

RITCHIE / SHELEDY
FAMILY HISTORY

OUR PEOPLE
WHO CAME TO KANSAS TERRITORY
IN 1855

JOHN RITCHIE

AND

MARY JANE SHELEDY, HIS WIFE

(Compiled and Written By Mary Evelyn Ritchie)
(1984—Kansas State Historical Society Property Number 1600)

COLONEL JOHN RITCHIE

Son of Dr. John and Mary (Coney) Ritchey

Born: July 17, 1817 in Uniontown, Muskingum County, Ohio

Died: August 31, 1887 in Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

John and his wife are buried in the Ritchie plot in Topeka Cemetery. In the same plot are two sons, twos grandson, and two great-grandsons.

m (1) **Mary Jane Shelledy** on January 16, 1838 in Franklin, Ind. the daughter of Caleb and Elizabeth Doss Shelledy/Shillideay. Mary Jane dies October 18, 1880 in Topeka, Kansas.

m (2) **Hannah Beall** on October 27, 1881 at Franklin, Indiana, probably the widow of Franklin hardware merchant John Beall.

Children of John and Mary Jane Ritchie

son	b. Jul 27, 1839	d. Jul 27, 1839	Franklin, Ind.
son	b. Jun 26, 1840	d. Jun 26, 1840	Franklin, Ind.
daughter	b. May 30, 1841	d. May 31, 1841	Franklin, Ind.
Theresa Jane	b. Oct 3, 1841	d. Sep 26, 1845	Franklin, Ind.
Florence	b. May 20, 1845	d. May 31, 1851	Franklin, Ind.
twin boys	b. Jun 11, 1848	d. Jun 11, 1848	Franklin, Ind.
daughter	b. Jul 19, 1849	d. Jul 19, 1849	Franklin, Ind.
Hale	b. Jan 27, 1851	d. Dec 24, 1920	Topeka, Kan.
son	b. Nov 18, 1853	d. Nov. 18, 1853	Franklin, Ind.
Mary	b. Dec 20, 1854	d. Oct 21, 1855	Topeka, Kan.
John	b. Jul 29, 1856	d. Jul 13, 1926	Topeka, Kan.
Elizabeth	b. Apr 5. 1859	d. May 25, 1864	Topeka, Kan.

Found in Print of John Ritchie

Of medium size	Unshakable good humor
Light hair and eyes	Unselfish philanthropist
Head narrow, long and high	Generous to a fault
Sharp, gray eyes	Ultra Abolitionist
Shaggy eyebrows	Women's Rights man
Firmly set lips	Advocate for reform
Frank face, cordial manner	Teetotaler

Friend and champion of the poor
Friend of God and lover of freedom
Courage of a lion, heart of a woman
Gave away more property than any man in Kansas
Carved for himself name, fame and wealth
Took ground alone on a fixed principle
Eccentric in many things. Admirer of John Brown

Source: His pastor Lewis Bodwell: Obituary
Editor of Leavenworth Times 7-27-1859

Marriage: Johnson Co. Ind. marriages, Mary Jane's obituary

WRITTEN OF JOHN RITCHIE DURING HIS LIFETIME

Abstracted from his biography in A.T. Andreas' **History of the State of Kansas 1883**:

“Born Uniontown, Muskingum Co. Ohio. Moved to Westchester, Ohio at 1 ½ years old, and remained in Butler County until age 13, Then lived in Columbus, Indiana at Greensburg, and at Franklin until the fall of 1854 when he visited Leavenworth, Lawrence and Kansas City. On March 12, 1855 he started again for Kansas and arrived April 3rd. He located on Section 6, Twp 12, Range 16 on a quarter section. Farmed and built the Ritchie block where the first state legislature met, and the first brick block in the city. He married Jan. 16, 1838 to Mary Jane Shelledy who died Oct. 18, 1880. Remarried to Mrs. Hannah Beall of Cincinnati on Oct. 27, 1881.”

The editor of the **Leavenworth Times** of July 27, 1859, writing of the delegates at the Wyandotte Constitutional Convention:

“We cannot close without notice of the man who dares to take the somewhat unpopular ground of extreme Radical. Of such who lean that way there are more than one perhaps, but the Radical of Radicals is John Ritchey of Shawnee. We

like the pluck, which enables a man to take ground alone and on a fixed principle. The Republican Party does not go far enough for Mr. Ritchey, but in his view, 'half a loaf is better than no bread,' and so he acts heartily with that party. But his Radicalism will out in spite of himself.

Mr. Ritchey is a man of medium size, with light hair and eyes, head narrow, long and high, with a frank face and cordial manner, rather rough in his appearance, free and easy, and with an unshakable good humor. Everybody knows him, and in spite of his peculiar views, everybody respects him. He is very nervous both mentally and physically and is a little apt to go off 'half-cocked' but takes a joke against himself good naturedly.

He is often on the floor, his sharp, nasal 'Mr. President' being heard on almost every question. Being a man of good sense on all points not requiring an expression of his radical views, he has rendered efficient aid in the convention. Of course he is an ultra abolitionist, women's rights man, teetotaler and general advocate for reform, looking eagerly and earnestly for the ultimate redemption of mankind from all oppressions, abuses and vices of whatever nature and kind.

We do not hesitate to say we like John Ritchey. Such men sow seed which often springs up to good use. They are pioneers who do not always leave the found cleaned and leveled, but they make a trail and blaze the trees as they go. They are iconoclasts, outlookers, men who are generally impractical in their present action but of service for the time to come; therefore, it is that here and there on the way we like to see such men as John Ritchey."

These two old Kansas histories were written several years prior to John Ritchie's death. The information they contain comes from John himself. He told of his birthplace, and said that he moved to Westchester in Butler County, Ohio when he was aged one and a half, or 1819. He also lived in Hamilton in that county. In Indiana, he mentioned Columbus and Greensburg before Franklin. He said he lived in Franklin until he visited Kansas in 1854, starting again for Kansas in March of 1855, arriving April 3rd.

Mary Jane Shelledy was taken from Shelby County, Kentucky to Franklin when she was about ten years old. After their marriage in 1838, the Ritchies' wedding trip was to Shelby County to visit the bride's old friends and relatives. Most of her relatives had moved into Indiana, but in Shelby County there were still Uncle Samuel Graham, and Graham cousins the children of her father's sister remarriage in 1832 to George King.

In April of 1830 is record of John's first purchase of Franklin property, when he bought part of Lot No. 45 from brother James. In 1847 John and wife Mary Jane are named when they begin to sell parts of that lot. They were investing in town lots, and also owned, in different places, 345 acres of farmland. Some of the land was not sold until after the move to Kansas. Two pieces of farmland were sold in 1842 and 1843 for a total of #1300. The rest was sold in 1860 and 1862 for a total of \$15,400.

(G-219:632, U-564:422)

In these listed transfers, John and Mary Jane are both named. Not listed is property naming just John Ritchey, which may be Dr. John.

Buying

#45 pt.	1839	\$ 125	J542
lot	1843	806	J536*
#45 pt.	1849	250	K554
#12 pt.	1849	80	J543
#12 pt.	1852	325	O42
#26 pt.	1854	1000	P379
#4 pt.	1857	<u>500</u>	S551
		\$3086	

*Bought from George and Elizabeth King or given by them.

Selling

#45 pt.	1847	\$ 150	H845
15, 16*	1848	800	K180
#5	1848	100	K122
#45 pt.	1850	350	M350
#12 pt.	1850	350	L220
#45 pt.	1851	175	L397
#45 pt.	1851	600	L550
#12 pt.	1852	600	O41
#5*	1853	75	Q215
27, 28	1854	1300	Q407
#26 pt.	1857	1200	S422
#26	1857	1000	S467
#12 pt.	1860	150	T422
#12 pt.	1860	150	T40
#45 pt.	1865	<u>150</u>	I40
		\$7150	

*In Addition #1

In the Franklin, Indiana 1850 census, John Ritchie was listed as a saddler. Their only child then was Florence, aged five. In Greenlawn Cemetery in Franklin, the graves of little **Florence** and **Theresa Jane** are marked, and cemetery records show babies,

unnamed, are also buried there. It was said in our family that some of the births were miscarriages, but that John Ritchie wanted them listed in the family Bible.

There was grief for the young Ritchies, losing so many babies. Pondering an explanation, I think of things such as an Rh factor problem. My father's sister, **Mary Margaret Ritchie Wright**, told a story that came down from Mary Jane. Her Franklin doctor had told her she kept her babies too clean, so she let Hale get dirty and he survived.

Just before departing for Kansas, they bought an expensive lot in Franklin. They did not sell all their Franklin property before the move. John and Mary Jane would have had a comfortably home in Franklin, and were surrounded by relatives, both in Franklin and in nearby counties.

We know John returned to Franklin on at least two occasions, and very likely at other times. Soon after their arrival in Kansas, the railroads reached the Kansas border, making travel more convenient. With their many ties to Franklin, I think both John and Mary Jane would have returned for visits, or on business.

Once they had a sturdy home established in Kansas, they would have sent for, or returned to collect, some possessions. That furnishings came out is evident by a small walnut chest, with inlay work, that was Mary Jane's, now in the possession of Betty Wright Leech of Oskaloosa, Kansas. It is beautifully wrought, the size of a small bedside chest, and was said to have been made by Mary Jane's stepfather, **George King**, for her doll clothes.

At our home, we had once some military letters in John Ritchie's hand, written during Civil War years. They were supply orders, containing just one or two lines each. His hand was fine and much like that of his father's, which has been reproduced on another page.

For me, the personal link with John and Mary Jane Ritchie was the large stone home, built in 1866/67. It stood just two blocks from my home and regularly I walked by it, then heavily shaded by trees, and a porch had been added on two sides. Now, when returning to Topeka, at first sight of the skyline, my eye falls on the large white concrete water tower on the site of the old home. A photo of the house hangs on my living room wall, among other old "house" pictures.

Obituaries

Deed data shared by Joan Ritchey Knox

A New Home In Kansas

John Ritchie came from Franklin, Indiana in the autumn of 1854 to look over the new Territory that was to remain Kansas Territory until statehood in 1861. He visited Leavenworth, Lawrence, and Kansas City. He started again for Kansas on March 12, 1855, bringing wife Mary Jane, four-year-old son, Hale, and little Mary, three-months-old. After a bit more investigation of the eastern Kansas countryside, they settled on a spot beside the Kaw River where nine men had established the town, Topeka, the previous December. In the new town, John Ritchie would soon buy the town share of a departing founder, and himself became one of the people who established Topeka, in Shawnee County, Kansas.

The Kansas grandchildren and great-grandchildren of John and Mary Jane Ritchie learned very early the story of the nine men who stood by the banks of the Kaw to found Topeka. This always called up a picture of a country totally empty. Not quite.

Mrs. Andrew Ritchie, in her written recollection, mentioned the first farmer on the site of Topeka, **Clement Shattio** (Choteau) a Frenchman out of St. Louis who was tilling the soil near the river in 1852. His wife was **Ann Davis**, a black girl born to free parents in Illinois, who was captured at age ten. She was taken to Missouri and sold many times, until she found herself in the small community of Uniontown in Shawnee County, where she bought her freedom in 1849, and married Mr. Shattio the next year.

Henry's *History of Kansas* cites a list of men settling in what became Shawnee County, by 1854, saying there were 26 or 27 cabins strewn about the area by the end of that year. He names them.

When John Ritchie arrived in Kansas in 1855, the historian lists him third among the year's incoming settlers, heading a long list that also included **A. M. Lewis**, husband of Ritchie's sister **Clarinda**.

The Ritchies entered, by choice, a free-soil community dedicated to the establishment of a state where slavery would not be permitted. Before that goal was reached, blood would be spilled and a drama enacted that played across the front pages of the newspapers of the entire nation. A Civil War, nationally, would be ignited.

John Ritchie would soon busy himself establishing a home, contribute generously to the growth of a town that would become the state's capital city, and serve in the Civil War, when it became official. But he was also a leading player in the years when the Territory became known as "Bleeding Kansas."

To know John Ritchie, an acquaintance with the western world he entered, is essential.

Kansas Territory

Kansas Territory was created with the signing of the Kansas-Nebraska Act on May 10, 1854, a land 200 miles wide and 700 miles long, stretching to the Rocky Mountains. When Kansas became a state on January 29, 1861, smaller in size than the Territory, the capital would be Topeka, Shawnee County.

Located on the fringes of the prairies, Shawnee County is land in transition from the eastern wooded hills to the treeless high plains. The Kansas River dominates the 545 square miles that is the county, dividing it in two. Along the streams, in 1854, were small stands of oak, walnut, hickory, ash, hackberry and cottonwood. The bottomland grass grew higher than a horseman's head, and clear springs abounded. The diaries of the Oregon trailers waxed lyrical over the Kansas wildflowers. It was a park-like land. My father, **John Scott Ritchie**, often spoke of the richness of Kaw Valley soil.

The Kansa Indians had bartered away their unrestricted land and a fixed reserve set aside for them astride the Kansas river. Later, the government designated 23 sections of land along the north bank of the river for the Kansa half-breed children. Seven of these half-breed tracts were in Shawnee county. A census taken in 1843 counted 1588 Kansa, but in future years they declined. The Shawnee agreed to a treaty that gave them the remaining part of the county, south of the river.

A national Indian removal brought more tribes to Kansas, causing a reshuffle. In Shawnee County, Pottawatomies arrived 1847-48. Right behind the Pottawatomies came the missionaries. Eventually, the government reduced the Pottawatomie reservation to a small reserve in Jackson County.

Fort Leavenworth had been founded in 1827 to protect the Santa Fe trail. The fort was soon to find itself in the midst of the great western Indian migration. The fort was reached by steamboat as early as 1829. By 1858 nearly a steamboat a day tied up there.

In early 1852, several small wagon trains had been attacked by Indians in eastern Kansas causing the establishment of another fort. Fort Riley was built in 1853 at the confluence of the Smoky Hill and Republican forks of the Kansas (Kaw) River. By 1844 the Military Road had been completed, reaching from southern Oklahoma through Fort Smith in Arkansas, to Fort Leavenworth and on to Fort Snelling in Minnesota.

The first ferry across the Kaw River established 1843 was at the future site of Topeka, operated by four Pappan (Pepin?) brothers who were French Canadians.

One branch of the Oregon Trail, that from Westport, stayed south of the Kansas River until the Topeka area, where wagons crossed on Pappans' ferry. The only other route was the Military Road, passing through northern Shawnee County, in a very rough state, and lacking bridges.

Kansas Territory In 1854

Kansas-Nebraska Act (May 30, 1854)

President Pierce signed the act concocted by Illinois Senator Stephen A. Douglas as a measure to end turmoil over slavery. His bill was simple: open all territories to settlers from north and south, and let them decide by vote whether to exclude or accept slavery. What could be fairer than that? He failed to foresee that a doctrine of squatter sovereignty would create a battlefield. Among the bill's proponents in the Senate was Senator David Atchison of Missouri, who would soon come west to lead the Missourians into the fray.

The south was overjoyed. In Missouri toasts were drunk at every crossroads store over the news brought so miraculously from Washington by telegraph. Atchison had warned the Missourians to be prepared to rush across the border to settle Kansas Territory and secure it for the south. "If I had my way, I'd hang every damned abolitionist," cried Dr. John Stringfellow of Weston, Missouri, "and everyone born north of the Mason-Dixon line is an abolitionist." Border Missouri was still a new country and there was no reason for bordermen to leave it. Most men would simply cross into the Territory to lay claim and make "improvements," four logs laid together to form a rectangle.

Pre-emption

The land was there for claiming. Shake together a cabin or pitch a tent, break half an acre of sod and fence it, file a notice of intention to pre-empt the chosen 160 acres at the nearest settler's office, at \$1.25 an acre. The land could not be sold until government surveys were completed. Then, for \$200, a quarter section was assigned to you and your heirs forever. For all the fanfare, nine months after the new lands were thrown open, there were, according to the Territory's first census in 1855, only 8500 permanent settlers, including women and children and 242 slaves.

The North Reacts - Settlers Arrive

Northern abolitionists, angry at what seemed a deliberate attempt to rob the north of Kansas Territory, met the evil design by forming societies to equip and send emigrants to Kansas. The New England Aid Society was formed in April 1854 boasting they would send thousands to save Kansas. In fact, only 4208 pioneers moved to Kansas from New England, the center of abolitionism, and of those only 1240 were aided by the Emigrant Aid Society. New York contributed 6311 settlers. The majority 30,000 came from Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, unaided by any society. The southeast states sent out only a handful.

The Aid Societies offered only reduced fare and a guide to interest emigrants. They established two western hotels, one in Missouri, to help provide safety for those passing through.

