the Year Ending June 30, 1900," 27 July 1900.

which indicated a relative economic prosperity when compared to years past. The state series of text-books were still the texts used in the district.<sup>94</sup> When compared to Jordan Springs, the Langdon school prospered both economically and qualitatively over Jordan Springs. However, the figures involved seem to show that these differences were not substantial, but rather a matter of degree reflecting the economic variances between the two school districts.

The town of Langdon, though, remained in a state of stagnation through the 1890's. However, by 1900, certain changes began occurring, and Langdon started to resemble what those who had initially planned it hoped to realize. This account of town activity in Langdon was filed in the Interior Herald in April, 1900:

There seems to be quite a change in our little burg this spring. For years it has been a very, very quiet, slow small village, with no growth to speak of. But of late it has awakened from its slumbers and taken a healthy start, not an excited boom. Our citizens have made up their minds that this point will make a good town, and by the aid of some enterprising people coming here, it is being accomplished. Such as the Kansas lumber company. They are putting in a very large building and a very large stock of all kinds of lumber and shelf hardware. Harry Deffenbaugh has just completed a large two story building,

...  
Robert Miller is telling the people now that he is in the grocery business, and will be glad to wait on customers any and all the time. He will buy all the eggs and butter you have to sell.

The ball, Friday evening, was largely attended and every one reported a good time. The music was the nicest that could be had.

Harry Deffenbaugh bought an organ for his hall, and our young people enjoy it very much. Alex Ralston was here and helped play the organ for the ball, Friday night.<sup>95</sup>

Furthermore, the town's population was on the increase and in 1900 it

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<sup>94</sup> Reno County, Kansas, "Annual Report of School District No. 62, For the Year Ending June 30, 1904," 29 June 1904.

<sup>95</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 21 August 1900.

boasted 105 inhabitants. The business establishments in the town included one blacksmith, one physician, four general stores, a hardware store and a drugstore.<sup>96</sup> It was also during this same year that Langdon was first visited by one of the technological changes which was to affect its future, the automobile. The event was described in the Interior Herald: "Langdon was visited by a real locomobile, last Saturday. It caused quite an excitement. It came from James Hasten's ranch."<sup>97</sup>

In April of 1901, J. E. Eaton, of the Citizen's Bank of Arlington, established a branch bank in Langdon town.<sup>98</sup> The business at the bank proved to be good and in December of 1901, the State Bank of Langdon was chartered.<sup>99</sup> Furthermore, in 1901, the town company was reported to be raising their price for real estate. In the same year they had sold about sixty lots and new buildings were being constructed.<sup>100</sup> By 1902, the Kansas Lumber Company had their new hardware store operating, the post office had a new building, and G. H. Goodenough was building a telephone line through the area. The people of Langdon felt enthusiastic about their town's growth and prosperity, and could not refrain from boasting a little in the Interior Herald. As one citizen noted: "Langdon's new bank is doing a large business. You see yellow checks circulated instead of pink ones, now days."<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Polk, Polk's Kansas State Gazetteer (Chicago: R. L. Polk & Co., 1901), p. 664.

<sup>97</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 28 April 1900.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 27 April 1901.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 21 December 1901.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 26 October 1901.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 2 August 1902 and 26 July 1902.

When 1908 rolled around, the town found itself still enjoying economic prosperity. It witnessed a jump in the city lot valuations from a total of \$7,657 in 1906 to \$37,220 in 1908.<sup>102</sup> Population increased and in that year the town had approximately two-hundred residents. The business community had grown substantially since 1902 and it now included a livery, a blacksmith shop, three grain companies, a telephone company, three general stores, a drug store, a restaurant, a hardware, the lumber yard and the bank.<sup>103</sup>

In December, 1911, the petition for incorporation was filed with the Reno county commissioners.<sup>104</sup> By the middle of April, 1912, the commission had acted favorably and the first city election was set for May 7, 1912. So it was, that the editor of the recently-founded Langdon Leader, on April 11, 1912, proudly reported:

#### Langdon a City

The incorporation of Langdon marks us and we trust a peaceful and prosperous epoch for the town. As a man remarked to us the other day: "The people of the town should now work together as one, for the improvement and best welfare of the town." All differences of opinion that could work injury to the welfare should be dropped entirely, in the interest of the common good. If happily this be done, we may reasonably look forward to an era of gratifying improvement and prosperity in Langdon.<sup>105</sup>

It should be pointed out to the reader, that to view Langdon's development solely as has just been described still leaves out some important aspects which shaped life in Langdon. It should be remembered that these people were also socially inclined. Sometimes the events were

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<sup>102</sup>See Appendix A.

<sup>103</sup>Polk, Polk's Kansas State Gazetteer (Chicago: R. L. Polk & Co., 1909), p. 871.

<sup>104</sup>Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 28 December 1911.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., 11 April 1912.

church related and sometimes they were not. Even in the roughest days of Langdon's growth, when working one's farm required a tremendous personal effort, the people still found time to socialize together. The occasions were few, but were enjoyed by all in attendance. For example, it is interesting to note how a participant interpreted a Christmas celebration in the small wooden school house of Maple Grove in December, 1885.

The Maple Grove school house is a large building fitted something in the style of a hall, with organ, chandeliers, and high ceiling, but for the crowd that thronged the building Christmas eve, the ceiling did not seem a bit too high, for at the back end of the house, the people seemed to reach nearly to the top; . . . Mr. Popejoy, chairman of the committee on foreign affairs, got the tree for thirty dollars from the nursery of Mr. Duport, of Sun City, who makes a speciality of raising Christmas trees.<sup>106</sup>

The most popular public celebration was the Fourth of July. It was always at an opportune time in the Langdon area as it followed the wheat harvest when people were in a position to take a break from the rigorous responsibilities of farming. Sometimes, as in 1890, the celebration had religious overtones. As the Interior Herald reported: "It will probably be interesting to the people of Reno county to learn that there will be a Fourth of July celebration at Railsback grove, under the 'all-spices' [sic] of the Christian Church, Rev. Poole, to be the orator."<sup>107</sup> Other Fourth of July celebrations were more secular as was the one in 1893, when beer was consumed freely. This affair even had a fireworks display, a special treat for the people of Langdon.<sup>108</sup> In 1900, when the

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<sup>106</sup> Hutchinson (Kansas) Interior Herald, 2 January 1886.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 28 June 1890.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 8 July 1893.

town was experiencing its most rapid growth, a large celebration on the Fourth was held, as related to the editor of the Interior Herald. "Langdon celebrated the fourth of July in grand style. A whole ox was roasted, a flower parade, speeches, singing, and a ball at night finished the day."<sup>109</sup>

Ice cream socials were popular forms of entertainment, and even a well-attended birthday party earned special mention in the Interior Herald.<sup>110</sup> Baseball was also a popular form of recreation, though it was not played in any kind of organized league.<sup>111</sup> At times the paper would mention an old settlers' meeting where everyone was invited and all would discuss how hard times had been when they first arrived.<sup>112</sup> The arrival of a medicine show was also a cause for celebration, especially when open air concerts were given each night during the week when in town.<sup>113</sup> Although these early accounts do not present the full scope or range of early social functions in Langdon, they do indicate that they provided the basis, however sporadic, of social interaction between the residents of the community.

Langdon town survived the depression of the 1890's, started its real growth in 1900, and became a third class city in 1912. When the township prospered the town prospered but not vice versa, as the town's economy was dependent upon the farmers, since it was essentially a service center for them. The community had a strong religious influence

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 14 July 1900.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 21 April 1894.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 21 July 1894.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 2 June 1894.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 13 July 1901.

derived from the two churches; it had a school system which was beginning to show signs of qualitative development; and it had a community social life, even if it was relatively unorganized. Not surprisingly, Langdon showed a Republican political preference, except in times of economic stress, and even then it tended towards a moderate non-radical orientation. In 1912, this Langdon, twenty-five years in the making, stood at the threshold of its zenith.



Langdon's Rock Island railroad depot, c. 1890.



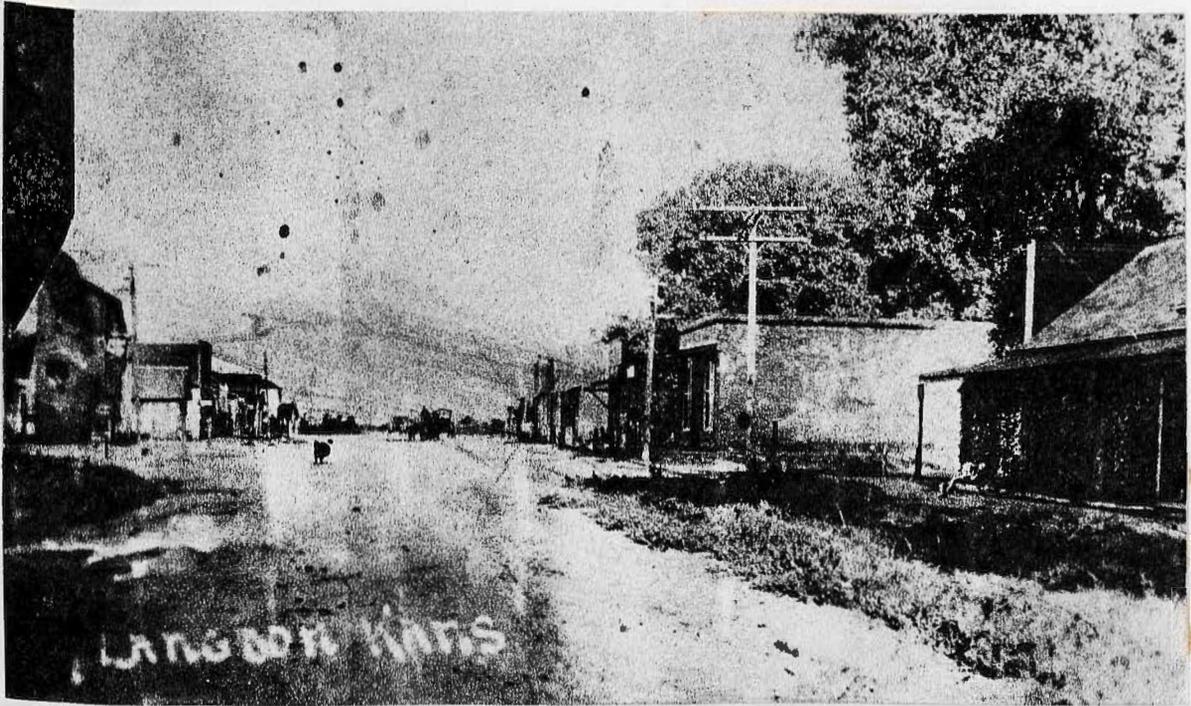
A crowd awaiting to board the train bound for Hutchinson and the state fair, c. 1905.



Main Street, Langdon, Kansas, c. 1915.



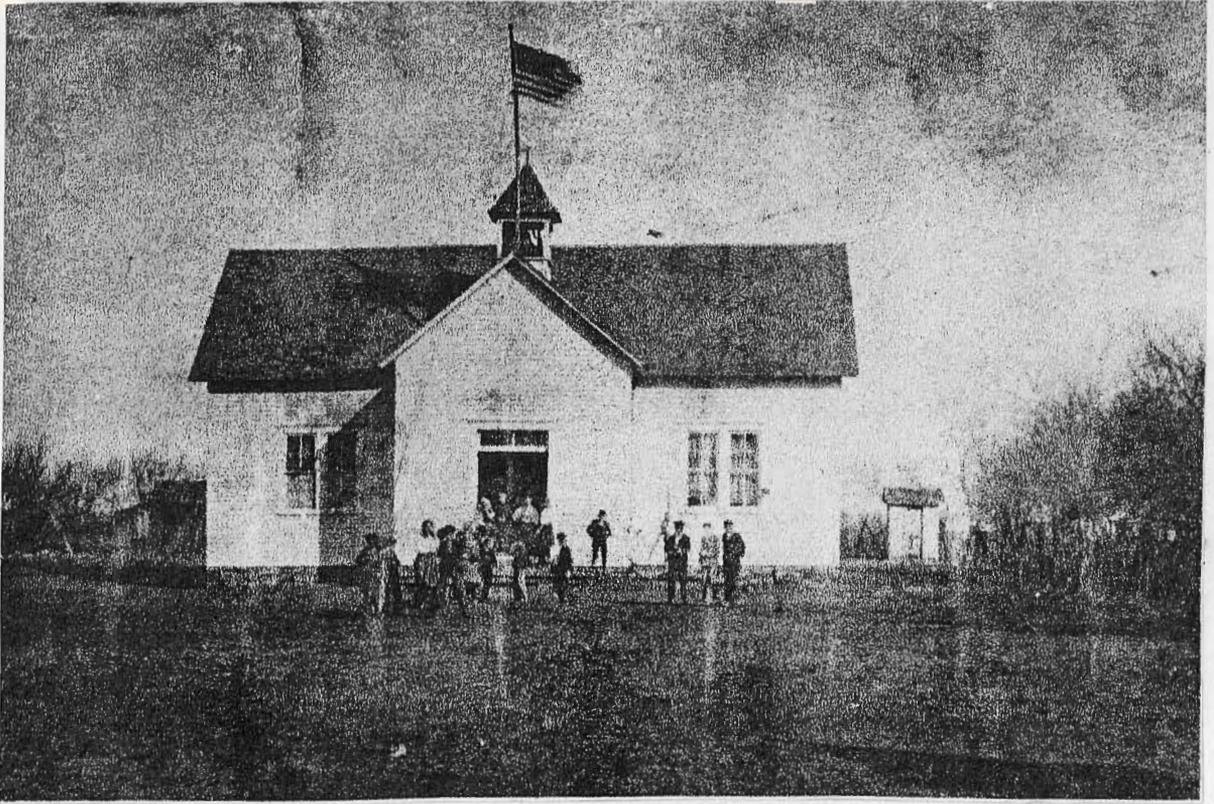
Main Street, Langdon, Kansas, 1978.



Main Street, Langdon, Kansas, c. 1910.



Front Street, Langdon, Kansas, 1920.



Langdon grade school building, c. 1910.



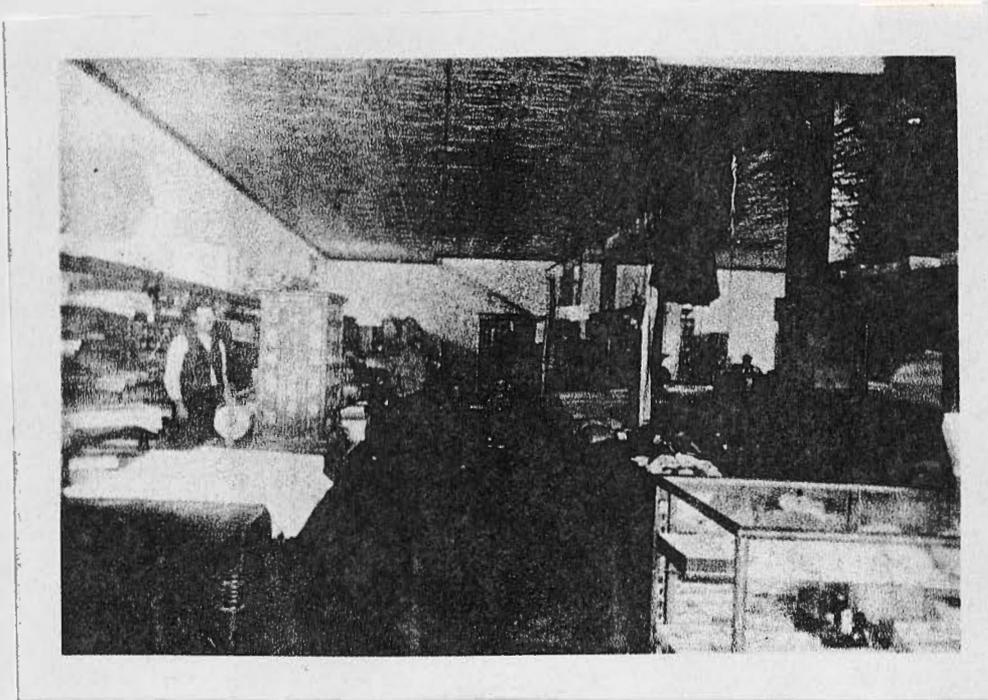
Langdon grade school building, c. 1915.



S. D. Wyman Hotel, c. 1915



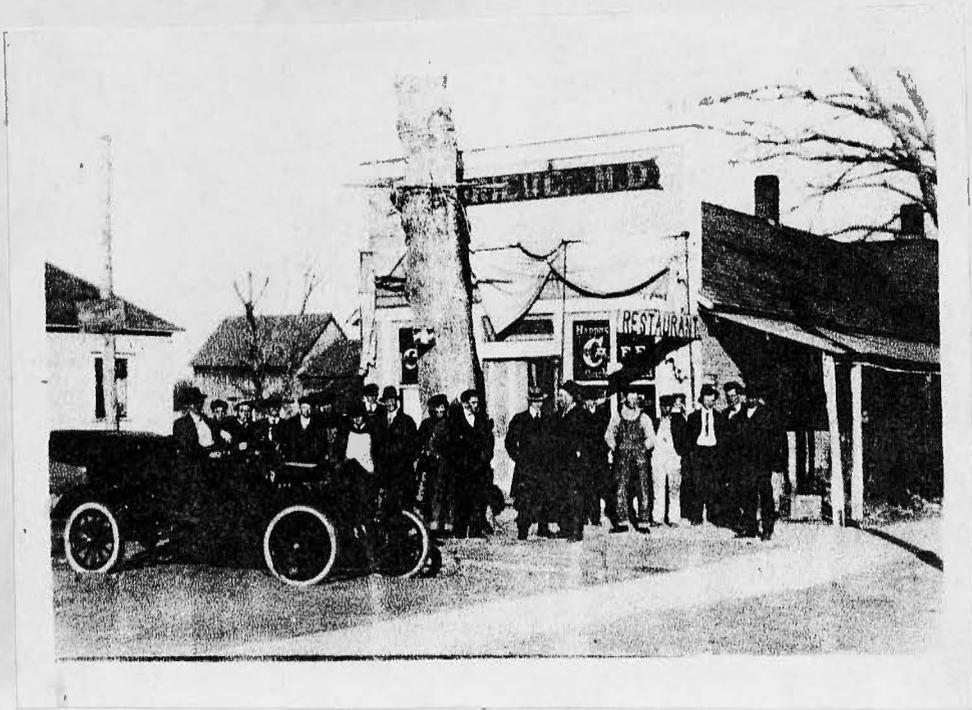
The Joe Sherow General Store, c. 1915.



Inside view of the Joe Sherow store, c. 1910.



Memorial Day parade, c. 1915.



Happy Harlan's Cafe, c. 1920.



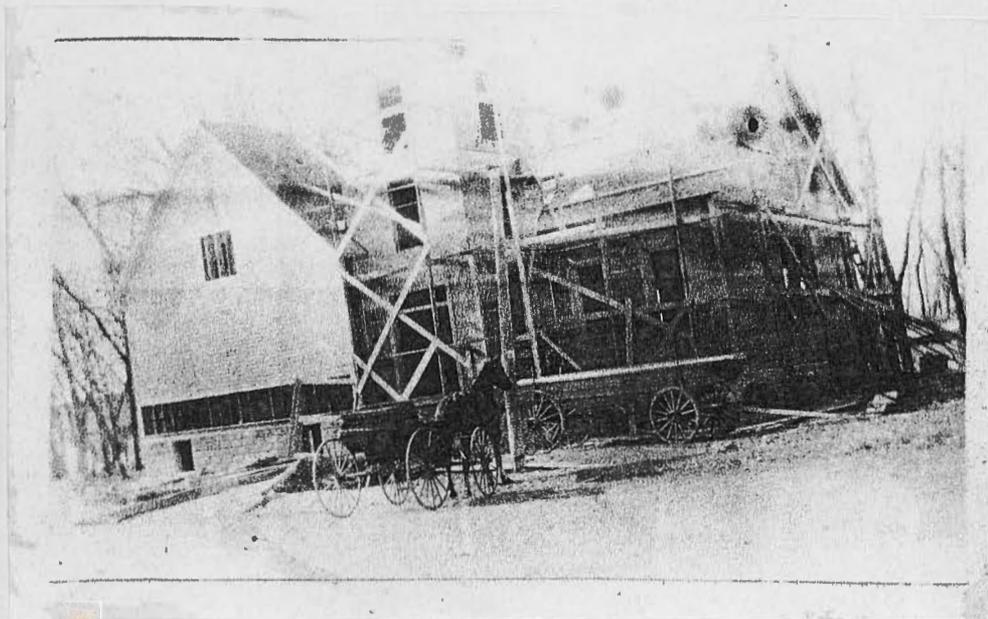
Inside view of Harry's Drugstore, 1912.



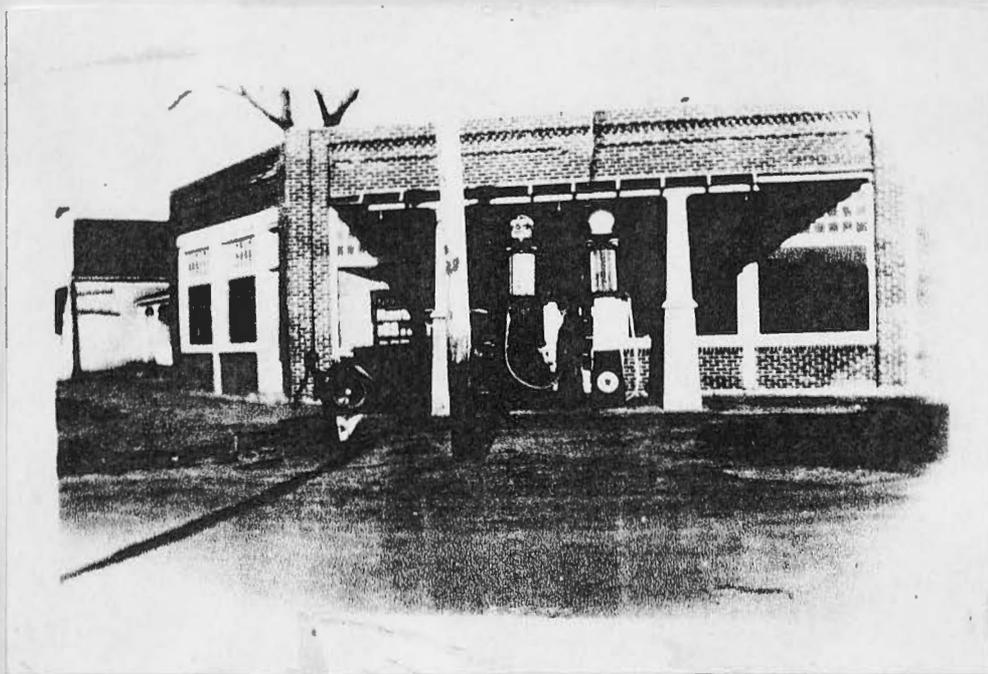
Langdon Christian Church of Christ, 1893.



Langdon Methodist Church, 1910.



Construction on the Christian Church, 1912.



Jonas Holmes' gas station, 1927.



Farmers' grain elevator, c. 1915.



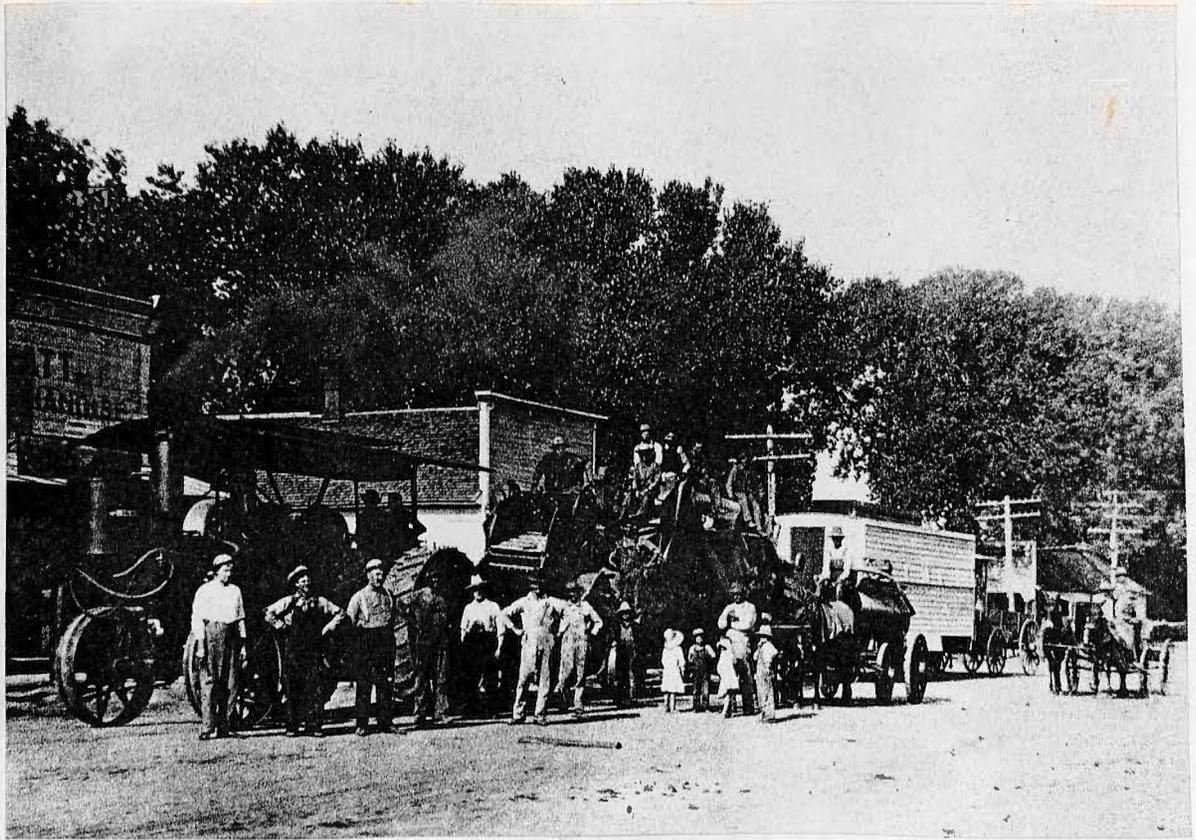
Inside Fay Holmes' grocery store, 1940.



Dr. Grieve and wife, 1912.



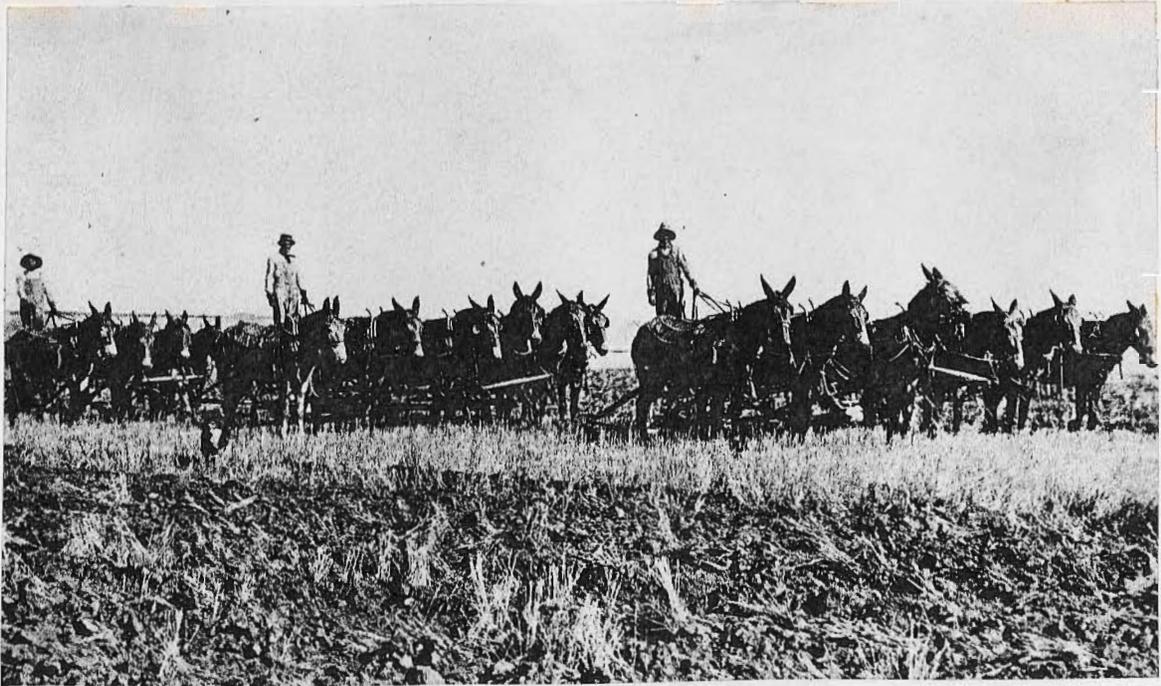
Langdon High School's first basketball team, 1916.



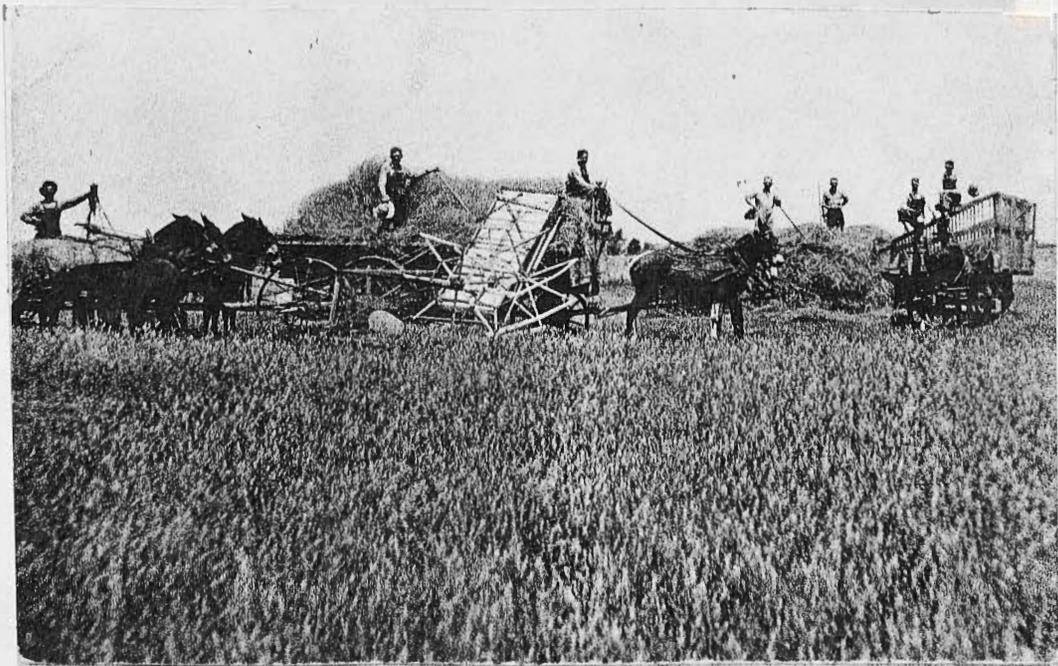
Threshing crew in Langdon, c. 1910.



