

Kansas History as Published in the Press

Extracts from the diary of the late John W. Hill, prepared for publication by his daughter, Mrs. Jessie Rowland of McPherson, appeared in *The Democrat-Opinion*, McPherson, June 16, 1939. Mr. Hill was a member of a "locating committee" sent to Kansas in 1871 by the Ashtabula, Ohio, colony whose members came to Kansas in 1871 and 1872. A part of the diary is still in Mrs. Rowland's possession. The first notation is dated April 7, 1871, at Concordia.

The Norton County Champion, Norton, of November 30, 1939, reporting the fiftieth anniversary celebration of School District 38, Mount Caramel, which was to be held on December 3, printed a list of teachers and all known pupils of the school. The original records are lost, and this list may therefore be incomplete.

During the agrarian difficulties of the latter 1880's in Kansas and neighboring states, many farmers were receptive to the idea of moving on to greener pastures. In 1886 a coöperative colony, in connection with the projected construction of a Mexican railroad, was incorporated under the laws of Colorado and settlement was begun at Topolobampo, Mexico. Lacking capital, the colony made little progress until it received assistance from a Kansas organization, the Kansas Sinaloa Investment Company, founded by Christian B. Hoffman, a Kansas business man, in 1889. A weekly newspaper, *The Integral Co-operator*, was published at Enterprise, in order to stimulate investment in and emigration to the colony. Difficulties arose and in 1893 Hoffman and his company severed connections with the original group and established an independent colony called Libertad. However, neither Topolobampo nor Libertad was successful and by 1898 it was clear that the whole colonizing plan had failed. The story of this experiment was told by Sanford A. Mosk, of the University of California, in an article entitled "A Railroad to Utopia" which was published in *The Southwestern Social Science Quarterly*, Norman, Okla., in December, 1939 (v. XX, No. 3).

For sixty-two years Charles Epley of Hutchinson has kept a diary of his daily activities, reported the *Hutchinson News* on December 24, 1939. His notations are a record of his life since 1877, from his youth in Ohio to his experiences in Kansas as a carpenter, farmer, and finally as a peace officer in Hutchinson.