Besides farmers to be, the Territory attracted large numbers from the professional classes, and other hearing the knock of opportunity. Land speculators also saw a future and profit by arriving among the first. In 1856, **Hugh H. Moore** wrote, "I bought an interest in Topeka two weeks ago for \$300. I refused \$1000 for it this morning. If Kansas is a free state it will make me a fortune."

In the spring of 1854, even while the Kansas-Nebraska bill was being debated, emigrants by the thousands congested trails and packed steamboats, headed for Kansas Territory. The entire country had gone "mad about Kansas." During the summer of 1854, six Emigrant Aid troupes, approximately 600 people, came out, establishing Lawrence and other villages, including Osawatomie and Manhattan. In almost every case, they contested the staked claims of absentee Missourians. More would arrive the following year.

Senator Atchison of Missouri was surprised and shocked by this migration. He seems to have expected the whole nation to stand back and let his Missouri constituents pre-empt Kansas. He wrote to his fellow citizens to prepare for the challenge, and came personally to fuel the first of conflict.

The first Governor of Kansas Territory arrived in October 1854 to a peaceful winter and to the sound of ringing axes as squatters had time to build or tighten their cabins. The new Governor, **Andrew Reeder**, set the date for the first general election to select a Territorial Delegate to Congress for March 30, 1855.

Topeka Is Founded - December 5, 1854

Late in November, several men from the new free-soil settlement, Lawrence, rode out across the prairie looking for possible future sites for other free-state towns. About 25 miles up the Kaw river they discovered a place, well-watered and drained, with high country nearby and good timber within reasonable distance. They reported their findings and encouraged settlement. Four of the men remained on the site: **Enoch Chase, J.B. Chase, M.C. Dickey** and **George Davis**, all New Englanders.

Only a few days later, on December 5, nine men gathered on the chosen site and formed the Topeka Town Association. Some were agents of the New England Aid Society, some were land speculators, but all nine were free-staters, united in their wish to establish a free-soil town, but otherwise strangers. In addition to the other four, they were **Cyrus K. Holliday, Fry W. Giles, Daniel Horne, L.G. Cleveland** and **Charles Robinson**. Dickey was a New England Aid company representative. Charles Robinson, a physician from Fitchburg, Massachusetts, was a Lawrence resident, and would later become Governor of Kansas.

At their meeting that December morning, “that fellow in the white hat” was called on to chair their association. Thus Cyrus K. Holliday became the symbol of Topeka’s founding.

The cabin the nine occupied suffered a roof fire within a few days, and the city began with the one tent they owned. They drew up an agreement dividing the townsite into fifty shares. Contrary to the laws assigning 320 acres for townsites, Topeka founders originally believed four square miles a suitable size, but they soon reduced their goal to Section 31 of Township XI Range XVI, and a portion of Section 30 near the riverbank, for a total of 684 acres.

As protection for the embryo town several of the men pre-empted claims bordering it. The winter was a warm and peaceful one and the first rough shelters of Topeka went up.

In the spring, an early arrival will be **John Ritchie** and his small family. He will buy out one of the founders, **Jacob Chase**.

The history included as part of John Ritchie’s Kansas story was assembled in large part from material in these volumes:

History of Kansas, Andreas, 1883

History of Kansas, Henry, 1882

Civil War on the Western Border, Jay Monaghan, 1955

Bleeding Kansas, Alice Nichols, 1954

Witness Of The Times, A History of Shawnee County, Roy D. Bird and Douglass W. Wallace, published 1876 by the Shawnee County Historical Society

A capsulated report cannot relate all the activity of the time, or even of the moment, nor is there space to relate the many incidents that made the free-soilers think themselves more sinned against than sinning.

A FEW WORDS FROM JOHN RITCHIE...

What motives impelled the Ritchies to a territory that was certain to become a testing ground?

In 1879 on September 15th and 16th, an Old Settlers Meeting was held at Bismarck Grove in Lawrence, Kansas. It was the 25th anniversary of the first Kansas settlement. A report in the *Topeka Capital* on September 16th stated that on Monday after attending the Greenback convention in Lawrence, Colonel John Ritchie came over to the Old Settlers' Meeting, and at the close of the evening session the crowd shouted for John Ritchie. When he rose to speak, he said that he had been taught not to impose himself on people and therefore his remarks would be brief.

“As I am called on to say something in this Old Settlers’ meeting, I will say a word about what has been claimed as having saved Kansas. It was neither the Emigrant Aid Society nor the Pennsylvanians, nor any other class or organization that made Kansas a free state. I say it took us all—backwoodsmen from Indiana, Ohio and all the western states, as well as the men of principle sent out by the Aid Society of New England, and the politicians from Pennsylvania. There was need for all classes. And every Kansas man knows, or ought to know, that the rough-hewn western men and boys, who went in on their instincts as to what was right and wrong, as to what was square and fair in squatters’ rights, took a full hand in all that was done in beating down the proslavery power on the soil of Kansas.”

“I don’t want to take any just credit from any Society nor from any state in this thing, but I remember once, in the spring of 1856, about forty high-toned men came out to Topeka from the fat east to fight against slavery on principle, and when they heard of the approach of a force of border ruffians to sack the town of Topeka, those forty men of principle took to their heels and left the Territory, running through grass as high as their heads and declaring as they went that Kansas was a barren country that wouldn’t produce anything.”

“An education of mere principle didn’t give men backbone, but I don’t mean to say it weakened anybody. Some of us came out to make our homes here, if we like the country, and to fight slavery out if it undertook to crowd in here. Others came simply to make homes without any thought of a fight of any kind. But when the fight came, there were as many of these as of any kind who just went in, stood up to the rack and did a full share of the work till Kansas was made a free state. These classes of the ‘Saviors of Kansas’ have not had quite a fair share of silver-tongued orators to speak for them here today, so I thought I would put in my little say-so in their behalf.”

Adding to John’s Remarks...Beyond “making out home here if we liked the country.”

- ∞ Immediately, John Ritchie bought a share in the Topeka Town Association, and later bought 42 more town lots. He is said to have been one of the leaders in making Topeka the capital city of Kansas.

- ∞ Paul Adams, in his 1950 biography of John, states that “*it is a matter of tradition*” that Ritchie, on the way to Kansas, paid a call on **Dr. Blanchard**, president of Knox College at Galesburg, Illinois. Leader both in Christian education and in underground railroad activities, helping escaping slaves. I note Dr. Blanchard appears, later, in Nebraska City, Nebraska, an end-of-the-line depot for escaping slaves.

- ∞ In Indiana, it is recorded of his brother, **Dr. James Ritchey**, that he was supportive of the underground movement. By his biography, **Uncle Nat Richey** of LaSalle County, Illinois was very active in helping “*the sable sons of Africa.*”

- ∞ John and Mary Jane named a son **Hale Ritchie**. By family tradition Hale was named for a leader Mary Jane admired, and a remark in her obituary supports the tradition. Hale was born in 1851.

- ∞ In 1847, Senator John P. Hale of New Hampshire was nominated for President by the Free Soil/Liberty Party of New York. It was a time when Democrats and Whigs were breaking into splinter parties, partly over differences regarding the new territories acquired as a result of the Mexican War. The Free Soilers were in opposition to Generals Zachary Taylor and Lewis Cass, and were united on the common basis of the Wilmot Proviso. (John’s brother, **Samuel**, named a son Wilmot Hale.) The party was pledged to a national platform of freedom and attacked the aggression of slave power. It’s slogan: Free Soil, Free Speech, Free Labor and Free Men. Senator Hale continued to be an active opponent of proslavery leaders in Congress, and was again nominated for president by the Free Soilers in 1852.

- ∞ In naming her son, Mary Jane made a statement and tells us of her interests, which pre-date her arrival in Kansas.

- ∞ For the emigration to Kansas Territory, the Ritchie interests were several.

The Ritchies In Kansas

Arrival: April 3, 1855

The all-absorbing question for the settlers arriving in 1855 was “What shall we do for building material?” The New England Aid Society had provided a sawmill engine that was inadequate and provided no relief. The Ritchies, and most others, resorted to the use of rude frames made of hewn poles, and shakes rived from oak trees. Cyrus K. Holliday built a shake cabin on his claim and John Ritchie made use of the limbs of trees that Holliday and Fry Giles left from their construction. Holliday, in a letter to his wife, reported that 24 men had been known to bed down together in his shelter. Horne and Cleveland build sod huts. A.W. Moore, in a board shanty, opened the first boarding house.

On April 16, John Ritchie’s name was proposed for membership at the weekly meeting of the town company, and he was admitted to membership on April 23. Land could not be entered as a purchase until government surveys were completed. The following spring on 21 June 1856, John’s deed could be recorded, whereby he bought from the departing Jacob Chase his Share No. 6 of the original Topeka Town Company, for \$300. The deed does not show that Chase’s pre-emption was included, but obviously it was, and John probably paid \$200 more for the land, at the land office.

A post office had been established in March with Fry Giles as postmaster. His cabin was, also used as a blacksmith shop by **H. H. Wentworth**. The town plat was soon dotted with camps, wagons, farming implements and household furnishings, as farmers waited for the spring rains to ready the soil for planting.

In April another boarding house opened, a long cabin called the Pioneer Hotel that stood for several years. The first store was opened by **J. T. Jones**, and on April 13 the foundation work began for the Farnsworth brothers’ store, the building afterwards known as Constitution Hall. [This building still stands in Topeka, lost among other old structures. One of the Farnsworth brothers was pallbearer at John Ritchie’s funeral.] **J. C. Miller** began to make tinware under a tree near the foot of Kansas Avenue, and on April 18 started construction on the first brick house of the town, near 6th and Kansas Avenue. **D. W. Horne** had a brickyard a little way out of town and was advertising his readiness to supply demand at \$8 per thousand. The medical fraternity was represented by **Drs. Martin** and **Merriam**.

John Ritchie listed himself “farmer” for every census, but had opened a rock quarry on his land, for the following year he quarried and made a gift of the stone for the First Congregational Church. After the cabin, the two houses the Ritchies lived in were of stone.

Helping To Purchase Topeka City Ground

Notes left by **Dr. Franklin L. Crane** - published in Bulletin of Shawnee Co. Historical Society, 1847, Vol. I No.4, page 102

*“On April 19, 1855 I bought of **Matthew Hooper** his claim near Topeka and commenced building thereon a house, in which I was living until Mr. Holliday came over and proposed that I should assist in building a city on the site of Topeka. He stated that there were nine claims held by individuals for that purpose and that it was thought best to sell at least three and place it upon 640 acres, and that we would use all justifiable means to build up an important city.”*

*“**Colonel Richey, Colonel Holliday** and myself furnished the money to purchase the land warrant.”*

(John Ritchie's \$300 for purchase of **Jacob Chase's** share must have constituted his part in helping to purchase the float. The total was \$1200. Someone must have chipped in a little more.)

***Witness of the Times, A History of Shawnee County**, by Roy Bird and Douglass Wallace, 1976, page 13, published by the Shawnee Co. Historical Society*

*“In order to have clear title to the land, a little over a full section, 640 acres, the Topeka Association contracted with one **Isaiah Walker** on February 9, 1856 for a Wyandotte Float.”*

“As part of an 1842 treaty settlement for the removal of the Wyandot Indian Nation from Ohio, the United States granted 640 acres west of Missouri to each of some 35 blood or adopted members of the tribe, provided the sections not be in any established reserve. Hence the name given to their land, Wyandot Float; the property could be located or “floated” nearly anywhere and then sold.”

“The Association raised \$1200 as the agreed price with Mr. Walker, owner of Wyandot Float No. 20. The patent for Float No. 20 was issued February 14, 1859.”

Up to about the time of the Civil War, John signed his name **Ritchey** for it appears that way upon the original of the Wyandotte Constitution in 1859, the constitution under which Kansas became a state. In Civil War records, he is **Ritchie**.

Topeka's First Social

The full account of this merry-making on May 17, 1855 appeared in Lawrence's *Herald of Freedom* on May 26. The ladies of Topeka first conceived the idea of a picnic party so that the residents who had come from different parts of the country might get better acquainted. Underbrush was removed by the younger men. A fifty-foot table set up under the trees. There were mammoth fish straight from the Kaw and a barbequed pig. The table was graced with prairie flowers and had for centerpiece a pyramid cake surrounded by smaller ones. The ornamental cakes were abundant enough that those left over were sold at auction, the proceeds for the erection of the first church in Topeka, a Methodist church.

The gentlemen of Topeka were food on their feet, and flowery toasts were the order of the day, led by master of ceremonies Daniel Horne toasting "Our Happy Homes In Kansas." They drank to the future of the state, to the future of Topeka, to ladies individually and to all the ladies. They remembered, "Our Friends At Home, Far Distant But Fondly Remembered."

May also recorded the first birth, and the first death in Topeka. The first cemetery was at 10th and Kansas Avenue. "No ground having been set aside for burials **John Ritchie** authorized these and later interments to be made on his homestead at a point just south of what became the intersection of Tenth and Kansas Avenue. When the bodies were later removed to Topeka Cemetery, graves were found in and on both sides of the Avenue, where in building excavations unidentified bones are still encountered." (Chronology of Shawnee County by George A. Root, 1946, in the first bulletin of the Shawnee County Historical Society.)

Mrs. H.C. Root, who would later record recollections of a young Topeka, told family members that **Mary Jane Ritchie** was present for nearly every birth in the early days, which suggests she was something of a midwife. She also remarked that Mrs. Ritchie was one of the most knowledgeable of the Topeka ladies. Through research, I discovered that Mrs. Root was **Laura Douthitt**, a granddaughter of *Dr. James Ritchey*, and great-niece of John Ritchie. (My family seemed unaware of the relationship.)

There was grim news to shadow the social. At a March election to select a Congressional delegate, the Missourians had crossed the border to vote. By steamboat, ferry, and on horseback, they streamed in 5000 strong and carried the election. Governor Reeder protested to Washington who turned a deaf ear. The first meeting of a pro-slave legislature was set for July.

Busy Town Fathers

That spring, a new and more level road was laid out, branching off the California road about Big Springs and on west to Topeka. Another ferry was arranged. The Topeka Association voted to prohibit the sale of liquor on lands granted by it. There was a temperance meeting at the boarding house.

Summer 1855

June came in cool as October. In Lawrence, the Robinson's awoke to find a rattlesnake curled under their stove. Another couple found one of the critters snuggled between them in the bed.

It was a peaceful summer, if a wet one. The Ritchies endured the water that shakes directed more inside the house than out, as Mrs. Andrew Ritchie remembered it. (They were still in the cabin the following spring when the Andrew Ritchie arrived in Topeka.) The last week in July was one of brilliant sunshine by day and light showers by night, and crops responded in bounty. Mrs. Robinson, in Lawrence, reported melons, tomatoes and early apples on the market.

E. C. K. Garvey arrived in Topeka proposing to establish a newspaper. The Town Association granted him lots, and John Ritchie was appointed to the building committee and helped raise money for a building to house the press. Garvey managed to issue the first edition on July 4, 1855.

The Free Staters, in many pow-wows, met together in horrified protest over the news in from Shawnee Mission. Their proper, or improper, response was considered.

“The Crimes Against Kansas” - The Bogus Legislature meeting Shawnee, Mission, Kansas in July 1855

The pro-slave legislature passed a slave code abridging American rights of free speech and of the press. They enacted laws which limited office-holding to believers in slavery, provided for the imprisonment of anyone declaring the institution did not legally exist in the Territory, and inflicted punishment on all speaking or writing against slaveholding. No period of residence would be required of voters.

When Governor Reeder objected again, he was dismissed from office.

The new Governor arrived in Kansas on September 1st, **Wilson Shannon**. “I come as one desiring for himself and family a permanent location.” He endured Kansas for six months.

Big Springs Free Soilers Convention - September 1855

The Topeka delegation left September 5th in a triumphal procession with music and banners, headed by an immense wagon carrying the band of musicians. I find no mention that John Ritchie attended. Had he not attended, it would have been out of character for him.

The four-cabin trading post on the California road west of Lawrence called Big Springs, drew free staters and on-lookers, to devise a counterattack to the bogus constitution. Split log benches were filled. Every tree had its leaner. They denied they were abolitionists. (Emphasizing a difference between a free stater and an abolitionist.)

The spell-binder speaker was Indiana's **Jim Lane**. It is a matter of record that when he finished, only one of 100 delegates voted against his proposed "Black Law," that no Negro was ever to live in Kansas when she became a state.

Ex-Governor Reeder, who had returned to the territory craving office, spoke, "Let our shrinking and reluctant hostility be pushed to a bloody issue." The Free State Party resolved to set up its own lawmaking body, and elected Reeder its delegate to the United States Congress. Flint had struck flint.

Autumn of 1855

On October 14th John Ritchie met with others in Cowles cabin to form a Congregational church.