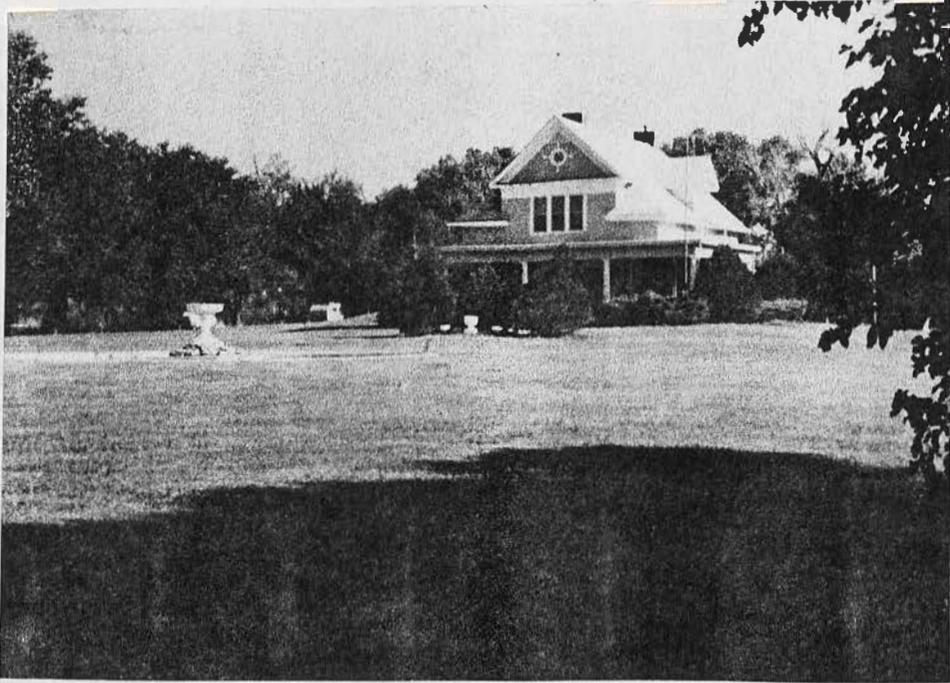
Road grading crew, c. 1915.



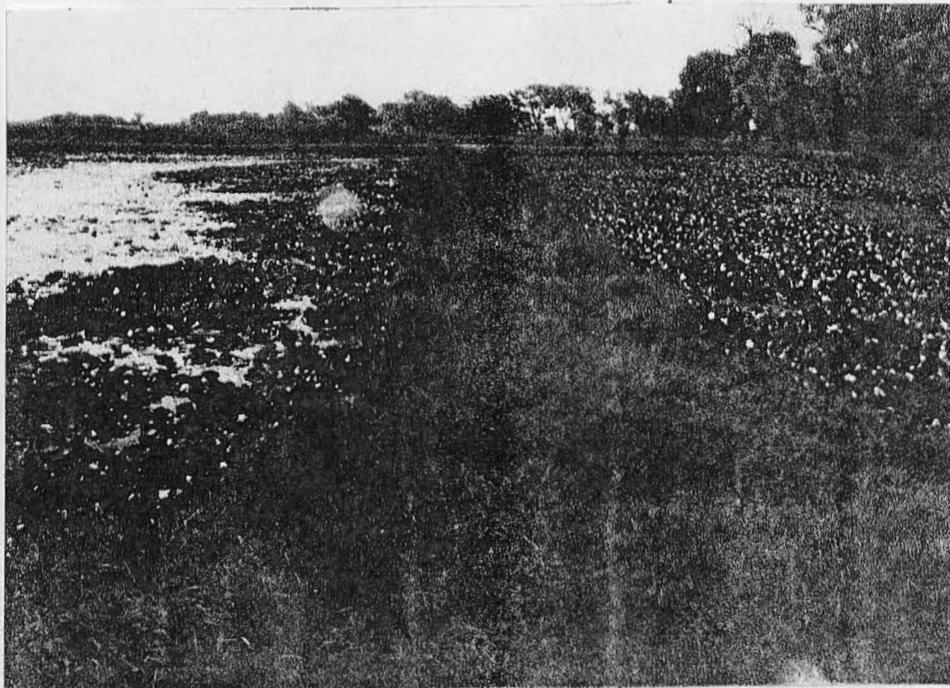
Harrowing on the G. G. Railsback farm, c. 1910.



Header and stacker on the Claude Railsback farm, c. 1913.



The former Eugene Catte home, 1977.



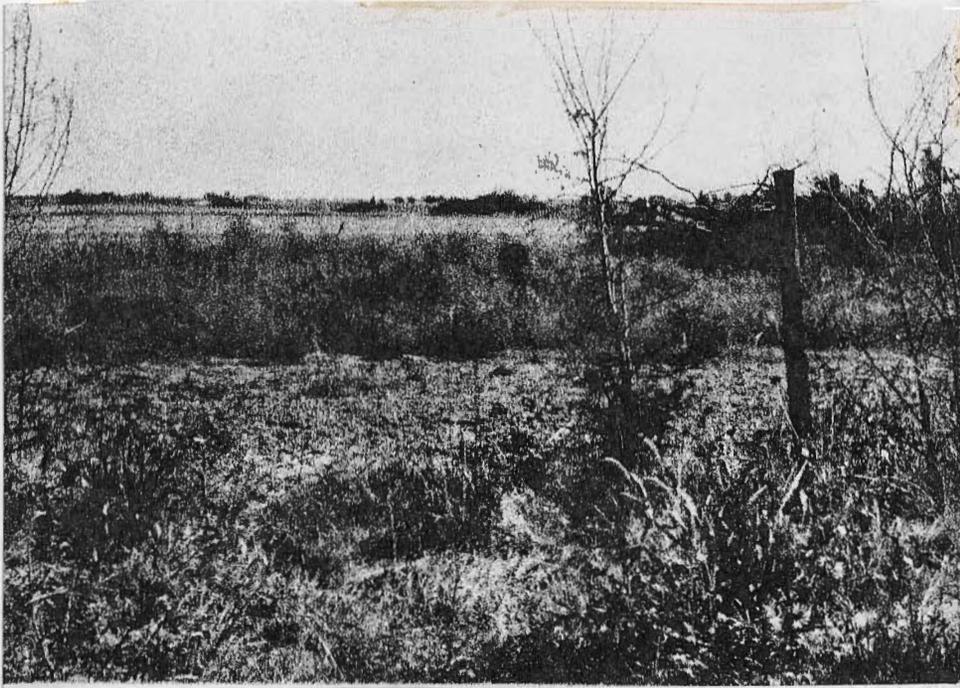
Former hatchery ponds, 1977.



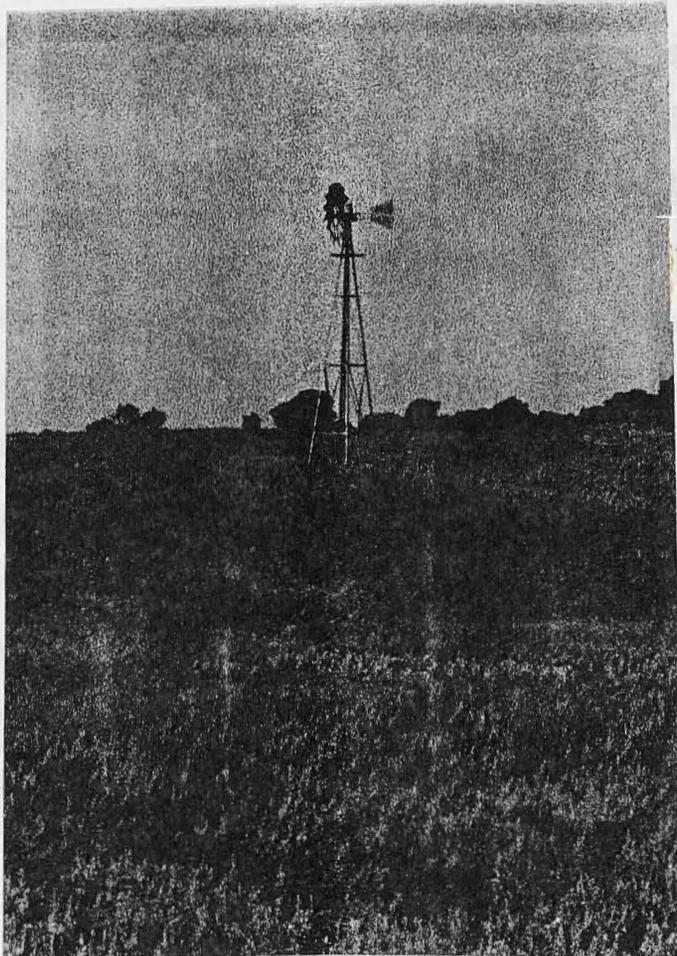
Langdon High School, 1978.



The remnants of Lerado, Kansas, 1978.



Stripping the windbreaks, 1977.



A lone windmill in the sandhills, 1977.

## CHAPTER IV

### LANGDON COMES OF AGE, 1912-1918

Langdon town had now achieved a legal identity and with it, the need for a form of city government. The citizens of Langdon adopted a mayoral form of government with a five member council and one police judge. Two slates of candidates entered the first election for city offices. The two tickets' differences were not distinguished by common party political or religious affiliations, but rather by some other qualifications, perhaps, social relationships within the town itself. The first slate, and the one elected, was composed of Dr. Grieve for mayor, E. J. Nunemaker for police judge, and C. K. Mauck, R. E. Duncan, John Litchfield, H. L. McCain and B. E. Cole for councilmen.<sup>1</sup> The second ticket, called the "Good Government Ticket," included some of the same candidates running on the first ticket mentioned: running for mayor was Dr. Grieve; for police judge, H. H. Purdy; and for councilmen, W. White, J. L. Ducan, E. S. Corrie, B. E. Cole and John Litchfield.<sup>2</sup>

On May 8, 1912, the first mayor and council met. Mayor Grieve appointed a city clerk, city treasurer and city marshall. The most important appointments he made were for the ordinance committee, which

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<sup>1</sup>Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 9 May 1912.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 2 May 1912.

had the responsibility for drawing up and drafting the town's laws.

John Litchfield, H. L. McCain and J. A. Lyons sat on this committee.<sup>3</sup>

The ordinance committee put itself to the task and by the end of 1912, had devised a wide range of town laws. The laws symbolized the community consensus giving fundamental guidelines of the town's proprieties. For example, under the heading "misdemeanors," disturbing the peace brought the heaviest fines. If convicted, one faced a fine of not less than \$3 and not more than \$100. Others which merited rather stiff fines were assault and battery, drunkenness, obscene language, disorderly conduct, carrying a concealed weapon and impeding an officer in performing his duties. Speeding on the streets, whether on horse or in an auto, was also a misdemeanor. Lesser offenses were enumerated under the heading "nuisances." Such petty infractions included littering, unsanitary outhouses, or the leaving of dead animals on city lots. There was a separate ordinance passed concerning prostitution with fines for conviction not to be more than \$100.

The gravest misdeed to be punished in Langdon town was the sale, trade, making or drinking of alcoholic beverages. The fines assessed expressed the seriousness with which Langdon took the regulation of liquor. Trading, selling or making within the city limits could bring a fine of not less than \$100 and not greater than \$500, with a thirty day to six month confinement in the town jail, which the town never built. A person caught drinking liquor received the same fine and possession was considered as a nuisance. In addition, pool halls were regulated and taxed by each table in the building, and by 1913, were outlawed within the city limits altogether. Furthermore, peddlers, auctioneers, and

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

amusement shows were to be licensed before operating within the city limits. Moreover, no one was to drive an auto without the use of headlights after dark.<sup>4</sup>

The ordinances also provided for the construction of sidewalks. With the incorporation of Langdon, taxes could now be assessed and city improvements constructed. Sidewalks were an important element in showing a degree of civilization and progress in a town. It represented the passing from a frontier stage to one which reflected a town with permanent standing. It was a means for the citizens of Langdon to show that their community was as progressive as any larger city. In fact, such pride was taken in these sidewalks that a separate city ordinance was passed prohibiting the driving of a horse, auto or bike on any of them.<sup>5</sup>

The first city budget showed an income of \$456,59, of which approximately \$220 was spent on street labor and sidewalks. Other expenses were for such various items as printing cost, surveying and the marshall's salary. This budget set the pattern for subsequent budgets: the majority of all funds spent by the city were for street improvements and maintenance.<sup>6</sup>

Along with city improvements, the citizens of Langdon decided it was time to develop a better school system. In April, 1913, in the Leader, one concerned citizen voiced an opinion:

The constant dropping of water will wear away a stone, so let's everybody talk new school house and consolidation. Langdon's school house is undoubtedly

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<sup>4</sup>See Appendix H.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 10 April 1913.

the poorest in the county, country school houses included.

We owe it to our children to give them an education, and no teacher can do himself or herself and the children justice in such an unsanitary dilapidated building as the one here. We don't believe in knocking, but it seems to us time for action. Let's get busy and have a decent building.<sup>7</sup>

In July, 1913, after some campaigning for a school bond issue, the citizens voted for the building of a new school house by a margin of seventy-one to twelve.<sup>8</sup> By September 1913, a contract of \$6,638 was accepted and the school was finished in about four months. It was a very good structure considering the time and place. It was of red brick, with four rooms and a small belfry over the front entrance. When school started in September 1914, fifty-four pupils enrolled, twenty-six in the primary department and twenty-eight in the grammar department.<sup>9</sup>

In 1915, the education system in Langdon received an addition. During that year the Kansas House passed a bill relating to the development of rural high schools. The bill was signed and became effective the same year. It stated in part:

The legal electors residing in territory containing not less than 10 square miles and comprising one or more townships or parts thereof shall have authority to form a rural high school district and maintain therein a rural high school.<sup>10</sup>

The editor of the Leader took up this theme:

This is the best high school law we have had yet. Under the provisions of this act we can have a high school without disturbing our elementary school in any

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 24 April 1913.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 17 July 1913.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 10 September 1914.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 29 April 1915.

way.

We have the building here in Langdon. Why not have the outlying country come in with us and establish such a school here?<sup>11</sup>

A petition was passed throughout the area and was signed by enough voters to bring the high school question to a vote in July 1915. This was an achievement for the residents of Langdon and the surrounding area. Prior to this time, anyone wanting a high school education went to Nickerson, Kansas, about twenty-five miles from Langdon, which had had the only county high school. The vote was overwhelmingly in favor of creating a high school in Langdon, 132 for and only 32 against the proposal. However, the vote was contested. Nine sections of Langdon's proposed school district were also claimed by Arlington. A solution to the problem was finally worked out by splitting half the disputed territory.<sup>12</sup>

By May, 1916, the Langdon school board was preparing for the opening of its high school and reviewing teacher applications. The board purchased "a large standard dictionary" and an encyclopedia as reference materials for its future students. The editor of the Leader proclaimed of the school board in May, 1916: "They intend to have a High School second to none and have a wise number of students ready to enroll this fall."<sup>13</sup> By 1917, the courses offered to freshmen were: algebra, Latin, English and ancient history; to sophomores: geometry, general science, English II and American history; and to juniors: algebra and geometry, chemistry, English III and civics. A senior class did not exist when the Langdon school first opened its doors.

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 25 May 1916.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

Frontier conditions and standards in education were finally giving way to a better quality of education in terms of its facilities and course offerings.<sup>14</sup>

The churches, as well as the schools, showed definite growth in Langdon by 1915. In that year the Christian church had a membership of 180 and the Methodist were numbered at 93.<sup>15</sup> This was a sizable number and represented over 40% of the entire population in the township, and gave the churches an opportunity to assert a considerable influence on the community at large. It is difficult to assess in a scientific manner the influence of the churches upon members and non-members who attended the services. However, in Langdon's case, it is possible to conjecture that their influence was keenly felt in most instances when not interfering with business. The churches could get the town businesses to close down for revival meetings, but it was a different story when it came to closing them down on Sundays. A member of one of the churches voiced a concern over this problem and proposed a solution for it in the Leader in August 1914.

An effort has been put forth to have the business houses in Langdon closed to trade on Sunday. The petition as presented was turned down on the ground that as long as people demanded goods on Sunday it was up to the merchants to sell them. . . . So if the people of the community do not want to see a wide-open Sunday<sup>16</sup> they will have to deny themselves this accommodation.

How successful this drive was is not known, however, Langdon never had a town statute passed prohibiting trade on Sundays.

Moreover, it is of importance to know what the town's clergymen

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 20 September 1917.

<sup>15</sup>Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1915.

<sup>16</sup>Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 13 August 1914.

stressed in their sermons. By knowing this, one is able to see the themes which were considered important to the ministers. Especially in the case of the Christian minister who held his position through the consent of the congregation to whom he preached, it can be considered that these sermons were at least acceptable to the church community even if they were not remembered. So in this manner they reflect a community consensus.

It was decided by the ministers of the two churches to make Christian appeals through a series of newspaper articles to gain a wider audience by this means. In the Leader, May 1913, Elder J. T. Sapp, the Christian Church pastor, explained the purpose of the articles.

Our purpose in these articles will be: not to stir up a spirit of unfriendly controversy but to arouse public opinion along the lines of some of the evils of the times; not to abuse men and women but to help them to a better happier, and holier way of living; not to pose as individuals without fault but to exalt Jesus Christ in the minds of men; not to deny the individual his true liberty but to help him to see that his so called liberty is often times used to abuse the liberty of others. If we can in some measure do these things we shall feel well paid for our troubles.<sup>17</sup>

The first article to appear in what would be a series of three, was entitled, "The Sabbath," by Reverend B. W. Folsom, the Methodist pastor. It was an attempt to get people to consider Sunday as a holy day. A day in which a person should not concern themselves with anything but religious program. It was thought by Folsom that not only would a neglect of Sunday as a holy day led to a "lowering of the moral tone of the community and . . . destroy its religious life," but that it also led to a physical deterioration of the body. It was on this

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 29 May 1913.

aspect which Folsom devoted his attention. If one could combine science and holy script to justify a dogma, then even the most critical person would have to concede the argument. It was by the means of pseudo-science that Folsom begins his article.<sup>18</sup>

One of the greatest and most important of all Christian institutions is the Sabbath. This day was instituted in the infancy of the human race and in accordance with the laws of man's nature. It is said that by analysis of the blood it is found that of the one ounce of oxygen consumed out of our system in a day's labor, only five-sixths is restored by a night's rest. Thus we see that we "run down," like the clock, in six days and therefore need the seventh for rest. From a purely physical point of view,<sup>19</sup> the Sabbath is a necessity for man's highest attainments.

The flaws in this argument are obvious enough without any comment. However, as it is readily seen that from this argument it was easy to condemn sports, business, and work activities on Sunday. Folsom concentrated his attack on what he called "Sunday amusements" showing how they caused physical harm. He said he would deal later with the moral evil in disregarding the Sabbath, however he never did, at least not in the newspaper.

The second article dealt with selfishness. It was written by the Christian church minister, J. T. Sapp and was entitled, "Self: In it's [sic] Relation to Progress." In it, he presented William James' definition of self and added his own explanatory comment.

"The total self of me, being as it were duplex, partly known and partly knower, partly object and partly subject, must have two aspects discriminated in it, of which for shortness we may call one the Me and the other the I." Accepting this view of Dr. James, there can be no phase of our existence but belongs to one or the other of these

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<sup>18</sup>It should be noted that pseudo-science was a part of the popular culture of those times. It was used to sell patent medicines or in the justification of racial differences. Therefore, it should not be viewed as the device solely of a small rural town minister.

<sup>19</sup>See Appendix I.

aspects. If one unduly exalts the I, we call him an egotist. If he lives for the Me and that alone, we call him selfish. And it is to the latter I want to call attention in this article.<sup>20</sup>

Sapp had needlessly confused exactly what it was that he was talking about. The difference between an egotist and a selfish person is not altogether clear. He would have been better off to have used the Rousseauian terms of "egoism" and "self-respect" in describing the type of person which he desired to see. For the person of "self-respect" is the kind of person which Sapp exhorts his readers to become.

No man has a moral right to consider himself as a unit apart from the whole. On the other hand he should consider himself as an integral part of the whole, and that which effects him, effects the whole. One great trouble with men is that they are unwilling to consider the good of others unless they can see some material recompense.<sup>21</sup>

Furthermore, it is not entirely clear what he considered progress to be. However, it seemed to center around material gain, individual liberty and peace and harmony. Sapp also urged his readers to consider the present as the time in which to act towards good, and not to look back upon the past as a time of lost greatness, nor to view the future as the time for good deeds. He concluded by blending Rousseauian and pragmatic philosophies into a social gospel theme, thusly.

In the present, only, can we show an appreciation of the blessings which have come to us out of the unselfishness of the past. The future is before us. What are we going to contribute to its greatness? Let us bear in mind that there can be no real progress only as men use self as a means to help the many and not as an end of living for the individual.<sup>22</sup>

The third article was written by B. W. Folsom, the Methodist pastor, which he labeled, "The New Patriotism." The first one-third of his essay

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<sup>20</sup> See Appendix J.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

pertained to a military theme. From this he developed the idea of the Christian soldier going out to do battle with the forces of evil.

"This, then is real Christianity--the twentieth century religion--the New Patriotism--in conformity with the Great Commission, 'Go ye into ALL THE WORLD.'" The enemies which Folsom would attack were "the commercial spirit of the time," "the love of pleasure," e.g., dancing, vaudeville and the picture show, rising divorce rates, white slavery--"that slavery ten thousand times more hellish than the slavery against which you [the Civil War veterans in the audience] fought," and the greatest of all evils--"drink." Concerning liquor, Folsom let loose this following bombast:

In loss of life and in misery and moral debauchery little comparison can be made. But it is a startling fact that in ten years more seats are made vacant at the American firesides by this liquor business than were made vacant by the entire Civil War. And yet this modern Goliath continues to defy the armies of the living God, and no David had yet appeared to smite him. Let this monster be slain and the Philistine hosts will be put to flight. There are other evils to be sure, and other foes we must meet, but they go hand in hand with the greatest of all. The murderer steels his nerve for the dastardly deed by taking a drink. The wine glitters upon the tables of the bawdy house, and fires the passions of the young in the whirl of the dance and other social pleasures. It impoverishes the home, driving the members of the family to theft in order to allay the pangs of hunger. It breaks the marriage vow and works the divorce courts overtime. It is found upon the gambler's table, and drives striking laborers to mob violence.<sup>23</sup>

So it is that from these three tracts certain religious themes emerge. One is the notion of the sanctity of Sunday. Another is the view that a person should be generous to others--the notion of community and not individualism. Moreover, certain evils exist in society and it is the duty of every Christian to battle these with their belief in

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<sup>23</sup>See Appendix K.

Christ. Chief among all these evils is liquor.

There was one notable person who had lived near Langdon who refused to accept some of the above beliefs. His name was Silas D. Wyman. "Si," as those who knew him liked to call him, was a bachelor who remained apart from the churches. He had been an early settler in the Langdon area, at least since 1875, and had prospered well beyond that of any other farmer in the surrounding area. He had amassed property in Langdon, not only in town lots, but in buildings and bank stock. He had helped Joe Sherow build the first brick store structure in the town in 1910. The store went broke in 1913 due to the owners' over-extension of credit to the local farmers.<sup>24</sup> No one proprietor seemed to be able to stay long after that and on Si's death in 1915, the store was willed to the Salvation Army.

Si was also responsible for bringing families out to Langdon township to farm his lands. The Claude Royce family in Indiana, after listening to Si's tales of the good life possible in Kansas, loaded their family possessions in one end of a railroad freight car and the mules and one cow in the other end, and came out to Langdon.<sup>25</sup> Nor were they the only ones Si brought out to farm his holdings. In 1895, he owned at least one-thousand acres in Langdon township alone.<sup>26</sup> He worked the standard agreement with these people and treated them as renters; in other words, he received one-third of all crop and farm production.<sup>27</sup> However, the venture paid off for these people, for the

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<sup>24</sup> Interview with Mr. J. Breton Sherow, Langdon, Kansas, 13 July 1977.

<sup>25</sup> Interview with Mr. Joy Royce, Langdon, Kansas, 13 July 1977.

<sup>26</sup> Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1895.

<sup>27</sup> Interview with Mrs. Sadie Applegate, Langdon, Kansas, 6 July 1977.

land was willed over to them upon his death.

Si was always known as a "picturesque character." It was said he never cared for the company of women. The Hutchinson News as quoted in the Leader told this story about this particular dislike of his. "It is told of him that once when a woman with her husband took refuge in his house during a severe storm, that he swept the yard after she was gone to obliterate her tracks."<sup>28</sup> The Leader took a milder position about it and said even though he did not care for women in general, he did respect and admire "a good sensible woman."<sup>29</sup> He also loved to read and had quite a few books. He enjoyed music, and since he did not play the piano, he had "a big player piano" in his house. Furthermore, it was said of him that he was "kind hearted" and liked to entertain young people in his home. So then, what would keep a person like this away from the churches in Langdon? It was simple, he drank.

Sadie Applegate, whose father had rented from Si, recalled this about him, and why he was not endeared by many of the town's folks.

No, there were quite a few people in town who didn't care about him. . . . He was strictly business. . . . Well I don't remember of him playing cards and I don't know as he drank a lot either. But, he kept liquor at his place most of the time. He knew how to use it. And I can't say as I ever saw him drunk. [When asked if just the knowledge that Si kept liquor around offended people in Langdon, she had this reply:] Well, I think it does [sic].<sup>30</sup>

Moreover, when Si died he did little to win over the affections of the churches in Langdon. He left them only \$200 apiece, whereas he left

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<sup>28</sup> Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 18 March 1915.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 25 March 1915.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Mrs. Sadie Applegate, Langdon, Kansas, 6 July 1977.

far larger sums to the Catholic parochial school in Hutchinson, even though Si was not Catholic himself, to the home for aged women in Hutchinson, and money for the maintenance of a maternity bed in a Hutchinson hospital for "destitute women."<sup>31</sup> So no matter how much people practiced their Henry Beecher Wardism, money alone was no guarantee of social respectability in Langdon.

By 1912, social development in Langdon town was also beginning to follow a different direction than it had in years past. Because of the strong moral influence exerted by both churches, no longer would one find dancing in the town. In fact, dancing did not occur in Langdon again until the early 1950's when the moral restraining influences of the churches propagated by an older generation gave way. It should not be construed from this that secular forms of public entertainment were not allowed, for indeed they had a place in Langdon's social life. Even though the majority of social events were tied closely to church or school, these other amusements were an important development in the town for they gave a view of the rest of the world to this little prairie burg. The most notable form of secular entertainment in Langdon was the movies.

Movies were special occurrences for the town, for there was not a theater with continuous showings in the town until the 1930's. Thus, films received special attention in the Leader whenever one came to town. In 1912, the Turon Amusement Company ran by C. H. Geesling and K. F. Clem made arrangements with Joe Sherow to show pictures on the second floor of his store building. This received a good billing in the

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<sup>31</sup>Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 25 March 1915.

Leader.

Next Thursday evening, April 25, we will begin a series of up-to-date motion picture entertainments in Sherow's Hall, Langdon. On that evening and each Thursday evening through the season we will show 3,000 ft. of the Latest Release Films, in Langdon, consisting of,

Educational, Dramatic, Scenic and Comic Features, some of which are bound to please the fancy of everyone.

A low admission price of only 10¢ will be asked which will admit everybody easily attending the highly enjoyable and educational entertainments--no better shows of the kind are seen in towns many times the size of Langdon.

Remember it's only ten cents to 1 1/2 hours of right UP TO NOW moving pictures--everyone of these shows guaranteed.<sup>32</sup>

After 1912, moving pictures became less frequent in Langdon but when shown, were promoted with the same enthusiasm as were the ones above.

Another form of public entertainment which was intended to be educationally informative was the lyceum. The programs that came to the town were varied as were the lyceum companies which appeared from year to year. Usually about twelve programs were staged each year. One time it was a humorist who came to Langdon, one other time it was a small concert company. Once in 1912, a small company who called themselves the Bonheur Brothers came to Langdon. They were a take off on a wild west show. They had trained ponies and horses, clowns and a motion picture besides "many other interesting and instructive features."<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, moral issues were not neglected and lectures on such topics as the white slave traffic were common.

A committee was established in Langdon for the purpose of obtaining a lyceum for each year. Once a company was picked, the ticket prices were advertised and they ran about ten to twenty cents a show, or \$1.25

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 18 April 1912.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 8 August 1912.

for an entire season as it was in 1913.<sup>34</sup> It was proposed to take the excess profits from the lyceums and develop a reading library for the community. However, because of lagging attendance, the town committee had enough troubles in securing payments for the lyceum programs themselves.

Furthermore, Langdon's social life was highly organized. Several different associations existed in Langdon, and if a person did not belong to one it was not because they did not have an opportunity.<sup>35</sup> Two lodges existed in Langdon, one was the Modern Woodmen of America and the other was the A.O.U.W., lodge #530. These were essentially fraternal societies and their functions remain somewhat obscure. Another organization was a holdover from earlier frontier days. This was the Anti Horse Thief Association, #96. Everett Dick explained how this organization evolved. "[It] . . . was organized to provide protection against horse thieves. In time it developed certain social features such as school house programs, oyster suppers, and picnics."<sup>36</sup> The Royal Neighbors of America was an organization based on a life insurance program. Langdon's branch of it was the Maple Leaf Camp, #2673. The club members would gather about once a month and pay their dues, which were partly life insurance premiums, and socialize. Of course, it goes almost without saying that Langdon had its own active Women's Christian Temperance Union with its obvious objective.

The Langdon Commercial Club--synonymous with boosterism--was

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 23 October 1913.

<sup>35</sup>A listing of the lodges in Langdon ran in every edition of the Leader. The ones noted came from the Leader, 21 December 1911.

<sup>36</sup>Everett Dick, The Sod-House Frontier, 1854-1890 (Lincoln, Nebraska: Johnsen Publishing Company, 1975), p. 384.

another organization of Langdon town. Considered by some American historians as characteristic of the 1920's, boosterism, as a social phenomenon, should not be confined to the 1920's, but viewed rather as an on-going part of small rural town life--if Langdon is any example. The club was formed in May, 1913, and the Leader expressed its purpose.

No great achievement has ever been attained without organized effort.

Realizing this great truth, a goodly number of the citizens of Langdon and vicinity met Friday night, May 16 at Mauck's Hall and perfected the permanent organization of the Langdon Commercial Club.

This club is not to be political, but progressive in every sense of the word all working harmoniously for the upbuilding of Langdon and vicinity.

The greatest good to the greatest number, is our motto.<sup>37</sup>

The business community which this booster club was to serve was as well developed as it ever would become during Langdon town's history. The period between 1912 and 1920 marked the peak of the town's businesses and population growth. The Leader, in 1914, claimed a town population of three hundred,<sup>38</sup> whereas, a more accurate figure found in the Kansas Agriculture Biennial Report had it numbered at 214 people in 1914.<sup>39</sup> Probably the highest town population to have ever occurred in Langdon was 276 in 1918.<sup>40</sup> The Leader went on to boast about the town's "cement" sidewalks and its streets lined with "fine, large, shade trees."

The business community itself was comprised of several different elements.<sup>41</sup> A farmer-owned grain elevator was established in 1907, and

<sup>37</sup> Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 22 May 1913.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 10 December 1914.

<sup>39</sup> Kansas Department of Agriculture, Twenty-third Biennial Report, p. 878.

<sup>40</sup> Kansas Department of Agriculture, Twenty-third Biennial Report, p. 434.

<sup>41</sup> All information concerning Langdon's businesses in the following paragraphs is from the Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 17 December 1914.

had been running fairly smoothly throughout the years. Another elevator was owned by the Enns Milling Company and nothing is known about this enterprise. The bank, even though its total assets were small--about \$120,500--was always thought of by the town's residents as an essential part of the town. The town had one grocery store, ran by J. W. Parish; and two general merchandise stores, ran by C. W. Wyatt and B. E. Cole. There was a furniture store operated by Mrs. E. S. Cross and two hotels, one called the "Langdon House," and the other "Cottage House." Langdon had at the time, its own telephone exchange which served the town and local farmers. It was managed by P. D. Krebbiel. C. A. Wendling kept a livery in Langdon which was also used for autos. As the auto became more commonplace in Langdon town, Charley Poorman, the town's blacksmith, began to work on cars as well as continue his smith's work. Two hardware stores operated by H. H. Purdy and the other by C. A. Henry, who was also the agent for a Maxwell auto dealership in Langdon. The Maxwell was a relatively high priced auto for 1914, at least when compared to the Ford model-T. It was advertised in the Leader at \$695. However, the Maxwell was by far the better auto as it had an electric self-starter and other features which made it a better auto than the model-T. Unfortunately, the Maxwell company could not compete with Ford and was eventually bought up by Chrysler; and after 1917, nothing was heard about the Maxwell in Langdon.

