

MENNONITES OF KANSAS HELPED DEVELOP STATE

Brought Vast Wealth by Introduction of Red Wheat.

BY FORREST DAVIS
Times Special Writer

NEWTON, Kas., June 15.—Kansans' "old native stock" cult—a haughty doctrine of Puritan Nordic supremacy affably preached by William Allen White, editor, platform-builder and chief religious prop of Nominees Alf M. Landon—comfortably ignores the Mennonites who transformed this dusty section three counties away from White's Emporia into a great state.

Yet it was the Mennonites—a band of despised foreigners, conscientious pacifists in flight from the hard boot of Tsar Alexander II—who, by introducing Turkey red wheat, converted hard-scrabbling, native-stock Kansas into the banner.

They made Kansas rich. Moreover, the pious, unromantic Mennonites infused a certain glamor into the state's sparse legend and refreshed Kansas' Puritan memory by duplicating in the Nineteenth Century the idealistic behavior of the Non-Conformists who settled New England. They sought wealth in the Crimea for the sake of religious liberty, and out of their sacrifice vast, sudden riches descended on the prairies.

Contribute Much to State

The Mennonites, aliens speaking a Russo-Germanic dialect, wearing peculiar homespun costumes, contributed more to the state's well-being than all the John Browns, Carrie Nations, border raiders and prohibitionists ever colonized in "bleeding Kansas" by the rifle-and-Bible abolitionists of New England.

The saga of the Mennonite fugitive deserves, on the score of economic significance, a prominent place in the history of the West. Because of Turkey red, the semiarid high plains were put to the plow. When ranchers crowded out the cattle men, the range was fenced.

Turkey red supplanted buffalo grass. Deprived of its grass binder, the soil began to crumble and blow. Today we have the "dust bowl," an incipient desert covering 68,000 square miles in five states, primarily because Tsar Alexander revoked century-old privileges respecting military immunity and language that Catherine the Great had granted the Mennonites. Originally the Mennonites had been Germans and Swiss.

Blame Is Divided

The burned-out, eroded, gullied, dust-stained but magnificently undiscouraged farmer of the "dust bowl" may, if it comforts him, blame Catherine, Alexander, the zeal of the Anabaptist Mennonites, and the Santa Fe Railroad whenever a hot southwest wind picks up tons of his topsoil and scatters it across the Middle West.

A fabulous incident, the arrival of the brown-habited, broad-hatted immigrants at the Santa Fe station in Newton. That was in 1874, six years before Kansas adopted prohibition—a "Chinese wall" against European immigration. The Santa Fe, chartering a Red Star liner, brought the Mennonites to Kansas free of charge.

Tucked away in trunks, tied up in sacks, were the Turkey red kernels. A winter wheat, planted in September, maturing in June, which thrived in the Crimea. Winter wheat, richer in protein, was unknown to Kansas and the wheat belt, and Minnesota, adapted to spring wheat, then produced more of the white cereal than other states.

Pioneers Were Deceived

By 1880, Turkey red had overrun moist eastern Kansas and deceived by a series of rainy years, pioneers began to seed the high plains. The first drought, in 1887, depopulated the ranch lands but the farmers came again, betting 1 to 5 on rain each time they needed.

Wheat became king in Kansas, replacing cattle as the chief crop. Presently, the yield grew to 150,000 bushels a year—one-fifth the normal average for the country. Spring wheat and the Chisholm trail, along which in one year 4000 cattle had herded 1,000,000 grazing cattle out of Texas into Kansas railroad, vanished into memory.

Meanwhile, the alien peasants who brought the new wealth plodded on, oblivious to it. Their farms became models of careful husbandry—among the finest in Kansas. They spread out in a tier of counties between here and Hutchinson. They built a college, Bethel, here at Newton, and hospitals.

Kept to Themselves

Minding their own business—a singular trait in Kansas—they kept to themselves, shunned law courts and politics, practiced a mild, primitive, Sermon-on-the-Mount Christianity. The older Mennonites clung to their German speech, an idiom adopted by Russian phrases during their 100 years' sojourn in the Crimea.

During the World War they maintained their pacifist principles. Their sons became conscientious objectors—the butts of bloodthirsty local patriots.

"Old stock" Newton merchants discharged Mennonite clerks and put up signs reading "Only English Spoken Here." The German-speaking Mennonites transferred their trading permanently to other towns, and Newton merchants. I was told, regret to this day that petty persecution.

The story of the Mennonites in Kansas deserves retelling as a commentary on the virtues and accomplishments of 100 per cent Nordic Kansas, which this year, for the first time, offers the rest of the country a candidate for the presidency.

JELKE'S GOOD LUCK MARGARINE

18¢
per pound

Text of Roosevelt's Vincennes Talk

By United Press

VINCENNES, Ind., June 15.—Following is the text of President Roosevelt's speech here yesterday.

"But the menace of the regular British forces remained. Col. Henry Hamilton, the British commander of the Northwest, had come down from Detroit and seized and fortified Vincennes. Fort Sackville, where we stand today, made Clark's position untenable. His desperate resolution to save his men and the Northwest by a mid-winter march and an attack by riflemen on a fort made by the King's own regiment and equipped with cannon, marked the heroic measure of the man.