The Ritchie's baby daughter, Mary, died October 21, 1855, aged one year. She would have been placed in the new cemetery on John's property "just south of 10th and Kansas Avenue." That cemetery held about 100 graves upon the establishment of Topeka Cemetery in 1859, those people being moved to the new site. Later, the date uncertain, John Ritchie established a "free" cemetery southwest of the community. His two infants must have been removed to his later "Ritchie" Cemetery. By office records at Topeka Cemetery, Mary Jane and her two infants were re-interred in one grace, beside John, in 1888. And Mary Jane had been placed, first in "The Ritchie Cemetery South West of Topeka."

In October, Free Soilers met in Topeka to work out a constitution. Lane dominated, and was able to get his Black Law included. Two months later the new constitution was overwhelmingly ratified, as southerners abstained from voting. A "northern" government was set up. The "Topeka Movement" was treated with contempt by the new Governor Shannon.

The south's answer was a meeting in Leavenworth to which "All lovers of law and order" were invited. Governor Shannon consented to preside, telling the crowd that "The President is behind you."

Incidents of conflict now increased. A pro-slave man was murdered by a Free-stater over a claim. One offense led to another. Roads became unsafe for travel.

The Wakarusa War - Topeka Militia to the Aid of Lawrence

During the first week in December, for the first time Kansas and Missouri armies faced each other, both with cannon. A Free-state man living on Wakarusa Creek was killed with no attempt made to arrest the murderer. Hostilities built into this gathering of armies. The Missourians camped on the Wakarusa just outside Lawrence. In Lawrence, Free-soilers gathered in numbers varying by report from 500 to 1500, but including the Topeka Militia and John Ritchie, who was 3rd Lieutenant. It was at this time that Ritchie first met **John Brown** of Osawatomie.

An army of 1500 had come from Missouri. A few of the Lawrence men called on the Governor, hoping to forestall bloodshed. When Governor Shannon arrived on the Wakarusa, he could see for himself these were rowdies from Missouri assembled to fight Kansans. He was shocked, and as matters worsened he found himself signing a paper giving the people of Lawrence permission to repel their invaders, an act he was soon excusing by letter to Washington. With the intervention of the Governor, the Missourians went home without having attacked Lawrence. He was at last able to strip the ruffians of their cloak of legal authority, and convince them to disband. One result of the Wakarusa War was to induce all free-state communities to form militia groups for protection.

White Christmas

It was white and very cold, falling to 30 degrees below zero on Christmas morning. Mary Jane Ritchie told of awakening to snow on her blankets that winter. Water froze in the tumblers and bread had to be held to the fire to thaw before it could be sliced. The snow inside one lady's house was the same depth inside as it was outside.

John Ritchie went to Missouri and brought home apples and potatoes. **Susannah Weymouth** told how hers were placed in bags under her bed and froze solid. She learned that if a frozen potato was dropped into boiling water and kept boiling, the taste was not hurt.

Both hammers and hatreds were held by the bitter cold, which went beyond anything the Indians could remember. People were chiefly concerned with staying alive. Few Free-soilers braved the cold to go to the polls on January 15, 1856 to elect officers for the

spurious commonwealth they had set up. The Governor's office went to Lawrence's Charles Robinson, an Aid Society agent.

In Lecompton, capital of the Territory, a large stone hotel was going up and a brick capitol building. A log jail stood ready to receive political prisoners when the spring arrest season opened. John Ritchie managed to stay clear of it until September.

Spring of 1856 - The Sack of Lawrence

In deed records dated June 21, 1856, is noted John Ritchie's purchase of Share No. 6 in the Topeka Town Company, bought from Jacob Chase. It was the recording of an earlier transaction.

Dr. Andrew Ritchie and his wife, **Elizabeth**, arrived driving a new wagon with a span of splendid horses, the wagon filled with building materials and supplies. Elizabeth was sixteen years old. She and her husband would return to Iowa to live at the end of the Civil War, maintaining close ties to Topeka through their land and their children. In Topeka, until they were able to arrange other quarters, they stayed with John and Mary Jane.

In Lecompton, thinking it would stop subversiveness, pro-slavery **Judge S. D. Lecompe** issued subpoenas for Charles Robinson, Andrew Reeder, Jim Lane and others, to appear before a grand jury on charges of treason. Robinson and many others were arrested and imprisoned. Some, including Reeder and Lane, escaped the Territory or went in hiding.

Open warfare began in Kansas, beginning with the sack of Lawrence on May 21, 1856. Early that morn, residents there awoke and saw horsemen and cannon on Mr. Oread, knowing their leaders were imprisoned or in hiding. To the south more men could be seen marching along the California road. Late in the afternoon, the army rode into town, headed by the most notorious of the Missourians including Senator Atchison. Helplessly, the townspeople watched as two newspaper presses were destroyed. A 300-volume library flew out a window. The cannon, placed directly in front of the 3-story Eldridge Hotel, were unable to destroy it. Two kegs of powder were placed inside the hotel and ignited. Still, the walls stood. Finally the interior was torched. General looting ensued, and even ex-Governor Reeder's trunk was ransacked.

John Brown's Revenge - May 24, 1856

The outrage had begun when old John Brown, with two companies of riflemen, was coming to the relief of Lawrence, and learned that they were too late. As he rested in the shade of their wagons, a man rode into their camp reporting that pro-slavery men were evicting Free-staters at Osawatomie, the home of the Browns. Old Brown had wanted to fight the Missourians when they surrounded Lawrence the previous winter, but had been

stopped. Now, the homes of his people on Pottawatomie Creek were endangered and it was time for revenge. There are statements of two men, describing their attempt to dissuade Brown and his sons from his “secret mission,” relating his long discourse, using God as his authority.

Two days later, riders were out with the news of five pro-slavery men called out of their cabins at night and killed with cutlasses.

To many, murder had at last gone too far. To many others, in the north, Brown was a heroic figure.

Topeka’s 4th of July

President Pierce had issued a proclamation against the Kansas Free State Government and gave orders that its legislature was not to meet on July 4th as scheduled. But the fourth found Topeka filled with legislators and their families. Neither John Ritchie’s biographies or his obituary mention him as a member of this legislature.

The day dawned bright and hot, people gathering for a morning of parades and speeches. The legislature planned to convene at high noon, despite a warning that had come from Colonel **Edwin Sumner** at Leavenworth. A sentry came riding to warn the bluecoats were coming. Sumner rode in at the head of a column of 200 dragoons, with light artillery.

The legislators took their seats as Colonel Sumner appeared in the doorway, taking a preferred chair. Clerk **Sam Tappan** called roll and it was discovered there was not a quorum present. Sumner rose to his feet, “Gentlemen, I am called on this day to perform one of the most painful duties of my life. Under the authority of the President, I am here to disperse this legislature and inform you that you cannot meet. I order you to disperse.”

As the Colonel’s sympathy was evident there were three cheers for him as the troops mounted their horses, as well as three cheers for Republican presidential candidate John Fremont, with three added groans for President Pierce.

On July 29, 1856 was born **John Ritchie, Jr.** a babe who would live.

Lane's Army of the North - To Kansas in August (1856)

Indiana-born James H. Lane, subject to arrest in Kansas, had gone on a lecture tour through the east. A dozen other orators were out on the stump. Money was raised, and sent to Kansas. Lane appeared in Indiana before a "Free Democrats" group, and a committee was appointed "to raise men and arms and take them to Kansas." On that committee was **Dr. James Ritchey** of Franklin. The report in the *Indiana Magazine of History* does not relate whether or not Dr. Ritchey actually went to Kansas. He said he would, and he was a traveler. His daughter would move to Topeka after her marriage, about 1858, and it is documented that Dr. James came to Topeka then.

Lane enlisted emigrants for Kansas and from all over the north they came. Lane's Army of the North had become part of the Presidential campaign, a marching symbol of Free Soil and Fremont. Eastern papers reported his daily progress. In late July the army was encamped at Nebraska City. Kansas Governor Shannon sent out an inspection party that found the immigrants a motley crew but innocent enough. They crossed the border to establish the towns of Plymouth and Holton. Dr. James would not have had time to dawdle along with this horde, nor have any reason to do so. But that in some manner he fulfilled his agreement is a logical conclusion.

Kansas Avenue in Bloom

In November, Topeka could count 80 new buildings. One of these was the Ritchie Block, construction commencing before Ritchie's capture and imprisonment, but continuing while he was away. It was the first brick block in the town, a 3-story, 70 by 100 foot building owned by **Ritchie, Walter Oakley** and **L. S. Wilmarth**. Its auditorium, called the Museum, was soon the site of festivals, dances and meetings. Here, in April 1857, the first public play was presented, *The Drunkard*. When fire destroyed the Ritchie Block on November 28, 1869 the loss was estimated at \$50,000 to \$75,000 with the State of Kansas and Crane's Bindery being the big losers. Topeka then realized the need for a fire department.

Autumn of 1856 - The Jayhawkers Ride

With the Kaw River blockaded and no supplies reaching Topeka or Lawrence, anger flared anew. Militia companies of Free State towns rode out to accept enforced "donations" from the enemy. The story of John the Jayhawker, and his capture, follows. A jayhawk is said to be a bird that worries its prey.

A Home At Last (1856/1857)

With a rock quarry opened and construction beginning in 1857 on a Congregational Church with stone given by John Ritchie, I think a home for themselves was going up by the summer of 1856.

At 1116 Madison Street in Topeka still stands an old stone home, covered with stucco, that I say was the Ritchies first real home. Colonel Ritchie gave it to eldest son, Hale, upon Hale's marriage in 1876. My father was born there in 1882. Between 1882 and 1886 Hale built a fine new frame home next door at 1118 Madison, a home where my family lived from 1930 to 1930, my father having inherited both houses. In 1930 the rest of the east side of Madison to 12th Street, and one or two houses across the street, was family owned.

Hale Ritchie's new home at 1118 was a modern house of the 1880's with nine rooms, a stained-glass front window, a ruby-red glass hall window. The contrast with the very old house next door is evident, helping to date 1116 as very old.

In Fry Giles *Thirty Years in Topeka* he places Ritchie's earlier home "east" of his "present" home (the large 1866/67 house). Another account places it "near 11th and Madison Streets." Confusing the issue is a mention of Ritchies earlier home in his obituary of 1887, locating it at 12th and Monroe.

The old stone house at 1116 sits atop the rise where the land slopes up from Shunganunga Creek (the eastern edge of Ritchie's land) and is a logical site for a first home. Immediately behind 1116 where the property makes its first sharp drop, in 1930 was found the remnant of an old cave that I believe to be the location of the spring behind Mary Jane's house. Behind the property, a couple of city lots to the south, was, in 1930, the remains of John's rock quarry, forming a "cliff" where I played as a child. At that spot, then, were old hardened bags of lime strewn down the hillside, probably dating from Hale's time with the lime kiln.

The stucco has been on 1116 as long as I can remember, but underneath the house is stone, with foot-deep window sills, a walk-in cellar door at the rear. When I was young the cellar had a dirt floor. We leased the house, and I played with the children who lived there, making a playhouse in the cellar. I have swept that hard dirt floor nearly as often as Mary Jane may have done.

By the 1930's a front porch had been added, and a room at the rear, that leaned against the rear wall.

The original house had two rooms downstairs, the one at the rear being slightly more spacious than the front room. The back room would have been what we now call a family room. Between the lower rooms was an enclosed staircase going up to the bedrooms. A large upper bedroom was at the front of the house, with two smaller ones at

the rear. Even as a child, my eye noticed the unusual structure of the door to that inner staircase, of narrow vertical boards. The latch was an old sort where a press-down with the thumb would lift the closing bar.

This house lacked a kitchen sink, even in the 1930's. A fireplace was no longer in evidence, very likely walled up when the stucco was added to the outside. Nor was there a furnace, or any sort of central heating. In the 1930's, the new addition at the rear included a bathroom and a small kitchen, allowing the center room to be used as a dining room.

The deed whereby John Ritchie transfers Madison street land to son Hale does not mention "improvements" (deeds rarely do) so I cannot prove anything about 1116 beyond its being Hale's first home and old when he received it, and given him by his father. I am, however, firm in my conclusions about 1116 Madison, and have given all necessary information to the Shawnee County Historical Society, so that they may investigate its history, and perhaps find something more conclusive than I have done.

Underground Railroad, from 1857

An item in the third bulletin issued by the Shawnee County Historical Society, in 1947, states, "**John Armstrong, Col. John Ritchie, Col. Sam Wood** and others established the first "underground" station for aiding fugitive slaves in Topeka, in 1857." One Topekan wrote, in a letter, of a tunnel in a hill on John Ritchie's property out near Highland Park, where slaves were hidden. It is told in Mary Jane's obituary that on one occasion forty-eight men forcibly entered her cabin in search of a Negro, under the Fugitive Slave Act. She stood guard, another time, against three armed ruffians and ordered a slave to advance with his shotgun on a line with herself, when the slave-hunters retreated for reinforcements. (What were their thoughts, to see a slave with a gun in his hand?)

Mary Jane aided fleeing slaves with food and shelter, and when they were hiding in the brush near her later dwelling, she would drop food for them near the spring to which she went for water. My father told this story (and he had never seen Mary Jane's obituary) adding that when she went to the spring carrying wooden pails, the pails were filled with food for the men in hiding. As a child, I remember my father showing me an old shed somewhere, where slaves were hidden.

John Ritchie would claim he had helped \$100,000 worth of escaping slaves. One searching party visited the Ritchie home at 4 AM, the posse routing out the family while they looked for a slave. John parleyed with them until daylight, allowing the runaway more time for his escape, for he had been sent on the night before.

The Battle of the Spurs

At the Battle of the Spurs in January of 1859, Ritchie was helping escaping slaves, as well as coming to the aid of **John Brown**. The Missouri legislature had offered \$3000 for the capture of Old Brown, and for that reason or some other, Brown and a party that included eleven slaves set out for Nebraska. The Governor sent word to Colonel Sumner, again at Fort Leavenworth, and asked him to furnish the bearer of the note, **Marshal Colley**, with enough military force to “secure” Brown before he got away. Sumner assigned troops and the chase began. Men from Topeka, including John Ritchie as mentioned in his obituary, hurried to Holton where they were able to take advantage of the lay of the land to help Brown outride his pursuers, and “The Battle of the Spurs” was won by the hard-riding abolitionists.

Brown’s attempt to set up a freeing center for slaves at Harper’s Ferry was to come that fall. In the newspapers, even in Topeka, John Ritchie would have read all the details of the trial of John Brown (the talk of the town?), and read that one of the lawyers involved in the case was a Marylander by name John Ritchie.

Do not forget Uncle **Nathaniel Richey**, back in LaSalle County, Illinois, also helping “the Sable Sons of Africa.”

A Visitor and Newcomers

Brother **Dr. James Ritchey** of Franklin, Indiana was in Topeka in September of 1858. He might have accompanied his eldest daughter **Emily Douthitt**, and her husband, on their move to Topeka, or have come soon after the move to see their new home. The father of **James** and **John** had died in Franklin a year earlier, in October of 1857, very likely soon after John had returned to Kansas after his long stay in Franklin following his prison escape.

By a deed dated 20 September 1858 Topeka’s Justice of the Peace, **J. C. Miller** stated that James Richey appeared before him when selling five Topeka Township acres to **George B. Holmes** (another relative).

The Douthitts

Emily’s husband was **William P. Douthitt**, lawyer, with office at 167 Kansas Avenue and residence at 129 East 6th. William died November 28, 1897 and is buried in Topeka Cemetery, his monument saying “Lawyer & Pioneer.” Emily is buried in Venice, California. In 1880 Mr. Douthitt was president of the school board. By his administration papers (case #3463) at his death William still owned 40 of his original 80

acres of 1859, and nine acres on lower Kansas Avenue. (The Douthitt property is marked on the 1873 plat map, across Kansas Avenue from John Ritchie.)

James V. Douthitt	of Topeka
Ada Douthitt Carr	of St. Louis, Missouri
Laura Douthitt Root	of Topeka (Mrs. H. C. Root)
Louisa Douthitt Wolfe	of Topeka, Mrs. Eugene Wolfe

Laura Douthitt Root survived into the 1940's and was somewhat noted as a source of historical information in Topeka. She lived at 1635 Topeka Avenue, across 17th from the fairgrounds, in a very large, old, dark-red shingled house with cupolas. She was living on land that was of her father's original claim. It chanced that I saw Mrs. Root many times, although never spoke with her, for next door lived the Jarboes, my husband's family. Her house was razed after her death. My aunt, **Mrs. Wright**, several times quoted Mrs. Root on historical matters, but none in the family was aware of relationship. When my own family lived at 1432 Topeka Avenue, we were on Douthitt land. That area is still Douthitt's addition on plat maps. In 1939 the streetcars were still running, the one to our house being the Douthitt Car. I am delighted even to have seen Dr. James' granddaughter.