Frank Harlan, known in Langdon as "Happy," owned at this time, a cafe. Happy was one of Langdon's long-standing businessmen. He was one of the few who survived the economic storms in Langdon and kept his businesses solvent. Langdon also had a produce company operated by W. C. Long. Long was known as a fair businessman and paid good prices for the produce brought in to his company. This could also get him in

trouble with the larger companies which bought from him. A larger company in July 1913, unnamed in the Leader account, wrote this threatening note to Long, requesting a change in his purchasing procedures.

. . . [But] we are advised at the present time that you are paying 24¢ while our price is 23¢ and that is three cents lower than Elgin. [The prices quoted were for a gallon of cream.]

Now we regret to say that we will either have to discontinue receiving shipments from you entirely or change our arrangements with you, unless you pay the prices that we quote, because we cannot and we'll not allow a station from which we get cream affect other stations at which we buy.<sup>42</sup>

Whether or not Long changed his pricing is not known, but this does indicate that Langdon businessmen were receiving competition from larger firms, which in the long run, they were unable to match.

Another firm which maintained itself in Langdon was the Kansas Lumber Company. It was owned by a Hutchinson company and managed by C. W. Harper. Langdon's town doctor was the prominent G. H. Grieve. He quit his practice in Langdon sometime before 1920 and reestablished in Turon. Perhaps he made this move since Turon had a pharmacy and Langdon did not. No country town was complete without a veterinarian, and at that time, it was Joe Bates. In addition to all of the above mentioned businesses was the Langdon Leader, edited and owned by B. B. Miller. Miller took over the paper in September 1914, from H. B. Albertson, the original founder of the Leader. He made this statement of intention concerning the Leader:

Politically the paper will be independent [even though in reality it was Republican], its first mission to work for the best interest of Langdon and tributary territory, while furnishing me with the necessary finances that I may make a

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 31 July 1913.

buy for myself and my family. B. B. Miller<sup>43</sup>

One other business, which did not operate within the town limits of Langdon, was unique to the township, as well it could be said, to southwestern Kansas. This was Eugene Catte's fish hatchery. Eugene immigrated to the United States from France with his parents when he was eleven. He migrated to the vicinity of Langdon when he was eighteen in 1887. There was an eighty acre place, northeast of present Langdon town, for sale at \$200 and he worked for the C.K.&N. at 50¢ a day when it was building through the area to pay off the amount. He purchased the land partly because of its natural springs. A man who loved to hunt and fish, he built ponds by damming the springs. Once he stocked it, they gave him a place to fish and also served as a lure for local game, since it was used as a watering hole. When he realized he could sell the fish, he built more ponds until it became a fairly elaborate enterprise.<sup>44</sup>

Catte raised several kinds of fish--bass, blue-gill, perch, black bass, crappie and goldfish.<sup>45</sup> He never raised catfish. These fish would have made the bottoms of the ponds too murky, thus preventing him from viewing what was going on in the ponds. It was always best to have clear ponds when draining them or just to maintain them. He also had trouble with turtles, especially the soft-shelled, and with muskrats tunneling into the pond dams.<sup>46</sup>

In fact, Catte prospered so well from the fishery, that around

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 3 September 1914.

<sup>44</sup> Interview with Mrs. Genereouse Miner, Turon, Kansas, 13 July 1977.

<sup>45</sup> C. B. Penland, "Fish Hatchery at Langdon, Kansas, Is Beauty Spot," Rock Island Magazine 24 (August 1929): 10.

<sup>46</sup> Interview with Mrs. Genereouse Miner, Turon, Kansas, 13 July 1977.

1900, he built a first-class residence. The house took seven years to build. The brick walls of the house rested on a foundation three feet deep, three and one-half feet wide at the bottom and tapering to two and one-half feet wide at the top. The walls were of three layers of brick with an air space in between each for insulation. The house had one of Langdon's first indoor bathrooms, and a large one at that, which measured ten by fifteen feet. The house was served by inside running water, supplied by hydraulic rams which forced artesian water into a large storage tank. Not only did this tank furnish water for the house, but also for his family's garden and the fountain on the front lawn.<sup>47</sup> Eugene Catte prospered better than the vast majority of people in Langdon's history.

Even though the farmers in the township did not prosper as well as Catte, they did enjoy relative prosperity. Other statistics which were not covered showed that Long's produce company must have fared well during this time. Over eight thousand pounds of butter were produced in the township during 1915, but the dairy produce it sold to the factories only accounted to \$500. Poultry and eggs, however, did much better with over \$5,000 worth sold.<sup>48</sup>

Other economic gauges showed Langdon's economic development at this time to be stable, and in fact slightly increasing, but not exceptionally. Even though land values in the township fell from \$860,120 in 1914 to \$844,259 in 1916, personal property gained. From \$187,430 in 1914 it increased to \$193,460 by 1916. The same trend in personal

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Kansas, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1915.

property was reflected in the town of Langdon. Moreover, city lot values rose during this same time span rather than falling as did the land values in the township.<sup>49</sup>

Langdon township was beginning to realize advances in farm technology. In April 1916, the Leader announced the first farm tractor demonstration to be held in Langdon. It was on the Chuck Wendling's farm, which was south of the town limits of Langdon. The tractor used in the demonstration was a Mogul 8-16. The Leader gave this report about the exhibition on April 15, 1916:

The C.&R. Hardware held their tractor demonstrations before a large crowd here. The way it made the black dirt roll was surprising. All are begining [sic] to realize that there must be change in the method of farming in the near future. The tractor is bound to displace horses to a large extent.<sup>50</sup>

Economic prosperity aside, farm work still involved very hard labor, for men and women. Although the plight of women on the farm has always been recognized as harsh, it is important to understand just what made it so. Sadie Applegate explains what farm life was like for her when she was a young woman. She was Homer Truitt's daughter, and Homer was one who rented his farm from Si Wyman.

I know I plowed many a row of corn when I was a kid. My dad, my brother and I, we took cultivators and dad would take the walking cultivator and my brother and I, we would use the riding cultivators. We'd go out there early in the morning and work there til late at night and of course we'd always stop at noontime, you know. . . . Oh, I expect I was ten or twelve years old when I started working in the fields. I think I was sixteen when I quit school.<sup>51</sup>

Sadie was the oldest in a family of ten children, and there was plenty for

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<sup>49</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>50</sup> Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 26 April 1916.

<sup>51</sup> Interview with Mrs. Sadie Applegate, Langdon, Kansas, 6 July 1977.

for her to do at home as there was in the fields.

We got all of our sewing and everything like that and it just kept you busy. Well during the summer time there was canning vegetables and fruits and everything like that, and always a lot to do and gardens to take care of. And I always helped with the milking and things like that. I milked several cows [about ten each day] and separated the milk and sold the cream and sometimes churned the butter. . . . [T]here was washing and we always baked our bread, and that was always a chore. We always got up by sun-up. . . . Now we didn't have running water at all.<sup>52</sup>

Moreover, the Truitt's, like most of the farm families around Langdon at that time, had large gardens. Sadie recalls her family's garden.

Oh, I expect it [the garden] would cover one-half a block. We just raised everything in it, you know, melons, muskmelons, squash, pumpkin, some popcorn, peanuts and all kinds of garden stuff, potatoes and all that kind of stuff, sweet potatoes and cabbage.<sup>53</sup>

Once the garden was harvested, it was time for canning, and that was an arduous task.

When you can fruit during the summer time, and that was always so hot, you know, you have to keep your fires going and that was so hot, you know. I can just remember standing there and working and the sweat would just be dripping off of ya.<sup>54</sup>

Although farm and town life in Langdon, as well as in the entire state of Kansas, seemed to be fairly stable in most respects and a degree of prosperity existed for most of its residents, Langdon did not resemble the prevailing political sentiment in the state, progressive Republicanism. According to Zornow, Progressivism exerted a "powerful force in Kansas," but not so in Langdon township and town. The 1912 elections explain in part where Langdon stood politically.

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

Zornow had this to say about the election at the state level, explaining as he does, the outcome of the Roosevelt-Taft fight in Kansas. "The split in the Republican ranks gave Democrat Woodrow Wilson both the national and Kansas vote, although his vote fell considerably below the combined totals of Taft and Roosevelt."<sup>55</sup> This may have been the state and national trend, but such was not so in Langdon. Taft pulled thirty-two votes to Roosevelt's thirty-one, which combined, did not match the vote for Wilson, which numbered seventy-five. In fact, in a township which normally voted Republican, it carried the entire Democratic ticket for every major office in 1912.<sup>56</sup> This seems to indicate a source of dissatisfaction with the Republican party as a whole in Langdon township and town at that time.

The tide began to turn against Democratic state governor George Hodges before the 1914 elections. Hodges made a state tour in October, 1914, which carried him to such small towns as Langdon.<sup>57</sup> However, his appearance in the town did not help him, and he went down to defeat in Langdon to Arthur Capper, 95 to 113 votes. In this election for the governor, Langdon followed the state trends. Langdon reestablished a Republican preference for all candidates except for U.S. senator, and it gave Democrat George Neeley 107 votes to thirty-three cast for Progressive Victor Murdock and eighty-four for the Republican Charles Curtis.<sup>58</sup>

The 1916 elections saw Wilson gaining the majority vote again in Langdon with 139 as opposed to the Republican Hughes' 110 votes. The

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<sup>55</sup>Zornow, Kansas, p. 220.

<sup>56</sup>Aldrich, "A History of Reno County Elections," pp. 154-156.

<sup>57</sup>Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 15 October 1914.

<sup>58</sup>Aldrich, "A History of Reno County Elections," pp. 162-168.

Republican candidates took the other offices in Langdon, except for the state representative in the 76th district, which went to the Democratic contender.<sup>59</sup> When the Leader gave the election returns in November 9, 1916, it ran a now famous caption under a large picture of Wilson, "He has kept us out of war." It went on to say the following:

This is the face of a man strong, courageous, patient and kindly, a man--

Always alert to the aspirations of his fellowman and sympathetic toward their fulfillment; . . .<sup>60</sup>

However hopeful the prospects for peace looked to Langdonites, and it is not at all certain that all people in Langdon desired peace, war was soon to come. With it rapidly came a new age, one which would begin a transformation of Langdon town and the surrounding township.

When the European war broke out in 1914, it was not really noticed much in Langdon, except that it caused higher prices on some commodities, e.g., sugar, coffee, cereals and meat.<sup>61</sup> The Leader, naturally enough, followed the war action on the continent, but sides were not taken in Langdon and a newspaper column in the German language ran as usual.

As the war became more intense in Europe in early 1916, the Wilson administration found itself involved in two troublesome situations. First, was the submarine warfare of the Germans, and the second, was the Mexican revolution. The first problem brought about the Arabic pledge, which was a German capitulation to American demands concerning submarine warfare and the second was the "preparedness" program. The first problem was followed in the Leader, but the readers took more interest in preparedness. There may have been much debate about the necessity of preparedness in the

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., pp. 170-174.

<sup>60</sup> Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 9 November 1916.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 13 August 1914.

nation's capitol, but it did not occur in Langdon. The Leader's editor asked his readers to write in letters explaining their positions relative to preparedness. The few letters that were printed in the Leader were all pro-preparedness. One letter ran like this:

Mr. Editor:

There are three things that I wish to maintain in regard to "preparedness." First, that Preparedness is necessary; second, Preparedness is practicable and third, that Preparedness is desirable.<sup>62</sup>

Another reader had this to say:

Mr. Editor:

In last week's article we proved the necessity of preparedness because of the probability of war and this week we hope to prove the necessity of preparedness because of the fact that we are not properly defended, that our Navy and coast defenses and Army are inadequate.<sup>63</sup>

The Mexican revolution was also a source of concern to the people of Langdon. When war looked imminent with Mexico in June, 1916, the editor of the Leader printed this call for volunteers.

A state-wide call for veterans. A provisional regiment of veterans and ex-soldiers now forming, with regimental headquarters at Salina, Kansas, fully officered and organized, to be offered as a body to the President upon a call for volunteers.

We are organizing a troop of cavalry for service in the volunteer army of the United States to be ready for immediate service in answer to the first call for volunteers in the event that war is declared on Mexico.<sup>64</sup>

However, these issues seemed to cool down, and as previously noted, Wilson was reelected as the man who "kept us out of war."

Nonetheless, war with Germany was drawing nigh, and the people of Langdon were beginning to realize this. The editor of the Leader ran this editorial, February 8, 1917.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 2 March 1916.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., 9 March 1916.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 29 June 1916.

This is a time when every American should show his patriotism, and stand by those who have the conduct of national affairs on their shoulders. It may be that we differ with President Wilson in politics, and perhaps think he has not always conducted international affairs of the United States in accordance with our views, but the time has arrived when he will need the support of the entire nation, and we should all stand behind him in whatever policy he may pursue and show to the world that our emblem is not a joke, but that we are "Many in One" when it comes to the safeguarding of the rights of America and American citizens.<sup>65</sup>

When Wilson delivered his war message on April 2, 1917, its theme was readily accepted by the editor of the Leader. He wrote the following, which appeared in the Leader, April 12, 1917:

Germany in her desperation has endeavored to give the impression to the world that we are entering the war for a material gain, but the world shall know that the principles for which we stand, "That all men are created equal and are endowed with the same inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and pursuit of happiness" shall be granted to Americans, and that Americans wherever they may be, even in utmost parts of the earth, are under the protection of the Stars and Stripes.<sup>66</sup>

Not surprisingly, the German column was dropped from the paper.

Support for the war effort in Langdon reached a fevered pitch, and jingoisms were common in the Leader. One reader wrote in the following:

"If anyone attempts to haul down the American flag, shoot him on the spot." Another reader wrote in this little diatribe, which took on a harsh reality for a Langdon resident:

Say Boys How About This?

I have nothing but contempt for the "slackers" who are flocking to the ministers and justices of the peace for no other reason than to escape the serving in the army or navy. Yellow is their color and somebody ought to brand them as such.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 8 February 1917.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 12 April 1917.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 19 April 1917.

One Langdonite who encountered public resentment was George Creswell. He either made some derogatory remarks about a relative in the navy or was seeking to avoid the draft. Whichever it was, he raised the ire in some of the townspeople and local farmers. One night, and it is not certain when this event occurred, except that it did during the course of the war, Creswell was asked to come outside of his house in town because a man was waiting to see him. Creswell was led up the street about a block when several others rushed out and poured a bucket of yellow paint over his head. The outcome of this event is not known, but Creswell surely understood the message given him.<sup>68</sup>

One other occurrence in the township which symbolized community vengeance against anyone not supporting the war effort took place in the northeast part of the township. A rather successful farming family named Breidenstein refused to buy war bonds. During the war, this was considered heresy by many people in Langdon. Therefore, some persons in Langdon took it upon themselves to convince the Breidensteins that buying war bonds were in their best interest. A group gathered, and it is not known exactly how large this group was, and went to "visit" the Breidensteins. During the course of the visitation, the Breidensteins decided to buy bonds.<sup>69</sup>

Sometimes during the war, near paranoia existed in Langdon concerning spies. In June, 1917, the Leader printed this tip-off to its readers:

Warning

Do Not Buy Medicines or Cosmetics of Strangers. . . .

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<sup>68</sup>Interview with Mr. Vic McAtee, Langdon, Kansas, 6 July 1977.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

There is strong evidence that our whole country is networked with spies.<sup>70</sup>

Not only did the war effort receive strong vocal support in Langdon, it gained manpower and farm support. The Leader ran a section called the "Honor Roll." In it were listed the men serving in the armed services, and it usually numbered about twenty to twenty-five men. Langdon, through the course of the war, suffered three war casualties. They were Bill Holmes, who died in France of pneumonia; Paul Creswell and Mack Craig.<sup>71</sup>

The farmers also responded to a need for increased crop production. The Leader, in September, 1917, urged them onward to do their part to win the war.

#### A Call to Farmers

Production! How can it be increased? Conservation? To what extent can it stretch a scanty yield into a liberal portion? These are the grave questions which will decide the war.

The proper cultivation of corn or other similar crops will increase the yield per acre while the saving of hay will release more grain for human food. Despise not the day of small things. Every effort, great or small, for increased farm efficiency this year is an act of patriotism.<sup>72</sup>

Production on the farm front in Langdon was high. In 1918, over ten thousand acres of wheat were planted and nearly 3,400 acres of corn. There was planted over seven hundred acres of oats and over 850 acres in the township were planted in rye. Fatted beef stock sold on the market in 1918 was up considerably from the 1915 level and amounted to \$59,358. Over \$8,600 worth of dairy products were sold in the township and over \$6,500 worth of poultry and eggs were sold.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, prices were good.

<sup>70</sup>Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 5 June 1917.

<sup>71</sup>Langdon (Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, 1 June 1928.

<sup>72</sup>Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 27 September 1917.

<sup>73</sup>Kansas Department of Agriculture, "Agricultural Statistic Rolls, Langdon Township," 1918.

For example, from 1917 through 1919, wheat prices averaged \$2.00 a bushel.<sup>74</sup> In fact, the rise was astonishing as reflected in the Reno county farm and crop valuations for the same time period. Crop valuation in the county was \$7,674,216 in 1914 and by its peak year in 1918, it had reached \$12,838,723. Moreover, fewer acres were planted in 1918 than were in 1914. The same increases were reflected in farm production, when in 1914 it was valued at \$9,637,654 and reached its peak in 1919 at a value of \$16,225,112.<sup>75</sup> Indeed, prosperity seemed to abound in Langdon township.

Generally speaking, the effect of World War I on Langdonites is best reflected in a poem printed in the Leader, December, 1917:

We're Hooverizing

My Tuesdays are meatless  
 My Wednesdays are wheatless  
     I'm getting more eatless each day.  
 My home it is heatless,  
 My bed it is sheetless,  
     They've been sent to the Y.M.C.A.

The barrooms are treatless  
 My coffee is sweetless,  
 Each day I grow poorer and wiser.  
     My stockings are feetless,  
     My trousers are seatless.  
     My! How I do hate the Kaiser.<sup>76</sup>

However, wars, like all things in life, come to an end. This one did in 1918, and when it did, it precipitated a slow, gradual whittling away of Langdon town which would bring the town to near distinction.

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<sup>74</sup>See Appendix G.

<sup>75</sup>See Appendix B.

<sup>76</sup>Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 27 December 1917.

## CHAPTER V

### THE EROSION OF LANGDON'S BASE, 1918-1950

. . . [S]hall be likened unto a foolish man,  
which built his house upon sand:

And the rain descended, and the  
winds blew, and beat upon that house;  
and it fell:

St. Matthew 7: 26-27

Langdon's well being rested upon a multifaceted base. The economic prosperity of the surrounding farms determined to a substantial degree whether or not the community itself prospered. However, when the farmers prospered, it did not guarantee the success of Langdon's business community. With the advent of the car after 1900, Langdon's business houses had to be competitive with the larger market centers of Hutchinson, and to a lesser degree, Pratt and Kingman, in order to survive. Langdon's merchants had to be competitive in both the pricing of their goods and in wages. Langdon town served as a service center for the local farmers, and as the initial marketing place providing transportation facilities--the railroad-- for their crops and livestock. Beyond this, Langdon had no other economic function. If this function was undermined, a large part of Langdon town's base would slip away.

Another component of Langdon's base, which operated somewhat independently of the prevailing economic situation at any one given time, was the social arrangements of the town. In a small town such as Langdon, the citizens had to remain cooperative and to work harmoniously with each other to promote an environment which would contribute to the town's

unity of purpose. Intolerance of, or friction between, differing groups within a small town leads directly to disruptive factionalism. This intolerance pulls at the web of human relationships; and if it is not held to a minimum, it rips apart the social structure of a town, leaving its residents in positions of non-cooperation. In an age where individual or family transportation posed no serious obstacles, one could simply leave the area and begin somewhere else, or they could go to another nearby community which better suited their social needs. The latter option did not necessarily mean moving from the community or area in which they lived, only non- or partial-participation in it. Intolerance within a town survives because nonconformists can and usually do leave. Consequently, the remaining or dominating group becomes somewhat inbred, cliquish, and elitist. The restrictive attitudes of a dominating group often creates an atmosphere which is hostile to the maintenance or enlargement of the town's population. Intolerance in a small community poisons its future well-being.

Though to a lesser degree when compared with economics, and social interrelationships, education composed another important aspect of Langdon's base. In a world fast becoming mechanized, technological, urbanized, and special interest group orientated, education became the means by which the future participants in a changing society gained the tools enabling them to cope with it. Ironically, the type of education stressed in the rural community fit nicely into this new world. Taught by the church, school, or family, it saw the need for the self-reliant, moral and industrious individual. In a society where bureaucrats and special interest groups worked to further their own aims, the individual might also come to see community effort and involvement as passe or less important than vaguely defined community values. Furthermore, the thirst for higher education

contains destructive tendencies for a small community. Once educated in collegiate surroundings, and having been indoctrinated with the "cult of the immediately useful and the practical," the student from the small rural town finds no position to occupy in his former environment with the educational tools, skills and knowledge acquired. The small community by not having the resources or the forethought to provide a place in its economic or social structure for the student, forfeits what might have become a critical part of its base. Therefore, education has the possibility of working for or against a small town like Langdon's survival.

All of the forestated components of Langdon's base had to work in favor of its well-being in order to assure Langdon's survival. From 1920 on, forces worked contrary to the cohesiveness of the components constituting Langdon's base and eroded them apart, sealing Langdon's doom. This chapter will trace the forces which chipped away at the town's base, and how some of its citizens struggled to prevent it.

When World War I ended, war inflation aside, Langdon seemed from all outward appearances to have prospered economically from the war. In 1920, the value of land in the township reached the highest level it ever attained. The same held true of personal property values in the township. Langdon witnessed its highest personal property and city lot values in 1922.<sup>1</sup> While the effects of the war had temporarily left Langdon economically secure, it suffered from two of the afflictions which affected many other Americans from 1918 through 1920. They were the influenza epidemic during the winter of 1918-19, and "red scare" hysteria, which did not subside until 1920.

The influenza epidemic apparently hit Langdon township hard as it

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<sup>1</sup>See Appendix A.

did the rest of the state. Sadie Applegate recalled how the epidemic affected her and the surrounding area:

Oh, there was a lot of people died that winter, an awful lot of people died. . . . Yeah, everywhere around here people died. The doctor [Dr. Grieve] didn't think I'd live through it. . . . The doctors just went night and day, . . .<sup>2</sup>

Claude Royce, who had been farming his own land for only three and one-half years, succumbed to the disease.<sup>3</sup> It was a very trying winter for the residents of Langdon township.

The red scare reached high tide in Langdon around 1919, as it did in the rest of the country. Farmer and rural town distrust of one particular group had been building for many years. This group was the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) or as the people of around Langdon liked to call them, the "I Won't Work" organization. When wheat fields were being burned around Turon in 1915, the editor of the Leader commented that burnings were the work of either a "demented man or an I.W.W. crank."<sup>4</sup> When one "I.W.W." man was shot in Turon in the summer of 1917, the editor of the Leader summed up local feelings towards the group:

The farmers of the county are getting to be very much prejudiced against the I.W.W. organization, as every year there is more or less trouble caused by them, and it would be a good thing for the country if they could be kept out of it.<sup>5</sup>

Lucille Tibbits Dunn remembered one notable encounter with the I.W.W.'s, one which "made quite an imprint" on her mind. Lamont Tibbits,

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<sup>2</sup>Interview with Mrs. Sadie Applegate, Langdon, Kansas, 6 July 1977.

<sup>3</sup>Interview with Mr. Joy Royce, Langdon, Kansas, 13 July 1977.

<sup>4</sup>Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 29 July 1915.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 5 June 1917.

her father, had a very sizable wheat operation in 1919 and when harvest time came, he always needed additional field hands in order to get the work done. Either he or a member of his family would drive to town and obtain a work crew from the transients riding freight cars. Lamont had a hard problem to resolve for the reason that his crews would often leave just after finishing their noon meal. After hiring another crew, he gave the following warning to them in the morning with his shotgun in hand: "By God, the first one that leaves here is going to get his seat full of pellets, and I mean it!" That particular crew toiled until nightfall, when they left as quickly as they could under the cover of darkness. Supposedly, the "organization" was informed about Lamont's peculiar hiring practices, and they decided to avenge their comrades. Tibbits' family noticed an "old coupe" driving near the fields and upon closer observation determined that their wheat field just south of their home and farm elevator, had been set ablaze. A member of the family gave four cranks on the phone, which was the general alarm for the Langdon area. With the aid of the neighbors who arrived with two large water tanks used for the threshing machine, the fire was put out before it reached either the elevator or home.<sup>6</sup> Whether or not these men were truly "Wobblies" (I.W.W.'s) or just drifters, does not really matter. These men were perceived as "Wobblies" by the people of Langdon, and, as a result, negative opinions of "the Wobblies" were formed by such forestated encounters.

By the end of 1920, the "red scare" gave way to the harkened cry for "normalcy," which the people of Langdon went all out to support. In an overwhelming majority vote in 1920, the voters of Langdon elected

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<sup>6</sup>Interview with Mrs. Lucille Dunn, Langdon, Kansas, 28 July 1977.

Harding over Cox by 156 to 68 votes. Similar margins held in all races on the ballot, and allowed the Republicans to make a clean sweep of Langdon township.<sup>7</sup> Though the citizens of Langdon township yearned for that elusive "normalcy" promised by Harding and the Republicans, they received instead a bitter economic crisis.

Prior to 1920, the promise of large overseas markets for domestic farm products stimulated the farmers' hopes of maintaining and expanding their newly-gained prosperity.<sup>8</sup> This is clearly reflected in Langdon township where personal property values amounted to \$187,430 in 1914, and by 1920 had reached \$278,030. Farm prosperity during the same period also reflected in town personal property valuations with an increase from \$76,080 in 1914 to \$113,830 by 1922.<sup>9</sup> In terms of their material holdings, the people of Langdon township had never had it so good. But in 1920, bad news came to the farmers, dashing their hopes for sustained economic prosperity.

In June of 1920, the government removed the price supports for farm production which had been in effect throughout the war. Because of the nationwide increase in farm production during the war years and the resultant large surpluses, the effect was a rapid drop in farm prices. In Kansas, the average price for wheat fell from \$1.86 a bushel in 1919 to 97¢ a bushel in 1920. The price kept falling until it reached 87¢ a bushel in 1923.<sup>10</sup> The price decline was very hard for farmers to understand or accept, since they had been ordered to increase production for patriotic reasons during the war years.

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<sup>7</sup>Aldrich, "A History of Reno County Elections," pp. 184-186.

<sup>8</sup>James H. Shideler, Farm Crisis: 1919-1923 (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1957), p. 41.

<sup>9</sup>See Appendix A.

<sup>10</sup>See Appendix G.

Further aggravating the economic situation in Langdon was the mortgaged condition of the township. Mortgaging from 1920 until 1923 remained at very high total amounts for Langdon township.<sup>11</sup> One reason why it did, might have been the fact that the farmers in the township were mechanizing. By 1918, only one tractor was operated in Langdon township, and in 1921, only two. By 1923, fifteen farmers were using tractors and fourteen new combines were beginning to replace the old header and steam thresher harvesting operation.<sup>12</sup> The Langdon bank was doing its part in helping the farmers. The bank's loans amounted to \$146,723 in September 1922 and \$128,540 in March, 1923.<sup>13</sup> With farm equipment costs running high and prices for their products falling, the inevitable happened. The small bank in Langdon town had found itself over-extended and unable to realize on its loans.

H. B. Ferguson, who was the original banker in Langdon, retired in 1917. He was well liked by the community and had apparently served his fellow citizens well. Chester L. Pew took Ferguson's place, but Pew failed to achieve economic success at Langdon. Harlow Brown, who was then editing the Leader, became aware in mid-1923 that Pew was encountering difficulty in keeping the bank solvent. The situation looked grim and something needed to be done quickly if disaster were to be avoided. Brown and Pew quietly left Langdon and drove to Wichita to seek financial assistance from the Federal Land Bank. The mission proved unfruitful.<sup>14</sup> Once they returned to Langdon, it was not long

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix E.

<sup>12</sup> Kansas Department of Agriculture, "Agricultural Statistic Rolls, Langdon Township," 1918, 1929 and 1923.

<sup>13</sup> Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 14 September 1922 and 23 March 1923.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Mr. Harlow B. Brown, Hutchinson, Kansas, 25 July 1977.

before people in the area were convinced that the bank was in trouble. In October, 1923, after sixty days of gradual runs on the bank, which depleted its reserves of approximately \$30,000, a deputy state bank examiner, on a routine inspection, closed its doors.<sup>15</sup>

In October, 1923, John F. Lee, a deputy bank commissioner, was sent to Langdon to direct the bank's liquidation or its reorganization.<sup>16</sup> Lee sought to reopen the bank, but his effort to reopen it proved to be a tough assignment. By the end of November, 1923, prospects for reopening the bank looked bleak. Talk began to circulate that the bank might be placed in receivership.<sup>17</sup> On November 30, 1923, the Leader reported the following bad news.

Mr. Lee Not Overly Optimistic

Mr. Lee's interview follows: "Very little progress has been made during the past week in reducing the bank loans and no reduction has been made in re-discounts with the War Finance Corporation. In view of this situation, I am not overly optimistic in regard to the bank's affairs."<sup>18</sup>

The following week, Langdon experienced its worst fire when the Langdon Merchantile Store, operated by Mr. Miles Griffen and housed in the Salvation Army building, burned completely with a total loss of its contents.<sup>19</sup> What made this fire somewhat suspect were the rumors that Griffen had deliberately set the fire to stave off financial ruin by collecting the insurance money. However, this was never proved.

When Christmas came to Langdon in 1923, spirits were not gay. In the Christmas edition of the Leader, Brown tried to inject a little

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<sup>15</sup> Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 29 August 1924.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 19 October 1923.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 23 November 1923.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 30 November 1923.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 7 December 1923.

hope for the future and an appreciation of what blessings one did possess.

Christmas again rolls around, and with Christmas comes the close of one of the worst years this section of Kansas has ever seen. Each individual feels that his cross has been harder to carry than his neighbor's. Each person feels that there is little left of him to cause him to feel and show the Christmas spirit.

Yes, we all have had our share of troubles, but we are still up and coming, we have had plenty to eat, our homes are heated comfortably, our families are comfortably clothed and our community has stood and is still standing for the nobler things in life.<sup>20</sup>

Despite the editor's attempt, the winter of 1923 proved to be a trying one in Langdon.

It was not until June, 1924, that economic good news came to the town.<sup>21</sup> The bank was ready to reopen, but stock had to be bought in it before the banking commission would allow its opening. In a week's time, sixty of the required one-hundred shares were purchased.<sup>22</sup> The other forty shares were sold slowly and it was not until August that the application for a new bank charter was made to the state. At the end of August, the State Charter Board granted Langdon's bank charter.<sup>23</sup> It took a few days to get all the stock certificates in order and when that was accomplished, the bank opened its doors for business on September 2, 1924. The Leader, naturally enough, boosted the event.