Praises Gibault, Vigo

"It is worth repeating—the story that the famous winter march began at Kaskaskia with a religious service. To Father Pierre Gibault,

and to Col. Francis Vigo, a patriot of Italian birth, next to Clark himself, the United States is indebted for the saving of the Northwest territory.

And it was in the little log church, predecessor of yonder church of St. Francis Xavier, that Col.

Hamilton surrendered Vincennes to George Rogers Clark.

"It is not the independence of the colonies that is the turning point of the Revolution.

"The other danger lay, therefore, not in the immediate defeat of the colonies, but rather in their inability to maintain themselves and grow after their independence had been won. Records show that the British planned a definite hemming-in progress, whereby the new nation would be strictly limited in area and in activity to the territory lying south of Canada and east of the Allegheny Mountains.

"Toward this end they conducted military operations on an important scale west of the Alleghenies, with the purpose, at first successful, of driving back eastward across the mountain all those Americans who before the Revolution had crossed into what is now Ohio and Michigan and Indiana and Illinois and Kentucky and Tennessee.

"In the year 1778 the picture of this Western country was dark indeed. The English held all the region northwest of the Ohio and their Indian allies were burning cabins and driving fleeing families back across the mountains south of the river. Three regular forts were all that remained in Kentucky, and then seemed inevitable.

Calls Clark 'Genius'

"Then, against the dark background, stood forth the tall young Virginian, George Rogers Clark. Out of despair and destruction he brought concerted action. With a flash of genius, the 26-year-old leader conceived a campaign—brilliant masterpiece of military strategy.

"Working with the good will of the French settlers, and overawing the Indians by sheer bravado, he

"Today among our teeming mil-

lions there are still those who by dishonorable means seek to obtain the possessions of their unwary neighbors.

Knowledge Wider Today

"Our modern civilization must constantly protect itself against immoral defectors whose objectives are the same but whose methods are more subtle than their prototypes of a century and a half ago. We do not change our form of government when we arm ourselves with new weapons against new devices of crime and cupidity.

"Today is as it is a vastly wider knowledge.

"During the last week I have traveled through many states, and as I have looked out in the daylight hours upon the countryside of Tennessee and Alabama and Arkansas and Texas and Oklahoma, I have tried to visualize what I now consider looked like a short century and a half ago. All of it was primeval forest or untilled prairie, inhabited by an exceedingly small population of Nomadic Indian tribes, untouched by white man's civilization.

"In most of this vast territory, as here in the Middle West, nature has wounded, nature and nature have taken offense. It is the task of us, the living, to restore to nature many of the riches we have taken from her in order that she may come more upon those who come after us.

"George Rogers Clark did battle against the tomahawk and the rifle. He saved for us the fair land that lay between the mountains and the Mississippi. His task is not done. Though we fight with weapons unknown to him, it is still our duty to continue the saving of this fair land.

Gave No Heed to Future

"Who, even among the second and third generation of the settlers of this virgin land gave heed to the future results that attended to cutting of the timber which denuded the greater part of the watershed?

"Who, among them, gave thought to the tragic extermination of the wild life which formed the principal article of food of the pioneers?

"Who among them had ever heard the term "submarginal land" or worried about what would happen when the original soil played out or ran off to the ocean?

"Who among them were concerned if the market price for livestock for the moment justified the over-grazing of pastures, or a temporary boom in the price of cotton or corn tempted them to forget that rotation of crops was a farming maximum as far back as he days of ancient Babylon?

"Who among them regarded floods as preventable?

"Who among them thought of the use of coal, or oil, or gas, or falling water as the means of turning their wheels and lighting their homes?

Must Restore Riches

"Who among them visualized the day when the sun would be darkened as far East as the waters of the Atlantic by great clouds of top soil borne by the wind from what has been grassy and apparently imperishable prairies?

"Because man did not have our

TRIBUTE IS PAID ROGERS CLARK BY ROOSEVELT

75,000 at Vincennes Hear Roosevelt Laud Deeds of Colonial Hero.

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His desperate resolution to save his men and the Northwest by a mid-winter march and an attack by riflemen on a fort made by the King's own regiment and equipped with cannon, marked the heroic measure of the man.

Northwest Territory and his band of 180 men.

The chief executive credited Clark with waging a campaign in behalf of religious liberty and quoted from the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which declared that "religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged."

McNutt Introduces F. D. R.

D. Frank Culbertson, chairman of the Memorial Commission, introduced Gov. McNutt, who in turn introduced President Roosevelt.

"On this spot the destiny of the United States of America was determined," said Gov. McNutt. "Through the bravery of George Rogers Clark there was founded a

nation instead of a confederacy of seaboard states.

"On this spot, where Clark determined the destiny of the nation, I present another intrepid leader whose guidance is bringing to the nation another victory—a victory of economic rehabilitation to all the people," he said.

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Good, sturdy trousers for outdoor workers. Made of sturdy dark pattern BROWN'S TROUSERS. Will stand washing and plenty of hard wear, full cut and well tailored. Sizes 28 to 42.

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Men's Sanforized Work Shirts

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