The Holmes

I have explained that Mrs. Holmes was **Margaret Richey**. Under deed date 23 November 1861 is a discharge of a mortgage given by Margaret's father, **Nathaniel Richey**, to **George B. Holmes** on 80 acres in Topeka's Section 7. (Vol 6:94) George died before 1880 when Radge's Topeka Directory for that year lists **Mrs. George B. Holmes**, widow, at 157 East 7th Street. For the 1865 Kansas Census, George is listed as Register of Deeds in Topeka, then age 48 and Margaret 38. Their children in 1865:

Rebecca	12	b. Ill	O. ?	9	b. Ill (female)
S--- R.	9	b. Ill (f)	Mary Ella	2	b. Kansas

More Newcomers - Other Relatives I Can Identify

Harvey McCaslin - He is Mary Jane's first cousin, born in Shelby County, Kentucky. See Esther Shillideay McCaslin. His property shown on 1873 plat map, Topeka. Captain, Kansas Militia 1864 at Battle of Big Blue.

Juan F. Doss - He is the son of Mary Jane's sister **Cynthia Doss**. See that family. In 1866 John Ritchey gave a mortgage on acreage for Juan F. Doss.

Demaree (?) - One of Cynthia Doss' daughters married a Demaree by **Elizabeth King's** will, and there are Demarees in Topeka.

Minnie Ritchie Parker - This daughter of Dr. **Andrew Ritchie** married in Topeka 3-13-1888 to **I. W. Parker**. In a separate plot in Topeka cemetery, matching well the children of Dr. Andrew Ritchie:

Blanche Ritchey	d. 1863	George Ritchie	d. 1936
Elizabeth F.	d. 1864	Mabel Ritchie	d. 1938
James L. Ritchey	d. 1888		

Clarinda Lewis - John Ritchie's sister. Clarinda married **A.M. Lewis** 1848 in Indiana. On the list of arrivals to Topeka for spring 1855, along with John Ritchie, several names away, is **Archibald M. Lewis**. They are still in Topeka for the 1860 Territorial Census, but are not there for the 1865 census. This is a name I still research. I think they have gone elsewhere in Kansas.

Jane Robinson - John Ritchie's sister. Jane and Robert W. Robinson were still in Indiana in 1858, by a deed. The Franklin family had entered "d1864?" after her name. (She did not live close at hand.) To date, I have found one mention of a Robert W. Robinson who enlisted in the 10th Regiment of Kansas Volunteers in 1861 from Mound City in Linn County. He mustered out with the regiment so survived the war. certain they were eventually in Topeka, and think they are closely associated with the **Davis** family that connects with our Wichita Ritchies. Fondly, I remember **Bob Robinson**, to whom my father seemed very close. I think he was "cousin."

Sarah Hungate - John Ritchie's sister. The Hungates arrived in Topeka in 1868. See their family pages.

Ritchies Acquire More Land - A "Ritchey Company"
(The grantee is the buyer)

5-23-1860	*	John Ritchey, grantee 84 lots in Topeka	*	Topeka Assn., grantor
5-23-1860	*	John Ritchey, grantee w ½ SE ¼ Sec 24 T12 R15 (on 1873 map)	*	Harrison Hannahs, grantor
5-23-1860	*	John Ritchey, agent, grantee 78 lots in Topeka	*	Topeka Assn., grantor
8-01-1860	*	James Ritchey, grantee Undivided ½ Topeka Share No. 84	*	Ritchey Company, grantor
1860	*	John Ritchie, grantee E ½ S1/2 NE ¼ Sec 30 T12 R16 (not on 1873 map)	*	Harrison Hannahs, grantor
1863	*	John Ritchie, grantee "Interest in Topeka Mill Property"	*	A. Merrill, grantor
1863	*	John Ritchie, grantee "Mill Property in Topeka"	*	Topeka Assn., grantor
1865	*	A. J. Ritchie, grantee ½ share 84, 27 lots	*	Quit Claim Deed James Ritchey, grantor
1865	*	A. J. Ritchie, grantee ½ share 84, 27 lots-Topeka	*	Quit Claim Deed John Ritchey, grantor

Can we conclude that the three brothers had formed a Ritchey Company as investors in Topeka town lots? The name does not appear again after 1865. Dr. Andrew continued to own property in Topeka and still owned some at his death in 1876. By the 1873 plat map he still owned 400 acres near Washburn College.

More Interesting Deeds
(Extracted from dozens of lot sales)

- 1875 * Leonidas Ritchey, Dr. James' veterinary son of Franklin, Indiana. Sells Quincy Street Lots.
- 1878 * Elizabeth F. Ritchie, widow of Dr. Andrew Ritchie. Sells Quincy Street lots. Many sales for Elizabeth.
- 198 Western Ave. transfers from their daughter Minnie, then age 20, to Elizabeth F. Ritchie.
- In 1880 Elizabeth F. Ritchie receives from John Ritchie "part of lots drawn to Share 84 of the Topeka Assn."
John was probably transferring Andrew's share to Elizabeth.
- 1880 * Mary Jane Ritchie sells three Quincy street lots to Lucia Case.
- 1881 * John Ritchie sells "Crane Street lots to the Santa Fe Tracks" to one William Ritchie. In 1870 William had bought two Crane St lots from T. K. Crane. He's not Andrew's son William. The 1875 Kansas Census for Shawnee County shows a William Ritchie born South Carolina. I don't think William is our close kinfolk.
- 1884 * Austin J. Richey and wife sell acreage in Section 3. Austin is John's first cousin, son of his Uncle Samuel Richey who remained in Muskingum County, Ohio.

1861 Kansas State Census, City of Topeka

John Ritchie	48	b. Ohio	*	A. J. Ritchie	37	b. Ohio
Mary J.	45	b. Kentucky	*	E. F.	27	b. Indiana
Hale	14	b. Indiana	*	J. L.	11	b. Iowa
John	9	b. Kansas	*	Minnie	7	b. Kansas
			*	Mabel	3	b. Kansas
			*	Anna, maid	21	b. Tennessee
Occupation: Col, of 2 nd Iowa Regt. (It should be Indian Regiment)			*	Occupation: physician		
				R. E. value	\$5,000	
				Personal	\$2,000	

The Historic Year 1859

It was the year of Harper's Ferry, and was the year when John Ritchie helped formulate the Kansas Constitution, and was one of the signers.

Elizabeth F. Ritchie, Andrew's widow, would recall, "I saw John Brown on his way to Harper's Ferry. He was at Col. John Ritchie's. They were shaking hands over the gate." But Brown was away from Kansas a good while, prior to Harper's Ferry.

In 1859 the Kansas Medical Society was established on May 10th, one of the incorporators listed as A. J. Richey.

Elizabeth recalled seeing the Minnie Belle, the first steamboat to arrive at Topeka. She was constructed in St. Louis specifically for Kaw River traffic, in 1857. She plied the river successfully for two seasons, 1858 and 1859. The busiest year of the short-lived river trade was 1859, the last boat ascending the Kaw in 1861.

It would be January 1, 1866 before the first passenger train pulled into Topeka, the Union Pacific line.

First Republican Convention in Kansas - May 18, 1859

John Ritchie was present and a member of the Central Territorial Committee. Republicans of Kansas decided to organize their party and Osawatimie was selected for their first convention site. Horace Greeley, publisher of the New York Tribune, was on a trip through the west and offered to take part in the meeting, delivering an address. Abraham Lincoln wrote that law practice kept him from attending but he hoped the delegates would stand firm against extending slavery. One thousand people crowded Osawatimie.

Wyandotte Constitutional Convention
Kansas' Permanent Constitution Formed - July 11, 1859

John Ritchie, attending as a delegate from Shawnee County, was Chairman of the "County and Township Organization" committee. The town, Wyandotte, later became Kansas City, Kansas.

He introduced the following resolution: "*Resolved, that the Constitution of Kansas shall confer power on the legislature to prohibit the introduction, manufacture, or sale, of spirituous liquors within the state.*" The matter was discussed and dropped. (Twenty-one years later, in 1880 and with Ritchie's support, a prohibition amendment was passed in Kansas.)

Mr. Ritchie moved to strike the word "white" from the article establishing the state militia. Only six voted in favor. (The Kansas Constitution was so amended in 1888.)

Under a provision of this Constitution, the temporary seat of state government was located at Topeka, the question of a permanent location to be decided by popular vote. In 1861, when 14,981 votes were cast, Topeka received 7,859 and Lawrence followed with 5,194 votes.

On January 21, 1861 the U. S. Senate voted to admit Kansas as a free state under the Wyandotte Constitution. Prior to this, seven southern states had renounced their allegiance to the union and were not present to vote. President Buchanan signed the bill on January 29, 1861 and Kansas entered the union as the 34th state. By nickname, she is the Sunflower State or the Jayhawker State.

The original constitution upon which the signatures appear (in 1984) may be seen in the lobby of Kansas' Memorial Building at 10th and Jackson Streets. The case in which it rests was specially constructed, dust proof and under document glass which filters out light rays that might be damaging to the paper. The display case has its length parallel with the wall, causing a viewer a twist of neck to read the signatures, and making a photograph of the signatures rather difficult. [It is currently displayed (2005) in the foyer of the Kansas State Historical Societies Archives Building].

(By now, we have a clue to John's views of things, and can guess that is why he was called "eccentric." I think that in so many respects his thinking was ahead of his time.)

Ritchie's moves at the convention, *Kansas and Kansans*, William E. Connelly, 1918 published by the Kansas State Historical Society.

Border War

For Kansas Territory, the Civil War began in September 1856.

After the dispersion of the Legislature in Topeka on July 4, 1856 the Free-State citizens of Topeka, in common with those of other towns, felt that they were completely adrift, having no faith in the Territorial Government at Tecumseh, and no immediate prospect of a better. The Missouri River towns were in the hands of the pro-slavery party and it became almost impossible to procure even the necessaries of life. In the attempt to get supplies from Leavenworth or Kansas City, lives had been lost, and the teams almost invariably captured.

An organization was begun in Topeka, some slight fortifications thrown up on the lots on Quincy street which had been donated by the city to the Methodist Church, the basement of Constitution Hall pressed into service to receive goods which should be captured in foraging expeditions on the company, and a regular system of reprisal on the enemy established. This continued until supplies could be brought to Topeka in a regular manner, without danger of attack by border ruffians. Dr. Crane's little office at the foot of Quincy street served as a sort of hospital for the sick and wounded. The Free-State organization at Topeka was known as Company B, Second Regiment Kansas Volunteers. Colonel Whipple (an alias for **Aaron Stephens**) headed the Regiment. Expeditions were made by the company to the various pro-slavery towns in the vicinity—Tecumseh, Osawkie and Lecompton. The company usually returned with supplies sufficient to feed the townspeople for a time.

In September the situation in Topeka was deplorable. There was no food to be bought in the town. **Mr. Farnsworth's** team was taken with all his goods by border ruffians, near Westport, and a man sent to get supplies at Leavenworth was murdered, while in pro-slavery towns there was food in plenty.

The pro-slavers' blockade brought them more than they bargained for. On August 29th the Missourians raided Osawatomie. A "reign of terror" began.

On August 18, 1856 Governor Wilson Shannon resigned. His Secretary of State, a thirty-year-old Marylander **Daniel Woodson**, became Acting Governor. The Missourians favored Woodson for Governor and were disappointed when word came that President Pierce had named **John W. Geary** instead. An army more than one thousand strong, under Senator David Atchison stood camped on the border. The day Shannon left the Territory, they received the invitation they had waited for. Woodson declared Kansas Territory in a state of insurrection and rebellion and asked "all patriotic citizens to rally in defense of the law."

The Missourians set out to wipe Osawatomie off the map, home of the hated Brown family. As they neared town, they met John Brown's deficient son. They shot him. Osawatomie was robbed and put to the torch. The Topeka Company was in Lawrence at

that time, having just reached there in response to a summons by General Lane. There was a fast march to Bull Creek where the enemy had encamped on their return to Missouri. Lane arrived about dark and found them ready for him with four pieces of artillery. Lane fell back eight miles for the night's camp, outnumbered and outgunned.

On September 3rd Tecumseh was raided by Free-soilers. The pro-south *Leavenworth Herald* exploded, laying all the blame at Jim Lane's feet. Reported the paper, "*The confederated band of savages rode into town plundering, threatening to burn the town, well armed and mounted on fine horses. They ransacked every store of goods even down to the brooms.*"

About this Tecumseh raid, a history of Shawnee County, *Witness of the Times*, states that John Ritchie was one of the party. In Topeka, Dr. Franklin Crane innocently recorded in his diary for September 4th, "Some men went to Tecumseh and returned with goods in five wagons."

Lane's main objective was Lecompton. Citizens there lived in fear of attack, and women and children were evacuated. Colonel Cooke from Leavenworth himself took command of the dragoon garrison in the capital and when the Free-soilers approached on September 5th, managed to defuse both sides. Lane's men went back to Lawrence.

JOHN RITCHIE IMPRISONED - HIS ESCAPE

Capture, Sept. 18, 1856 - Escape, Nov. 19, 1856

Before a Douglas County (Lecompton) judge appeared William F. Dyer (a pro-slavery leader) saying Col. Whipple at the head of 100 men or more, among whom were J. Ritchie, Ephraim Bainter, J.O.B. Dunning, Capt. Jamison and other not known to him, did on Monday September 8th rob him of six head of mules and horses and various merchandise, in value more than \$1000, and that this day, it being September 13, 1856 (seems it should be the 12th) the same men were assembled at Osawkie at about 8 AM, as he believed, for the purpose of robbing and burning the town and country roundabout and attacking the town of Hardtville (Hickory Point) this evening.

Upon the arrival of Governor Geary in Kansas, Lane, long wanted by the Territorial Government, determined to leave the Territory by way of Nebraska. He started from Topeka with a few men on September 11th and upon arriving in Osawkie learned that a large pro-slavery force was in the neighborhood. He sent to Topeka for reinforcements and was joined by about 50 men under Col. Whipple on the 12th. (Obviously including John Ritchie).

On the morning of the 12th the "Atchison Guards" burned a store at Grasshopper Falls and then returned to Hickory Point where Lane threatened, fortifying themselves in small buildings. Gen. Lane, with John Ritchie as chief of staff, arrived on the spot about 11

AM, and finding he could not dislodge the enemy without artillery, sent to Lawrence for reinforcements.

Governor Geary, on September 14th wrote Col. Cooke suggesting a force visit that neighborhood. Late in the afternoon of the same day, 81 men under Capt. Wood were detailed, a Deputy Marshal with them, and rode toward the scene.

Lane's men were at Osawkie when he received the proclamation ordering all forces to disband. He instructed the Topeka men to return home avoiding any collision with U.S. troops, which they did.

The Lawrence reinforcements, provided with a cannon and under Col. J. A. Harvey, had proceeded directly to Hickory Point, just north of the Shawnee County line in Jefferson County, and on the morning of the 14th had an encounter with the Missouriians. On their return to Lawrence, Col. Harvey's men were taken prisoners by the U. S. troops and imprisoned at Lecompton.

Samuel Reeder of Indianola (now a place within Topeka) was among those who rushed to Hickory Point to combat the border ruffians, having heard they were prepared to attack Valley Falls. After this minor skirmish, Reeder dashed off some lines in his diary saying they arrived about 11 o'clock in the morning, "*Fired some, retreated to Ozawkie.*" He claimed his side lost only three horses and had one man wounded, to several border ruffians killed. (Reader generally kept himself out of all conflicts.)

On the 18th of September, a few days after the return of the Topeka Company, Governor Geary and U. S. Marshal Donaldson visited Topeka for the purpose of making arrests. A squad of cavalry was stationed near the corner of Fifth and Kansas Avenue, and a line of infantry and several pieces of artillery farther east on Fifth. The arrests were mainly confined to members of the company who had been engaged in the late disturbances. Among Topeka men arrested at and about this time were Messrs. Mitchell, Ritchie, Kagi, Rastall and Sexton. They were imprisoned at Lecompton. Other men were arrested where found in camp, in all, 101 men.

The bewildered new Governor could not give the prisoners much thought. Word came that 2700 Missouriians were threatening Lawrence with an attack imminent. Governor Geary's heated handling of that danger is another story. David Atchison's only comment was, "He promised us all we wanted." Free-State men feared as much. When Geary returned to Lawrence and reported that the invaders were dispersing, Free-Soilers asked him why he had not arrested any Southerners when he was holding 100 men at Lecompton. The Governor had been in the saddle for a week and he felt he had accomplished a great deal. "I'll show you and all the damned rascals that I am Governor of Kansas" he retorted. (Geary left Kansas Territory March 10, 1857. No governor lasted long.)