The New Langdon State Bank opened their doors Tuesday morning at nine o'clock, as was announced in the Leader last week. The first day's business was a surprise in view of the fact that over \$6,000 was deposited and about \$200.00 went out in cash. Everybody who came into the bank on Tuesday wore a big smile and all were more than

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 21 December 1923.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 6 June 1924.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 13 June 1924.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 22 August 1924.

pleased to have the bank in operation.<sup>24</sup>

Although Langdon, from 1919 through 1923, survived the farm crisis and the threatened destruction of its bank, it suffered some irreversible damage. For example, personal property values in the town which had stood at \$113,830 in 1922, had dropped to \$50,860 by 1924. The highest they ever would be again was \$65,880 in 1928. Farm land in the township valued at \$1,040,233 in 1920 fell to \$894,085 in 1922, and the 1920 level was not surpassed until in recent years. Personal property values of the farmers also fell off dramatically from their 1920 levels, never again to be surpassed.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, Langdon town and township were beginning to lose population. The town's population of 276 in 1918 had dropped to 181 by 1925, and the township fell from 427 in 1918 to 350 by 1925.<sup>26</sup>

Throughout the crisis, Brown, through the Leader, cautioned against political remedies, especially if they took a leftward stance. He may have been a Democratic newspaper editor, but like most in the twenties, he was still a conservative. In July, 1922, he wrote:

Radicalism never got anybody anywhere. The history of the movements patterned after the bolshevists and the I.W.W. and other "isms" that sought to do away with God and government and morality does not show a signal [sic] success. And it never will. Retaliation and revenge for real or fancied grievances may be human but they fail.<sup>27</sup>

It was also obvious that the farmers in the area were not happy with the Harding administration's handling of the crisis. Brown recorded how the people in Hutchinson reacted to Harding's visit in June

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 5 September 1924.

<sup>25</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>26</sup> Kansas Department of Agriculture, "Agricultural Statistic Rolls, Langdon Township," 1918 and 1925.

<sup>27</sup> Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 15 June 1922.

1923.

President Harding is not of the Roosevelt type and did not get the applause and ovation that Teddy had when he visited Hutchinson. The people were very friendly but not demonstrative.<sup>28</sup>

The people listened to his speech but really did not expect much from an administration so blatantly pro-business.

Many were not looking towards government intervention like that advocated by the Non-Partisan League as the cure for their complicated economic ills, but rather at diversification as the single cure-all.

This attitude is well shown in an editorial run by Brown in the Leader in 1923.

Radical farmers in North Dakota and Minnesota have found by experience that legislation will not correct economic or personal deficiencies.

Growing wheat alone year after year means worn-out lands and hard-up farmers, and no government subsidy or guaranteed prices will help.

One man in ten who goes into the grocery business succeeds and grows wealthy, and the same with farmers.

Farming is the basic industry and if we could destroy every city, the wealth, production and necessities of the farms would build them up again. But if we destroy the farms, the cities would fall into irretrievable ruin. To guarantee wheat prices is to tax weaker industries than farming. . . .

The way out is not by more legislation but more faith in our country, more common sense and more diversified farming.<sup>29</sup>

Diversification, however, did take place in Langdon township. From 1923, when the acreage in wheat planted was at its lowest level since before 1905, the next years saw an increase in wheat acreage until a record 15,185 acres were planted in 1930.<sup>30</sup> Probable causes for this were that

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 29 June 1923.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 15 November 1923.

<sup>30</sup> Kansas Department of Agriculture, "Agricultural Statistic Rolls, Langdon Township," 1923, 1925, 1926, 1928 and 1930.

wheat prices had recovered from their post-war slump and increased farm mechanization was making wheat growing easier. Diversification did not have much appeal for these farmers.

In spite of the forces eroding Langdon's base, many people strove to enhance and enrich community life in Langdon town. One way in which this was put in effect was in the creation of a community fair. The genesis for the fair occurred in the minds of two men, W. E. Railsback and O. L. Cook, both local farmers in the township.<sup>31</sup> The first meeting was held on October 2, 1920, and the fair committee organized and held the first fair on October 30, 1920. Langdon was the second town in the county to establish a fair, and by 1927, it had the oldest community fair.<sup>32</sup> This tradition of having a fair lasted until the later 1960's when it became economically unfeasible to stage it because of the decreasing numbers of people who attended.

The fairs in Langdon were festive events where many people in the community enjoyed themselves. The fair was one of the few community activities which brought the community together in the spirits of fun, relaxation, and harmonious socializing. In the 1922 fair, for example, the community had a parade through the town with floats representing most of the businesses in Langdon, the schools in and around Langdon and the two churches.

The fair was always a two-day event, held usually on the last Friday and Saturday in October. The day time was filled with activities and at night a play was staged or a band from Haven, Hutchinson, or Turon would perform a concert. Even an unseasonable snow storm in 1925 could

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<sup>31</sup>Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 29 August 1924.

<sup>32</sup>Langdon (Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, 14 October 1927.

not prevent the fair from being staged.<sup>33</sup>

In the afternoon, games were held, with horse polo and potato racing on horseback proving very popular. The latter game was played by two people on horseback, each with a long stick pointed on one end. Contestants had to race their horses about a block where a small pile of potatoes were on the ground, spear one, then race back to the finish line and deposit the potato in a certain area. The first one to get all of their potatoes to their goal won the race. Another event which was amusing for many was the pillow fight, as described in the Leader, October 20, 1922.

A telephone post had been fastened about three foot [sic] off the ground and as a man crawled on the post, the other men were at liberty to hit him with pillows until he lost his balance and fell off.<sup>34</sup>

And, of course, no community fair was ever complete without a horseshoe tournament.

The fair's exhibitions also served the practical function of encouraging pride in farming and domestic excellence. As the premium list for the 1927 Langdon fair indicates, prizes were awarded for outstanding exhibits on just about every conceivable aspect of farm life.<sup>35</sup> With the industrious rewarded for their hard work, moreover, a prize was even awarded to the "laziest man" of the year. In 1927, the prize given to the winner of that contest was "a fine pair of golf socks." Apparently, there was stiff competition for first place in 1927 as it was reported in the Leader that many of the men were disappointed in not winning. The fair was also used by both political parties to state their positions

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<sup>33</sup>Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 30 October 1925.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 20 October 1922.

<sup>35</sup>See Appendix I.

prior to the November elections.<sup>36</sup>

The schools in Langdon were also a source of community unity. Langdon's high school received a boost when in 1918 it was decided to build a new school building. It was finished and opened in 1919. By 1924, the high school had a fairly typical small-town library. The library contained 277 volumes and a run of the Hutchinson News, the Hutchinson Gazette and the Langdon Leader. It also carried journals pertaining to certain subject areas taught. The school subscribed to the Literary Digest and World Works for the English department; for the domestic science, The American Cookery Magazine; for agriculture, The Country Gentleman and Breeders' Gazette; for music, Musical America, and for what was called "general reading," The American Magazine and Current Events.<sup>37</sup>

In 1923, fifty-six students attended the school and in 1924, forty-nine were enrolled. Five people were on the teaching staff, four women and one man, O. V. Washler, who was the superintendent.<sup>38</sup> Whether the people of Langdon remembered him as a good teacher or not, all agreed that he was a very "puritanical" person. Puritanical in the sense that he firmly adhered to a fundamental religious and moral code and used strict disciplinary measures in school to effect this code when he felt anyone transgressed it. But at this time, it was in keeping with how many in the community believed. In this light, it also should not seem surprising that religious instruction was held in the grade school and chapel services in the high school consisting of prayer and Bible instruction.

<sup>36</sup>Langdon (Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, 26 October 1928.

<sup>37</sup>Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 3 November 1922.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 29 August 1924.

According to the Leader's account, when religious instruction was introduced into the grade school curriculum in 1924, it was popularly received by the people of the district.

A complete census of the grade school district has been made this week, not only to ascertain the enrollment for the public school but also for the Bible instruction which will be given in connection with the public school course. It was pleasing to find that every pupil will take the Bible work, which will be one hour's instruction each week. The sentiment is not only that patrons will let their children take the work, but they are anxious and glad to have the opportunity to enroll them.<sup>39</sup>

Whether this was typical or not of small rural towns, the people of Langdon believed that religious instruction was one of many aspects which they hoped their children would learn so as to help them cope in the world. The world around people in Langdon was becoming more complex, and teaching enough so that the student would be able to live in it was becoming more of a challenge.

Guy Houston, who began teaching in Langdon in 1921, led the movement for school consolidation which made more sophisticated education possible for Langdon's children. Houston graduated from high school in Missouri in 1916 and taught there for awhile. He then moved out to western Kansas and taught, but thought it too rough a place to bring his future wife, so he wrote to the superintendent of schools in Reno county seeking employment. The superintendent wrote back listing three openings, one being at Langdon. Houston wrote the school board and the board; without having interviewed him, hired Houston for the fall term in 1921. Houston was an energetic man who saw the need for higher quality education in the grade school. He thought that through consolidation, the district could take in more money on a lower tax base, thus

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

increasing the economic opportunities for enhancing the quality of education in the grade school. By doing this, he added teachers, introduced music and art into the curriculum, and began an athletic program of track, basketball and softball. Much of this program would have been impossible without consolidation.<sup>40</sup>

The small school districts around Langdon began to close in 1921 as a result of consolidation or depopulation. Jordan Springs finally became a part of the Langdon district, and the Lerado district had a split vote on whether to join with Langdon or Penalosa, which is about ten or twelve miles south of Langdon.<sup>41</sup> In 1929, Bell township finally joined the Langdon district.<sup>42</sup> After 1927, when its old school building was moved into Langdon and used as an auditorium for the grade school, Jordan Springs passed out of existence.<sup>43</sup>

Not only was the grade school expanding, but so was the high school. In May, 1926, the school board launched an appeal for support to build a separate auditorium building large enough to house a full size basketball court, a stage, a balcony for public attendance, and a manual arts department.<sup>44</sup> It was hoped to keep the cost between \$12,000 and \$15,000, but when the building contracts were let, it totaled \$19,302.<sup>45</sup> The building was dedicated in November, 1926, with the girls glee club singing, "America the Beautiful," and the boys glee

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<sup>40</sup> Interview with Mr. Guy Houston, Nickerson, Kansas, 13 July 1977.

<sup>41</sup> Langdon (South Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, 15 April 1927.

<sup>42</sup> Langdon (Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, 26 April 1929.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 16 September 1927.

<sup>44</sup> Langdon (South Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, 7 May 1926.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 23 July 1926.

club performing a play entitled, A Bad Case.<sup>46</sup>

The teachers' credentials in Langdon high school were also improving. In 1926, everyone of them held an undergraduate degree and a few had had graduate work to their credit. O. V. Washler obtained his B.S. from Purdue University, and did some graduate work at the University of Illinois. Olive Miller received her B.A. in home economics and music from Southwestern College; O. F. Bailey, his B.A. in mathematics and athletics from Ottawa University; and Eloise Hatteberg, her B.A. from Southwestern College in history and social science. These three also had accomplished some graduate work. Martha M. Voth received her B.A. from Bethel College in language. In keeping with the improvements in teaching credentials, course offerings were also getting larger.<sup>47</sup>

Even though the schools took community participation to keep them going, with consolidation, the interest in Langdon school affairs began to transcend the immediate community interest of Langdon. As the school district was enlarged, Langdon town became a smaller component in a larger community interest. Part of that larger community was Bell township, which entered the Langdon school district. After 1929, the people in Bell had a definite stake in what happened at Langdon. In other words, the interest in the schools at Langdon comprised a larger population than that which had an interest in Langdon town. The schools were beginning, in a sense, to outgrow Langdon.

Another educational trend of Langdon was that, in some respects, it was too successful. In 1928 and 1929 the Leader listed at least thirty students in colleges around the state or elsewhere. Only four

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<sup>46</sup> Langdon (Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, 26 November 1926.

<sup>47</sup> Langdon (South Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, 30 July 1926.

of the thirty mentioned ever returned to Langdon, and then only after retirement.<sup>48</sup> In 1929, in a list of Langdon students who became teachers publicized in the Leader, only two of the fifteen cited were teaching in Langdon, seven were teaching in the general area and the rest were more than fifty miles away from Langdon.<sup>49</sup> Only two in this number settled in Langdon, the rest never returned. In times that showed poor economic growth, the possibilities for applying a college education in gainful employment in Langdon, except for a few teaching positions, were virtually non-existent.

In fact, the possibility that the existing businesses in the town could maintain themselves was becoming less certain. Under these circumstances, Brown preached boosterism in the Leader with one main purpose: to save the town businesses that were left in Langdon, of course, including his own. The following editorial printed in March, 1925, was typical of those which Brown ran in the Leader from 1922 through 1926:

#### THIS IS MY TOWN

A pledge of citizenship is an enthusiastic and whole-hearted support in act and thought, of Langdon, its ideals, its institutions, its attractiveness, its advantages, its business and of your neighbors. When any individual or local organization makes an effort for a bigger and better Langdon they deserve and have a right to expect the loyal support of every citizen. At that moment they represent Langdon and there should be no bickering, no backbiting or factional disagreement which will detract from gaining the objective.

Only in proportion to our combined efforts can we hope to make our town more attractive and more prosperous. No matter the size, every town is too small in number of citizens, to grow when part of its folks take their money and trade to other centers. Our interest in state and national prosperity is not diminished through a strict loyalty to home stores and town development. On the con-

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<sup>48</sup> Langdon (Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, 28 December 1928 and 30 October 1929.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 13 September 1929.

trary, when we build an up-and-doing, prosperous and progressive town we add to our state's assets, and likewise to the nation's.

LET US MAKE LANGDON A BETTER TOWN!<sup>50</sup>

A sense of desperation seeped through the editor's message. Not surprisingly, Brown was the main force behind organizing a booster club in Langdon in 1924, but apparently, the club functioned only half-heartedly.<sup>51</sup>

Ironically, Brown was among the first to see a very limited future for business in Langdon. He was having troubles in 1925 with solicitating advertisements from the merchants in the three towns he was serving from Langdon. He realized they could not see a practical need for it, and besides, the businesses themselves were working on such a slim profit margin that they did not possess extra money for advertising. Brown saw the handwriting on the wall and decided to move his printing plant to South Hutchinson in January, 1926.<sup>52</sup> He combined his three small newspapers into one and retained the name, the Langdon Leader.

In September, 1927, Brown moved his plant to Hutchinson. He continued to publish the Langdon Leader until 1930, when his fading hopes of contracting advertisements from Langdon, Partridge, or Penalosa, vanished in the face of economic depression. He began publishing legal notices, and at the same time, changed the name of the paper to the Hutchinson Record.<sup>53</sup> Langdon thus lost a crucial part of its economic and social support system.

<sup>50</sup> Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 6 March 1925.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 22 February 1924.

<sup>52</sup> Interview with Mr. Harlow B. Brown, Hutchinson, Kansas, 25 July 1977. Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 15 January 1926.

<sup>53</sup> Interview with Mr. Harlow B. Brown, Hutchinson, Kansas, 25 July 1977. Langdon (South Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, 2 September 1927.

In a time when community unity was needed on all fronts if Langdon town was to survive as an entity, the town's residents were factionalized into a myriad of organizations. Already mentioned was the booster club for the town's businessmen. The American Legion became popular in Langdon for the veterans; as did the Farm Bureau for the farmers, which also had a ladies branch for their wives. Each church had a missionary society and the Christian Church sponsored the Langdon Woman's Club and the Methodist, the Ladies Aid. Each church also had its own youth organization. In August, 1927, a Boy Scout troop was formed in Langdon. The Royal Neighbors of America still held monthly meetings. And, if this were not enough for a town as small as Langdon, they organized in 1924, a Community Club. The Leader stated its purpose: "A community club was organized Saturday to cover all the club activities in the community."<sup>54</sup> In a virtual mania of organizational illusion, there existed the Pig's Club, Poultry Club, and the Calf's Club. Some people in Langdon even proposed to organize a health club. Langdon was falling victim to a common ailment of American society, especially noticable in small rural towns, the development of special interest groups unable to confront economic reality. A large city can absorb these groups and their limited aims better than the small rural town. With so many divisions operating within such a small community, what is good for the community interest is often overlooked in pursuit of the group interest.

Despite the ominous signs that all was not well within the community, the ill effects of the farm crisis in 1919 through 1923 seemed to have been temporarily alleviated after 1926. Mechanization of the sur-

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<sup>54</sup> Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 18 January 1924. To avoid fatiguing the reader with a long list of different dates all cited from the Leader, suffice it to say that all the information concerning organizational life in Langdon town came from the Leader between 1924 and 1930.

rounding farms continued. The numbers of tractors had increased from fifteen in 1926, to thirty-four by 1928, and with combines from twenty-five in 1926 to twenty-nine by 1928. By 1930, tractors numbered forty in the township and combines, thirty.<sup>55</sup> Land and personal property values in 1928 were the highest that they had been since 1920.<sup>56</sup> The year, 1928, also saw the highest dollar amount of mortgaging ever contracted in Langdon's history, which probably meant that the farmers were not afraid to recapitalize in their farms or expand their operations.<sup>57</sup>

By 1929, the town itself seemed to show some signs of working together in aspects other than the fair or school. In March, 1929, a "community day" was held. The businessmen helped with street repairs and many back yards were cleaned, thus "improving the appearance of the town."<sup>58</sup> The citizens of the town jointly contributed money and bought a Fordson and small grader to maintain the streets in Langdon. It was operated by any citizen whenever they wanted to grade their street or open a ditch. Since they all owned it, it was at the disposal of whom-ever needed it.<sup>59</sup>

What seemed to spur this interest in community after 1926? First, economic conditions in the area were improving due to better domestic and international markets for farm produce and a local oil boom; and second, Langdon businessmen realized that their existence was being threatened by a host of forces much larger and powerful than themselves. Easy access

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<sup>55</sup>Kansas Department of Agriculture, "Agricultural Statistic Rolls, Langdon Township," 1926, 1928 and 1930.

<sup>56</sup>See Appendix A.

<sup>57</sup>See Appendix E.

<sup>58</sup>Langdon (Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, 29 March 1929.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 12 April 1929.

to Hutchinson, made possible by the car, was one powerful source of competition to Langdon businesses. Hutchinson stores were advertising in the Leader, which made people quite aware of the stores there.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, the Hutchinson News and Gazette were inexpensive papers, both delivered to Langdon for 15¢ a week. Another event which made people in Langdon apprehensive about the future of their town was the news that the hamlet of Olcott was being dismantled.

Olcott was located on the Missouri Pacific line between Turon and Penalosa. As the town had greatly deteriorated by that time, the Missouri Pacific, in January 1927, decided to remove the depot and refuse elevator accommodations at that point. When the rumors of this impending move reached Langdon in December, 1926, it caused many to take a hard look at their own town and to reassess its future well-being. As a result, there occurred a meeting of Langdon's businessmen in December, 1926, as recorded in the Leader:

#### Is Langdon Dead?

The business men of Langdon have awakened to the fact that there should be a great deal more enjoyment among themselves, and realizing that by becoming better acquainted, and by cooperating with one and another, that the old town could be improved to some greater or lesser extent. Therefore they decided that they should have a meeting of the business men and their families and get a general expression as to conditions and the ways that same might be generally improved. . . .

written by "One Present"<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> For example, on 10 November, 1921, the Langdon (Kansas) Leader had fourteen ads with national brands, eleven ads from Langdon business men and one ad from Hutchinson. On 29 May 1925, the Leader had twenty ads with national brand names, one ad from Arlington, two from Hutchinson and seven from Langdon. On 7 December 1928, the Langdon (Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, which it is still important to remember that this paper was for rural consumption, had one ad from Langdon, one from Arlington and fourteen from Hutchinson.

<sup>61</sup> Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 31 December 1926.

Concrete results were not obtained during the meeting, but a significant number of town improvements occurred from 1927 through 1929. Streets were surfaced, the depot was repainted, C. A. Wendling opened an International Harvester dealership, and Frank Harlan built a new garage for auto repairs. T. W. Prichard moved from Pretty Prairie and rejuvenated the Oxford Cafe in Langdon, and street repairs were made more frequently than in the past.<sup>62</sup> Dampening this renewed interest in community was the June, 1929, fire in the Brown-Griffin General Store, which nearly destroyed the nearby bank building. Rumors about Mr. Griffen and arson persisted and he moved to Turon and established another general store there.<sup>63</sup>

The oil boom, which began sometime in 1926, never fully materialized in Langdon township. Lease money had raised hopes when the Leader reported that the Connell Oil company paid nearly \$10,000 between February and March, 1927.<sup>64</sup> Despite high hopes for gushers, the results of drilling at the Bailey farm was typical for Langdon township. Some oil was struck in June, 1927, in a shallow sand formation but it was decided that pumping what was there would be uneconomical.<sup>65</sup> After continuing the drilling into August and not striking anything, the rigs shut down their operations. Oil had been found near Lerado, but none in Langdon township. The oil boom was over in Langdon by December, 1927, when one company lost its drilling equipment in a sheriff's sale and the company drilling on the Bailey farm departed for a presumably more profitable

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<sup>62</sup> Langdon (Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, 18 February 1927.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 28 June 1929.

<sup>64</sup> Langdon (South Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, 18 February 1927.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 3 June 1927.

venture at La Junta, Colorado.<sup>66</sup>

One business in Langdon continued to prosper in face of the setbacks experienced by the rest of the community. The Catte fish hatchery sold over 100,000 fish to the U.S. government under its lease agreement in 1923.<sup>67</sup> For awhile, the government entertained the possibility of purchasing the hatchery, but decided otherwise and continued to lease it from Eugene Catte. The Catte hatchery did such a fine job raising fish that the National Geographic in its October 1924 edition cited it as one in a number of "noteworthy establishments."<sup>68</sup> In 1927, Catte was receiving \$25 a thousand for bass, \$20 a thousand for crappie, and \$10 a thousand for blue-gills.<sup>69</sup> When these were added to what Catte obtained from the government lease and the private gold fish sales, they amounted to a sizable economic concern in the Langdon economy.

The economic crisis of 1919 through 1923 also altered voting habits in Langdon township. In 1922, the township supported the liberal-minded, Democratic farmer, Jonathan M. Davis; over his Republican opponent, William Y. Morgan, for the governorship. Davis received 120 votes to Morgan's 93. The Republican Tincher won the 7th Congressional vote in Langdon, and Republican John Yust was chosen for their state representative. In this election, the township followed state trends.<sup>70</sup>

When the 1924 election neared, Langdonites felt the influence of

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<sup>66</sup> Langdon (Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, 9 December 1927.

<sup>67</sup> Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 30 November 1923.

<sup>68</sup> Hugh M. Smith, "Goldfish and Their Cultivation in America," National Geographic 46 (October 1924): 383.

<sup>69</sup> Langdon (South Hutchinson, Kansas) Leader, 1 April 1927.

<sup>70</sup> Aldrich, "A History of Reno County Elections," pp. 192-94. Zornow, Kansas, pp. 238-39.

the Klu Klux Klan, which was very active throughout the entire state and much of the nation. Even though the residents there now cannot recall persons in Langdon directly involved, Guy Houston remembers being asked to join, but refused.<sup>71</sup> Whether anyone in Langdon was a member of the Klan or not, the Klan's leaflets and pamphlets were widely distributed in the town. Now whether or not the candidates who won in Langdon township were Klan-supported is not known, but Brown felt compelled to issue this comment in the Leader after the election was held: "The Klan certainly made itself felt in this election in Kansas. With very few exceptions, the candidates endorsed by the Klan were successful."<sup>72</sup>

Langdon followed the state in voting overwhelmingly for Coolidge as President, giving him 135 votes opposed to 74 cast for Davis and 16 for La Follette; but they countered the state trend by supporting the Democratic candidate for governor, John Davis, over the Republican Ben Paulsen by 116 votes to 90. The vote given to Independent William A. White in his campaign against the Klan suggests the strength of Klan influence in Langdon township at the time. White received only twenty-five votes. Arthur Capper, known for his prohibitionist stance, received 150 votes for senator from Langdon, and Tincher, even with a visit to Langdon prior to the election, still lost to Democrat Nellie Cline by two votes. The vote for Capper followed state trends, but the vote for Tincher did not. Langdon citizens also put Yust back in as state representative by a large margin over his Democratic opponent. Without knowing exactly who the Klan supported, its exact influence in Langdon during

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<sup>71</sup>Interview with Mr. Guy Houston, Nickerson, Kansas, 13 July 1977.

<sup>72</sup>Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 14 November 1924.

the 1924 election is very hard to analyze.

With a semblance of prosperity returned, the Republicans made a clean sweep of all elections in Langdon in 1926.<sup>73</sup> By 1928, the Republicans had become so strong that no Democrats ran against the Republican candidates for state senator in the 36th district and state representative in the 76th district. Langdon also felt threatened by the city as represented by Democratic Presidential candidate, Al Smith. Furthermore, in a township so thoroughly protestant and dry as was Langdon, it is a wonder that Smith received 59 votes to 159 cast for Hoover.<sup>74</sup>

It has been previously mentioned that Langdon was a very conservative, protestant community. Both churches worked very hard to keep the Langdon community in keeping with a very strict moral code of conduct. Both churches were also, in a sense, very possessive of their congregations. The standing number of a congregation represented that church's strength vis a vis the other, and the long-standing differences dividing the two could never be reconciled. Guilford Railsback stated in reference to the attitudes of the older members of the Christian Church: "It has been said, jokingly I hope, that it was more fashionable to fight the Methodists than it was to fight sin."<sup>75</sup> However, there is a great deal of truth in that statement and old sentiments died slowly. Editor Brown said he felt uncomfortable in between the two churches, and hoping to stay in the good graces of the entire community, he and his wife traveled to Hutchinson for church.<sup>76</sup> Lucille Dunn recalled the

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<sup>73</sup>Aldrich, "A History of Reno County Elections," pp. 198-202.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., pp. 204-6 and p. 210.

<sup>75</sup>Mr. Guilford Railsback, Langdon, Kansas, personal letter to author, 5 August 1977.

<sup>76</sup>Interview with Mr. Harlow B. Brown, Hutchinson, Kansas, 25 July 1977.

church division in this light:

From my early childhood, I recall we were definitely two different churches and our religious beliefs were divided, . . . Now these were the two main differences [whether or not communion was taken quarterly or weekly and the different practices in baptism, immersion in the Christian Church and sprinkling in the Methodists. Some remember a third primary difference, that was the manner in which the Lord's Prayer was recited], cause our hymns were very much the same, our sermons were very much the same. But I think it was a healthy thing that there were two churches, especially at that time, because it brought more people into the church. We went out and found people, new people who moved into the area, and we invited them to church and we would go out and take them to church.<sup>77</sup>

The moral code preached by both churches was exceedingly strict. For example, the formation of a Reno county baseball league which played its games on Sundays, caused the ministers of both churches to react.

Reverend Moore of the Christian church wrote:

To keep a community up to a high standard of morality not only religious instruction should be taught during the week, but zealous observance of the holy day God has given us. This cannot be done by absenting oneself from God's house and spending the day in games and sports.<sup>78</sup>

Reverend Lent of the Methodist church stated:

Some get the idea that the notion of restraint on the part of the church, as touching various evils, such as Sabbath desecration, cigarette smoking, gambling, drinking, etc., is old foggish. It is nothing of the sort. Liberty is not freedom to do just as we please. There is no liberty outside of character, the man who is bound down by evil habits is a slave.<sup>79</sup>

Nonetheless, Sunday baseball in the afternoons remained very popular in Langdon and drew sizable crowds until the start of World War II.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Interview with Mrs. Lucille Dunn, Langdon, Kansas, 28 July 1977.

<sup>78</sup> Langdon (Kansas) Leader, 25 April 1924.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 2 May 1924.

<sup>80</sup> Interview with Mr. James (Pete) I. Sherow, Maize, Kansas, 29 January 1978.

Other aspects of this code were strictly enforced throughout the entire community. For example, if any high school student wanted to participate in school activities, they dared not be caught smoking or drinking, or even reported to O. V. Washler as among those that had been. Such behavior was grounds for being declared ineligible for all school activities. In fact, in the twenties one girl bobbed her hair and Washler, seeing this as a sign of urban decadence, promptly declared her ineligible for all school affairs.<sup>81</sup> He was known to wield the disciplinary ax quickly and sometimes indiscriminately.

Dancing was also a taboo for both churches in the town. When the jazz age came to full bloom in the 1920's and if the people from Langdon wanted to dance, they either went to Arlington on Thursday nights for jazz-band or to Turon on Wednesdays for jazz-band and on Saturday nights for western ho-down music. Those who had a car went to Hutchinson.<sup>82</sup> Sometimes, a barn dance was held near Langdon, but it was not publicized.<sup>83</sup> Arlington had both a Methodist church and a Christian Church of Christ; so did Turon, with the addition of a Roman Catholic church. One must then assume that the Langdon churches in an age of change during the twenties and thirties retained their fundamental religious beliefs, whereas, other churches were beginning to practice moderation with regards to dancing.

The economic depression of the thirties also brought change to peoples' lives in Langdon. For example, G. G. Railsback, known as Gif,

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<sup>81</sup>Mr. Guilford Railsback, Langdon, Kansas, personal letter to author, 5 August 1977.

<sup>82</sup>Interview with Mr. James (Pete) I. Sherow, Maize, Kansas, 29 January 1978.

<sup>83</sup>Mr. Guilford Railsback, Langdon, Kansas, personal letter to author, 5 August 1977.

lost considerable money in his western Kansas wheat farming investments. At the time, 1929-30, he was receiving substantial support from Neil Klassen, who had taken over the Langdon bank in 1924. He was farming nearly 4,500 acres near Ulysses by the technique referred to at the time as "suitcase farming." It was risky business, as a hail storm demonstrated to him on one occasion. When wheat dropped from an average price of \$1.00 a bushel in 1929 to an average of 29¢ by 1932, farming large tracks in western Kansas could bring financial disaster. Gif rode out the dust bowl years in western Kansas until he could pay-off his debts back home and did not venture west again.<sup>84</sup>

Because of the large mortgage debts contracted in 1928 by the Langdon farmers, the mortgage moratorium imposed by governor Alf Landon in 1933 and the moratorium law passed by the state legislature and signed by Landon during the same year saved many from going under.<sup>85</sup> Also staving off mortgage foreclosures in Langdon township was the Emergency Farm Mortgage Act of 1933.<sup>86</sup> During the depression, Klassen also felt the pinch of a restricted economy, and ran his bank with a very conservative manner. Some Langdon people, remembering Ferguson as a kind community-minded person, had a hard time coming to terms with Klassen. The difference between Klassen and Ferguson was that Klassen maintained a tight policy regarding loans. In other words, he based his

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<sup>84</sup> Interviews with Mr. Neil Klassen, Hutchinson, Kansas, 14 July 1977 and with Mr. Ned Railsback, Langdon, Kansas, 13 July 1977.

<sup>85</sup> As a means of comparison, the 1893 depression was not as severe as was the depression in the 1930's, but yet the decade of the 1890's saw twenty-three farms lost in sheriff sales in Langdon township, whereas, the decade of the 1930's saw nine lost to sheriff sales. See Appendix F. Zornow, Kansas, pp. 252-53.

<sup>86</sup> John D. Hicks and Theodore Saloutos, Twentieth Century Populism: Agricultural Discontent in the Middle West 1900-1939 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1951), p. 498.

policy strictly on the ability of the person to repay a loan, and he did what he could to insure its repayment.

Some people not caring for Klassen's policies, moved their accounts to Turon. Others saw Klassen's position as imposed upon him, especially when remembering the situation and times when he took over the bank at Langdon in 1924. Klassen explained his policies this way:

I don't mean it boastingly, but I ran a tight ship. And I didn't get top heavy with loans, and loan it to everybody. There again maybe somebody would say "that son-of-a-gun wouldn't even loan you a nickel." But it might have paid off, because I kept it open and it was a very small bank.<sup>87</sup>

The depression affected other people in Langdon in varying degrees, but for the most part, it made life more difficult for all. Guy Houston remembered that teachers in those days worried about pay cuts.<sup>88</sup> Houston himself, experienced a drop from \$1,575 a year in 1929 to \$1,260 a year in 1933. Monthly salaries for the teachers fell during the same period from \$113.75 to \$93.33.<sup>89</sup> If a teacher did not like his or her cut, there was always someone ready to take their place. Houston recalled that one person even tried to bribe him to get a position on the teaching staff in Langdon.<sup>90</sup>

It was also a time when many in Langdon were called to reassess their devotion to rugged individualism. Houston was mayor in Langdon when the first town public works project was initiated. It was not

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<sup>87</sup> Interview with Mr. Neil Klassen, Hutchinson, Kansas, 14 July 1977.

<sup>88</sup> Interview with Mr. Guy Houston, Nickerson, Kansas, 13 July 1977.

<sup>89</sup> Reno County, Kansas, "Annual Report of School District No. 62, For the Year Ending June 30, 1929," 8 August 1929, and "Annual Report of School District No. 62, For the Year Ending June 30, 1933," 20 July 1933.

<sup>90</sup> Interview with Mr. Guy Houston, Nickerson, Kansas, 13 July 1977.

carried out under the control of the WPA or the PWA and Houston did not remember what agency funded the project. The project itself, consisted of hiring those heads of households who were in immediate need of employment. About five or six men were hired and put to work in constructing a city building, cleaning the park and rebuilding sidewalks. These men worked for wages of 30¢ to 35¢ an hour. The government, probably federal agencies, allowed \$150 to \$200 for the town projects.<sup>91</sup> The effect of this program was short-lived because the city building's construction was finished by soliciting public donations to defray costs.<sup>92</sup>

In the township, the emergency relief provided could not have done much to alleviate economic want. Funds distributed through the township board designated specifically for emergency relief were paltry amounts. In 1932, \$144 was distributed; in 1933, \$225.50 and in 1934, \$165.60.<sup>93</sup> Records for soil conservation payments in the township do not exist and if the oral tradition is right, then only those farms in the sandhills were affected by production curtailments and payments.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Interview with Mr. James (Pete) I. Sherow, Maize, Kansas, 29 January 1978.

<sup>93</sup> Reno County, Kansas, "Emergency Relief, Work Relief Projects, Grove, Langdon and Bell Twp. Road Imp., #6-10, 2 December 1932, #6-13, 29 April 1933, #6-17, 2 September 1933, and #6-21, 4 January 1934," (Miscellaneous, County Clerk, Roll #36).

<sup>94</sup> All efforts to locate existing township records of soil allotment payments or land set-asides in Langdon proved unsuccessful. The Reno county ASCS office does not have them and neither does the Reno county courthouse. After placing calls to the regional U.S. archives, it was found they were not there. The Kansas State Archives lacks these records and they were not listed on the Kansas Agriculture Statistic Rolls. Personal letters to the author from the National Agricultural Library, dated 3 November 1977 and from the National Archives and Records Service, dated 25 October 1977, both stated that they did not have these records. The oral tradition is a faulty base to gauge New Deal policies at the local

The one other area in which government aid was felt in Langdon was in the schools. A government paid school lunch program was initiated in the school system. Government commodities were used and they were not known for their quality. However, it was much better than going without a nutritional meal. Houston also worked very hard to maintain a grade school population averaging 115 students. This took considerable effort on his part, as it meant a continuous on-going campaign of consolidation.<sup>95</sup>

For the younger generation in Langdon, it was a time of displacement. Richard Swan could not find work around Langdon except at one time when the Pan Eastern Pipe Line company constructed a gas pipeline through Langdon township. During the other years in the depression, he worked in the CCC for three different enlistments. When American involvement in World War II seemed nearing a reality, he joined the Army medical corps.<sup>96</sup>

Guilford Railsback's family was able to start him in college in 1929, but by 1930 they could do very little to support him. Thanks to the aid provided to him by a sister who was able to remain employed at her teaching job and with very careful management of his earned money, Guilford graduated in 1933, only unable to find work. He spent a year at home and then in 1935 was able to find employment in the Reno County Welfare Office at the "fine" salary of \$50.00 a month.<sup>97</sup>

Pete Sherow could not find steady work in Langdon and was forced to take a variety of jobs during the depression. When fortunate, he

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level because of its inherent incompleteness and the farmer mentality of independence which dislikes to admit that government aid played an important role in the thirties.

<sup>95</sup> Interview with Mr. Guy Houston, Nickerson, Kansas, 13 July 1977.

<sup>96</sup> Interview with Mr. Richard Swan, Langdon, Kansas, 13 July 1977.

<sup>97</sup> Mr. Guilford Railsback, Langdon, Kansas, personal letter to author, 5 August 1977.

could work for a local farmer for \$1.00 a day. Richard Jones, who owned one of the grocery stores in Langdon paid him \$15.00 a week for running the meat market in his store. This job lasted only until 1937, when Jones sold out and moved to Harper, Kansas, to operate a larger store. Towards the late-1930's, Pete was able to gain a position on the work crews of Gano, a large Hutchinson-based grain elevator company. The company had purchased and built many grain elevators throughout the central and western parts of Kansas and maintained rather large work crews used in construction and maintenance of the elevators. From 1937 when Pete joined the company, for the next one-and-one half years, he saw only temporary work at \$21.00 for a sixty-hour week. After that, he was hired to work for them throughout their regular work season--spring, summer and up to mid-fall--for \$35 a week, which was not considered bad wages.<sup>98</sup> What the depression meant for the younger generation of Langdon was that the town did not possess any viable economic opportunities for them. Consequently, they were forced elsewhere to seek reliable employment.

Another trend occurring in Langdon during the depression at first glance appears to uphold Kansas historian James Malin's theory that population stabilizes during times of economic depression. The town population, which had been suffering from a gradual decline, increased from a low point in 1930 of 142 people to a high of 208 people by 1937.<sup>99</sup> The town maintained a population averaging around two-hundred people until 1941. Counterposed to this growth trend, the township's population

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<sup>98</sup> Interview with Mr. James (Pete) I. Sherow, Maize, Kansas, 29 January 1978.

<sup>99</sup> Kansas Department of Agriculture, Twenty-Seventh Biennial Report, p. 476 and Thirty-First Biennial Report, p. 352.

gradually declined during the same period from 380 people in 1931 to 305 by 1941.<sup>100</sup> However, it should be pointed out that the town's growth was a temporary aberration from a general decline which had begun in 1920. Accounting for this might have been the reoccurrence of an oil boom in Bell township, or perhaps, some of the township population was moving into the town. Irregardless of which it was, the town's population does not seem to be the result of economic depression. After 1941, largely as a result of World War II and the end of the oil boom in Bell township, the town's population continued its decline.

City lot values in the town suffered almost a yearly devaluation after 1930, even though in 1935, there were nearly as many businesses in the town as there were in 1924. When the depression showed signs of letting up after 1938, city lot values increased but not to their pre-depression levels. Personal property values in the town show a pattern of up and down tendencies, with the low experienced in 1934 and the high in 1938. Once again though, the 1938 level did not surpass the amount experienced before 1930.<sup>101</sup>

The business establishments in Langdon during the thirties showed changes brought about due to the auto. In 1935, no blacksmith shop was left in the town, even though the farmers had not fully turned to mechanization. Three gas stations were in the town and one garage with a fuel pump in the front. One livery had been transformed into a picture show. It had good crowds on weekends, numbering at times, up to a couple hundred people. Weekdays were not as good, but with the inducement of a \$25 door prize for a lucky number drawing, they could be good. The movies

<sup>100</sup>Kansas Department of Agriculture, Twenty-Eighth Biennial Report, p. 392 and Thirty-Third Biennial Report, p. 410.

<sup>101</sup>See Appendix A.

were usually 25¢ a show unless a "big" movie, as for example when San Francisco played, then the ticket price was 30¢. Given the moral climate to the town, it should not be surprising that the proprietor heard discouraging comments from some of the patrons about the showing of the Ziegfeld Follies.<sup>102</sup>

Other business establishments in the town were a restaurant, drug-store with soda fountain and a hardware store. The lumber yard was still in town and two combination cream station-feed stores were in operation. Two elevators, the bank, the Rock Island depot, the post office, and an independent telephone exchange constituted the rest of the town's business community.<sup>103</sup>

Some of the effects of the depression on the township have already been discussed. One aspect that requires particular analysis is mechanization of the farm. The numbers of horses on the farms had been in a steady decline since 1915, whereas mules' numbers varied and did not show a real declining trend in numbers until after 1926. Mules and asses were the laboring animal of farm work whereas horses had various functions besides farm work. When the auto became a part of the farmers' world, horses as a means of transportation, were no longer needed. In the 1930's, the numbers of horses and mules generally represented only the need for animals to power that farm equipment which had not yet been mechanized.<sup>104</sup>

Most farm tractors which the farmers of Langdon used during the early to mid-thirties were the lug wheel type. The lugs were made either

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<sup>102</sup> Interview with Mr. James (Pete) I. Sherow, Maize, Kansas, 29 January 1978.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Kansas Department of Agriculture, "Agricultural Statistic Rolls, Langdon Township," 1915, 1926, 1930 and 1932.

of chain links welded onto a wide wheel or angle-iron pieces. These early tractors were good for wheat farming or pulling a combine, but they were not useful in row-crop farming. In cultivating corn or any other row crop, it was still the horse or mule-drawn cultivator. During the thirties, rubber tires were introduced for tractors, and some of the farmers invested in the new row crop machinery at that time.<sup>105</sup> Furthermore, in spite of the depression, mechanization kept increasing in Langdon township. Tractors increased in the township from thirty-four in 1928 to forty-seven by 1935, plus five in the town. Combines numbered the same in 1930 and in 1934, thirty in both years. By 1941, fifty-nine tractors were numbered in the township and thirty-nine combines.<sup>106</sup> By 1950, the township farming practices were completely mechanized, thus requiring far less manpower and no animal power to farm. What an incredible change to occur in farming practices in the short time span of thirty years--1920 until 1950!

The New Deal policies regulating planting and soil conservation land set-asides cannot be accurately assessed in Langdon township. However, some inferences can be deducted from statistical information relating to wheat planting. The year 1930 represented the largest amount of acreage--15,185 acres--planted in wheat in Langdon's history up to 1960. In 1932, only 7,642 were planted and in 1935, 8,322 were sowed. The 1932 number might suggest the influence of the Farmers Holiday Association, and the 1935 accounting might be an indication of governmental regulation over production. However, it must once again be emphasized that this interpretation is speculative. Beginning in

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<sup>105</sup> Interview with Mr. Vic McAtee, Langdon, Kansas, 6 July 1977.

<sup>106</sup> Kansas Department of Agriculture, "Agricultural Statistic Rolls, Langdon Township," 1928, 1930, 1932 and 1941.

1937, 12,232 acres were planted, but after that time, acreage of wheat planted remained at or below 10,000 acres, except in 1945, when the acreage sowed was 10,985 acres.<sup>107</sup>

The Great Depression, as has been the case with economic downturns throughout Langdon's history, effected a change for Republican voting habits. In the 1930 election for governor, the pseudo-doctor, J. R. Brinkley, received eighty-one votes; coming close to Republican Frank Haucke's ninety-two and surpassing Democrat Harry H. Woodring's sixty-three. When the 1932 elections were held, Brinkley won a majority in Langdon with 101 votes cast for him. The Republican Landon trailed with ninety-nine and Democrat Woodring received eighty-two votes. When it came to the race for the Presidency, Langdon voted for F. D. Roosevelt for reasons probably like those expressed by Lamont Tibbits, a Republican himself. They voted against H. H. H., "hardtimes, Hoover and hell." Roosevelt received 142 votes as opposed to Hoover's 117 and Norman Thomas' 16.<sup>108</sup>

In 1934, Republican Alf Landon easily defeated his Democratic rival Thompson by 169 to 95 votes. The other races went Republican by similar margins. Even if Landon was a popular Kansas governor with the voters in Langdon, in the 1936 election they gave Roosevelt the majority vote by 147 to 121 votes. Thomas received only three votes. After the 1936 elections, Langdon township maintained a Republican preference for all national offices and nearly all local or state offices.<sup>109</sup> It was also in 1938 that a Langdonite emerged in state politics and he was Frank Miller, a son of Robert Miller--early pioneer of Langdon

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 1930, 1932, 1935, 1937 and 1945.

<sup>108</sup> Aldrich, "A History of Reno County Elections," pp. 224-26. Interview with Mrs. Lucille Dunn, Langdon, Kansas, 28 July 1977.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., pp. 225 passim.

township.

Frank Miller was a farmer in Langdon township and member of the Christian Church of Christ. He was active in town affairs and was also popular among the citizens of Langdon. It was in the late thirties that he decided to enter state politics and succeed at doing such. Miller also represented a new attitude towards life around him. Despite coming from the strict moralistic environment of Langdon, he was able, as the speaker of the state house of representatives, to lead enough "honest dry's" to place on the 1948 election ballot a constitutional amendment repealing prohibition.<sup>110</sup> This new attitude, still basically conservative, also appeared in other aspects of life in Langdon.

Superintendent of the high school, O. V. Washler, was refused his contract in 1938. He had alienated some people in Langdon with his methods, especially when he fired coach Everett Reed. Reed ran for the school board on an anti-Washler platform in 1937 and was elected. Of the three members on the school board, one supported Washler and the other sided with Reed, leaving Washler without a contract.<sup>111</sup> This new attitude also affected both churches. With declining church membership due to town and township outmigration when World War II ended, the two churches in the town made efforts at consolidation. Unfortunately, long-standing differences could not be compromised, even though at least three efforts were made. However, the very notion of consolidation by some of the younger members and the attempt to effect it is significant in itself. It represented an attitude of toleration,

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<sup>110</sup> Interview with Mrs. Ethel Miller, Langdon, Kansas, 5 July 1977.

<sup>111</sup> Interview with Mr. James (Pete) I. Sherow, Maize, Kansas, 29 January 1978.

even if it was not successful.<sup>112</sup>

This attitude came too late to help Langdon survive. Furthermore, it alone could not have prevented Langdon town from further decline. From 1935 to 1950, the business community of Langdon disintegrated. The Catte hatchery met with an unexpected end. Eugene died in October, 1934, probably from a ruptured blood vessel in his brain. His son, Harold, who understood the operations of the hatchery and took over its maintenance, suffered an appendicitis attack and did not receive medical attention in time to prevent his untimely death in May, 1935. After this, there was no one left to manage the hatchery, as Eugene's wife did not understand its operation well enough to effectively run it.<sup>113</sup> Another example, Dick Jones, as has been previously mentioned, opened a new grocery store in Harper in 1937, looking for a larger market.<sup>114</sup>

The event which seemed to signal to most Langdon residents their town's inability just to maintain itself was the bank's departure in 1941. Neil Klassen had the opportunity to move the bank to Nickerson and fill the void left there by two defunct banks. He quickly took advantage of this chance to better himself economically. When later asked why he left Langdon, he gave this reply:

Then guess at it, 75,000 [dollars] deposits down there [in Langdon] and now there's 6,000,000 [dollars in deposits at Nickerson]. Wouldn't you better yourself by moving? Sure, look at the size of Langdon,

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<sup>112</sup>Mr. Guilford Railsback, Langdon, Kansas, personal letter to author, 5 August 1977. Interview with Ned Railsback, Langdon, Kansas, 13 July 1977. Interview with Mrs. Lucille Dunn, Langdon, Kansas, 28 July 1977.

<sup>113</sup>Interview with Mrs. Generouse Miner, Turon, Kansas, 13 July 1977.

<sup>114</sup>Interview with Mr. James (Pete) I. Sherow, Maize, Kansas, 29 January 1978.

wouldn't you get out of there as soon as you could?<sup>115</sup>

With property values declining in the town and township, and the population leaving, Klassen sensed the decaying economic situation around him. It was time to move out. It paid off for him, but many still feel resentment towards him, a persistent feeling that he let the town down. Others, seeing the business motivations behind it, were sorry to see it happen, but understood Klassen's reasoning.

World War II finished off the hopes of most people in Langdon for a stable town population and economy. The population of the town dropped from 199 people in 1940 to 138 people by 1945.<sup>116</sup> The movie house quit showing pictures during the war because of the lack of attendance.<sup>117</sup> By 1950, the town had only 126 people.<sup>118</sup> Job openings in urban areas like Wichita and Hutchinson drew people away from Langdon because of the economic advantages involved. Furthermore, military service took many more, and a great many of these men never returned, and most of those who did, left after living in Langdon again for a few years. Others left for reasons not tied to these two major reasons. Guy Houston left his teaching position in Langdon in 1944 and went to Nickerson to become the grade school superintendent there. This was probably the main reason that he gave for his departure from Langdon.

Well you know, after you've been in a place like that

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<sup>115</sup> Interview with Mr. Neil Klassen, Hutchinson, Kansas, 14 July 1977.

<sup>116</sup> Kansas Department of Agriculture, Thirty-Second Biennial Report, p. 430 and Thirty-Fifth Biennial Report, p. 298.

<sup>117</sup> Interview with Mr. James (Pete) I. Sherow, Maize, Kansas, 29 January 1978.

<sup>118</sup> Kansas Department of Agriculture, Thirty-Seventh Biennial Report, p. 314.

[a declining town like Langdon] you begin to wonder, what am I doing? Am I getting anything accomplished? You begin to wonder. Then you have a tendency just to let things ride.

Get in a new situation then you have a new challenge. That's one of the feelings that I had.<sup>119</sup>

Even when Langdon had one of its rare occasions for the possibility of a new business, it failed. In 1932, the Panhandle Eastern Pipe Line company was looking for a site for a pumping station, and Langdon was considered. On the land where they wanted to build, the farmer who owned it wanted a sizable consideration for those five to ten acres. So much in fact that some of the gas officials thought his entire farm was not worth as much as he was asking. So the company found a better offer near Haven, Kansas, and located the station there.<sup>120</sup>

The result of the decline depicted above was that by 1950, Langdon's business community was almost non-existent. Left in the town were a garage and filling station, one grocery store, a fountain and drugstore, the telephone exchange, the depot, two grain elevators and its post office. The lumber yard left in 1950.<sup>121</sup> Langdon town then entered the twilight of its existence.

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<sup>119</sup> Interview with Mr. Guy Houston, Nickerson, Kansas, 13 July 1977.

<sup>120</sup> Interview with Mr. Richard Swan, Langdon, Kansas, 13 July 1977.

<sup>121</sup> Interview with Mr. James (Pete) I. Sherow, Maize, Kansas, 29 January 1978.

## CONCLUSIONS

Beyond all this is the fact, always evident to those who look to living itself for their final information, that the community cannot be manufactured. It cannot be built like a house. Though intelligence is needed to maintain it, the community itself comes, like life, without machinery or artifice. For the community is not formulated for power, profit, wages, or production. It is the integrity of living.

Baker Brownell, The Human Community

Langdon town is a rural community. This may seem obvious to most people, but there are definitional problems involved when one is discussing whether or not a community is rural. There also exist definitional problems concerning the term, community. Two criterion are used by the federal census bureau in determining what a town is. It can be either rural or urban, metropolitan or nonmetropolitan.<sup>1</sup> A town of more than 2,500 people is urban, any below that number is considered rural. Metropolitan areas are counties which have a city in them which numbers over 50,000 in population and throughout the county and surrounding counties, a great deal of commuting to the city occurs. Langdon, when considered in these definitions is a rural town. It can also be considered in a nonmetropolitan area, even though it is in the same county as Hutchinson, which has a population of over 50,000 people. Langdon is twenty-eight miles southwest of Hutchinson and very little daily commuting for work occurs between the two. Thus, while statistically Langdon is part metropolitan area, it possesses many more traits con-

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<sup>1</sup>Calvin Beale, "Demographic Trends of the U.S. Rural Population," in The Development of Rural America, ed. George Brinkman (Lawrence: The University Press of Kansas, 1974), p. 34.

sidered nonmetropolitan.

Whether or not Langdon is a viable community is somewhat more debatable. Baker Brownell, a social philosopher who has written extensively about small town community life, lists the following traits of a viable community:

- (1) A community is a group of neighbors who know one another face to face.
- (2) It is a diversified group as to age, sex, skill, function, and mutual service to each other.
- (3) It is a cooperative group in which many of the main activities of life are carried on together.
- (4) It is a group having a sense of "belonging," or group identity and solidarity.
- (5) It is a rather small group, such as the family, village, or small town, in which each person can know a number of others as whole persons, not as a functional fragment. . . .

A community is a group of people who know one another well.<sup>2</sup>

If we apply all five criterion to Langdon today, then it falls short of fulfilling certain ones. Langdon today is not a diversified group when considering age, skill and function. In 1975, forty-one people of Langdon town's population of eighty-eight were forty-nine or older, and twenty-four were eighteen or under.<sup>3</sup> This is not a diversified age group but rather, one which reflects an aged population. In Langdon, people's skills may be different, but in such a small population a great diversification is not found. Functions, whether they are political, economic, or formal, are not greatly varied in such a small group of people. For example, an antique store, gas station and elevator do not constitute a wide degree of differing economic functions. Before the later 1930's, a community by Brownell's definition existed in Langdon. Today, as shown above, some of the critical components which constitute a

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<sup>2</sup>Baker Brownell, The Human Community: Its Philosophy and Practice for a Time of Crisis (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1950), p. 198.

<sup>3</sup>Kansas State Census Bureau, Kansas, City of Langdon, Decennial Census of Kansas, 1975.

"community" are lacking. However, if the chief component of community is as Brownell says, "a group of people who know one another well," then Langdon may still be considered a community.

Langdon's history as a rural community shows certain characteristics. First and foremost, it was a creation of the Rock Island railroad company. Or, in other words, it was essentially a product of industrial technology. Historians James Malin and Walter P. Webb have shown that before the Plains could be successfully settled, a new farming technology had to be adapted to the Plains' environment.<sup>4</sup> The railroad, if not the most important aspect in developing the Plains as a farming region, was certainly a very crucial one. In an area where there was no natural means of transportation for crops; a lack of natural building materials; unless one considers sod for building early prairie homes, the railroad was essential. The experience of Langdon township's settlers before 1886 clearly illustrates that life on the Plains could be very burdensome when convenient rail connections were lacking.

Not surprisingly then, the people in and around Langdon township in 1886 took advantage of the first opportunity to support the building of a railroad through their area. However, when it was built, the people soon learned of their economic dependence on it. Brady learned this when the Rock Island by-passed Lerado. The people at Turon and Arlington learned the rules when they were forced to give 51% of their town companies' land holdings to the railroad. Three farmers in Langdon township realized the railroad's power when they were not allowed to share in town lot selling with the railroad's land company. Of course, they could have taken the value of the sale of their lands in stockholding of the town

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<sup>4</sup>See James Malin's, Winter Wheat and Walter P. Webb's, The Great Plains.

company, but that would have proven a dubious investment, considering the amount of watered-stock in railroad companies during the late 1880's. The people, grudgingly or otherwise, obeyed because their prosperity and sometimes even their survival was at stake.

Because the railroad established trade centers--towns--and made possible the farming of the Plains, the people who lived in the area or in the towns were always at the mercy of forces larger than themselves. From the inception of Langdon town, it was dependent upon the technology which created it. Moreover, Langdon town was not the only one created by the Rock Island. Between 1886 and 1889, the company was responsible for the establishment or development of over eighty-five towns in Kansas. The total number is undoubtedly much higher, as the conservative number of eighty-five represented only those towns of which some record of their creation or development by the company exist. The Rock Island, along with the other railroad companies who built through Kansas, planned an empire. An empire designed to tap the agricultural commerce of Kansas; in fact, to make agriculture dependent on the railroad. Town making was part of this plan for empire.

Langdon was the market where the agricultural produce in the surrounding area flowed to find its way to market. It was also the outlet where the needs and wants of the farming families were purchased. So long as the railroad remained the main source of transportation, then Langdon town had a function. Not surprisingly then, the decline of Langdon can be traced to the deterioration of the railroad in America caused by the auto and truck. Langdon was solely the creation of the Rock Island railroad company. It was not located along natural lines of transportation, but rather, beside a man-made ribbon of steel. It

was designed as a marketing outlet for the railroad. When the railroad began to falter, it should not seem surprising that Langdon also declined.

Langdon town proved unwilling or unable to make the transition from a railroad-based economy to one based on the auto. No industry was added to the town, and it remained essentially a service center for the local farmer. After 1920, when farm mechanization became more predominant, far less manual labor was needed to farm. This, in turn, effected a need for less people and the accomplishment of more and better production. By 1930, with good roads to Hutchinson and the lure of advertising from there, people drove there to do their business rather than in Langdon. A greater selection and lower prices in Hutchinson meant an end to the general store in Langdon town. The technology which had created the need for Langdon no longer dominated the American scene after 1940. The deterioration of Langdon, which had begun in the early 1920's, greatly accelerated after 1940. Langdon had lost its economic base.

Langdon's history suggests other reasons for its decline besides sheer economic correlation to the decline of the railroad. Both churches share some of the blame, even though the economic reasons for Langdon's decline outweigh church reasons. From the time that Langdon township was settled by 1885 until the 1940's when an ecumenical attitude began to appear in the town, the churches seemed to cling to the acceptable thought of the day. They both practiced a form of competition encouraged by the exponents of Social Darwinism and "unfettered capitalism." Martin Marty explained:

Religious liberals, not always friends of the competitive free market, will not enjoy seeing it credited with helping provide for their religious prosperity. . . .

The capitalist model inspired a century of competition and lived on in an ecumenical age when milder-mannered leaders became uneasy over the churches' efforts to do each other in.

When the American West was opened, Baptists, Methodists, and Disciples of Christ lunged at each other as they raced to overwhelm the old colonial denominations--the Congregationalists, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians--and keep Catholics at bay or away.<sup>5</sup>

The Langdon churches searched the area to find converts and to bring them to their respective churches. The church members regarded these practices as good because it made the churches stronger and also insured that the people would have a Christian influence in their lives. This competition between the two, however, could not make for a healthy social climate in the town or township. There simply were not enough people to afford that kind of factionalism without emotions and convictions colliding.

It is strange to think that two churches which held nearly the same fundamental beliefs could incite at times such divisiveness. On the matters of liquor and dancing they agreed. Their basic outlooks towards moral conduct or what was good and bad were the same. This is the reason that many youths in the 1920's and 1930's would go to Turon, Arlington or Hutchinson to dance. Langdon churches certainly tried to control sin as they saw it, but this practice bred intolerance. Even though Arlington and Turon suffered decline at the same time as did Langdon, their population declines were not as severe. They both also seemed more tolerant towards drinking and dancing than did Langdon. Intolerance exacts a price even if the exact amount is not known.

In spite of the two churches' narrowness at times, they could join together for union services. They might even take to the newspaper,

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<sup>5</sup>Martin E. Marty, "God's 'Almost Chosen People,'" American Heritage 28 (August 1977): 6.

as they did in 1913, in trying to make their creeds readily available to a wide audience. The churches also provided a moral framework for their congregations which served as a guide around which they lived their lives in harmony with one grand design. The two churches also tried to provide assistance for those people in the community in times of sickness, severe economic need and death. In these ways, the churches often worked, in spite of their competitiveness and narrowness, towards a healthy community environment.

Education also added to Langdon's decline. In Langdon, from 1875 through 1910, education was viewed as comprising no more than acquiring the mastery of the fundamental basics of reading, writing and arithmetic. By 1913, this attitude was changing as many became convinced that an expanded education was necessary if one was to cope in a world which was changing. Elements of pragmatism and progressivism which fostered the push for better education were seeping into the social thought of Langdon. In a few more years a high school was added and in the 1920's, many of Langdon's youth were attending colleges or universities. What is very striking is that they did not return to Langdon. As Langdon pushed harder for better education it contributed to its own decline. By doing this, Langdon town was continuing to lose a very valuable asset, its educated youth. This does not mean that the people who did not attend college or who stayed in Langdon were neither less intelligent or ambitious. The ability to achieve a college education had a lot to do with personal and family economic status. Throughout the 1920's and the 1930's, there were many in Langdon who were thankful just to be able to retain their farms and feed their families, much less entertain the notion of sending or helping a child through college. Nonetheless, in losing these people, Langdon was deprived of the potential

innovations that these people could have given it.

Langdon's history also reveals some interesting forms of political behavior. The township from its beginnings showed itself to be traditionally Republican in the conservative Kansas manner. When many had over-extended themselves in land investments and mortgaging in the late 1880's, and found that the railroads were not the means to riches that they had expected, Langdon's voting patterns mirrored the discontent that existed throughout the state of Kansas during the Populist era. A return to prosperity brought the return of Republican dominance to Langdon which lasted until the election of Wilson in 1912. Discontent with Taft and the rift within the Republican ranks allowed Wilson's election in Langdon. Langdon supported Wilson again in 1916, but did not support the Democrats in 1920 when the price of wheat fell from record highs because of post-war deflation and overproduction. The Republicans were returned with their promise of normalcy. When the farm depression deepened in the early 1920's, Langdonites in 1922 voted for a liberal farm-oriented Democrat for governor. In 1924 they became somewhat reactionary and reflected the influence of the Klu Klux Klan. By 1926, the economic situation seemed better and they returned to the Republican fold again.

With the Great Depression of the 1930's, Franklin Roosevelt received the popular vote for two consecutive terms in Langdon. But after that time, the Republicans were returned in virtually every succeeding election. What becomes very apparent is a direct correlation between prosperity and voting for the Republican party in Langdon township. When economic crisis struck, the voters turned either to a third party movement or the Democrats.

The economic trends exhibited throughout Langdon's history show

certain tendencies. Prior to the development of the railroad, township valuations increased slowly. The coming of the railroad boosted the valuations initially. They fluctuated through the 1890's and then recovered after 1900 during a time of national prosperity. Langdon shared the same farm prosperity which existed during that time throughout the entire nation. Property valuations continued to rise through World War I until war inflation and over-production threw the national farm economy into a severe post-war economic crisis. Langdon's history reveals that this crisis was the beginning of its end. Economic statistics about Langdon's property values in that period support James H. Shideler's thesis about the farm crisis of 1919-1923. As he stated:

This crisis damaged the agricultural industry and the farm population, altered the position of agriculture in relation to the rest of the economy, shifted ideas concerning rural well-being, and established definite lines of farm policy.<sup>6</sup>

Since 1920, Langdon has never again enjoyed the economic prosperity that it had then. Beginning around 1910, the effects of the auto were being felt in Langdon as the declining number of horses in the town and township reveal. Also, by 1920, the farmers were beginning to mechanize their farms which called for larger investments. Larger investments then called for increased crop production, and this in turn, meant larger farms. Better mechanized farm equipment made this all quite feasible, but it also made for over-production, which resulted in crop surpluses causing lower prices. Lower prices for crop production then meant larger acreage if a farmer wanted to maintain his enterprise, and the circle completed itself. Farmers have not yet extracted themselves from this vicious cycle as the events of the 1970's exemplify all too well.

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<sup>6</sup>James H. Shideler, Farm Crisis: 1919-1923, p. vii.

When compared to a study by Allen Bogue, Langdon township seems to have been more economically stable than was Kinsley township, which lies about twenty miles directly west of Langdon. In mortgage debts contracted from 1876-1905, they follow similar trends in peaks and lows, but Langdon's total indebtedness fluctuated less severely than did Kinsley's which seems to testify to a more stable economy in Langdon township. The differences between the two might be in their soils. Langdon township has better farming land than Kinsley as its soils are not quite as sandy as Kinsley's. Kinsley is also situated more in the High Great Plains, which has less moisture than the Central Great Plains. It could also be that the farmers in Langdon township were conservative in mortgaging their lands since they might have been less speculative about farming. As has been stated previously, the farmers of Langdon township appear from its very beginning to have wanted to engage more in farming than in land speculation. If this was the case in Langdon township, and as Bogue argues that it was not the case in Kinsley township, then Langdon could be more stable as the people there wanted to make a go of farming more than those in Kinsley township.<sup>7</sup>

Underlying much of the troubles in the rural towns like Langdon is the philosophy of its citizens. The vast majority of Americans are all very good Lockians and realize that the main function of government is to promote individual property. It should not be surprising, then, that Lewis Atherton tells us that to rural people, progress is defined in terms of continuous population growth and increasing valuations in town and local area real estate.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, individualism as understood

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<sup>7</sup>For a comparison between the two townships, see Allen G. Bogue's, Money at Interest, p. 247.