The prisoner indictments were mainly on the ground of participation in the fight at Hickory Point, but Ritchie and Kagi were being accused of being in the affray on the 14th when an Atchison Company man was killed, and with others were indicted for murder. Ritchie, in addition to the general charge, was held to answer to that preferred by Mr. Dyer of Osawkie.

Prisoners were first placed in the U.S. encampment near Lecompton, that being a square of open prairie, guarded by three lines of sentinels. After examination, they were recommitted for a trial and imprisoned in an old house. At the trial in October, a few were acquitted. All would be pardoned and liberated by Governor Geary in March, 1857, in compliance with numerous petitions and on the ground that “their continued punishment could neither sub serve the ends of justice nor the interests of the Territory.”

John Ritchie waited for no pardon. Many prisoners made their escape through a small hole cut in their cabin jail in November 1856. The early Topeka Congregational minister, the **Reverend Bodwell** wrote a memorial after John Ritchie’s death and tells of the escape.

“October 30, 1856, returned to Topeka by way of Lecompton and there saw the Free State prisoners in their confinement. So, in an old journal runs the record of the day on which I made John Ritchie my first pastoral call....Asking for Col. Titus, I was led into the presence of a rough-looking military man to whom I presented my request for an interview with John Ritchie, a prisoner of his. As it was only a solitary Yankee preacher wishing to see a member of his flock under arrest, the Colonel seemed to see no danger to the Union from the interview, and gave the necessary order under which I was escorted to the rather shaky and very dirty prison house. The prisoner was soon brought in by an armed guard who, weapon in hand, stayed with us to see that we plotted no treason. With such a witness, our talk was of course, quite general.”

“A hearty handshake, a look in each others’ faces, a few kind words of greeting, inquiry and response, and I said farewell to whom I then and ever afterward believed to be all he professed—a friend of God and a lover of that freedom which he held to be the God-given and inalienable right of all men.”

“I had been received with the grave and dignified courtesy of a man to whom a prison was a good place, if it fell to his lot in the way of right-doing. And as I rode from what was in those days, for Abolitionists, not a desirable or healthy locality, I felt what thirty years has not disproved, that the Free Congregational Church of Topeka had there as one of its seven pillars, a representative who might often be mistaken, but who would never once cowardly or selfishly turn his back on God or His church, or the very poorest of His poor.”

“Our next meeting was on this wise: Nov. 19th the whisper passed about that some prisoners, escaped from Lecompton, were hiding at Father Seagrave’s. There was no safety in Topeka, the ferries were few and would be watched, but some cottonwood

house-logs, long cut and well seasoned, were found at the lower ferry landing in the early dusk of a chill morning. A lariat bound them together and so it comes that the journal says: November 20th at 5 AM made a raft, ferried some of our friends across the Kansas (river) and went with them to the Nebraska road. Almost a year passed ere we met again.”

A letter, signed by ninety-eight of the Free-State men imprisoned at Lecompton, addressed to the People of America, was gotten out and into the hands of the press.

The letter appears in *The Englishman in Kansas*, T. H. Gladstone, published 1971 and reproduced from an 1857 edition. This English newsman made a long visit to Kansas, and said he had the prisoners' letter before him as he wrote, in 1857.

After narrating at length some of the particulars of capture...

“We come now to speak of a subject too immediate, too vital to admit of our passing it unnoticed, yet too full of horror to dwell upon. We allude to our treatment and condition since our confinement here, any description of which must come far short of the terrible reality. A few of our guard will ever be remembered by us with emotion of the deepest gratitude for their kindness, but the greatest portion of them are drunken, brawling demons, too vile and wicked for portrayal. Times without number they have threatened to either shoot or stab us, and not infrequently have they attempted to carry our their threats...Most of us are poorly clad—few have any bedding. Our prison is open and airy, yet small; without surrounded with unearthly filth; within all is crawling with vermin.”

*“When youths we listened with doubt to the dark stories of the Jersey prison ship, and the Black Hole of Calcutta, never dreaming that we should at last be a sad, actual part of their counterpart! More than once have we prophesied to one another that all would not leave this charnal house alive. Several have been dangerously ill, one has died. His name was **William Bowles**...he left his sufferings this morning at one o'clock. Before his death, we requested of the guard to have him removed to a place of quiet, yet nothing was done. Last night all the physicians in town were sent for, and each refused to come...we can see nothing left us but an appeal to the last tribunal, with God as our judge, and our jury the great American people.”*

The mention of the prison ships of the Revolutionary War, hints that we may be hearing the voice of John Ritchie. If he did not himself compose and write the letter, we know what story he told to the others, while they passed the time in confinement.

Once rafted across the Kaw River in his escape, John Ritchie took the Nebraska road back to Franklin, Indiana where he remained for nearly a year. The Lecompton prisoners and escapees, pardoned by Governor Geary in 1857, were also granted amnesty by an act of the Kansas Legislature, passed February 11, 1859.

AFTERMATH - 1860

John Ritchie Kills A United States Marshal

Fry W. Giles, one of the nine founders of Topeka and a friend of John Ritchie's devotes a six-page chapter to this event in his *Thirty Years in Topeka*. Giles recalls that during 1858 and 1859 little or nothing was heard concerning the old indictments in the Lecompton court, which the free state men had come to believe had been quashed. John Ritchie had long since returned to take an active part in the life of the town and Territory, having been a conspicuous figure in the elections and conventions from 1857 to 1859, in which the Free State party wiped out all local political control save that exercised by the federal court and the United State Marshal whose authority came from the pro-slavery Democratic administration in Washington.

In spite of the fact that Governor Geary had pardoned the Lecompton prisoners, Giles reports that in 1886 rumors were abroad that the indicted persons must appear in court, which was understood to imply, at least, payment of considerable bills of costs before the dismissal of their cases could be entered. This seemed a flagrant breach of good faith after a declaration of amnesty, and they generally refused to appear before a court of their enemies.

"On the 20th of April 1860, U.S. Deputy Marshal Leonard Arms came to Topeka to effect Mr. Ritchie's arrest. He was aware that Colonel Ritchie was a man of great firmness of purpose and fearless in his discharge of whatever he conceived to be the right. The Marshal made more particular inquiries as to Mr. Ritchie's character and as to his place of residence, and delayed his visit to his house until nearly sundown. He had a friend with him, but it did not appear that he had brought arms with him from his home in Lawrence, for he borrowed a revolver in Topeka."

"Colonel Ritchie resided on the southern border of the town, a little east of his present residence. [1116 Madison] Upon reaching the place of Colonel Ritchie, he met him in company with Mr. Harvey D. Rice, in the yard. Leaving his horse and carriage in care of his friend, Arms called Ritchie told him that he should not be arrested and walked to his house, followed by Arms."

"Upon entering his house, Ritchie got his pistol and awaited Arms' coming. The Marshal entered the house, pistol in hand, and the two men stood confronting each other, each ready to fire at a moment's notice, the Marshal insisting upon Ritchie's surrender, and Ritchie with vehemence replying that he should not be arrested alive."

"At length, conversation ceased, and the deadly arms were lowered. The Marshal turned to the door and called his friend to come to him and apparently was disposed to make no further attempt at arrest."

“In a minute after, however, he turned upon Ritchie and uttered the sentence, ‘By God! You have to go!’ advancing toward Ritchie who stepped into an adjoining room, both with revolvers pointed at each other. Ritchie then said, ‘Stand back or I’ll shoot you!’ Arms advanced a pace and Ritchie fired. The ball took effect in Arms’ neck, and he fell and expired without uttering a word.”

*“Mr. Ritchie surrendered himself to Justice **Joseph C. Miller** on the same evening for trial. General James H. Lane, at Lawrence, was sent for to act with attorneys of Topeka as Ritchie’s counsel. The trial was held before Justice Miller on the 21st and continued until late in the evening of that day. A high degree of excitement prevailed in Topeka, the citizens generally sympathizing with and justifying Ritchie in the course he had pursued.”*

Justice Miller’s verdict, finding “that John Ritchie has committed homicide, but one justifiable in the sight of God and man” was given about midnight and “was received by the large audience with demonstrations of great joy.” Bonfires were lit in Topeka and Lawrence, in celebration over the news of the verdict.

In the vault at the State Historical Society are hastily printed broadsides announcing mass meetings, one in Lawrence denouncing Arms’ “murder,” the other at Topeka approving Ritchie’s act. At the latter meeting, resolutions of considerable length, which Giles reproduces in full, were adopted. At the Lawrence mass meeting, the pro-slavery sympathizers found themselves in a weak minority and disbursed after a feeble display of indignation, met by boos from the opposing and more numerous faction.

John Ritchie suffered no further molestation, nor did the Lecompton court make any further attempt to press the old indictments.

The Congregational Church of which Ritchie had been a stalwart member from the beginning, felt obliged to bring him to a trial of its own, but its inquisition was brief. The church’s record book contains an entry for May 19, 1861, giving the conclusion of its trustees that the act was done in self-defense and that no further action on the part of the church seemed necessary.

Note: With very minor additions, copied from Paul Adams’ biography of John Ritchie of 1950. Mr. Adams was long an important figure in Kansas historical associations.

John Ritchie and Washburn College

The Reverend S. Y. Lum of Plymouth Congregational Church in Lawrence preached the first sermon in Topeka in late December, 1854.

On October 14, 1855 nine persons met in a small cabin constructed of boards and oak bark, the home of **James Cowles**, to form an anti-slavery Congregational Church:

Rev. Paul Shepherd
John Ritchie
William Bowker
M. C. Dickey

A. H. Barnard
William Scales
H. H. and James C. Cowles
Charles A. Sexton

The Township Association granted them six lots at the southwest corner of 7th and Harrison streets. The first pastor was the Reverend **Lewis Bodwell** of Clifton, New York.

“The Reverend Lewis Bodwell, who arrived with great hope and enthusiasm in the summer of 1856, dejectedly remarked in October, ‘I cannot say the prospect is very flattering. Our forces (13 members) are diminished by various causes. Of our three trustees, one is recovering from a severe illness, another has gone east to spend the winter, and the third (John Ritchie) is a prisoner and now on trial at Lecompton with the Free State men.’” (*Witness of the Times*, parentheses by the book’s authors’)

“When Topeka was not two years old, John Ritchie, William Bowker, Deacon Farnsworth, Harrison Hannahs, Harvey Rice, Sherman Bodwell and Lewis Bodwell met and determined to build a house of worship. A foundation began for the Free Congregational Church in the fall of 1857. Mr. Rice furnished the lime, Mr. Ritchie attended to the quarrying of the stone.” (*Kansas and Kansans*)

“Hard luck plagued the Congregationalists. They planned a simple one-room structure with a short bell tower. Work began in the fall of 1857, the men sparing what time they could from their personal labors but in 1859 a windstorm destroyed their work leaving behind a \$1,000 pile of rubble. Work resumed, but in June of 1860 a storm struck damaging the walls. Finally, with parishioners perched on makeshift seating, the first sermon was given January 1, 1861 by Reverend Peter MacVicar.” (*Witness of the Times*)

“At a Topeka meeting April 25, 1857, Congregationalists moved to form a Kansas College and secure its location. Reverend Bodwell later remembered that this action was taken in a small hired room by seven ministers and three laymen, representing eight churches.”

History of Kansas, Andreas, 1883

Kansas and Kansans, William Connelly, 1918 pub. by Kansas State Historical Society

Witness of the Times, A History of Shawnee County, Bird & Wallace, pub. by Shawnee County Historical Society

Topeka interests seized the opportunity, promising the church the 160 acres Ritchie proposed, along with a two-story stone or brick structure, to be completed by January 1, 1860.

On April 11, 1856, one year after his arrival in Kansas Territory, after an appetizing meal of cornbread and sidemeat, John Ritchie and Harrison Hannahs walked across the prairie to a stretch of rising ground overlooking the Shunganunga woods. To Hannahs, Ritchie said, *“Here is an ideal site for a college and, if possible, I am determined to secure it for that purpose. I want you and other friends to join me in an effort to found a Christian college here.”* That was the quarter section, which forms the present Washburn College campus.

The land John Ritchie had selected belonged to a man named Davis who was reluctant to sell it until gold was discovered in Colorado and he wanted to go there. He offered his quarter section to Ritchie the spring of 1859 for \$1,600 reports biographer Paul Adams in 1950. The actual deed reads \$1,000.

In his reminiscences, Harvey D. Rice who, as an incorporator and longtime member of the Board of Trustees of Lincoln College and of Washburn, knew every detail of the school’s development, related the circumstances of the acquisition of the Davis land. Ritchie did not have the purchase price and went to Rice to see if he did. Rice was empty of pocket but he had an idea. If Ritchie would provide him with a power of attorney under which he could mortgage Ritchie’s Topeka land, Rice would undertake to find a lender. He returned to Topeka in June 1859 with \$2,000 borrowed in Hartford, Connecticut, Rice’s former home. The purchase of the Davis land was made by Ritchie soon thereafter according to Rice.

- 1859 April 16 - Deed Book I p.99
George Davis and wife Clara of Topeka...for \$1000...to John Ritchey of Shawnee County, Kansas
SW ¼ Sec 1 Twp 12 Range 15 (site of Washburn University)

- 1859 April 20 p. 102
John Ritchey of Topeka appoints Harvey D. Rice “my attorney and in my name to mortgage a tract of land...
NE ¼ Sec 6 Twp 12 Range 16, 160 acres”
(Ritchie’s home property starting 10th and Kansas Avenue)

- 1859 June 16, p. 270
John Ritchey and wife Mary J. of Shawnee County Kansas Territory...\$2,000, \$1,100 to us in hand paid by Francis Gillette and John Hooker under the name & style of Gillette-Hooker of Hartford, Conn. and John Whitman of West Hartford and Joseph Davenport of the same place.
\$1,000 paid by Gilette & Hooker
\$ 100 paid by John Whitman

\$ 100 paid by Joseph Davenport
NE ¼ Sec 6 Twp 12 R16, East, 160 acres (homeplace)

War infringed on college plans and the school was not incorporated until February 9, 1865 as Lincoln College. John Ritchie had attempted to make the land transfer to the school in 1861 after he had gone away to war, by once again making Mr. Rice his agent. Rice and Mrs. Ritchie did execute a deed to the unincorporated body set up by the Congregational Church. By family tradition, Ritchie signed Washburn's deed on a drumhead on the field of war.

In Mrs. H. C. Root's recollections of April 27, 1903, in a paper read before the Native Sons and Daughters of Kansas, she states that John Ritchie gave the three lots on the corner of Tenth and Jackson streets for the preparatory school, and \$1000 in cash toward its construction, as well as the 160 acres that became the permanent campus.

“Although Ritchie obtained the future college site, its distance from town hindered immediate location there. That spring a seven-room ‘preparatory’ building was erected at a cost of \$8000 at 10th and Jackson streets, which opened January 3, 1866. Lincoln trustees acknowledged the town building to be temporary, but at the same time felt Ritchie's 160-acre tract still too far out of town. But by 1871 Washburn College settled upon John Ritchie's land, or rather the northeast corner of it.” (*Witness of the Times*)

By *Builders of Topeka*, Markley, 1934, John Ritchie gave \$3000 to the college of which the 160-acre site was part payment. Lincoln College record book contains an entry dated June 25, 1866 making reference to “the quarter section donated by Colonel Ritchie.” The college catalog of 1867 lists John Ritchie among trustees.

In October of 1868 Professor Horatio Butterfield persuaded Ichabod Washburn of Worcester, Massachusetts to give \$25,000 as an endowment, and the college was renamed for its benefactor in May 1869.

From Reverend Lewis Bodwell's *JOHN RITCHIE, A PASTOR'S SKETCH*

“But much had been done which showed the constant devotion of the man to his two ideals—a Christian church and a Christian education, free to all of any race. The General Association had in April holden the first meeting reported on our early minutes (1857) and of its ten members, he was one. His urgency in the matter of the talked-of and hoped-for college is shown in the place assigned him then as Chairman of the Committee on College Location. And there, as at the next and future meetings, his faith was proven by his works, his interest by his gifts: 160 acres of land offered again and again until we accepted, and he deeded the spot where now stand the buildings which will ever be a memorial of his forethought and faith.”

In John Ritchie's newspaper eulogy, printed upon his death in 1887, less than 16 years after the fact, it was said, "His philanthropy was fully evidenced in his gift of 160 acres of ground to Washburn College."

Through the years, descendants of John Ritchie enjoyed free tuition with enrollment at Washburn, it being the understanding on all sides that the family was entitled to two free scholarships in any one year, as a legacy from the founder of the family. There is ample evidence in the secretary's First Record book that such perpetual scholarships were granted, with certificated to prove them.