<sup>8</sup>Lewis Atherton, Main Street, p. xiv.

in the community scheme of things as defined by Robert Wiebe, stressed the protestant work ethic and non-governmental interference in the affairs of community.<sup>9</sup> Unfortunately, the rugged individualism and progress defined and closely adhered to by the citizens of towns like Langdon worked at cross purposes to true community interaction. There is an internal conflict concerning where the individual stops and the community begins, or vice versa. In most cases, the individual comes first and is considered a success if he prospers economically. If a community becomes too narrow to incorporate that person within its bounds of propriety or if the individual sees a lack of economic opportunity, then it is off to somewhere else to better the person's fortune.

Wiebe also cites another fundamental trend in American development noted as well by other historians--the effects of industrialization and urbanization after the American Civil War. Wiebe argues that these trends brought about a shift in American thinking to what he calls "bureaucratic thought."<sup>10</sup> In this thinking was the beginnings of the political doctrine of group politics as the acceptable norm for resolving political issues. Different interest groups all working towards effecting their ends compete with each other, and the compromises which result from such interactions for a public good. This propensity to join into groups which espouse certain limited aims is cited by both Brownell and Atherton as contrary to the aims of community. Brownell states it simply: "Communities are organized around people, while special-interest groups are organized around segregated functions."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Robert Wiebe, The Search for Order (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), p. 133.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 145-63.

<sup>11</sup> Brownell, The Human Community, p. 110.

Even though the Farm Bureau and Calf and Pig Clubs brought about new techniques and improvements to farming in Langdon township, and the Commercial Club looked after the interest of the business establishments, the community at large was neglected. Furthermore, as society seems to become more complex, the seemingly simplistic notions of community are further eroded by the tendency in American society towards an ever-increasing factionalization.

Another aspect limiting growth in small towns like Langdon is what Atherton labels as the "cult of the immediately useful and the practical." For example, artists and writers had difficulty fitting the terms of the cult, whereas calf and pig clubs and small hometown orchestras enjoyed a comfortable niche within its confines. This is very evident in Langdon's history as the town did not produce professional artists, or writers and only one musician went on to achieve anything beyond local fame. Small towns are notorious for this attitude and Langdon was no exception. For a town to be ultimately successful in terms of being a community, this attitude had to be overcome. Brownell concludes that this is the "basic evil" in any small town.

It is not enough to have a community where people know one another as whole persons but where the range and diversity of interests are kept within the bounds and forms of a narrow context. The significant context must be widened and deepened. To this end the shell of torpor, routine, prejudice, and narrow concern must be broken.<sup>12</sup>

Two interpretations about the place of the rural town in an age of change, especially since 1920, have emerged. One argued by Lewis Atherton claims that the rural town is not a dying way of life in America. Atherton argued that the fundamental cause of small town decline was

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 59.

essentially their over-production by zealous town speculators and the railroad.<sup>13</sup> Langdon shows this tendency; however, the causes of its decline are more complex. The other view by James H. Shideler states that since 1920, America's priorities had become fixed.

The decade of the 1920s ends with the urban-industrial world in a state of momentary disarray, but the transformation had become fixed and America was finally committed to urbanization, industrialization, corporatism, never-ending economic growth and proliferation of material goods.<sup>14</sup>

The history of Langdon supports Shideler's interpretation.

Shideler writes that between 1920 and 1970, over forty million people moved from the rural areas in the United States to the cities. In fact, he claims that by 1970 the farm population in the United States constituted only four percent of the total, or in other words, there were more college students in the United States than people on the farm.<sup>15</sup> In such surroundings, the rural town fares very poorly. In many respects, Langdon town was a casualty of that rural-urban collision experienced in the 1920's.

Langdon's history shows a multiplicity of forces which worked against its well-being. These forces gathered and as Shideler points out, became very visible in the 1920's. In summation, they marked the beginning of the end of Langdon town.

Finally, a few conclusions about methodology and source materials are in order. This study uses for its framework a host of different demographical sources. Of invaluable worth to the local historian who

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<sup>13</sup> Atherton, Main Street, pp. 4-32.

<sup>14</sup> James H. Shideler, "Flappers and Philosophers, and Farmers: Rural-Urban Tension of the Twenties," Journal of Agricultural History 47 (October 1973): 285.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 291.

hopes to reconstruct a history of a small Kansas town, are the state and federal censuses of the area, the agricultural statistic rolls housed in the Kansas State Historical Society's archives in Topeka and local county records encompassing school records and land records. In building the narrative, the area's local newspapers, especially the early ones are most useful. If the town had or has a local newspaper, it is a very valuable resource. One finds that in a small town-paper, the columns are written by many different people from the town and surrounding area. The researcher is able to examine the thinking of several persons in the town besides that of the editor. In addition, the researcher will have a record of those events which were of particular importance for the town. Oftentimes, oral interviews or area newspapers do not cover these events.

Oral interviews of the people who were or are residents of the town needs special consideration. The interviews illuminate and make more meaningful the demographic materials and lend to the narrative local color peculiar to the area. However, one who conducts oral interviews must do preliminary work before the actual interview takes place. A list of those people must be made, an initial contact and conversation before the actual interview is necessary so that the interviewees can order their thoughts and whatever materials that they have relating to the history of the town or area. It is also well to know something about the social structure of the town or area that the historian is researching and of the personalities of the people to be interviewed. Interviews, at times, may be unintentionally colored or deliberately self-serving. It is important that the historian know when this is happening. Despite these drawbacks, oral interviewing is a very enjoyable and rewarding research technique.

In researching local history, the local historian will encounter numerous impediments. The most frustrating of all obstacles is the poor maintenance of local records. For example, the yearly Reno County School Reports, which are a rich source of information about the area from 1905 through 1928, were destroyed in a flood. The greatest loss encountered in this study was the loss of the records of land set-asides and money paid out for crop-production curtailments in Langdon township from the middle 1930's until 1950. These records which would have shown the impact of New Deal farm policies at a local level are missing for the entire county of Reno. This is very regrettable for the local historian who wishes to gauge the effects of federal farm policies as they affected a local area.

Some basic works exist which the student who proposes to research local history in Kansas should read as a starting point. First, is Lewis Atherton's, Main Street on the Middle Border, which is a brilliant social history of small rural townlife.<sup>16</sup> It describes the problems of economic decline without proving his dated conclusion despite extensive demographic data that the small rural town is thriving. However, this does not detract from the book's merit as a social history.

James Malin's Winter Wheat and Walter P. Webb's The Great Plains are musts.<sup>17</sup> Their insights into what made this area unique are invaluable to any student of Kansas history. For a good outline of how a local study as this should be researched and outlined, one should read "Rural Communities and the American Pattern," by Everett E. Edwards, published in the Journal of Agricultural History, January, 1953.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> See Atherton, Main Street.

<sup>17</sup> See Malin, Winter Wheat and Webb, The Great Plains.

<sup>18</sup> Everett E. Edwards, "Rural Communities and the American Pattern,"

There are many other useful books and articles about rural and rural town history, but these are suggested as an initial approach.

Ultimately, the historian must ask an important question posed by the venerable Will and Ariel Durant. "Of what use have your studies been?"<sup>19</sup> It is hoped that this study will be useful in determining some of the forces which have caused rural town decline. However, this study alone does not offer definitive answers to the question. A lack of other studies of small towns researched in this manner make comparative conclusions extremely difficult. Hopefully, such comparative studies will be concluded. Perhaps, unexplored avenues will appear and either substantiate or change the conclusions presented in this thesis. Then and only then will this historical study of the causes of rural town decline which affected Langdon, Kansas, be fully appreciated.

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Journal of Agricultural History 27 (January 1953): 21-25.

<sup>19</sup>Will and Ariel Durant, The Lessons of History (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), p. 11.

## APPENDIX A

ASSESSED VALUATION OF PROPERTY IN LANGDON TOWNSHIP,  
1881-1948

Years	Land	Personal		Railroad		City Lots	Total
		Twp.	City	Twp.	City		
1881-							
1882	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$		\$ 25,119
1883-							
1884							46,795
1885-							
1886	40,990	8,320					49,310
1887-							
1888	59,240	6,520		37,990		9,660	113,410
1889-							
1890	48,205	6,400		34,875		3,173	92,653
1891-							
1892	53,880	7,045		25,810		1,287	88,022
1893-							
1894	56,650	4,800		39,969		930	102,349
1895-							
1896	62,050	5,190		31,240		1,010	99,490
1897-							
1898	58,970	9,470		31,480		1,075	100,995
1899-							
1900	65,910	22,870		31,558		2,244	122,582
1901-							
1902	80,620	26,030		36,282		4,969	147,901
1903-							
1904	80,180	25,410		38,779		6,970	151,339
1905-							
1906	95,640	25,700		39,160		7,657	168,157
1907-							
1908	665,590	187,930		300,703		37,220	1,191,443
1909-							
1910	862,944	256,160		288,647		45,805	1,453,556
1911-							
1912	828,327	245,380		289,383		44,065	1,407,155
1913-							
1914	860,120	187,430	76,080	283,435	8,389	43,310	1,458,764
1915-							
1916	844,259	193,460	84,520	288,930	8,588	51,605	1,471,362
1917-							
1918	869,906	230,400	99,920	286,556	8,741	54,923	1,550,446
1919-							
1920	1,040,233	278,030	122,550	286,039	8,707	63,607	1,789,166
1921-							
1922	894,085	186,500	113,830	293,154	8,696	64,133	1,560,398

APPENDIX A--Continued

Years	Land	Personal Twp.	City	Railroad Twp.	City	City Lots	Total
1923- 1924	\$ 977,615	\$129,260	\$ 50,860	\$369,599	\$19,864	\$60,385	\$1,607,583
1925- 1926	894,315	164,530	53,610	318,537	15,576	56,865	1,503,433
1927- 1928	952,995	231,360	64,880	317,237	15,041	58,735	1,640,248
1929- 1930	926,995	182,480	56,070	324,876	14,651	65,270	1,570,342
1931- 1932	809,475	68,890	45,545	396,842	12,743	60,435	1,393,930
1933- 1934	689,615	71,520	39,970	327,997	10,555	52,820	1,192,477
1935- 1936	691,415	92,750	43,210	335,510	9,096	48,210	1,220,226
1937- 1938	775,310	119,370	57,610	347,880	9,064	51,280	1,360,514
1939- 1940	776,560	109,080	45,300	340,046	8,116	53,080	1,332,182
1941- 1942	764,940	158,415	32,805	407,239	8,045	48,990	1,420,434
1943- 1944	764,840	164,765	33,050	485,809	8,797	46,990	1,504,251
1945- 1946	767,360	173,250	43,870	509,351	9,601	43,500	1,546,932
1947- 1948	769,420	164,655	42,325	509,556	9,728	45,500	1,541,184

This information was compiled from the Kansas Department of Agriculture Third through the Thirty-sixth Biennial Reports of the State Board of Agriculture, 1881-1948 (Topeka, Kansas: Kansas Publishing House).

## APPENDIX B

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION VALUES FOR RENO COUNTY,  
1885-1950

Years	Acres	Farm Values	Crop Values
1885	246,170	\$ 2,328,270	\$ 1,547,297
1886	235,306	2,118,956	1,485,343
1887	235,471	2,307,580	1,503,793
1888	234,617	2,262,385	1,617,544
1889	346,382	2,976,041	1,954,485
1890	274,541	2,462,067	1,287,008
1891	360,314	2,373,805	3,034,818
1892	345,724	2,174,232	2,747,157
1893	408,958	2,354,484	1,274,297
1894	432,386	2,240,601	1,293,456
1895	464,859	3,136,458	2,327,488
1896	477,489	3,197,080	2,191,180
1897	523,119	2,481,890	1,465,097
1898	481,865	3,388,791	1,861,542
1899	533,502	4,004,226	2,811,005
1900	557,855	4,067,967	2,441,907
1901	534,829	4,509,553	3,065,621
1902	586,194	5,146,435	3,743,374
1903	568,375	4,827,936	3,269,604
1904	658,087	6,575,083	5,092,952
1905	612,018	5,379,918	4,214,391
1906	619,016	5,982,023	4,691,707
1907	608,524	3,902,457	4,737,314
1908	595,801	3,880,821	5,138,939
1909	626,268	4,628,918	6,330,963
1910	627,236	4,776,502	4,626,678
1911	582,983	4,927,015	4,620,646
1912	606,042	5,091,055	6,015,773
1913	619,906	6,224,179	4,130,151
1914	628,048	9,637,654	7,674,216
1915	429,420	7,677,130	5,489,405
1916	485,777	6,618,881	4,900,120
1917	482,303	12,046,475	9,930,399
1918	509,290	15,934,275	12,838,723
1919	509,449	16,225,112	12,262,346
1920	499,728	12,086,015	7,908,060
1921	487,061	8,523,381	5,364,288
1922	487,706	8,469,023	5,768,116
1923	490,177	8,316,067	5,286,435
1924	491,728	12,344,664	8,881,831
1925	520,599	11,076,358	7,244,821
1926	500,975	14,599,626	10,083,008
1927	513,076	15,669,491	10,593,860
1928	505,523	12,993,057	8,157,634

## APPENDIX B--Continued

Years	Acres	Farm Values	Crop Values
1929	517,219	\$12,437,548	\$ 6,577,640
1930	531,429	12,303,760	6,177,336
1931	547,391	8,732,288	4,020,907
1932	518,544	6,190,062	2,023,362
1933	504,665	6,231,208	2,312,753
1934	476,705	10,200,613	5,910,495
1935	487,037	10,843,142	4,772,909
1936	518,186	11,659,446	6,814,211
1937	522,904	4,853,746	9,183,818
1938	534,110	3,834,838	3,065,778
1939	456,566	3,267,548	4,481,144
1940	507,500	3,617,287	5,789,015
1941	498,590	4,675,270	6,308,465
1942	451,285	6,416,870	7,139,650
1943	493,105	8,335,690	10,398,820
1944	525,190	7,584,490	12,740,760
1945	516,722	7,347,180	11,552,900
1946	504,230	7,705,570	16,959,910
1947	457,124	8,630,120	15,174,000
1948	464,035	8,949,870	15,337,800
1949	501,733	8,223,400	10,168,180
1950	510,481	8,135,830	18,645,460

This information was compiled from the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Fifth through the Thirty-seventh Biennial Reports of the State Board of Agriculture, 1885-1950 (Topeka, Kansas: Kansas Publishing House).

Supplement to Appendix B  
Amount Paid Out in Soil Conservation Payments  
in Reno County, 1937-1950

Year	Amount	Year	Amount
1937	\$206,064	1944	\$360,778
1938	150,530	1945	347,527
1939	313,835	1946	456,658
1940	617,152	1947	115,146
1941	635,569	1948	-
1942	688,038	1949	68,958
1943	989,485	1950	87,008

This information was compiled from the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Thirty-first through Thirty-seventh Biennial Reports of the State Board of Agriculture, 1937-1950 (Topeka, Kansas: Kansas Publishing House).

## APPENDIX C

## WHEAT, 1860 to 1932.

TABLE showing acres, annual product, value, and average yield and value of wheat (winter and spring).

YEARS.	Acres.	Bushels.	Values.	Average yield per acre.	Average value per bushel.
1860.		168,527			
1861.		185,379			
1862.	9,630	202,232	\$149,652.00	21.00	\$0.740
1863.	16,434	262,953	231,399.00	16.00	.830
1864.	13,439	201,598	405,212.00	15.00	2.010
1865.	12,768	191,519	338,689.00	15.00	1.770
1866.	12,171	260,465	497,488.00	21.46	1.910
1867.	89,285	1,250,090	2,300,000.00	14.00	1.840
1868.	98,525	1,537,000	2,074,850.00	15.60	1.350
1869.	151,351	2,800,000	2,212,000.00	18.50	.790
1870.	193,200	2,343,000	2,013,980.00	15.60	.860
1871.	169,433	2,694,000	3,044,220.00	15.90	1.130
1872.	185,775	2,155,000	3,060,100.00	11.60	1.420
1873.	309,256	4,330,000	4,330,000.00	14.00	1.000
1874.	716,205	9,881,382	7,631,671.00	13.79	.772
1875.	743,206	13,209,403	11,350,375.38	17.77	.859
1876.	1,023,183	14,620,225	12,413,780.89	14.28	.849
1877.	1,063,993	14,316,705	12,240,128.72	13.45	.835
1878.	1,730,812	32,315,353	18,441,066.84	18.67	.571
1879.	1,932,798	20,550,936	18,448,711.14	10.63	.893
1880.	2,414,434	25,279,884	20,060,668.57	10.34	.830
1881.	2,182,872	20,479,689	21,705,275.80	9.38	1.059
1882.	1,603,267	35,734,816	24,093,821.00	22.29	.672
1883.	1,559,392	30,024,936	22,322,119.58	19.25	.743
1884.	2,237,128	48,050,431	20,516,560.93	21.47	.427
1885.	2,000,519	10,772,181	6,829,045.60	5.15	.684
1886.	1,758,393	14,571,033	8,482,503.60	8.24	.582
1887.	1,373,915	9,278,501	5,759,419.60	6.75	.621
1888.	1,120,119	16,724,717	12,067,814.11	14.93	.723
1889.	1,594,285	25,310,851	19,917,761.21	22.15	.564
1890.	2,321,113	28,801,214	23,410,548.00	12.40	.810
1891.	3,733,910	58,550,653	42,596,759.99	15.68	.728
1892.	4,129,829	74,538,806	40,891,762.03	18.05	.546
1893.	5,110,873	24,827,323	11,032,022.64	4.85	.444
1894.	4,540,892	28,205,799	11,297,797.13	5.82	.401
1895.	4,171,971	16,091,090	7,463,118.47	3.81	.466
1896.	3,337,727	27,751,838	13,257,193.77	8.27	.442
1897.	3,411,364	51,026,694	34,335,304.69	14.81	.674
1898.	4,624,731	60,790,661	32,937,042.23	13.14	.542
1899.	4,933,952	43,687,013	22,406,410.00	8.76	.513
1900.	4,378,553	77,339,091	41,974,145.60	17.66	.543
1901.	5,316,482	90,333,095	50,610,505.00	16.99	.560
1902.	6,301,910	54,649,236	29,139,490.00	8.67	.533
1903.	5,564,866	94,041,902	52,426,355.55	15.75	.558
1904.	5,831,712	65,141,629	51,409,255.56	11.11	.789
1905.	5,925,393	77,178,177	53,889,365.76	13.02	.698
1906.	6,436,085	93,292,930	55,178,711.62	14.49	.591
1907.	7,225,283	74,155,695	56,787,511.85	10.24	.765
1908.	6,939,351	76,808,922	63,835,145.74	11.06	.832
1909.	6,450,734	80,958,740	75,941,189.83	12.55	.698
1910.	4,870,442	61,917,339	52,785,965.32	12.53	.865
1911.	4,643,393	50,899,435	43,810,589.85	10.94	.863
1912.	6,242,855	88,889,128	71,227,437.27	14.24	.801
1913.	6,062,666	72,458,051	56,375,409.95	11.95	.778
1914.	9,116,183	180,924,885	151,583,031.17	19.85	.835
1915.	7,639,810	95,768,176	85,681,786.81	12.55	.895
1916.	7,819,627	99,384,760	134,615,306.56	12.71	1.350
1917.	3,546,433	41,563,387	85,679,211.22	11.72	2.060
1918.	6,899,029	93,195,392	156,332,974.83	13.70	1.999
1919.	11,649,873	146,109,192	289,886,360.01	12.56	1.630
1920.	8,982,743	140,842,516	282,110,065.71	15.68	1.860
1921.	10,345,651	128,220,148	123,876,113.57	12.39	.966
1922.	9,602,955	116,864,983	105,489,193.23	12.17	.903
1923.	7,825,833	76,172,274	66,341,972.80	9.72	.871
1924.	9,425,672	152,627,658	163,899,506.53	16.28	1.070
1925.	8,520,564	74,264,926	103,888,770.59	8.71	1.400
1926.	10,683,428	149,083,056	179,905,914.15	14.87	1.200
1927.	9,945,955	111,406,440	130,294,660.02	11.20	1.169
1928.	10,374,680	177,850,700	167,321,813.17	16.58	.911
1929.	11,545,899	137,965,088	138,428,361.64	11.98	1.003
1930.	11,773,015	158,862,287	99,681,365.23	13.49	.627
1931.	12,345,596	239,207,703	81,416,717.91	19.43	.340
1932.	8,933,273	166,533,639	30,973,850.27	11.92	.291

This table was published in the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Twenty-eighth Biennial Report, 1931-1932 (Topeka, Kansas: Kansas Publishing House, 1933), p. 454.

## APPENDIX D

## CORN, 1860 to 1932.

TABLE showing acres, annual product, value, and average yield and value per acre.

YEARS.	Acres.	Bushels.	Values.	Average yield per acre.	Average value per bushel.
1860		5,678,534			
1861		6,246,717			
1862	170,365	6,814,601	\$2,180,672.00	40.00	\$0.320
1863	193,597	8,518,251	2,555,475.00	44.60	.300
1864	186,923	4,673,681	6,402,121.00	25.00	1.370
1865	163,463	6,729,236	3,566,495.00	41.00	.530
1866	190,658	6,527,358	4,112,235.00	34.20	.630
1867	211,373	8,159,000	4,457,450.00	38.60	.550
1868	360,388	6,437,000	6,422,130.00	18.00	.950
1869	506,198	24,500,000	10,780,000.00	48.40	.410
1870	595,892	16,685,000	9,677,300.00	28.00	.580
1871	617,325	24,693,000	7,160,970.00	40.00	.290
1872	769,636	29,631,000	6,518,820.00	38.50	.220
1873	1,202,046	47,000,000	14,570,000.00	39.10	.310
1874	1,525,421	15,699,078	12,064,424.00	10.29	.768
1875	1,932,861	89,798,769	19,071,698.15	45.80	.236
1876	1,844,454	82,398,176	19,217,332.24	43.68	.232
1877	2,863,412	103,497,831	20,206,184.92	40.38	.195
1878	2,495,482	89,324,071	17,018,968.79	37.13	.160
1879	2,995,670	108,704,927	26,562,674.46	36.29	.244
1880	3,554,396	101,421,718	24,926,079.07	28.53	.246
1881	4,171,554	80,760,542	41,859,963.29	19.33	.555
1882	4,441,896	157,605,722	51,858,306.27	35.36	.330
1883	4,653,170	182,084,526	47,452,663.43	39.14	.261
1884	4,545,908	190,870,686	30,512,734.32	41.99	.207
1885	5,266,034	177,350,703	40,428,327.68	33.67	.228
1886	5,562,018	139,569,132	37,966,031.80	24.05	.272
1887	6,530,392	75,791,454	26,836,422.70	11.60	.354
1888	6,993,207	168,754,087	52,395,948.65	24.13	.310
1889	6,820,693	273,888,321	51,649,876.16	40.15	.189
1890	5,775,691	51,060,229	21,491,916.00	8.84	.421
1891	5,269,244	139,363,991	48,057,978.93	26.75	.355
1892	5,603,588	138,658,621	42,069,810.01	24.74	.364
1893	6,172,462	118,624,369	32,621,762.62	19.20	.275
1894	6,404,706	66,952,833	25,354,150.27	10.45	.379
1895	8,394,871	201,457,396	46,189,772.72	24.00	.229
1896	7,897,575	221,419,414	55,633,013.17	28.63	.161
1897	8,293,819	152,140,993	28,555,293.05	18.31	.188
1898	7,237,601	126,999,132	30,298,097.93	17.54	.229
1899	8,194,561	225,183,422	53,530,576.00	27.43	.233
1900	7,369,020	131,523,677	39,581,835.00	18.25	.294
1901	6,722,973	42,695,672	21,731,215.39	6.33	.510
1902	6,690,764	201,367,102	78,321,653.26	28.50	.389
1903	8,525,777	169,359,769	57,678,141.67	25.95	.337
1904	6,494,153	132,621,774	50,713,955.74	20.33	.384
1905	6,799,755	190,519,593	68,718,583.91	28.01	.361
1906	6,584,535	137,021,214	65,115,203.01	28.40	.348
1907	6,869,012	145,258,326	63,010,743.32	21.33	.433
1908	7,057,535	150,610,516	82,642,461.72	21.31	.549
1909	7,711,879	147,005,120	83,666,905.22	19.06	.565
1910	8,589,682	152,810,884	76,402,327.52	17.79	.500
1911	7,760,087	105,017,068	59,599,408.03	13.64	.567
1912	6,884,041	156,459,382	83,483,691.05	22.73	.523
1913	6,655,023	18,420,052	13,376,475.35	2.77	.726
1914	5,279,532	87,338,272	59,380,146.75	16.54	.679
1915	4,637,238	142,655,149	73,547,443.71	31.41	.530
1916	6,954,724	62,127,191	51,886,271.52	8.92	.835
1917	9,162,232	106,166,517	120,540,410.70	11.59	1.135
1918	6,195,621	44,579,458	64,081,655.56	7.19	1.439
1919	4,188,615	63,653,497	82,845,461.76	15.06	1.310
1920	5,137,268	132,786,139	92,036,455.00	25.85	.690
1921	4,421,669	96,494,670	27,760,924.81	21.82	.288
1922	5,055,989	95,311,532	51,645,465.49	18.35	.542
1923	6,014,323	125,680,706	77,558,715.81	20.89	.617
1924	5,815,153	131,007,817	106,313,292.23	22.52	.812
1925	6,546,349	104,860,915	74,065,681.78	16.02	.710
1926	5,856,561	38,380,832	41,010,514.49	10.32	.700
1927	5,836,661	176,712,332	113,924,418.99	29.96	.645
1928	6,634,666	179,116,320	117,760,980.91	27.00	.657
1929	6,324,219	106,804,908	82,633,728.53	16.89	.774
1930	6,544,478	76,162,843	48,596,573.03	11.61	.633
1931	6,376,692	114,177,015	32,666,551.60	17.90	.288
1932	7,337,522	141,049,455	31,631,891.51	19.22	.153

This table was published in the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Twenty-eighth Biennial Report, 1931-1932 (Topeka, Kansas: Kansas Publishing House, 133), p. 455.

## APPENDIX E

MORTGAGE DEBT IN LANGDON TOWNSHIP,  
1875-1950

Year	No.	First Mortgage		Second Mortgage		Interest Rates	Total	
		Amount	Acres	No.	Amount		No.	Amount
1875	1	\$ 260	160	-	\$ -	20 %	1	\$ 260
1876	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1877	3	1,500	400	-	-	11.3	3	1,500
1878	4	1,755	640	1	200	10	5	1,955
1879	10	3,752	1,600	1	40	10.3	11	3,792
1880	17	9,260	2,640	4	153	9.25	21	9,413
1881	5	2,050	800	1	50	10.3	6	2,100
1882	4	838	640	1	30	8.6	5	868
1883	9	4,790	1,920	-	-	8	9	4,790
1884	19	15,356	3,120	1	25	8	20	15,381
1885	26	21,496	3,800	9	1,030	7.75	35	22,526
1886	27	18,588	3,920	13	1,085	9.3	40	19,673
1887	27	20,783	3,540	6	605	8	33	21,388
1888	29	18,991	3,860	7	1,152	7.3	36	20,143
1889	27	25,175	3,160	4	415	8.5	31	25,590
1890	15	38,528	2,000	3	321	7.3	18	38,849
1891	5	6,310	640	-	-	7	5	6,310
1892	4	2,350	560	2	105	8.5	6	2,455
1893	8	7,164	1,220	1	80	7	9	7,244
1894	13	6,419	-	5	795	6.75	18	7,214
1895	5	2,995	480	-	-	-	5	2,995
1896	8	12,696	1,160	-	-	8.8	8	12,696
1897	9	3,700	1,260	2	105	6.8	11	3,805
1898	7	6,385	1,200	-	-	8.6	7	6,385
1899	15	11,115	2,480	1	60	6.25	16	11,175
1900	23	20,920	3,400	4	228	6.3	27	21,148
1901	24	32,496	2,805	3	894	7.25	27	33,390
1902	31	36,158	4,180	6	1,315	6.3	37	37,473
1903	15	17,060	2,338	2	750	7.1	17	17,810
1904	21	24,920	2,560	4	2,098	6.6	25	27,018
1905	26	37,698	3,220	4	220	8	30	37,918
1906	18	23,476	2,366	3	680	8	21	24,156
1907	13	21,531	-	1	40	6	14	21,571
1908	10	12,592	1,360	-	-	6.6	10	12,592
1909	26	67,875	3,220	4	5,305	5	30	73,180
1910	23	40,825	2,475	5	1,370	5.25	28	42,195
1911	11	17,900	1,360	-	-	6.25	11	17,900
1912	18	57,580	2,702	3	131	6.12	21	57,711
1913	10	23,175	1,580	1	28	5.37	11	23,203
1914	8	18,300	1,320	3	1,275	6.5	11	19,575
1915	26	90,482	3,960	7	1,908	6.66	33	92,390
1916	21	63,250	2,445	5	1,525	7	26	64,775
1917	6	17,300	540	1	725	6.12	7	18,025

## APPENDIX E--Continued

Year	No.	First Mortgage		Second Mortgage		Interest Rates	Total	
		Amount	Acres	No.	Amount		No.	Amount
1918	19	\$51,070	1,998	2	\$ 274	7.12	21	\$51,344
1919	19	61,575	2,277	4	2,622	5.5	23	64,197
1920	16	66,300	1,960	8	1,784	7.75	24	68,084
1921	30	85,378	3,663	7	2,025	7.12	37	87,403
1922	18	60,775	2,933	3	2,225	7.3	21	63,000
1923	27	82,016	4,130	7	2,346	7	34	84,362
1924	16	35,150	1,915	3	540	7.25	19	35,690
1925	16	44,200	1,920	4	1,320	7.5	20	45,520
1926	11	28,950	1,760	4	782	6.6	15	29,732
1927	18	45,816	2,243	2	335	5.5	20	46,151
1928	24	95,850	3,104	7	2,402	5.3	31	98,252
1929	13	30,650	1,630	2	225	5.5	15	30,875
1930	10	25,619	1,680	1	65	7.6	11	25,684
1931	13	23,990	1,210	1	198	-	14	24,188
1932	11	31,850	1,755	1	100	6	12	31,950
1933	11	21,825	1,465	2	135	6.5	13	21,960
1934	22	61,185	2,440	10	13,450	5	32	74,635
1935	13	42,160	1,602	1	2,500	5	14	44,660
1936	9	24,450	1,055	1	150	4.5	10	24,600
1937	7	29,250	938	-	-	6.5	7	29,250
1938	19	56,150	2,278	-	-	4.75	19	56,150
1939	11	29,050	1,705	-	-	4.5	11	29,050
1940	7	14,200	961	3	1,136	5	10	15,336
1941	6	10,200	499	2	900	4	8	11,100
1942	7	26,350	995	-	-	4	7	26,350
1943	5	9,100	491	-	-	-	5	9,100
1944	3	7,230	320	-	-	-	3	7,230
1945	8	16,950	786	1	500	5	9	17,450
1946	2	4,270	240	-	-	-	2	4,270
1947	4	15,700	378	-	-	-	4	15,700
1948	4	11,500	380	-	-	5	4	11,500
1949	4	11,750	531	-	-	-	4	11,750
1950	7	59,600	1,160	-	-	4.5	7	59,600

This information was compiled from the Reno County, Kansas "Register of Deeds, Numerical Index, Range #9, Township No. 25," 1 June 1872-1 June 1924 and 1 June 1924-2 April 1954.

## APPENDIX F

SHERIFF DEEDS ISSUES IN LANGDON TOWNSHIP,  
1875-1950

Year	Number	Year	Number	Year	Number	Year	Number
1875	-	1894	3	1913	-	1932	2
1876	-	1895	1	1914	-	1933	-
1877	-	1896	1	1915	-	1934	1
1878	-	1897	-	1916	-	1935	2
1879	-	1898	-	1917	-	1936	3
1880	1	1899	2	1918	1	1937	1
1881	2	1900	-	1919	1	1938	-
1882	1	1901	-	1920	-	1939	-
1883	-	1902	-	1921	-	1940	-
1884	2	1903	-	1922	-	1941	-
1885	1	1904	-	1923	-	1942	1
1886	-	1905	-	1924	2	1943	2
1887	1	1906	-	1925	1	1944	-
1888	-	1907	1	1926	3	1945	1
1889	-	1908	-	1927	-	1946	-
1890	4	1909	-	1928	2	1947	-
1891	3	1910	-	1929	-	1948	-
1892	5	1911	1	1930	-	1949	-
1893	4	1912	-	1931	-	1950	-

This information was compiled from the Reno County, Kansas "Register of Deeds, Numerical Index, Range No. 9, Township No. 25," 1 June 1872-1 June 1924 and 1 June 1924-2 April 1954.

## APPENDIX G

DATE AND NUMBERS OF FINAL LAND RECEIPTS OBTAINED  
 BY HOMESTEADERS IN LANGDON TOWNSHIP, 1874-1909

Year	Sandhill Lands	Other Lands	Year	Sandhill Lands	Other Lands
1874	-	1	1892	-	1
1875	1	1	1893	-	2
1876	-	-	1894	-	1
1877	-	5	1895	-	-
1878	-	4	1896	-	1
1879	1	6	1897	1	1
1880	-	12	1898	5	-
1881	1	3	1899	1	2
1882	-	3	1900	-	-
1883	-	10	1901	-	-
1884	1	10	1902	-	-
1885	2	1	1903	-	-
1886	5	3	1904	-	-
1887	8	3	1905	-	-
1888	6	1	1906	-	-
1889	3	2	1907	-	-
1890	1	2	1908	1	-
1891	1	3	1909	-	1

This information was compiled from the Reno County, Kansas "Register of Deeds, Numerical Index, Range No. 9, Township No. 25," 1 June 1872-1 June 1924.

## APPENDIX H

AN ABBREVIATED AND CONDENSED GROUPING  
 OF LANGDON TOWN'S MAJOR ORDINANCES,  
 PASSED DURING MAY 1912-JULY 1914

1. Was an ordinance which pertained to the scheduled time of the city council meeting. They were to be held the 2nd Monday of each month.
2. This ordinance related to claims and accounts filed against the town.
3. Listed the duties of the city marshal.
4. Listed offenses termed misdemeanors.
  - (1.) Disturbing the peace. fine--\$3 to \$100.
  - (2.) Assault and battery, drunkenness, obscene language and disorderly conduct. fine--\$3 to \$50.
  - (3.) Defacing property. fine--\$1 to \$20.
  - (4.) Indecent exposure. fine--\$2 to \$30.
  - (5.) Carrying a concealed weapon. fine \$2 to \$50.
  - (6.) Related to property.
  - (7.) Could not ride a horse through town faster than a "traveling gate." Auto speed limit in the town limits set at 10 mph. fine--not more than \$10.
  - (8.) Impeding an officer in his duties. fine--\$5 to \$100.
  - (9.) Gambling saloons operating in the town limits. fine--\$5 to \$25.
  - (10.) Firing firearms in the town limits. fine--\$2 to \$20.
  - (11.) Hitching animals to ornamental trees. fine--\$2 to \$10.
5. Listed offenses termed nuisances.
  - (1.) Littering. fine--\$5 to \$10.
  - (2.) Stacking straw or hay in the streets, alleys or lots. fine--\$5 to \$10.
  - (3.) Town lot owner not keeping his property neat. fine--\$5 to \$10.
  - (4.) Keeping unsanitary pig sties, outhouses, etc. fine--\$5 to \$10.
  - (5.) Leaving dead animals on city lots. fine--\$10-\$50.
  - (6.) Letting animal stock run at large through town limits, fine--according to state law.
6. Relating to prostitution houses and immoral conduct.
  - (1.) Keeper of a house. fine--not more than \$100.
  - (2.) "That all persons who lead an idle, immoral or profligate course of life, or who practice or engage in the act of fornication, adultery or prostitution in any house of ill fame, booth, tent, railroad car, or other place in the city of Langdon . . . be fined in any sum not exceeding \$100."
  - (3.) Persons caught in such house. fine--not more than \$100.
7. Relating to liquor.
  - (1.) Trade, production or sale of liquor within the city limits. fine--\$100 to \$500 and/or a 30 day to 6 month jail term.

- (2.) Bribing with liquor. fine--\$100 to \$500 with or a 30 day to 6 month jail term.
  - (3.) Assisting a person who trades in liquor. fine--\$100 to \$500.
  - (4.) Helping to maintain a liquor house. fine--\$100 to \$500.
  - (5.) Running a saloon. fine--\$100 to \$500 and/or a 30 day to 6 month jail term.
  - (6.) Possession. fine--same as a nuisance.
8. Relating to pool halls and bowling alleys.
- (1.) Unlawful unless:
  - (2.) Petition signed by majority of city tax payers.
  - (3.) Taxed annually \$15 on the first table, \$10 on each additional table.
  - (4.) Related to bowling alleys, which Langdon never had.
  - (5.) Minors not allowed in unless with written consent of parents.
  - (6.) Violations. fine--\$1 to \$10 for each offense.
  - (7.) Hours--not later than 11 p.m.
9. Leash law for dogs.
10. Relating to the licensing of peddlers and auctioneers.
11. Relating to the licensing of shows and amusements.
- (1.) \$5 per circus
  - (2.) \$2 per minstrels
12. Ordinance to provide for the collection of fines.
14. No driving an auto after dark without headlights. fine--\$3 to \$10.
19. Repeal of Ordinance no. 8. Complete illegality of pool halls.
21. Relating to setting fireworks within the city limits. fine--\$1 to \$5.
26. Relating to driving a horse, auto, bike on sidewalks. fine--\$5 to \$25.

This information was compiled from the Langdon, Kansas, "Ordinance of the City of Langdon, Reno County, Kansas," pp. 1-37.

## APPENDIX I

THE SABBATH, by Reverend B. W. Folsom  
Langdon Leader, June 5, 1913

Religion is as essential to society as to individuals. Try to imagine the condition of American society without the restraining influence of Christianity. One of the greatest and most important of all Christian institutions is the Sabbath. This day was instituted in the infancy of the human race and in accordance with the laws of man's nature. It is said that by analysis of the blood it is found that of the one ounce of oxygen consumed out of our system in a day's labor, only five-sixths is restored by a night's rest. Thus we see that we "run down," like the clock, in six days and therefore need the seventh for rest. From a purely physical point of view, the Sabbath is a necessity for man's highest attainments.

It may be argued that ball games, auto and motor riding, fishing, hunting and other recreational exercises supply the needed rest. But everyone who will observe closely and be honest with himself and his own conscience know that this is not true. In my experience in attending college athletic games I am fully convinced that one interested in the sport will expend as much nervous energy in witnessing a ball game as he will in half a day's hard labor. I have gone to my room from an exciting contest of baseball or football as completely exhausted as from a whole day's strenuous toil. If this is true of a spectator, what must be the physical condition of the players. We call it sport and recreation, which it is if it is indulged in moderation, but when indulged in on the rest day, and after a week of toil, it becomes a costly sport--costly in strength and energy--and would be almost beyond endurance were it not for the excitement that attends it.

But this phase of the question is a minor consideration. The greatest evil of Sunday amusements is in the lowering of the moral tone of the community and destroying its religious life. This phase of the question will be handled in subsequent articles.

## APPENDIX J

SELF: IN IT'S [sic] RELATION TO PROGRESS, by Elder J. T. Sapp  
Langdon Leader, June 12 and 19, 1913

The continuous association of a term with wrong has often led to an erroneous idea of the true meaning of that term. Such has been the use and idea of the term self. Now the term self, in its legitimate sense, embraces all that a man is. Dr. James says: "The total self of me, being as it were duplex, partly known and partly knower, partly object and partly subject, must have two aspects discriminated in it, of which for shortness we may call one the Me and the other the I." Accepting this view of Dr. James, there can be no phase of our existence but belongs to one or the other of these aspects. If one unduly exalts the I, we call him an egotist. If he lives for the Me and that alone, we call him selfish. And it is to the latter I want to call attention in this article.

Self, then, in its truest sense, is not necessarily evil. Only does it become such as it becomes an instrument of Satan. Surely his Satanic majesty is well pleased when he can get a soul to close itself to the best interests of its fellow. Selfishness blurs the vision, narrows the horizon and dwarfs the soul of the individual, in as much as it is an embodiment of it. Remove it from the heart of man and you open the way to progress in its broadest sense.

In speaking of time, there is no time like the present. We cannot recall the past. It has come and gone and with it the good and evil which belonged to it. The future is still to come with the good and the bad, with its certainties and uncertainties, with its hopes and despair. How we are to face this future is one of the great questions for us to answer.

It is certainly not by pondering over the past, nor by speculating as to the future, but by heroically facing the present and making the best of it.

There never was a time in the history of mankind when it enjoyed as many blessings as at the present time. How narrow was man's sphere of activity in the not far distant past. From the family to the tribal, from the tribal to the nation, from the nation to the worldwide has been the history of man's activity. The great men and women of today are WORLD men and women. Their interests are world interests. No longer does the true man confine himself to the few but finds his greatest enjoyment in the doing of good to the greatest number. With marvelous strides are the nations of the world becoming united in promoting peace and harmony. Never before did the masses enjoy such measure of individual liberty. Never before was learning as universal. Now, as never, do men enjoy the blessings of God.

Of course there are those who do not view the present with such optimism. Some claim that the Golden Age is past and gone and that the present is rapidly going to the bad. All hope gone. These are pessimists.

And the pessimist, if followed, would lead to the abandonment of hope, and this in turn would lead to despair and from despair to ruin. On the other hand, there are those who look wholly to the future for the "Golden Age." The present loses its charm and all is centered on the hope of the future. These are idealists. And the failure of the idealist is that he loses interest in the present and this means the ruin of the future. So we are not to look to the pessimist nor to the idealist for our need but to take hold of the present for it is indeed our "Golden Age." There may have been one in the past, and there may be one in the future, but the present is our "Golden Age" since it is the age of our activity. The present is neither a dream nor a pleasant reminiscence, only, but a living reality.

And now the question comes, how do we come into the possession of all these blessings? From whence came all these things which gladden the lives of men today? One will say they came from nature's lavish hand. We will not deny that nature has been lavish in the bestowal of her gifts to men. She has given much to men for which they were ungrateful. But it is not enough to say that all these things came from nature. The God of us all has been working thru all these things. He has ever been indulgent in His provision for His creatures. He has made us heirs of a truly marvelous present. Are we going to prove ourselves grateful heirs and able executors? Shall we enjoy the present and let the future take care of itself? Certainly this is not spirit which prompted the noble and self-sacrificing deeds of the men and women of the past. That of their lives which contributed to the world's progress was not of selfishness but of unselfishness. They lived and gave their lives for the world's sake and not for the sake of self. There may never be marble shafts erected to their memory; the world may not sing of their glory, but the progress of today stands as an undying monument of their worth to the world.

Since so many good things have come to us thru the unselfishness of those who have been our benefactors, what provision are we making for those who are to follow us? In our consideration of the blessings which have come to us from our forebears, it is well for us to bear in mind that along with these blessings, there too, have come grave responsibilities--which are great blessings if we could only be led to view them in that light. The hope of the future lies in the greatness of the present. And the present will be as great as its men and women are unselfish. No great man was ever a selfish man--no selfish man was ever a great man. Then, can he, who aspires to nobility of character, afford to be selfish? No, for selfishness is evil and man is going to give to the world that which he gets from it. If he takes evil, evil will he give. If he takes good, good will he have to give. Man cannot give that which he has not.

None but the supremely selfish can say that he can do as he pleases--unless he pleases to good. No man has a moral right to consider himself as a unit apart from the whole. On the other hand he should consider himself as an integral part of the whole, and that which effects him, effects the whole. One great trouble with men is that they are unwilling to consider the good of others unless they can see some material recompense. How regrettable is the selfishness of men. And in what a small world is the selfgratifying and selfsatisfied soul is a stagnant soul. And the stagnant soul is a dying soul for in it there is no real

life. It is the active soul, the soul filled with the desire to serve, that sets the world to moving along the highway of progress which leads to the city of perfection.

Then in conclusion. Self is all that a man is, and is good, and only becomes bad as it becomes an instrument of evil. The blessings of the present bring with them the "Golden Age" and with it the necessity for action. In the present, only, can we show an appreciation of the blessings which have come to us out of the unselfishness of the past. The future is before us. What are we going to contribute to its greatness? Let us bear in mind that there can be no real progress only as men use self as a means to help the many and not as an end of living for the individual.

## APPENDIX K

THE NEW PATRIOTISM, by Reverend B. W. Folsom, Pastor, M. E. Church Memorial Sermon Delivered at the Christian Church, Langdon, Kansas, May 25, 1913, Text Matt.16-26  
Langdon Leader, June 26, 1913 and July 3, 1913

We are here this evening, not to eulogize the dead who have given their lives on the field of battle. Nor are we here to praise these survivors of the great struggle for national unity and preservation. They need not our praise. In the immortal words of the immortal Lincoln, "The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here." Neither are we here to praise or maintain a standard of military glory, for I trust that we have outgrown the standard of Cicero of old who declared that the highest of a man was to die in battle. It is always possible to inspire young blood by martial music, the blare of trumpets, the flashing of colors, and the display of instruments of warfare, but you who have experienced the realities of military service know that your old general, W. T. Sherman, described it very correctly when he said "War is hell." You have no desire to pass through the real experiences again, although you do enjoy living them over in memory and in conversation with old comrades. We believe today that war is a curse, and an unnecessary evil that be over come if we are to reach the standard of twentieth century civilization. It is an expensive and irrational method of settling disputes, either national or international. It is time for civilized people to do away with the double standard of morals for nations and individuals. Dueling and all attempts to settle difficulties between individuals by physical force is frowned upon as belonging to a primitive age, while we are inclined to land the display of armed force in nations as heroic and patriotic. There is a great cry even in America, for an increase of our standing army and for more battleships for our navy, while even now the expenses of our government for purposes connected with war are about twice as great as for all other purposes combined, if we accept the Postal Service, where income and expenses nearly balance. The total annual military expenditures of the world approximate two and a quarter billions of dollars. And this vast amount of money for threatening to destroy, if not actually destroying, human life. Enough money was spent in the great struggle of '61-'65, by the North and South combined, to have purchased every man, woman and child in bondage at that time at the rate of one thousand dollars a head, and to have purchased twenty islands the size of Cuba on which to colonize them. In Polk's administration Spain was offered one hundred million dollars for Cuba. In 1898 the United States could have quadrupled that amount and given Cuba her freedom from Spanish tryanny at a much smaller cost than that of the Spanish American war. The glory of military achievement is dearly bought.

Four score and eight years ago, as the war clouds were already beginning to appear on the horizon, Charles Sumner, in a Fourth of July oration delivered in the city of Boston, gave expression to the following sentiments: "What glory of battle in England's annals will not fade by the side of that great act of justice by which her parliament, at the

cost of one hundred million dollars, gave freedom to eight hundred thousand slaves! And when the day shall come (many these eyes be gladdened by it beams!) that shall witness an act of greater justice still, the peaceful emancipation of three million of our fellow men, 'guilty of a skin not colored as our own,' now, in this land of jubilant freedom, held in gloomy bondage, then shall there be a victory in comparison with which that of Bunker Hill shall be as a farthing candle held up to the sun. That victory shall need no monument of stone. It shall be written on the grateful hearts of uncounted multitudes that shall proclaim it to the latest generation. It shall be one of the famed landmarks of civilization, nay, more, it shall be one of the kinds in the golden chain by which humanity shall connect itself with the throne of God."

Could these words of the great statesman have proven a true prophesy we would not be here today in memory of the unnumbered thousands whose blood was shed on the fields of Shiloh, Antietam, Missionary Ridge and Gettysburg. The untold sorrow of countless thousands of homes would have been spared, the million chairs at American firesides would not have been vacant, and the wheels of progress would not have checked for fifty years. But such is war. Such is the result of avarice, prejudice, hatred and strife. And today every true soldier's heart, however its pulsations may quicken at the sound of fife and drum, and however the nerves may tingle at the recollection of battles fought and victories won, still will utter a fervent "amen" when I say, "thank God the war days are past," still will shout their accord to the words of the prophet of old who said: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth PEACE!"

"Why should the poet of these pregnant times  
Be asked to sing of war's unholy crimes?  
To laud and eulogize the trade that thrives  
On horrid holocausts of human lives?

\* \* \*

Of old men fought and deemed it just;  
Today the warrior fights because he must."

"The blood of men," says Edmond Burke, "shall never be shed save to redeem men. All else is crime and curse."

But while we decry war as a crime and a curse for which some one is responsible, and while we deplore the fact that greed, jealousy and hatred are still forces in the world driving men to these awful conflicts, yet the spirit of the true soldier, inspired by his love for country and his devotion to a great principle, going forth to face bullet and bayonet in response to the call to arms, is the spirit of the text: "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it." This is the spirit that must and shall conquer the world for Jesus Christ and Righteousness. Self preservation may be the first law of life--the primitive law--but self sacrifice is the highest law, the Christian law. And it is the law of our nature--our higher nature, our nature transformed by love, our divine nature. . . . Down yonder on the field of Antietam, when Hooker's division was ordered forward to take the elevated position around the little Dunkard church, did you refuse to move because you feared the Confederate bullets? Did

you fall back when the flanking fire of the enemy, sheltered by the East and West Woods, mowed down your men as hail mows the tender corn? Or perhaps you were with French when he was ordered upon "Bloody Lane." Did you give up the fight when from thirty to sixty per cent of your comrades lay prostrate on the field? Or did the famous "Stonewall" division of Jackson yield to you even when half of two brigades, one-third of another, and all but two of the regimental officers fell? No; self was forgotten. Every man threw himself into the fray, losing his life, that the larger life--the regiment, the army, the Nation--might be saved. Oh, that this spirit might pervade the hearts of the "Soldiers of the Cross" in all the great moral conflicts of today! Would that all who so gallantly wore the blue and the gray in the great Civil Conflict were enlisted in this greater army defending the banner of King Immanuel.

This text expresses the spirit of this twentieth century religion--of the New Patriotism. A religion that is world-wide and world conquering. A patriotism born of real love for country, but that goes beyond our own borders. Love of country not merely for country's sake, but for the sake of the world. "This world is my parish," said a great religious reformer. "God sent not his son into the world, but that the world"--not a few individuals here and there--"might be saved." There was a time when the principal purpose in becoming religious seemed to be to get safely through the pearly gates of glory. But this conception is too narrow for our time, and I thank God he is giving us a broader view of His plan and purpose. "Saved to serve" must be the slogan of the real Christian today. We want our beloved America to be a real Christian nation, then a nation that is Christian in fact as well as in name, not merely for the sake of America, but for the sake of other nations, that she may take her place as a teacher and leader of the nations; that she may measure up to her God-given opportunities in giving to the world the example of the righteousness that exalteth a nation. We love to sing, "As goes America, so goes the world," but this places upon us Americans a mighty responsibility.

"There are foes that must be conquered;  
 There are battles we must win;  
 There are lands that must be taken  
 That are going down in sin.  
 Let us enter in the struggle,  
 Ever march upon our way;  
 We must take the world for God  
 And win the day.

There are hosts of sin before us  
 That extend from sea to sea;  
 There are many still in bondage,

There are slaves that must be free.  
 Let us all be up and doing,  
 Ever found within the fray.  
 We must take the world for God  
 And win the day."

There are battles to fight today--bloodless battles we trust, to be fought without the flying colors and martial music to stir the fighting blood, but in the quiet of private life, in the office and shop, in the

home and society, in the political arena and at the ballot box. But nevertheless battles that require as much courage and self-sacrifice, battles as important and far-reaching in their influence as any in the civil war.

Primitive man knew no responsibility save to himself alone. Then the circle enlarged to take in the family, later the clan, then the tribe. And so the circle of social responsibility has ever widened, taking in the village, the colony, the state, the nation, until the modern conception of the extent of responsibility knows no limit of racial or national lines. This, then is real Christianity--the twentieth century religion--the New Patriotism--in conformity with the Great Commission, "Go ye into ALL THE WORLD."

But if this nation is to do its part in leading "the kingdoms of this world" to become "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ," we must first solve some gigantic problems of our own. A returned missionary once said to me: "It is a good thing we are so far away from our mission fields, for if the people whom we are trying to Christianize could see America at close range they would tell us to go home and clean up our own back yard before trying to teach them."

Many things exist in America today which are sadly unchristian. Some of them are even protected by government license. Many of them are counteracted, or at least winked at or utterly neglected by the masses of good people. And yet the solution of these problems is absolutely in our hands. At this time we can do little more than merely call attention to a few of these gigantic evils.

First, the commercial spirit of the time threatens our overthrow. Our very prosperity becomes a menace to us. When the Children of Israel were about to cross into the promised land, their great leader, Moses, gave them a solemn warning, saying to them something like this: "When you have passed over in to the goodly land and dwell in houses that you haven't built, drinking from wells that you haven't dug, and eat fruit from vineyards that you planted not, when all this luxury and prosperity comes upon you, then beware lest ye forget the Lord who brought you up out of the land of Egypt." This warning is as applicable to America today as it was to the Israelites of old. We measure the success too often by our balance of trade rather than by the honor of our manhood and by the purity of our womanhood. This greed for gold must be checked. Our ideals must be checked. Our ideals must be a splendid character rather than a splendid fortune if we are to reach a high standard of national and individual life.

The love of pleasure is another and kindred evil. It is threatening the young life of the country especially. Too many of our younger people take life lightly. They do not realize the seriousness of life. And they get their ideals from the older ones. When we find our pleasure resorts filled to overflowing on the Sabbath day and our churches empty, something is radically wrong. When the dance, the vaudeville and the picture show are more attractive to the young people of our "best families" than the prayer meeting, the Sunday School and the home, it is an indication that our ideals need to be changed. When Rome became intoxicated by the constant round of pleasure-seeking, her death knell was sounded.

France today is going the same road. Shall America, our fair Columbia, rocked in the cradle of religion, nurtured in the spirit of puritanic virtue, follow in their trail? God forbid.

The breaking up of the American home is another of the threatening dangers of our social life. The home is the most sacred institution on earth. Destroy the sancity of the home and you destroy the chief corner stone of our national life. It was shown by statistics a few years ago that the proportion of divorces to marriages in the country at large was about one in ten. That is, out of ten marriages one ends in the divorce courts.

In Chicago it is said to be one in six, and in Kansas City one in five. A few months ago one of the Wichita papers published the statement of the Probate Judge that for Sedgwick county in the year just preceeding it had reached the startling proportion of one in four. These figures are appalling. At this rate what is to become of the home life of America?

A few years ago we were appalled by the discovery of the existence of another institution which had grown to startling proportions before we were aware of its existence. I refer to that slavery ten thousand times more hellish than the slavery against which you fought--the slavery of soul as well as body--the slavery not of the black man, but of the white girl, your girl and mine. It is estimated that every year at least sixty thousand of our fair daughters are sacrificed to supply the market of this hellish business. That means five thousand every month, or one hundred and fifty every twenty-four hours. While we are sitting in this service tonight seven of our pure, innocent girls, in one way or another become victims of this terrible trade. Do you know that there is a price upon the head of your daughter, your sister, at this moment, and she is not safe so long as this price is hanging over her? One man, a doctor, said to me some months ago that he did not see any need of talking about these things in these country places; these are problems of the city, and the less the country people know about it the better off they are. Listen to me! Sixty-eight percent of the girls who are dragged into this life of shame come from the rural districts; that is, from cities of five thousand down to the country districts. It is the innocent, unsuspecting, robust, country girl, ignorant of the ways of the underworld, who is the choice and easy victim of these human vultures. May God help us to open our eyes to these facts and conditions and to stir ourselves to action. "Awake! Awake! Put on they strength O Zion."

But great as are all these evils, menacing as they do the safety of our fair land, there is still another that is at the foundation of them all. One mighty foe stalks out from among the hosts of our enemy as did Goliath of old, and hurls defiance into our teeth. It is the mightiest enemy that has ever confronted the hosts of righteousness. I need not name this arch enemy, for you all know him. Before the drink evil all others sink into insignificance. The slavery question, which lay at the foundation of the great struggle in which you men were engaged, was a gigantic problem. But do you know that the money spent for liquor in the United States last year would have paid four hundred dollars apiece for every man, woman and child in slavery in '61? And do you know that in one generation more men go down to drunkard's graves in this land

than all the slaves liberated by the Emancipation Proclamation? The liquor bill of two years would pay off the public debt with all accumulated interest and leave a neat sum in the treasury. Our new administration has been laboring diligently for several weeks to adjust the tariff schedule, and no doubt the tariff schedule needs revision. But in the tariff of the entire nation less money is involved than in the liquor business of New York alone. Turn into the public treasuries four-fifths of the annual drink bill and there will be a sum sufficient to pay all the running expenses of national, state and city governments. One great political campaign was made on the coinage issue, but all the gold and silver coined for ten years would pay only one-half of our annual drink bill. In loss of life and in misery and moral debauchery little comparison can be made. But it is a startling fact that in ten years more seats are made vacant at the American firesides by this liquor business than were made vacant by the entire Civil War. And yet this modern Goliath continues to defy the armies of the living God, and no David has yet appeared to smite him. Let this monster be slain and the Philistine hosts will be put to flight. There are other evils to be sure, and other foes we must meet, but they go hand in hand with this greatest of all. The murderer steels his nerve for the dastardly deed by taking a drink. The wine glitters upon the tables of the bawdy house, and fires the passions of the young in the whirl of the dance and other social pleasures. It impoverishes the home, driving the members of the family to theft in order to allay the pangs of hunger. It breaks the marriage vow and works the divorce courts over time. It is found upon the gambler's table, and drives striking laborers to mob violence.

And there is but one institution in existence in America that is in a position and able to cope with this "uncircumcised Philistine," and that is the church of Jesus Christ. It is estimated that there are at least five million two hundred thousand voters in this country who are communicants in the Christian churches. This force, if properly applied at the ballot box, is sufficient to close every brewery, distillery and wine press in the land. "But," you say, "the church must not go into politics." But I ask you, how is the liquor power to be overcome if not by political action? It is in politics today. It controls parties, manipulates caucuses and conventions, nominates its candidates, and (by the help of Christian voters) elects them. I would not have the church become a political party, but I would have church men catch the spirit of this text, forget self, love principle above party and purity more than political victory, and manifest the same fearless devotion to the cause of righteousness in the voting booth that these boys in blue and the boys in grey manifested on the field of battle. I would have men in positions of authority who would not seek to save their political life, their position, their party, their state, even their nation at the sacrifice of righteousness. A very prominent United States senator from Kansas made the public declaration a few years ago that his party could not make a platform that he would not stand on. Such false notions of loyalty and patriotism are unpardonable. The real patriot does not say: "My nation--right or wrong," but rather, "My country--may she always be right."

The difficulty with our temperance forces is that we are hopelessly divided, while the enemy is solidly united. Its forces stand as the Austrian phalanx with spears bristling on every side. We send a few

arrows into it here and there in the way of local option, state laws and Webb bills. But what we need is some Arnold Winklereid, backed up by a united force of fearless Christians to hurl itself into the gaps in the ranks and scatter the enemy and drive it from the field in permanent and final defeat. And when ever the Christians of America become so united, the death knell of the liquor traffic will be sounded. Whenever the Christian voters of this country say: "We will not vote with any party that does not take a definite and positive stand against this giant evil," then and then only will we see its defeat and the triumph of righteousness in the land.

True loyalty and true patriotism are based upon principle, and the need of America today is not men who, with a narrow notion of loyalty, will close their eyes to all national faults and sins, but men who have such deep love for the fatherland that they will not hesitate nor shrink from facing these evils and taking a bold and firm stand against them; men who are willing to sacrifice self and selfish interests--to lose their life--for the common good.

"The world wants men, large-hearted manly men;  
Men who shall join its chorus and prolong  
The song of labor and of love.

\* \* \*

The age wants heroes who shall dare  
To struggle in the solid ranks of truth;  
To clutch the monster error by the throat;  
To bear opinion to a loftier seat;  
To blot the era of oppression out,  
And lend a universal freedom in."

The Victoria Cross is the most highly prized medal of the British army. These crosses are made from the cannon captured in the Crimean war, principally at the memorable seige of Sebastopol. When the first of these crosses were being awarded by Queen Victoria, a veteran terribly mangled stepped up to receive his medal. As the noble hearted queen saw his scarred face, the empty sleeve, the artificial leg and the once powerful body deformed by wounds and exposure, she threw down the medal, turned away from the soldiers, covered her face with her hands and burst into tears. The old soldier stood waiting. When she could finally compose herself she picked up the medal, pinned it to his coat and spoke a few words to him. He looked up into her face and with a true soldier's devotion exclaimed, "God bless your Majesty, we'd bear it all again for Queen and Country!" You, scarred veterans of the great Civil struggle, you fought your battles and fought them well. You have lost your lives that the nation might live. You endured hardship and privation, faced dangers seen and unseen, for a great principle. But like the British veteran, you would bear it all again for your country. But your ranks are thinning. Soon you, too, will "go the way of all the earth" and be laid to rest with the multitudes of your comrades. God bless you for what you have done. And may we of the younger generation, upon whose shoulders rests the responsibility of the present and future welfare of the nation, catch the spirit that you manifested in your response to duty's call, which is the spirit of the text, and may we be faithful and fearless in meeting these responsibilities and solving these mighty problems presented to us today.

"So let it be! In God's own might  
And in His strength whose cause is ours,  
In conflict with unholy powers,  
We grasp the weapons He has given--  
The light, and truth, and love of Heaven!"

Supplement to The Langdon Leader, Friday October 14 1927

# PREMIUM LIST

The Eighth Annual

**Langdon Community Fair**

Langdon, Kansas

**Friday and Saturday October 28-29**



Langdon is the oldest Community Fair being held in Reno County this year. This is the Eighth Annual Fair and the officers expect this one to be the best.

*Come and Enjoy the Fair at Langdon*

## CATTLE DEPARTMENT

R. A. Railsback, Supt.

## Jerseys--Females:

- Under 1 year old.
- 1 year old and under two.
- 2 years old and over.

## Jerseys--Male:

- One year old and over.

## Holsteins--Females:

- Under one year old.
- 1 year old and under two.
- 2 years old and over.

## Holsteins--Male:

- One year old and over.

## Shorthorns--Females:

- Under one year old.
- 1 year old and under two.
- 2 years old and over.

## Shorthorns--Male:

- One year old and over.

There will be a first prize of \$1.00 and a second prize of 50c offered in each of the above classes.

In each of the above breeds there will be offered a first prize of \$2.00 and a second prize of \$1.00 for a herd, consisting of one male and one female of each class listed above.

There will be a judging contest in beef and dairy breeds for boys and girls of high school age and under.

There will be a first prize of a watch and a second prize of \$1.00 given in dairy judging. There will be a first prize of a fountain pen and a second prize of \$1.00 given in beef judging.

## HORSE DEPARTMENT

Clyde Cooper, Supt.

1. Team horses, 1st, \$1.00.
2. Team mares, 1st, \$1.00.
3. Team geldings, 1st, \$1.00.
4. Team mules, 1st, \$1.00.
5. Horse, 1st, \$1.00.
6. Mare, 1st, \$1.00.
7. Gelding, 1st, \$1.00.
8. Mule, 1st, \$1.00.
9. Colt, 1st, \$1.00.
10. Mare and Colt, 1st, \$1.00.
11. Saddle horse, 1st, \$1.00.
12. Shetland pony, 1st, \$1.00.
13. Other pony, 1st, \$1.00.