Washburn was financially troubled by 1940, with the school finally choosing the route of municipalization. In April 1941, voters approved. Scholarships of any kind would be no longer honored. (I graduated from high school that very spring, 1941.)

Should you visit Topeka and the Washburn campus look for your rock. On a large boulder is a brass plate, "In Memory Of John Ritchie, An Early Friend of Washburn College."

Mary Margaret Ritchie Wright on Ritchie/Washburn

She has earned the last word for she “fought like a tiger” to preserve the scholarships, and then for truth and her grandfather’s honor. A local columnist had published someone’s information saying Ritchie and never “given” the land at all. Aunt Maggie had the facts and figures, and her response was published...

“In your Around About column you made a statement to the effect that you had been informed that Colonel John Ritchie was paid \$2600 for the 160 acres which now comprise the Washburn campus. As proof, a March 27, 1865 deed was cited (Vol 9:352). On the face of it, this deed would seem to be conclusive that such a transaction took place. However, that is only part of the story.”

“In the year 1857 the general association of Congregational Ministers and Churches...Colonel Ritchie appointed to a committee...sites considered...first choice the Davis farm. So it was in 1860 that the first deed to the college was executed. The 160 acres was made over to the trustees of the Topeka Institute (as the college was then known) for and in consideration of the sum of one dollar. (Vol 8:220). Said premises were made free from all encumbrances and John Ritchie took it upon himself to pay the \$800 mortgage on the property that had been contracted by Davis. The land was given to the college by John Ritchie and was in its possession five years before the 1865 deed was drawn up.”

*“The 1865 deed and the sum of money inscribed therein are explained in An Historical Sketch of Washburn College by its President, Peter MacVicar, dated 1886. ‘In the spring of 1865 an effort was made to secure subscriptions for the erection of a building and for the purchase of a site. Over \$7000 was subscribed. The most generous subscriptions were those of **Colonel John Ritchie** of \$3000 and **H. D. Rice** for \$1000. In part pay of his subscription Colonel Ritchie deeded to the college, in fee simple, the 160 acres on which the buildings now stand. The 160 acres were valued then at \$2400.’”*

*“A similar statement appears in the minuets of the Congregational Association, and in his reminiscences **Harvey D. Rice** states, ‘Among the persons subscribing to Lincoln college was John Ritchie who made the subscription of \$3000 and in payment of which he turned in the college site at \$2400, two lots corner of Tenth and Jackson streets \$200, and cash \$400, canceling the subscription.’” (See Volume 1 of Washburn College Catalogs in the Washburn Library)*

*“The 1865 deed includes the transfer of the 160 acres valued at \$2400 and the city lots ‘number 78 and 80 on Tenth Avenue E’ (where the Memorial building now stands) valued at \$200. The lots on the corner of Tenth and Jackson on which Harvey Rice built a 2-story building at a cost of \$7000 that housed the college from 1865 to 1872, were sold to the city of Topeka, by the school, for \$15,000. **John Ritchie gave the college not one, but two sites.**”*

“With the municipalization of Washburn the 160 acres have become a part of the city of Topeka. But that is no reason why the past should be forgotten, or why certain facts should be disregarded.”

If thy tongue offend...

His church stood behind John Ritchie over a homicide. But a church which chastised wayward members for dancing, playing cards, even for pleasure-riding on the Sabbath, could not be expected to condone John's loose words which injured the good name of another pillar of the church. **Deacon Erastus Tefft**, a pious and active member of the congregation since the days of the church's birth, had also erected Topeka's finest new hotel, the Tefft House. For some reason, Ritchie did not like the deacon and he voiced his sentiments abroad. (I have read that John Ritchie had given the land for Topeka's first fine hotel, the Fifth Avenue Hotel.)

On March 20, 1863 Dr. Tefft addressed a letter to the church demanding that Colonel Ritchie be summoned to answer for slanderous attacks upon Tefft's character. Ritchie, the gentleman complained, had said *"that I stand on street corners to see who I could defraud and cheat out of their property; that I killed a man to get charge of his property and defraud his wife and children; that on coming to Kansas I reported myself worth \$50,000 and said I would build a Ritchey Block; that he respected such men as Cummings and Dudley for people knew what they were, but that I was a hypocrite."* To make matters worse, said Tefft, *"when I asked him if it were true that he said these things, he only answered, 'What of it?'"*

By the church records, Colonel Ritchie declined to make any retraction. As a consequence, on July 1, 1863, the congregation pronounced its verdict. The word "excommunicated" closed the official record of John Ritchie's affiliation with the church.

There is a story that the Colonel had called the Deacon a liar, and had been persuaded to apologize, but upon seeing a triumphant gleam in the Deacon's eye, he had amended his statement by saying, *"I will apologize for I have promised to. But Dr. Tefft did tell what was not true. You can turn me out of your church but you cannot turn me out of the church of Christ."*

The Reverend Lewis Bodwell, the church's pastor with whom Ritchie had toiled lovingly upon the church's building, joined unflinchingly in this condemnation of his friend, for he also had flint in his makeup. But not only did their friendship survive this ordeal, the incident did not even interfere with Ritchie's custom of attending church services and of partaking of the communion, and Bodwell rejoiced at that.

JOHN RITCHIE IN THE CIVIL WAR
Brevet Brigadier General, 1865

FIFTH KANSAS CAVALRY (Kansas Volunteers)

Organized at Fort Leavenworth July 12, 1861 to January 27, 1862

Captain, Company A	16 July 1861
Lt. Colonel	11 Sept 1861
Colonel	17 Sept 1861
Resigned	11 Dec 1861
Major	29 Jan 1862
Honorably Discharged	21 Mar 1862

Field and Staff:

Colonel Hampton P. Johnson of Leavenworth, as of Aug 1861
Lt. Colonel John Ritchie of Topeka
Major James H. Summers
Adjutant Stephen R. Harrington of Washington, D. C.

After Colonel Johnson was killed in battle in September 1861, Colonel Ritchie commanded the Fifth Kansas.

II REGIMENT INDIAN HOME GUARDS (Federal troops)

Formed at Baxter Springs, Kansas in June 1862

Colonel	22 June 1862
Bvt. Brig. Gen. Volunteers	21 Feb 1865
Honorably mustered out	31 May 1865

1st Brigade, Brig. General Frederick Salomon
Included II Indian Home Guards under Col. Ritchie

2nd Brigade, Col. William Weer of 10th Kansas Volunteers
Included III Indian Home Guards under Col. Wm. Phillips

3rd Brigade, Col. William F. Cloud
Included I Indian Home Guards under Major James Phillips

Reorganization when General Salomon took command of all forces in January 1863.

The Indian Regiments were organized into one command, the First Indian Brigade under Col. William Phillips. Colonel Ritchie remained in command of his regiment of II Indian Home Guards.

FIFTH REGIMENT, KANSAS VOLUNTEER CAVALRY

Volunteer American armies, at least at the beginning of a war, are no more than untrained, undisciplined militia, and like militia troops they expected to remain totally independent, elected their own officers, and were inclined to vote on every contemplated action. (During the Mexican War, this attitude extended even unto President Polk, who frowned on the West Pointers demanding time for the army to be trained and disciplined.)

General John C. Fremont was in command of the Department of Missouri and while he readied grandiose plans, **Kansas' Senator Jim Lane** took self-appointed command of the Kansas volunteer brigade. He pronounced the town of Fort Scott untenable in case of attack and set the men to work on a new Fort Lincoln, twelve miles away. The work was barely completed when **Confederate General Sterling Price** started north to retake Missouri with 10,000 victorious veterans of **Wilson Creek**, the site of a great battle. It was late summer 1861.

The left wing of Price's army was spied by Lane's men on **Dry Wood Creek** ten miles east of Fort Scott. (By pension records, **John Ritchie** was under fire at Dry Wood Creek.)

*"We drew ammunition and equipage. I opened the case of Springfield rifles and bayonets and gave them to men on horseback who rode off with them like rails lying across their saddles. It was a serious time, but into it crept now and again the grotesque and laughable, the ludicrous as well as the solemn. Our men met the enemy, dismounted, and from tall prairie grass poured deadly shot into Price's advancing columns."**

**Gun and the Gospel*, Reverend H. D. Fisher, D.D. 1896, published by Medical Century Company, Chicago & New York, second edition—My husband found this in a used-book store in Lincoln, Nebraska.

A small howitzer, Old Sacramento, a sentimental relic from the Mexican War was brought into play, with the first shell bursting in the midst of an enemy battery. Our storyteller, the Chaplain for the Fifth Kansas, states less than 380 Kansas troops were in the fight, but that Price's retreat amounted almost to panic. *"It was the acme of patriotic eloquence. It was action."*

Price was interested only in repossessing Missouri. A few captured rebels told Lane that Old Pap Price was heading first for Lexington, Missouri. Price moved northeast and the Fifth Kansas followed to **Morristown, Missouri** where on 17 September 1861 an attack was made on the southern force. **Col. Hampton Johnson** of the Fifth of Kansas was shot and killed while leading the charge. By the Reverend Fisher, Colonel Ritchie took command and his Colonelcy, in military records, is of this date.

Fremont had ordered the rest of Lane's men to fall back on Fort Leavenworth. **Union General Samuel Sturgis**, the Fifth Kansas under him, was to protect Lexington. They

failed to arrive in time and Lexington fell. Price held the town for two weeks, the retreated south to Springfield.

Colonel Ritchie's Fifth Kansas was soon marching to Springfield, via Osceola on the Osage River. The river was a difficult stream to cross and there was only a miserable old scow with a chain of iron rods reaching from bank to bank. General Lane had been in Osceola and was still there to consult with Colonel Ritchie and Reverend Fisher over how to cross that river. The scow was pulled out of the water, repairs made, a crew set to bailing, and it served to carry men, wagons, mules and artillery.

The good Reverend Fisher omits the telling of the earlier drama at Osceola, probably because he and the Fifth Kansas had not arrived until after the fireworks.

By Monaghan's accounting of it in *Civil War on the Western Border*, General Lane had obeyed Fremont's order to take his men to Kansas City, but not including the Fifth Kansas who were detailed to Lexington. Lane destroyed all the towns on his route, which had welcomed the Rebels. In the pocket of a captive, Lane found an order for the enrolling of Indians under the Confederate banner, news that would shock the north.

Lane's army came to Osceola, 90 miles south of the Missouri River on September 22, 1861 just two days after Price had occupied Lexington. His advance cavalymen complained that townsmen had shot at them. Inspecting warehouses, Lane found tons of lead, kegs of powder, barrels of brandy, 3000 sacks of flour, 50 sacks of coffee and more. He had found one of Price's depots. He impressed wagons and teams to move out the stores, then burned the town totally. Lane's reputation galloped ahead of him and Negroes and refugee Indians by the score joined his marching column. He would encamp outside Kansas City and issue an order prohibiting his men from plundering, but few obeyed him.

Fremont had an army of 40,000 spread across Missouri in five divisions, with General Lane and Brig. General of Volunteers Samuel Sturgis (the Fifth Kansas under him) on the border. On October 24, 1861 Fremont came within 60 miles of Springfield, where rumor had it the Rebel Missouri legislature was in session. Union men charged and the 2000 rebels fled. Fremont entered Springfield on October 26th and could telegraph Washington that he had retrieve Missouri. But the order would soon come relieving Fremont of command. Soldiers raged with resentment for as schoolboys they had revered The Pathfinder. Fremont would ride home to St. Louis and the new **General Hunter** counsel with his officers and order a retreat north.

Lane and Sturgis, in the meantime, had arrived in Springfield. Lane's men loaded with plunder and with the hundreds of escaping Negroes in his camp. (General Fremont had recognized **Fall Leaf**, an Indian who had guided him on exploring expeditions.) Springfield became a city of tents.

The Reverend Fisher picks up the story again.

“We joined Fremont’s command at Springfield, and remained in camp until General David Hunter took command and relieved Fremont. While encamped here we were short of rations. Colonel Ritchie, myself, and about 30 men were sent on a foraging mission. We took possession of Isam’s Mills and sent the men to the farms, and they threshed the wheat and brought it to the mills, where we ground it into flour and sent it into camp, supplying the wants of our army. While camped at Springfield and on our return march, via Lamar, our camp was the center of attraction to multitudes of contrabands (slaves) and refugees, so that they cumbered our camp and movements, and became at last so numerous as to threaten our subsistence.”

Hunter’s retreat north was in three columns, the third column under Sturgis and Lane, moving along the Missouri/Kansas border. In this company, the Fifth rode back to Kansas.

Lane, when planters laughed at him for retreating, sent their houses up in smoke. At every crossroads, slaves waited to join the procession. Sturgis sternly kept slaves out of his lines and restored them to their master. But Lane had a wagon train a mile long carrying children and furniture of slaves. As the historians have it, Lane formed a “Black Brigade” and ordered them west into Kansas to help harvest fall crops.

Chaplain Fisher tells us that Lane called him to the head of the column and asked him what could be done to relieve the army of these contrabands, without exposing them to their enemies. It was the Chaplain’s idea to take them to Kansas, and to employ them by the farmers there. They were put into his charge, and so far as he was able he obtained paid employment for them as farmhands. It was Chaplain Fisher (not Lane) who rose high in his saddle and proclaimed to the massed people that they were “freed” in the name of General Lane and the U. S. Government. Eloquenty, he tells of their joyful celebration. (President Lincoln had not yet issued his Emancipation Proclamation.)

Sturgis and the Fifth Kansas returned to Fort Scott. After a few expeditions to places in the vicinity, the regiment went into winter quarters at **Camp Denver** near Barnesville, Kansas. John Ritchie resigned during the winter. It has been said over dispute with Kansas Governor Robinson over assignment of officers.

John Ritchie served again with the Kansas Volunteers from January 29 to March 21, 1862. With no action close by, very likely he was involved with Lane in the formation of the Indian Regiments at Baxter Springs, Kansas.

Lincoln replaced General Hunter on November 19 with **General Henry Halleck** whose first challenge was news that Price had reoccupied Missouri as far north as Osceola. To get Price out of the state, the Department of Kansas was created, and that command given to **Brig. General Samuel S. Curtis**, an Iowa congressman with both military and engineering experience. He had engineered part of the National Road.

THE UNION INDIAN REGIMENTS

With Confederate Indian units already formed and fighting, Kansas Senator James H. Lane nagged President Lincoln incessantly for protection on the border. Constantly he urged enlistment of refugee Indians in Kansas, driven from their homes by the Confederate Indian **Stand Watie** and some Texas troops. Let these embittered people reassert Federal authority in the Territory. Lincoln finally consented, but advocating only a punitive force.

Animosity among the Indians in Oklahoma Territory had long existed, some of it dating back to Georgia days when there were several factions involved in the move to the west. Many of them were of mixed blood and many were slaveholding, but nearly all were farming, "civilized" peoples. **John Ross**, the 70-year-old Cherokee chief with seven-eighths white blood, had tried to keep all Indians neutral, but was opposed both by Stand Watie, a disgruntled Cherokee, and all the Indian agents in the territory who supported the Confederacy. The capital of the Cherokee Nation was at Tahlequah, near Fort Gibson.

Fort Gibson had been established in 1824 to prepare for the coming of the Five Civilized Tribes from the east, and had been a training ground for Zachary Taylor, Jefferson Davis and Sam Houston, in the past. The fort had been abandoned by Federal troops four years earlier and was now in Cherokee hands.

Along with Stand Watie, heading Confederate Indian troops was the liquor-loving **Douglas Cooper** and his brigade of Choctaw, Chickasaw and some Texas troops raised at his agency, by now numbering near 2000 men. They had fought to stop Indian exodus to Kansas.

Southern Kansas had filled with the refugee Indians including some 1575 loyal Creeks who had been attacked on three separate occasions while en route to Kansas to obtain Federal military protection. Survivors never forgot the scenes of the frozen Kansas campsite of the several thousand Indian refugees, which lay near LeRoy, Kansas. Hundreds of frozen limbs were amputated by Federal surgeons and mass graves dug for those dying of exposure and disease.

In November and December of 1861 the war in the Cherokee Nation was being reported in northern newspapers. From Fort Leavenworth, in late December, Kansas Indian Agent **George Cutter** wired Washington, "Help needed badly, hurry up Lane."

But President Lincoln appointed **Colonel William Weer** to head the northern brigades, not Lane. Weer, too, was a "bottle" man, and in September 1862, at the request of officers under him, he was replaced with **General Frederick Salomon**. The U. S. War Department prepared for an early summer invasion of the Territory. The refugees were clamoring to return to their former homes and were to accompany Federal troops.

Organized into an Indian Expedition, they were expected to facilitate the invasion by scouting the Territory, and to help in routing Confederate Indian guerillas.

On June 22, 1862, Colonel John Ritchie took command of the II Indian Regiment of Home Guards. His officers:

Lt. Colonel, Fred W. Schuarte
First Lts. and Adjutants, E. W. Robinson and John Palmer
First Lt. and Regimental Quartermaster, George Husman (?)
Surgeon, A. J. Ritchie
Captains, James H. Bruce and Joel Moody
Captains, Spring Frog, Moses Price, Archibald Scrapper, Budd Gritts

Battles of the II Indian Regiment

Shirley's Ford	-1 officer killed, 15 enlisted men killed and four wounded
Cane Hill	-no loss
Prairie Grove	-no loss
Fort Blunt	-3 enl. men killed, 2 enl. men missing
Cabin Creek	-4 enl. men killed, 5 enl. men wounded
Honey Springs	-4 enl. men missing

Moving Into Indian Territory

In July 1862, Colonel Weer sent a detachment to Tahlequah, capital of the Cherokee Nation. Without firing a shot, Chief John Ross and several of his leading officers were captured and taken back to Baxter Springs, Kansas. John Ross was sent to Washington where he lived most comfortably, and was a friend to President Lincoln. Upon the return to Baxter Springs thousands of loyal Indians came along seeking Federal protection. The III Indian Home Guard was formed under **Colonel William Phillips**, a Scotsman who had made a name for himself in Kansas as an anti-slavery reporter for the New York Tribune. Later, all the Indian Regiments were placed under his authority. Historian Monaghans praises his work highly.

In August of 1862 the Confederate **Hindman** became commander of the District of Arkansas that included Missouri and Indian Territory, a daring, curly-haired dandy who wore rose-colored kid gloves.

Shirley's Ford In Missouri - September 20, 1862

In Missouri, behind the stone walls of Newtonia, a town between Springfield and Neosho, Rebel leaders, Hindman, Cooper, and Stand Watie and his Indians, concentrated

forces. General Blunt, the ardent Kansas abolitionist, came down from St. Louis to reinforce the frontier army. On October 4 the rebels were sent flying with Blunt following. In Indian Territory at Old Fort Wayne, on October 22, he overtook the southern army, scattering them and capturing all their artillery.

("Old Fort Wayne" may be the battle "Fort Blunt" referred to above. I have been unable to find reference to a Fort Blunt.)

Daily, mounted detachments of the Indian Home Guard watched and reported enemy movement. The **Confederate Colonel T. C. Hawpe**, under Cooper, in his advance north, located the camp of the II Indian Regiment commanded by Colonel John Ritchie, at Shirley's Ford on Spring River, and on the morning of September 20 at about 8 o'clock, fired upon and drove in the Indian pickets, causing a panic among the 1500 women and children. But the Colonel soon rallied his Indian soldiers, and after a sharp action of about half an hour, routed the enemy and killed, as he reported, two captains and twenty men and captured their flag. He reported the Union Indian loss at 16 enlisted men and one officer killed, and nine wounded. The officer killed was **Captain George Scrapper**, while leading his men. Colonel Cloud of the III Brigade arrived at Ritchie's camp the day after the action and advanced some distance south of it, but the enemy had returned to their main command at Elk Mills.

(From *The Union Brigade In The Civil War*, Wiley Britton, 1922, published in Kansas City. Seen in Dallas, Texas public library)

Cane Hill In Arkansas - November 28, 1862

The Union army settled down for a winter of border patrol against guerillas, headquarter encampments covering a 100-mile line. Late in November Blunt's scouts reported a division of Hindman's horse coming through the Boston Mountains, under the young Missouri officer, **Marmaduke**, including all Hindman's cavalry. Blunt started south with 5000 men and 30 cannon, and after a 35-mile march, found the enemy on November 28 encamped at Cane Hill in Arkansas, a hamlet on the Fayetteville-Van Buren Road. The Confederates had expected to winter in this rich and hospitable farming country. Blunt ordered Colonel Salomon to hold one division in reserve, and with the other two, opened attack. In the face of an approaching storm, Marmaduke drew back, hoping to entrap Blunt, or at least get away, and they chose a narrow defile to dismount.

Blunt called for volunteers, to prevent any orderly retreat. **Lt. Colonel Jewell** of the Sixth Kansas accepted the rise, raced down the road with half his regiment, lost his own life, and failed to seal the entrance. Blunt's superior numbers availed little in the defile. Once, a countercharge was attempted, but Blunt's lines were impenetrable. Marmaduke sent a flag of truce, receiving permission to gather dead and wounded. Then, Blunt learned the commander opposing him was **Jo Shelby** of Missouri who with his horsemen crossed so many times into Kansas to vote, before the war. Blunt fanned out in the

rolling Cane Hill country, and sent to St. Louis for reinforcements, preparing to meet Hindman at Cane Hill.

Prairie Grove in Arkansas - December 1862

On December 6 Herron's reinforcement division marched into Fayetteville, 25 miles from Cane Hill. In the Boston Mountains, Hindman was confident he would defeat Blunt before supporting troops arrived. Jo Shelby was in the van on December 2nd when shot at by a scouting party from Blunt's Sixth Kansas.

Shelby's men captured 22 of the Kansans, fed them false information and paroled them. Blunt was not deceived. On December 5th the Rebels were within eight miles of Cane Hill, and Herron's help still 50 miles away. Hindman vowed to have Herron for breakfast and gobble up Blunt for dinner.

Lighting 100 fires to appear a "camped" army, Hindman slid around toward the Fayetteville road, the **James** boys **Frank and Jesse** riding in his ranks and captured 21 commissary wagons headed for Blunt's lines. Almost immediately, Jo Shelby was attacked by the Third Missouri and surrounded and overwhelmed, Shelby surrendered. Before sidearms were handed over, the 373 Missouri Union soldiers were captured, and Shelby again a free man.

Hindman had the advantage, and Herron's relief troops were at Fayetteville, exhausted from their march. But on December 7, 1862, Hindman stopped when he reached Prairie Grove church, between Fayetteville and Cane Hill, placing 8000 of his fabled horde in a 2-mile line, to await attack from Herron's 6000, while Blunt's 8000 more Federals were on the alert eight miles away at Cane Hill. In the midst of heavy artillery fire, and after two hours of bombardment, Herron ordered in his infantry, at considerable loss to Union troops. Herron charged twice more and failed to budge the Confederates. Where was Blunt?

Back in Cane Hill, Blunt was still fooled by Hindman's campfire stunt! Unaware of the Rebs' departure, and awaiting attack, the wait was irritating. Blunt was very evidently nervous. Finally, he heard the guns at Illinois Creek in **Prairie Grove**. In a tumult, all headed for the battle. Blunt outran his staff, arriving on the battlefield alone to pick out his position. Two shots from his lead batteries announced his arrival to Herron. Blunt was as yet unfamiliar with the field, and his two shots landed among Union skirmishers.

After an hour's bombardment, Blunt ordered an advance, from rail fence, to hedge, to barnyard. Night fell, and Salomon's fresh division (with Ritchie?) was to join tomorrow's battle.

Although obviously defeated, Hindman claimed victory because his men held original lines on Prairie Grove ridge. After dark, with blankets wrapped around cannon wheels,

he secretly retreated. In the morning, he sent back a white flag, asking for a 12-hour truce to tend wounded and bury dead. Blunt, deceived again, granted the truce. Blunt's burial details reported the Confederates were picking up arms from the field instead of bodies, and Blunt put a stop to it. Opposite Blunt's batteries where Hindman had urged Arkansas conscripts into an unwilling charge, bodies lay close together. Salvage crews picked up unshot bullets by the hatful. The conscripts had bitten them from the cartridges and fired only blank loads against their nation's flag. The total battle casualties were between 1200 and 1300 men, on each side.

Both Blunt and Herron received major-general stars. Colonel Ritchie reported no loss at Prairie Grove, and by records he was officially under Salomon, who had been held in reserve. Shelby closed his report on this campaign by reminding all who were interested that he looked forward, again, to bushwhacking in the spring. Along the Rebel lines, to the tune of "Maryland My Maryland" the popular Confederate song was,

Jo Shelby's at your stable door
Where's your mule, oh, where's your mule?

Re-raking Fort Gibson

I find no mention of a Fort Blunt in resources at hand, the next action for the II Indian Home Guards. Three men were killed. It could be that "old Fort Wayne" was briefly renamed Fort Blunt, or Fort Gibson, retaken, may have been termed Fort Blunt at the time.

After Prairie Grove in Arkansas, Union forces marched west and Phillip's Indian Brigades retook Fort Gibson that had been in Rebel hands for 18 months. General Blunt took command at the Fort.

General U. S. Grant called for all available men for a planned siege of Vicksburg, and men were ordered away from the frontier outposts. The Indian Brigades were ordered to take the posts vacated by Union soldiers. Phillip's column of 2500 Indians re-established Federal authority in the Territory, protected the loyal Cherokee, outlawed Stand Watie and his 5500 followers. The property of Rebel Indians was confiscated. Henceforth, Watie's faction could be counted on to fight with desperation. There was constant work to revitalize the Confederate Indian Brigades.

In May of 1863, Union Indian Brigades were raiding successfully toward Fort Smith on the Arkansas/Oklahoma line. Quantrill was raiding on the Confederate side.

Honey Springs in Oklahoma - July 16, 1863

In an effort to draw troops from besieged Vicksburg, the South had a plan to strike at Helena, Arkansas, with a large force, and Stand Watie was to capture a big wagon train coming down from Kansas with supplies for Fort Gibson, and starve them out. The curtain was rising on four military theaters, Gettysburg, Vicksburg, Helena and Fort Gibson.

Arkansas troops came to join Stand Watie, hoping to surround Fort Gibson. Blunt learned these troops were concentrating at Honey Springs 18 miles south of the Fort. With his Indians and some new men in from Colorado, he marched all night and struck the Rebel Indians under Cooper. The Cherokee, with Watie absent, gave way. Whole companies of the incoming Arkansas men deserted. The remnant arrived at Honey Springs in time to take care of 147 dead and wounded.

Blunt marched north with 57 prisoners, all of the enemy's supplies and 300 or 400 sets of handcuffs, brought to put on the blacks among Blunt's men, when marching them back to slavery.

Cabin Creek in Oklahoma - July 1, 1863 to September 22, 1864

Stand Watie was absent at Honey Springs because his plan to capture the wagon trail failed. The two armies had been scheduled to meet in Honey Springs for the assault on Fort Gibson. He ambushed the 300 wagons at a flooded crossing of Cabin Creek on July 1, 1863 but failed to capture it after three days of fighting against the guard of Indians and Lane's Negro soldiers.

The II Indian Regiment was at Honey Springs on July 16, 1863 yet Stand Watie was unable to get there by the 16th, from the Cabin Creek battle. Presenting the question of which Cabin Creek affair occupied Colonel Ritchie.

A year later, in September 1864, Watie would attack and capture another large wagon train at the Cabin Creek Military Crossing, costing the settlers supplying Fort Gibson hundreds of thousands of dollars in losses. Only the train's guard under **Major Henry Hopkins** was under fire. An hour later, when relief rode out from Fort Gibson, only a few long-distance shots were exchanged by scouts. From this account, my assumption is that the first Cabin Creek was the one listed by Colonel Ritchie.

After Honey Springs - The Autumn of 1863

Because of the defeats in the west, causing southern anger, in August Quantrill raided Lawrence, Kansas, saying he would kill every man and burn every house. Reverend Fisher, former Chaplain of the Fifth Kansas, endured a hair-raising experience there, hiding in his cellar while it was searched for him. His house was set afire, and through the smoke, his wife sneaked him out under a carpet. (The calm and clever Mrs. Fisher is heroine of that tale.)

Scrappy little Blunt, the ardent abolitionist, was a soldier after Lincoln's heart. This westerner realized that the enemy armies were the objective, not enemy towns. In August, he knocked a Rebel battalion of Creeks to pieces, then marched through Choctaw country destroying Confederate supplies. War Department maps in Washington could now show western Arkansas, and all of Indian Territory under the Stars and Stripes.

But half the western troops had been sent to Grant at Vicksburg. No relief squads were available to send for western conflicts. Stand Watie, noticing the ease with which raids could be made behind Federal lines, bypassed Colonel Phillips at Fort Gibson, destroyed the Cherokee capital at Tahlequah and burned the beautiful home of John Ross, Rose Cottage. Watie started to invade Kansas, but on December 18, 1863 he was overtaken and turned back by the Indian brigades out of Fort Gibson. The Confederates swerved away and raided into southwestern Missouri.

War was becoming a long holiday for the Confederate Indians, and as Sherman began to draw away even more Federal soldiers for his investment of Atlanta, the license promised to continue.

By letter, word surely reached John Ritchie of the death of his brother, Dr. Powers Ritchey, in March of 1864, at Louisville, Kentucky, a war casualty.

Keeping Price Out Of Kansas - October 1864

Battle of Big Blue, Battle of Westport

For these last major engagements of the Trans-Mississippi War 29,000 in forces were on the field. Price's army was broken by the combined efforts of Union ranks before and behind him.

John Ritchie went north with Blunt, for both will serve under **General Samuel Curtis** of the Kansas Department. In his official report on the repulse of the Rebels by militia in the vicinity of Hickman's Mill, Missouri on October 22, 1864 as part of the Battle of the Big Blue, Curtis wrote...

"The repulse by militia was a gallant affair and must have greatly annoyed the rebels who found resistance on all sides of them. (Credits his officers) My volunteer aides, Hon. Senators Lane and Pomeroy were earnest and very efficient in the field and of much service everywhere. Colonel Crawford, Colonel Roberts, Colonel Richey, and Colonel Cloud, of my volunteer aides, all of whom had experience and zeal, were active, efficient and useful throughout this and other days of the campaign."
(Annals of Iowa, Campaign Against Price, Vol. 8, 1st series)

Alarm in Kansas - In Topeka, a Stockade

October of 1864 brought an invasion of Missouri by General Sterling Price. His original objective was St. Louis but finding stout defenses in eastern Missouri, he turned west. Had he not been defeated in the 3-day battle of Westport, the Confederate army could have invaded Kansas.

General Curtis summoned all available troops. Many of his men were with James G. Blunt in the Indian Territory. The state militia was called out on October 8, 1864. Two days after that Curtis proclaimed martial law in Kansas, and ordered every man between 18 and 60 to arms and to the border.

Topeka companies were headed by **Captain Harvey McCaslin** (Mary Jane's first cousin), **Daniel Horne, A. J. Huntoon, James Thomson and Fry Giles. Colonel George W. Veale** commanded the Shawnee County militia under **General Deitzler**. The Shawnee County regiment numbered 561 men in eleven companies, called the II Regiment.

Topeka built a log stockade from trees cut on the south side of the Kaw near the present bridge, locating it at 6th and Kansas Avenue in front of Ritchie Block. There were four openings for cannon and a single gate on the west side. It was dubbed Fort Simple. All men not serving at the front were engaged in building rifle pits. Reports of guerrillas

came several times, and at least once Topekans buried their treasures and manned the trenches. Among those standing guard at the stockade one night were three women masquerading as men. Only the coming of daylight revealed their disguise.

There would be grief in Topeka when Colonel Veale came home, for he had to report 24 dead from Shawnee County, 20 wounded and 88 taken prisoner.

The Battles

General Curtis organized his Kansas troops into two divisions under Blunt and George Deitzler. To snap at Price's rear came **General Alfred Pleasanton** from St. Louis, a West Pointer with 7,000 horse and eight cannon, a dangerous man for Price to have behind him. Although outnumbered by Price, he would pound mercilessly at his rear.

Portions of Blunt's division engaged Price's Confederates near **Lexington, Missouri** on October 18th but were forced to fall back, after a daylong skirmish at Independence.

On October 22nd, Curtis' entire force confronted the Rebels on **Big Blue Creek**, just south of Kansas City, where severe fighting would take place at Byram's Ford and Hickman's Mills. Price was in trouble with Union cavalry to his rear rapidly drawing nearer, and on the border he had run into Curtis. The Rebels attempted to break the Union lines to the west only to run headlong into the Shawnee County regiment. In the thickest of the fighting the Kansans were nearly cut to pieces, Shawnee County losing a great many killed and wounded or taken prisoner. At one point they were outflanked and overrun by cavalry charges led by Jo Shelby. Shortly after that battle, Colonel Veale reported finding some 43 dead Rebels on the field. He would report that one the morning of the 24th they gathered their dead, their wounded having been already cared for, and took them to Kansas City where coffins were obtained. On the morning of October 25th, Veale buried his dead at Wyandotte on Kansas soil. From there, they marched home to meet mourning friends and tell the story of the fallen.

For the **Battle of Westport**, Price was surrounded by inferior numbers of enemy. Directly ahead of him was Kansas City and Westport, undefended except for Blunt's two regiments. Price was confident he could outride **General Pleasanton**, and overpower Blunt. His main uncertainty was **Curtis**. He found the union forces concentrated on Little Blue Creek. Blunt's men fought street by street as they backed through Independence, toward Curtis waiting at the Big Blue River.