## SHEEP DEPARTMENT

Wm. Fulks, Supt.

1. Lamb under 1 year, 1st, \$1.50;

2nd, 75c.

2. Ewe, 1 year and under 2, 1st, \$1.50; 2nd, 75c.

3. Ewe, over 2 years, 1st, \$1.50; 2nd, 75c.

4. Ram, 1 year and under 2, 1st, \$1.50; 2nd, 75c.

5. Ram over 2 years, 1st, \$1.50; 2nd, 75c.

6. Wether, 1st, \$1.00.

Special: Exhibitor of largest number of animals--Hair cut and shave.

Goat, 1st, 50c.

## SWINE DEPARTMENT

F. B. Miller, Supt.

A first prize of \$1.00 and second prize of 50c is offered in each of the following classes of Poland Chinas and Durocs.

## Females:

- Under 1 year.
- 1 year and under two.
- 2 years and over.

## Males:

- Under 1 year.
- 1 year and over.

A pair of leather leggins is offered as first prize and \$1.00 as second prize for the swine judging which is open to any one, 18 years of age or under.

## POULTRY DEPARTMENT

L. A. Dodd, Supt.

For each breed of chickens exhibited the following prizes are offered:

1st cock, 50c.

2nd cock, 25c.

1st hen, 50c.

2nd hen, 25c.

1st pullet, 50c.

2nd pullet, 25c.

Best pen, one male, four females, \$2.00; 2nd, \$1.00.

Best pen any breed--Chicken feeder by Lindas Lumber Co.

For each breed of turkeys the following prizes:

1st tom, \$1.00.

2nd tom, 50c.

1st hen, \$1.00.

2nd hen, 50c.

Best pen of turkeys, 1 tom, 2 hens, any breed--Brownie camera; 2nd, \$1.00.

Best dozen white eggs, 50c; 2nd, 25c.

Best dozen brown eggs, 50c; 2nd, 25c.

## Special Prizes.

Any child in the community under 16 years of age may set a hen on 15 pure bred eggs of any breed. Raise the brood, keep a record of work, show choice at fair. Prizes will be given on following basis:

50 per cent on number raised.

25 per cent on record kept.

25 per cent on quality.

1st prize--\$3.00.

2nd prize--\$2.00.

3rd prize--\$1.00.

## FARM PRODUCTS

Dept. F

J. Del. Davis, Supt.

## Class A

1. Best collection of farm products. This will include anything grown on the farm. Amount should include ten or more varieties. First, \$10.00; second, \$6.00; third, \$3.00.

## Class B--Shelled Grain

2. Peck hard winter wheat, any variety, 1st, shaving set.

3. Peck barley, 1st, 50c.

4. Peck oats, 1st, 25c.

5. Peck rye, 1st, 25c.

6. Peck milo maize, 1st, 25c.

7. Peck pink kafir, 1st, 25c.

8. Peck Blackhull white kafir, 1st, 25c.

9. Peck feterita, 1st, 25c.

10. Peck sweet sorghum, 1st, 25c.

11. Peck sudan seed, 1st, 25c.

12. Peck alfalfa seed, 1st, 50c.

13. Peck sweet clover seed, 1st, 50c.

## Class C--Bundle or Sheaf Grain

14. Six inch sheaf wheat, 1st, 25c.

15. Six inch sheaf barley, 1st, 25c.

16. Six inch sheaf oats, 1st, 25c.

17. Six inch sheaf rye, 1st, 25c.

18. Six inch sheaf broom corn, brush, 1st, 25c.

19. Six inch sheaf sudan grass, 1st, 25c.

20. Six inch sheaf alfalfa for hay, 1st, 25c.

21. Six inch sheaf alfalfa for seed, 1st, 25c.

22. Six inch sheaf sweet clover, 1st, 25c.

23. Six inch sheaf cow peas, 1st, 25c.

24. Six inch sheaf soy beans, 1st, 25c.

25. Ten stalks corn, 1st, 25c.

26. Ten stalks sweet sorghum, 1st, 25c.

27. Ten stalks Blackhull white kafir, 1st, 25c.

28. Ten stalks pink kafir, 1st, 25c.

29. Ten stalks milo, 1st, 25c.

*Class D—Ear Corn and Head Grain*

30. Ten ears corn, white, 1st, \$1.00 worth of blacksmith work.

31. Ten ears corn, yellow, 1st, 50c.

32. Ten ears corn, any other variety, 1st, 50c.

33. Ten heads Blackhull white kafir, 1st, 50c.

34. Ten heads pink kafir, 1st, 50c.

35. Ten heads feterita, 1st, 50c.

36. Ten heads milo maize, 1st, 50c.

37. Ten ears sweet corn, 1st, 50c.

38. Ten ears pop corn, 1st, 25c.

39. Ten heads sweet or other sorghum, 1st, 25c.

*Class E—Vegetable Department*

1. Best peck potatoes, 1st, 1 lb. coffee.

2. Best plate of six tomatoes, 1st, 50c.

3. Best plate preserving tomatoes, 1st, 25c.

4. Best plate six red onions, 1st, 25c.

5. Best plate six yellow onions, 1st, 25c.

6. Best plate six white onions, 1st, 25c.

7. Best plate six table beets, 1st, 25c.

8. Best plate six turnips, 1st, 25c.

9. Best plate six carrots, 1st, 25c.

10. Best plate six parsnips, 1st, 25c.

11. Best bunch sugar beets, 1st, 25c.

12. Best bunch mangel wurzels, 1st, 25c.

13. Best two heads of cabbage, 1st, 25c.

14. Best two Hubbard squashes, 1st, 50c.

15. Best two Crookneck squashes, 1st, 50c.

16. Best two squashes, any other variety, 1st, 50c.

17. Best two pie pumpkins, 1st, 50c.

18. Best two field pumpkins, 1st, 50c.

19. Biggest pumpkin, 1st, 50c.

20. Biggest squash, 1st, 25c.

21. Best six cucumbers, 1st, 25c.

22. Best 12 stalks rhubarb, 1st, 25c.

23. Best plate six peppers, 1st, 25c.

24. Best collection of peppers, 1st, 25c.

25. Best two egg plants, 1st, 25c.

26. Best peck yellow jersey sweet potatoes, 1st, 50c.

27. Best peck Nancy Hall sweet potatoes, 1st, 50c.

28. Best two watermelons, any variety, 1st, 25c.

29. Best collection, six varieties, 1st, \$1.00.

I. Junior Gardens Department.

Any one under 18 years of age may compete. Premiums for best green garden to be judged during growing season. For best garden, \$5.00; second best, \$3.00; third best, \$2.00.

For best exhibits from Junior garden, 1st prize \$5.00; second \$3.00; third, \$2.00.

II. For best exhibit by senior, first \$5.00; second \$3.00; third \$2.00. This will class as a farm exhibit and may include all fruits, gardens and field crops grown on the farm and exhibited by the producer.

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HORTICULTURE AND FLORICULTURE

C. P. Railsback, Supt.

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Best plate of apples of each variety, 25c.

Best plate of apples, any variety, 25c.

Best display of apples, 5 or more varieties, special prize, shaving set.

Best plate of pears, 25c.

Best plate of persimmons, 25c.

Best houseplants of each variety, 25c.

Best display of plants, special prize, one picnic ham.

Best houseplant of any variety, 75c.

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Special Prizes

1st prize for flower bed of 5 varieties \$5.00; 2nd \$3.00; third \$1.50.

1st prize for cut flowers from contest beds shown at Fair, \$2.00; 2nd \$1.00; 3rd 50c.

For children from 10 to 15 years of age.

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DEPT. K—DOMESTIC ART

Mrs. Forrest Burnett, Supt.

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1. Entries in this department close at noon of the first day.

2. No exhibitor can enter more than one article under one prize number.

3. All articles entered in this department must have been made by the person in whose name the entry is made.

4. Only ribbon prizes will be given on articles not listed in this catalogue.

5. Where there is no competition, articles will be given, first, second or no place according to the merits of the article.

6. No exhibits will be released before the close of the fair.

7. No soiled or torn articles will be accepted.

8. All articles must be completed before entry can be made.

*Tablecloth*

Embroidered, silver spoon.  
Hemstitched, 50c.

*Sheet and Pillow Cases*

Embroidered, box of powder.  
Tatted, 50c.

Crochet trimmed, 50c.  
Cut work, 50c.

*Pillow Cases*

Embroidered white, 50c.  
Crochet trimmed, 50c.

Tatting trimmed, 50c.  
Cut work, 50c.

Knitting trimmed, 50c.  
Applique, 50c.

*Towels*

Embroidered white, 25c.  
Embroidered in colors, 25c.

Crochet trimmed, 25c.  
Tatting trimmed, 25c.

*Luncheon Cloth*

or Between Meal Cloth 27 to 54 in.

Embroidered in colors on colored material—Silver spoon.

Embroidered white, 50c.  
Hardanger, 50c.

Crochet trimmed, 50c.  
Tatting trimmed, 50c.

*Center piece (18 to 27 in.)*

Embroidered white, 50c.  
Embroidered in colors, 50c.

Crochet trimmed, silver spoon.  
Tatting trimmed, 50c.

*Dresser or Buffet Scarfs*

Embroidered white, 50c.  
Embroidered in colors, 50c.

Crochet trimmed, 50c.  
Tatting trimmed, 50c.

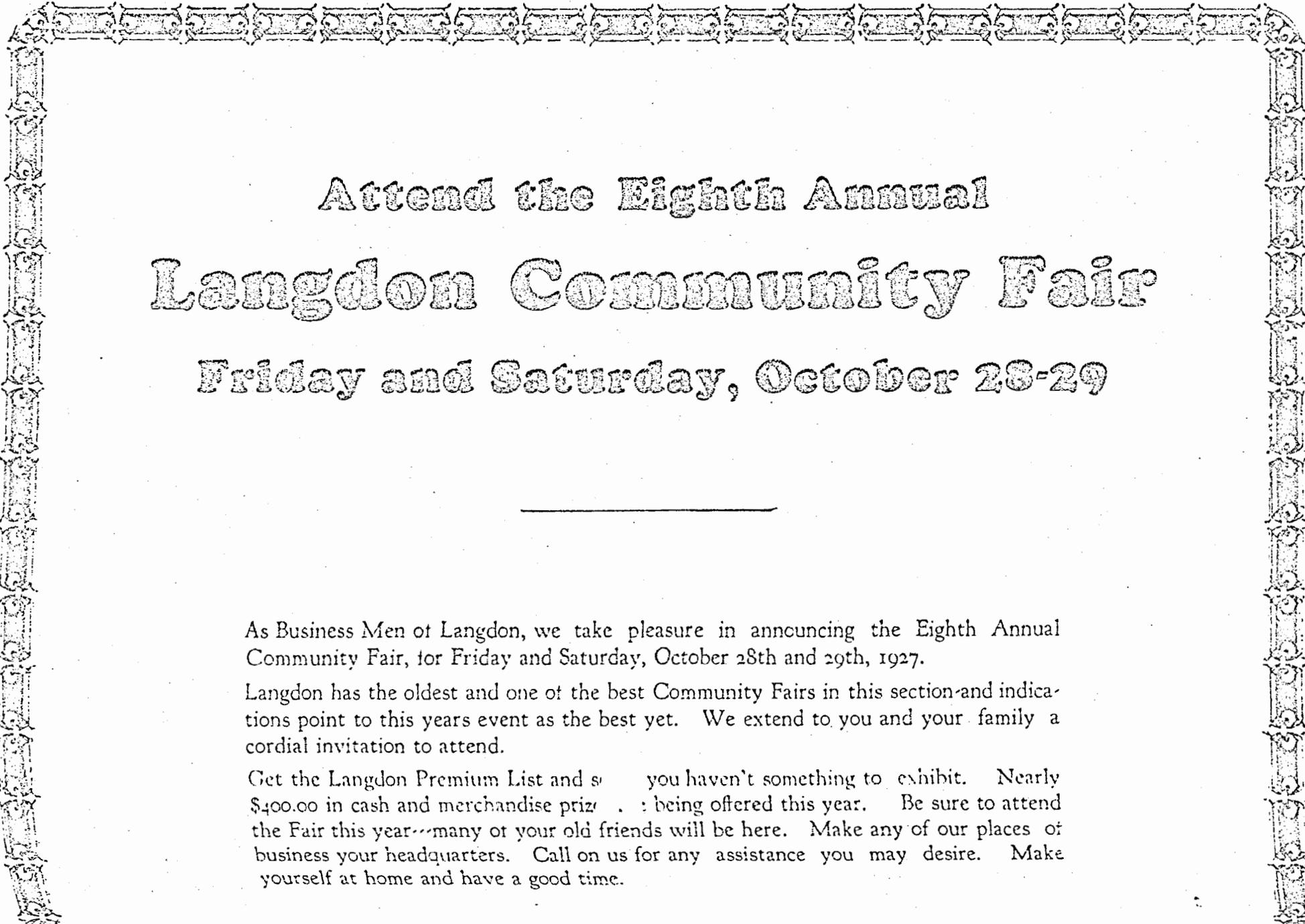
*Dresser or Buffet Sets (3 pieces)*

Embroidered white, 50c.  
Embroidered in colors, 50c.

Crochet trimmed, 50c.  
Tatting trimmed, 50c.

*Library Scarfs*

Embroidered colored on natural linens, 50c.



Attend the Eighth Annual  
**Langdon Community Fair**

Friday and Saturday, October 28-29

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As Business Men of Langdon, we take pleasure in announcing the Eighth Annual Community Fair, for Friday and Saturday, October 28th and 29th, 1927.

Langdon has the oldest and one of the best Community Fairs in this section and indications point to this year's event as the best yet. We extend to you and your family a cordial invitation to attend.

Get the Langdon Premium List and see if you haven't something to exhibit. Nearly \$400.00 in cash and merchandise prizes are being offered this year. Be sure to attend the Fair this year—many of your old friends will be here. Make any of our places of business your headquarters. Call on us for any assistance you may desire. Make yourself at home and have a good time.

Langdon State Bank  
 Oxford Cafe  
 C. A. Wendling  
 D. W. Straight  
 Holmes Grocery  
 The Langdon Leader  
 R. P. Williams  
 C. L. Root

Lindas Lumber Co.  
 H. H. Purdy  
 E. W. McKibbin  
 White Eagle Oil Co.  
 U. Holmes  
 Ford Riley  
 W. R. Fisher

C. E. Poorman  
 Brown & Griffin  
 Langdon Telephone Co.  
 W. S. DuVall  
 Langdon Grain Co.  
 Enns Milling Co.  
 J. H. Holmes  
 C. B. Penland

Watch the Papers for Complete Program  
**Langdon Community Fair Association**

W. J. Raiback, President

O. V. Washler, Secretary

Crochet trimmed, 50c.  
Tatting trimmed, 50c.  
Not otherwise specified—pair silk hose.

#### *Piano Scarf*

Embroidered in colors, 50c.  
Crochet trimmed, 50c.  
Tatting trimmed, 50c.

#### *Pillows or Pillow Tops*

Embroidered, 50c.  
Silk or satin, 25c.  
Baby pillow, 50c.  
Boudoir, 50c.  
Pin cushion, 25c.

#### *Dresses*

Linon, embroidered, 50c.  
Cotton, embroidered, 50c.  
Child's cotton dress, 50c.  
Child's fancy dress, 50c.

#### *Underwear*

Night gown, embroidered, 50c.  
Night gown, crochet trimmed, 50c.  
Night gown, tatting trimmed, 50c.  
Teddy, cotton, 50c.  
Teddy, silk—Silver spoon.  
Slip, cotton.  
Slip, silk.

#### *Infants' Clothes*

Dress, embroidered, 50c.  
Cotton slip, embroidered white, 25c.  
Flannel skirt, 50c.  
Coat, 50c.  
Bonnet, 25c.  
Carriage robe—Silver spoon.  
Romper, 50c.

#### *Ladies Over 65*

Embroidery, 50c.  
Crochet, 50c.  
Tatting, 50c.  
Knitting, 50c.  
Pieced Quilt—Blanket.

#### *Bed Spreads*

Embroidered, 50c.  
Crocheted, 50c.  
Applique, 50c.

#### *Quilts*

Silk, 50c.  
Woolen, 50c.  
Cotton pieced, 50c.  
Cotton Applique, 50c.

#### *Rugs*

Yarn, 50c.  
Braided, 50c.  
Pulled or hooked, 50c.

#### *Miscellaneous*

Best hand made hat, 50c.  
Best bungalow apron, 50c.  
Best book of sewing illustrations, 50c.  
Best book of textile illustrations, 50c.

Best darning, 25c.  
Boys suit, 50c.  
Best patching, 25c.  
*Boy or Girl's Work Under 16*  
Apron, 50c.  
Bloomers, 50c.  
Slip, 50c.  
Nightgown, 50c.  
Patching, 50c.  
Darning, 50c.

Best piece colored embroidery other than dresser scarf, 50c.  
Best piece white embroidery, 50c.  
Tea towel embroidered, 50c.

#### FINE ARTS

1. Exhibit in this department must be the work of the party making exhibit.

2. All pictures in frames must have means of hanging.

#### *Painting*

Best oil painting, 50c.

#### *Water Color*

Landscape or marine, 50c.  
Still life, 50c.

#### *Pencil*

Collection of 3 drawings, 50c.

#### *Arts and Crafts*

Lamp shade, 50c.  
Hand painted fabrics (scarfs, etc.), 50c.

#### *Basketry*

Best display of baskets, 50c.

#### *Decorated China*

Best piece or set hand painted china, 50c.

Artificial flowers, silk, wool or velvet, 50c.

Special cash prizes will be given on the following articles as published last March:

Embroidered bed set, including spread and dresser scarf, 1st prize, \$2.00; 2nd prize, \$1.00.

White pillow slips, embroidered in colors, 1st prize, \$1.50; 2nd prize, 75c.

Man's shirt, 1st prize, \$1.50; 2nd prize, 75c.

Pair of hand made curtains, 1st prize, \$1.50; 2nd prize, 75c.

(14 to 18 years inclusive)

Any kind of fancy pillow, 1st prize, \$1.50; 2nd prize, 75c.

Two piece lingerie, 1st prize, \$2.00; 2nd prize, \$1.25.

10 to 14 Years.

White dresser scarf, embroidered in colors, 1st prize, \$1.50; 2nd prize, 75c.

Cotton dress, 1st prize, \$2.00; 2nd prize, \$1.00.

#### *Under 10 Years*

Doll dress, 1st prize, \$1.50; 2nd prize, 75c.

Embroidered towel, 1st prize, \$1.50; 2nd prize, 75c.

#### DOMESTIC SCIENCE

*Mrs. Neal Klassen, Supt.*

*Mrs. Guy Houston in charge.*

Seventy dollars in cash will be given in the following classes.

#### *Class I. Bread:*

1. White, 1st, 25c.
2. Graham, 1st, 25c.
3. Cinnamon Rolls, 1-2 doz., 1st, 25c.
4. Baking Powder Biscuits, 1-2 doz., 1st, 25c.
5. Soda Biscuits, 1-2 doz., 1st, 25c.

#### *Class II. Cake Loaf:*

6. Angel Food—Pair ladies' slippers.
7. Devils Food, 1st, 25c.
8. Nut, 1st, 25c.
9. Fruit, 1st, 25c.

#### *Layer:*

10. Devils Food, 1st—2 1-2 lbs. coffee.
11. Coconut, 1st, 25c.
12. Burnt Sugar, 1st, 25c.
13. Spice, 1st, 25c.
14. White layer, 1st, 25c.
15. Nut, 1st, 25c.

#### *Class III. Cookies, 1-2 doz.:*

16. Sugar, 1st, 25c.
17. Fruit, 1st, 25c.
18. Ginger, 1st, 25c.

#### *Class IV. Doughnuts:*

19. Doughnuts, 1-2 doz., 1st, 25c.

#### *Class V. Pies:*

20. Lemon, 1st, 25c.
21. Apple, 1st, 25c.
22. Raisin, 1st, 25c.
23. Cherry, 1st, 25c.
24. Berry, 1st, 25c.
25. Pumpkin, 1st, 25c.

*Class VI. Dairy Butter, 1 lb., 1st, 25c.*

*Class VII. Soap, 1st, 25c.*

#### *Class VIII. Candy:*

28. Peanut Brittle, 1st, 25c.
29. Fondant, 1st, 25c.
30. Chocolate Fudge, 1st, 25c.
31. Divinity, 1st, 25c.
32. Pinoche, 1st, 25c.
33. Best collection, not less than four varieties, 1st—Box face powder; 2nd, 50c.

## FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

*Nell Railsback in charge.**Class I. Canned Fruit:*

1. Cherry, 1st, 25c.
2. Apple, 1st, 25c.
3. Blackberry, 1st, 25c.
4. Peach, 1st, 25c.
5. Plum, 1st, 25c.
6. Pear, 1st, 25c.
7. Grape, 1st, 25c.
8. Apricot, 1st, 25c.
9. Strawberry, 1st, 25c.
10. Collection, not less than six specimens, 1st, fancy pillow; 2nd, \$1.00.

*Class II. Jelly:*

11. Apple, 1st, 25c.
12. Grape, 1st, 25c.
13. Plum (Blue or Sandhill) 25c.
14. Blackberry, 1st, 25c.
15. Current, 1st, 25c.
16. Collection, not less than five specimens, 1st, \$2.00; 2nd, \$1.00.

*Class III. Preserves:*

17. Apple, 1st, 25c.
18. Plum, 1st, 25c.
19. Cherry, 1st, 25c.
20. Peach, 1st, 25c.
21. Pear, 1st, 25c.
22. Tomato, 1st, 25c.
23. Watermelon, 1st, 25c.
24. Collection, not less than five specimens, 1st, \$2.00; 2nd, \$1.00.

*Class IV. Jam:*

25. Raspberry, 1st, 25c.
26. Blackberry, 1st, 25c.
27. Grape, 1st, 25c.
28. Strawberry, 1st, 25c.
29. Collective, not less than three specimens, 1st, \$1.50; 2nd, 75c.

*Class V. Butter:*

30. Apple, 1st, 25c.
31. Pear, 1st, 25c.
32. Plum, 1st, 25c.
33. Peach, 1st, 25c.
34. Apricot, 1st, 25c.
35. Grape, 1st, 25c.
36. Collection, not less than five specimens, 1st, \$2.00; 2nd, \$1.00.

*Class VI. Pickles:*

37. Beet, 1st, 25c.
38. Cucumber (sweet), 1st, 25c.
39. Cucumber (dill) 1st, 25c.
40. Cucumber (mixed) 1st, 25c.
41. Peach, 1st, 25c.
42. Pear, 1st, 25c.
43. Watermelon, 1st, 25c.
44. Apple, 1st, 25c.
45. Mustard, 1st, 25c.
46. Collection, not less than six specimens, 1st, \$2.00; 2nd, \$1.00.

*Class VII. Vegetables:*

47. Beans (Green or yellow wax) 1st, 25c.

48. Peas, 1st, 25c.
  49. Corn, 1st, 25c.
  50. Tomato, 1st, 25c.
  51. Sweet Potato, 1st, 25c.
  52. Beets, 1st, 25c.
  53. Carrots, 1st, 25c.
  54. Collection, not less than five varieties, 1st - Pair blankets; 2nd, \$2.00.
- Class VIII. Meat:*
55. Beef, 1st, 25c.
  56. Pork, 1st, 25c.
  57. Chicken, 1st, 25c.
  58. Collection, not less than three varieties, 1st, \$2.00; 2nd, \$1.00.

## JUNIOR GIRLS DEPT.

*Mrs. Maranville in Charge.**Girls 12-18 Years.**Class I. Canned Fruit:*

1. Cherry, 1st, 25c.
2. Blackberry, 1st, 25c.
3. Apple, 1st, 25c.
4. Peaches, 1st, 25c.
5. Plum, 1st, 25c.
6. Pear, 1st, 25c.
7. Grape, 1st, 25c.
8. Apricot, 1st, 25c.
9. Strawberry, 1st, 25c.
10. Collection, not less than five specimens, 1st, \$1.50; 2nd, 50c.

*Class II. Jelly:*

11. Apple, 1st, 25c.
12. Grape, 1st, 25c.
13. Plum (Blue or sandhill), 1st, 25c.
14. Currant, 25c.
15. Collection, not less than four specimens, 1st, \$1.50; 2nd, 50c.

*Class III. Preserves:*

16. Plum, 1st, 25c.
17. Cherry, 1st, 25c.
18. Peach, 1st, 25c.
19. Pear, 1st, 25c.
20. Tomato, 1st, 25c.
21. Watermelon, 1st, 25c.
22. Collection, not less than four specimens, 1st, \$1.50; 2nd, 50c.

*Class IV. Pickles:*

23. Beet, 1st, 25c.
24. Cucumber (sweet), 1st, 25c.
25. Cucumber (dill), 1st, 25c.
26. Cucumber (mixed), 1st, 25c.
27. Peach, 1st, 25c.
28. Watermelon, 1st, 25c.
29. Collection, not less than five specimens, 1st, \$1.50; 2nd, 50c.

*Class V. Bread:*

30. White Bread--Fountain Pen.

*Class VI. Cake:*

31. White Layer, 1st, 25c.
32. Chocolate Layer, 1st, 25c.

*Class VII. Pie:*

33. Apple, 1st, 25c.

34. Lemon, 1st, 25c.

*Class VIII. Biscuits, 1 2 doz.:*

35. Baking Powder Biscuits, 1st, 25c.
36. Soda Biscuits, 1st, 25c.

*Girls Under 12 Years.**Class I. Jelly:*

1. Apple, 1st, 25c.
2. Plum (Blue or Sandhill), 1st, 25c.
3. Grape, 1st, 25c.
4. Collection, not less than 4 specimens 1st, \$1.50; 2nd, 50c.

*Class II. Pickles:*

5. Cucumber (sweet) 1st, 25c.
6. Cucumber (dill), 1st, 25c.
7. Beet, 1st, 25c.
8. Collection, not less than 5 specimens, 1st, \$1.50; 2nd, 50c.

*Class III. Bread:*

9. White, 25c.

*Class IV. Cake:*

10. White Layer, 1st, 25c.
11. Chocolate Layer, 1st, 25c.

*Class V. Pie:*

12. Apple, 1st, 25c.
13. Lemon, 1st, 25c.

Note: Collections cannot be made from single entries in the Domestic Science Department.

*Children's Department**Under 12 Years*

1. Collection of jelly, not less than four specimens, 1st, \$1.50; 2nd, 50c.
2. Collection of pickles, not less than three varieties, 1st, \$1.50; 2nd 50c.

## BABY DEPARTMENT

*Mrs. Stella Hobbs, Supt.*

- 1st prize baby, \$5.00.
- 2nd prize baby, 1 pair shoes by Miles Griffin.
- 3rd prize baby, \$1.00.

## SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

*Guy C. Houston, Supt.**I. High School Department:*

1. Best group of three mechanical drawings made by mechanical drawing class I during 1927, 1st, 50c; 2nd, 25c.
2. Best group of three mechanical drawings made by mechanical drawing class II during 1927, 1st, 50c; 2nd, 25c.
3. Best Home Project completed by a member of the woolworking class during 1927, 1st, \$1.50; 2nd, \$1.00.

4. Essay, open to English classes of the fall of 1927.

5. Best Elementary Exercise done by class in woodworking during 1927. 1st, 50c; 2nd, 25c.

6. Best Domestic Science Poster. Domestic science teacher to designate kind. 1st, 50c; 2nd, 25c. (To be made in 1927.)

7. Best Domestic Art Poster. Domestic Art teacher to designate kind. 1st, 50c; 2nd, 25c. (To be made in 1927.)

#### II. *Grade and Rural School Department:*

Open to all pupils of the Langdon Grade School and pupils of the rural schools in the Langdon community. All work must be done in 1927. A prize of 50c for first place and a prize of 25c for second place will be given on each of the following.

##### *First Grade*

1. Mounted Free Hand Paper Cutting.
2. Illustrated Booklet.
3. Paper Construction.

##### *Second Grade*

1. Penmanship.
2. Free Hand Drawing from Book II.
3. Language Poster.

##### *Third Grade*

1. Penmanship.
2. Health Poster.
3. Free Hand Drawing from Book III.

##### *Fourth Grade*

1. Penmanship.
2. English Poster.
3. Crayon Work.

##### *Fifth Grade*

1. Penmanship.
2. Health Poster.
3. Map of South America.

##### *Sixth Grade*

1. Penmanship.
2. Story (not over 200 words.)

3. Free Hand Drawing from Book VI.

##### *Seventh Grade*

1. Penmanship.
2. Physiology Note Book.
3. Free Hand Drawing from Book VII.

##### *Eighth Grade*

1. Penmanship.
  2. Citizenship Poster.
  3. Agriculture Note Book.
- Special (Open to all grades)*
1. Best and Largest Collection of leaves from native trees (mounted.)
  2. Best piece of Basketry.
  3. Best hand made toy.
  4. Best Nature Study Collection.
  5. Best Booth by Rural School. 1st, \$1.50; 2nd, \$1.00; 3rd, 50c.

#### DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION *F. R. Seely, Supt. Mrs. Seely and Anson Aldrich, Assistants.*

##### *Week-Day School of Religion:*

For neatest and most complete set of papers in either Course of Study, in Third Grade—1st prize, 50c; 2nd prize, 25c.

For neatest and most complete hand-book in fourth grade—1st prize, 50c; 2nd prize, 25c.

Grade Five and Six: Best story written on either of the characters, Noah, Abraham, or Joseph. Graded on carefulness of preparation and comprehensiveness of the material—1st prize, 75c; 2nd prize, 50c.

Grades Five and Six: Most complete and best kept note-book—1st prize, 50c; 2nd prize, 25c.

Grades Seven and Eight: Best theme written on a phase of "The Lives of The Patriarchs." Grading based on content and appearance of paper presented. First, 75c; second, 50c.

Grades Seven and Eight: Best

kept note-book—1st, 50c; 2nd, 25c.  
*Bible School Department:*

Best arrangement in booklet form of lesson papers dating from January 1, 1927, to September 30, 1927, by any child from six to ten years of age—1st prize, 50c; 2nd prize, 25c.

Best map of Palestine by any child fourteen years old or under, map to show at least five waters, three mountains, and eight cities—1st prize, \$1.50; 2nd prize, \$1.00.

Best theme presented by any person under 25 years of age, on the subject, "The Church the Center of Our Community." Must be at least two contestants before premium shall be awarded—1st prize, \$2.50; 2nd prize, \$1.50.

Best theme presented by any person 25 years old or older, on "The Christian's Attitude Toward the Eighteenth Amendment." (Must be at least two contestants before premium shall be awarded.) First prize, \$2.50; 2nd prize, \$1.50.

Best Religious Poster by any Primary Class of Bible School folk, 50c.

Best Collection of scrap-books presented by any Primary Class of Bible School folk, 50c.

##### *Boy Scout Department:*

For best appearing and most complete "knot-board" presented by any Patrol of Scouts, 50c. (Must be at least two entries before premium shall be awarded.)

For best "Fire-making Set" presented by any Patrol, 50c. (Must be at least two entries before premium shall be awarded.)

#### LAZIEST MAN CONTEST.

Pair of beautiful golf socks for laziest man. Voting to be done at Jonas Holmes' Filling Station during fair.

Don't fail to see the play "Safety First" at the High School Auditorium on Friday evening, October 28th at 8:00 o'clock.

Conductor Farney and his Band from Hutchinson will furnish music at the Fair on Saturday.

NOTICE TO EXHIBITORS: Entries in all Departments, except Livestock, closes Friday morning at 10:00, at which time judging starts. Entries in the Live Stock Department close Saturday morning at 10:00, at which time judging starts.

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