Curtis hoped to halt Price at the Big Blue, trapping Price, with Pleasanton at his rear. Deitzler's raw Kansas militia might even consent to cross the state line and fight. Far to the North along Brush Creek, just south of Kansas City, Curtis formed another line, extending around Westport to the Kansas border, where the Kansas militia were massed to defend their state. Jo Shelby and his cavalry were the first of Price's van to reach

Curtis' line. Shelby urges a quick thrust at Curtis, then an about-face to knock out Pleasanton when he reached Byram's Ford.

Shawnee County's **Sam Reader**, was there, and hadn't been in arms since he rode with Whipple, Ritchie and "the forty thieves" at Hickory Point in 1856. That night, he listened to the cannon pounding and wrote in his diary, "I'd rather head the baby cry."

Topeka area Ritchies know what Sam survived to hear the baby cry once more, for his diary was published in daily excerpts, in a Topeka paper, in the 1940's. General Pleasanton with some of Blunt's men, in Independence had given Price the first reverse on his expedition. On Sunday October 23 he reached Byram's Ford between Big Blue Creek and the Kansas State Line. Toward the south, as far as the Feds could see, stood thousands of Price's army. As his soldiers gazed in wonder, Pleasanton rode up shouting, "Rebels, Rebels, Rebels—fire you damned asses!"

General Curtis had been maneuvering against Shelby along Brush Creek and he now ordered a general advance across the creek, the men crushing through ice an inch thick. Within half a mile, all of them were stopped by Jo Shelby and Fagan. They could hear Pleasanton's cannon at Byram's Ford. Curtis rode along his own and General Deitzler's lines to prepare the soldiers for a charge. He ordered Blunt up a hollow to outflank the enemy, a plan that succeeded, forcing the Rebels to move south. Deitzler's line advanced.

Price was now outnumbered, Marmaduke was being forced back by Pleasanton—he was losing ground on both fronts. The rush to the south began. Shelby made a last stand and barely got away, abandoning his wounded and leaving 800 of his best men behind him. Price retreated—and would go all the way to the Arkansas River in Oklahoma.

MINE CREEK - BATTLE ON KANSAS SOIL - WAR ENDS

History books end the Trans-Mississippi War with the battles called Westport and Big Blue. But the war wasn't over for Generals Blunt, Curtis and Pleasanton, or for John Ritchie. Their pursuit of Price is the most entertaining of these adventures. I close the history books to tell it as the good story it is.

On a wet and blustery October 24, 1864 a dozen Union regiments streamed down the road to the south in a column fifteen miles long. Blunt, with his veteran First Brigade (Ritchie is again under Blunt is the logical assumption) was following Price south. Federal or Rebel, every man and beast on that road was in a state of exhaustion, sleepy, and munching raw field corn, after many days of battle and two nights' bivouac in cold rain.

Crossing the state line, the Union men worried Price's rear. Local residents told stories of hungry troops raiding gardens for cabbages and onions. A few miles south, Price finally stopped and formed for battle, at a chosen site on **Mine Creek** where the stream crossed an open prairie, an ideal site for a cavalry engagement. The Kansan, Samuel Crawford, with a small body of men had shadowed Price and now saw the Rebels set for battle, the first to be waged between regular troops on Kansas soil.

As candidate for Kansas governor in the coming election, **Colonel Sam Crawford** saw a battle coming and determined to take part. Crawford sent for assistance, and one regiment of Pleasanton's came on the field. Some of Deitzler's Kansas militia arrived. Where was Blunt? Deciding Blunt was not coming, Crawford ordered a charge. In a swirling chaos, men fighting on horse and foot, the Rebels took a drubbing.

In the confusion, Private Sam Reader didn't know which way his unit had moved. Wet, tired and hungry, he wrote his name on a piece of paper, pinned it in his drawers, and walked in the direction he rook to be north and home.

A private from an Iowa company captured a big, rough-looking man who was General Marmaduke. He marched him to Curtis' ambulance headquarters and on the spot Curtis furloughed the private for the rest of the war. Also captured were four colonels, a thousand men, and ten pieces of artillery. As the next Governor, Crawford would tell it many times on every crossroads stump, that he saw Marmaduke's line disintegrate, and rallied as many men as he could find. (Ex-Governor Crawford was a pallbearer at John Ritchie's funeral.)

Now, due to the haggard condition of men and mounts, a rest was needed. While they rested, a courier from Pleasanton called in his troopers. Unwilling to draw back, Crawford followed the Confederated cautiously. He saw Shelby replace Marmaduke as rear guard. Across the Little Osage River, the road forked, and there Price formed again for another stand, his men equally exhausted.

Crawford saw the opportunity to smash Price forever, but he was apparently alone in his zeal. As he watched and waited for the Union men to come up, Blunt's forces came into view, but instead of stopping, they kept right on marching down the road to Fort Scott. Behind Blunt came Pleasanton with a long file of prisoners and the ten captured guns. They, too, passed on by.

In his ambulance, General Curtis listened to Crawford's frustrated cries and dispatched orders for the two generals to turn and fight. Pleasanton did send back a surgeon's certificate saying his men were physically unable to remain in the field. No one turned back. Four hours later when Fort Scott was reached, the men toppled from their horses, falling sound asleep on the wet ground.

Curtis and Pleasanton arrived at Fort Scott in a huff. The prisoners were captured in Curtis' Department and he wanted them sent to Fort Leavenworth. Pleasanton, whose men had aided in the battle, wanted them sent to St. Louis, his headquarters. The quarrel over prisoners soon extended into mutual accusations of negligence for bypassing Price, and would last for years.

I have seen copy of a piece of correspondence in the *Annals of Iowa* (General Curtis' home state) mentioning John Ritchie's name in connection with the prisoner quarrel, implying that he was very angry over something. If ever there was a time when he pulled a superior officer off a horse, as has been said of him, this may have been the time, when all involved were very tired.

Rested and freed at last from political soldiers, Curtis became himself again. He overtook Price at Newtonia, Missouri where Old Pap held back the Union army for three hours. At Fayetteville, the garrison reported that Price circled that place without stopping to fight, and was heading west on the wire road. All troops, north and south, stopped to feast on apples and the good produce around Prairie Grove and Cane Hill. Curtis followed Price to the Arkansas River.

Beside the Arkansas in eastern Oklahoma, the war truly ended for John Ritchie. Across the river into the plains beyond, the Union guns fired a parting salute of twenty-four shots. They had been up against Price from the opening days of the war, since Dry Creek in 1861. A conclusion was marked.

Of Price's men, only 6000 survived the circle west through Indian Territory, before coming back into Arkansas on December 1, 1864. The elderly General Curtis asked to be relieved, and Lincoln complied with his request.

Fort Gibson - 1865

Dr. Andrew J. Ritchie, John's brother, who was Surgeon for the II Indian Regiment of Home Guards, was mustered out on April 12.

General John Ritchie's release came May 31, 1865.

Chief John Ross of the Cherokee, old and ailing, returned to the Indian Territory to attempt to heal wounds and renew the long battle for Indian justice. He died August 1, 1866, after which his nephew, William P. Ross was elected Chief of the Cherokee.

Fort Gibson has been restored, and a few years ago my husband and I visited there. It was a log fort, but within the walls was a long, stone building, the very small end room being the office and home of the Fort's commander. One the wall was a framed, yellow document, giving in a decorative old script the names of the commanders of Fort Gibson. The Commandant in May 1865 was General John Ritchie.

*For any who stayed with me for the entire war—
a 21 gun salute*

Civil War on the Western Border, Jay Monaghans, 1955, Bonanza Books, a division of Crown Publisher

The Cherokee, Grace S. Woodward, 1963

EPILOGUE - THE RADICALS

Stand Watie was honored by the Confederate Congress in January 1865 with a resolution of thanks. He and a third of his people were outlawed by the Cherokee Nation and gathered along the Texas border. He held off from surrender until June 23, 1865, going down in history as the last Confederate general to give up the fight.

Jo Shelby and 500 of his soldiers went to Mexico to offer their services in the Mexican civil war, voting to decide which faction to support. Believing in race superiority, they elected to support Maximilian's monarchy. To his farewell ceremony near Eagle Pass on the Rio Grande came Generals Price and Hindman. With ruffled drums Shelby's tattered battle flag was lowered into the muddy water. All Maximilian could do for them was to offer them some land for homesteading. Within a year, Hindman, Price and Shelby came home. A personal enemy shot and killed Hindman, and Price died within the year, aged 55. Shelby lived quietly in Missouri and when the Democrats became respectable under Cleveland in 1893, he became a U. S. Marshal for western Missouri.

Quantrill disguised in Union blue, rode off to assassinate President Lincoln but learned on the way Booth had committed the crime. He was discovered in Kentucky, shot and killed.

Jim Lane survived the peace only a little more than a year. He insisted on supporting Andrew Johnson's veto of the radicals' Civil Rights bill, aligning himself with the moderates in reconstruction. No longer a popular figure, he lapsed into despondency and shot himself in the head in July 1866. The Reverend H. D. Fisher, his old army Chaplain, to the end an admirer, performed the service in Lawrence.

Dan Anthony the abolitionist editor of Leavenworth, advocated the impeachment of President Johnson. In 1875 he was shot by another editor but his sister, Susan B. Anthony, came to nurse him back to health. On his deathbed in 1904 the 80-year-old radical was asked if he'd do things differently could he live his life again. From his pillow came, "Yes, next time I'd be more positive."

John Ritchie lived happily ever after with a town to raise up in the way it should grow.

AFTER THE WAR - A New Home

On June 18, 1868 the *Topeka Leader* advised on the new homes in Topeka..."John Ritchie's, if he ever has chimneys built on it and completes it, which many doubt." We can conclude the home had been up for some time, with the family living in it.

The first Topeka street directory appeared in *The Kansas State Record* February 11, 1860. Under a list of buildings recently commenced "or for the erection of which active preparations are now in progress" I find "J. Ritchie, Stone Dwelling on Kansas Avenue." (The Ritchie home faced 11th Street between Quincy and Kansas Avenue.)

In the original picture of the house, the top four layers of stone have whiter mortar between them than for the rest of the house. It is just possible that John's place was 10 years a-building!

It became a Topeka landmark, and was familiar to me as I lived near to it for years. Ritchies will always wonder if Topeka's city fathers would not rather have a handsome and historic old home on the south edge of downtown, rather than the concrete water tower that replaced it. (With a MacDonald's next door.)

My father must have had a childhood memory of the interior of the house, as he was born in 1882, five years before his grandfather died. When the house was being razed, he took advantage of the opportunity to enter. The comment remembered is of the beautiful

walnut woodwork throughout. I am told some individuals of Topeka purchased pieces of woodwork, as collector's items.

In the 1930s the house had a wrap-around porch and was partially hidden by large, shadowy trees. Yes, I knew whose house it had been. As a youngster, I admired it and wished I could live there.

Items from the *Topeka Leader*

March 14, 1867

General John Ritchie's son Hale, was thrown from a horse, the horse falling on the boy on Friday last and was taken up apparently lifeless and senseless. Drs. Greeno and Sheldon were called and in an hour's time the boy could articulate. Hale is a fine youth and we are glad that he is doing well.

October 31, 1867

On Saturday afternoon last, in Ritchie's Addition, General John Ritchie and his son, Hale, had a set-to with Mr. J. A. Smith, the teacher of the public school on Eugene in North Topeka. General Ritchie shows marks received in the combat while the face of Mr. Smith is uninjured. The General and son have been notified to appear before Judge Hanback on Saturday next. (Hale was 16 years old in 1867.)

RITCHIE SUBDIVIDES - SOUTH TOPEKA CREATED

In the late 1860's John Ritchie began selling 75 to 100 foot lots on his farm. The deed index books for that period show the sale of lots on every page, on Quincy, Monroe and Madison streets, on Kansas Avenue, and on Jackson and Harrison streets. He sold a Monroe street lot to a Cephas Ritchie, on of the clan I cannot identify.

“He gave away land to those who would improve the property. This the *Topeka Weekly Leader* on January 18, 1866 applauded. ‘The General calls it the free-soil principle and seems bound to build a city upon his farm, although he does not realize one cent for the land.’ Despite such good terms, parts of the area remained unused. John Ritchie did not discriminate against the incoming Negro population, ‘A circumstance’ wrote Fry Giles, ‘that militated against the sale of lots to white people and the locality...remained comparatively unoccupied from that cause.’”

“In June, 1867, Topeka annexed that area, traditionally called Ritchie’s Addition, and proceeded with the usual public improvements...Ritchie subsequently sued in 1872, claiming his land was outside of Topeka and beyond the pale of the tax collector. He won. Again Topeka annexed it, and again lost.”

“In the meantime, several additions grew up beside Ritchie’s including the Keith tract and the Western Investment Company’s Walnut Grove. In 1885 residents of the three areas decided to incorporate as a third class city called South Topeka. On July 25 voters elected John Ritchie as its first mayor. (J. W. McClure was the second and last mayor.) As the *Capital* October 9, 1886 explained, South Topeka’s boundaries were ‘very vague in the minds of many.’ On the north was 12th Street, on the west Kansas and Topeka Avenues, and on the south and east the Shunganunga creek. A census of 1886 counted 2193 residents, a large proportion of them Negro.” (*Witness of the Times*)

Somewhere, I have seen a reference to South Topeka, asserting that John Ritchie’s objections to sale of liquor, and worse, in Topeka, influenced his separation.

There was a large migration of blacks into Kansas circa 1866, their population in the state increasing from 816 to nearly 13,000 in that decade.

HUZZAH! JOHN AND MARY JANE RITCHIE - WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE

The first hour for Women's Suffrage came in Kansas in 1867 when the legislature placed the issue of the ballot as a constitutional amendment. However, for this election it was entangled with Negro suffrage, another explosive issue. Both issues were doomed for defeat, both questions losing by large margins.

When Susan B. Anthony and Mrs. Cody Stanton appeared on a Topeka platform, introducing them was John Ritchie. He should have been well acquainted with her brother, Daniel Anthony of Leavenworth, Kansas, an abolitionist newspaper editor.

From *Topeka Leader* - September 12, 1867

“Last Friday night a large and respectable audience (Colonel Lawrence was large and Ritchie respectable) assembled to hear the two famous advocates of female suffrage, **Mrs. Cady Stanton** and **Susan B. Anthony**. Colonel Ritchie, after consultation with Lawrence and after ascertaining by anxious inquiries that Governor Crawford was not present, nominated his excellency for chairman of the meeting. After waiting three seconds for the absent governor to show that he was present, Colonel Lawrence, as if by accident, discovered that Colonel Ritchie was present, and moved that he take the chair, which he did. The thing had been “cut” so long that it smelt fishy. General Ritchie upon taking the stand, thundered out in a tragic voice, and without giving his audience time to prepare for it, “We’re in earnest!” which, elicited very audible snickers. After the General had delivered himself, he introduced Mrs. Stanton...”

From *Topeka Leader* - October 22, 1868

“And it came to pass in those days that the Suffragettes gathered themselves together and chose one John, whose surname was Ritchie, to rule over them. And everyone that was in distress, and everyone that was in debt, and everyone that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him and he became their Captain. And there with him about four score.”

“Now the man John was very meek, above all men upon the face of the earth, and yet withal was a mighty man of valor, and much possessions were given unto him inasmuch that all the lands lying on the south border of the city are held by him and named Ritchie's Addition, as a perpetual memorial. And all the inhabitants that dwelt on the south border did him homage, for he gave them lots, and they grew and waxed strong and multiplied exceedingly.” [A reference to his having given lots to colored after the war.]

“And it came to pass on the 6th day of the 10th month that the **Suffragettes** gathered themselves together...then the heathen round about were greatly angered and a great fear fell on them, lest this Captain and his band should take the city...etc.”

History Made in Mary Jane's Parlor - 1867

Very soon after the November election of 1867 in which the cause of votes for women suffered defeat, the first **Woman Suffrage Association** in Topeka was launched. Mary Jane Ritchie spoke with a few ladies about meeting, and the first organizational meeting was held in her home.

“The husbands played a large role during the Association’s life, usually occupying one of the minor offices. Of the eventual 193 members, many were men who joined individually or with their wives, with Franklin Crane, John Ritchie and J. B. Billiard among the best known. Only one person seems to have been expelled from the body—Hale Ritchie, John Ritchie’s son.” (*Witness of the Times*) [Hale was then 16 years old]

If at several meetings they discussed holding picnics and peach festivals, they also conducted serious business such as writing a column for the *State Record* or sponsoring prominent speakers. **Susan B. Anthony** spoke at Union Hall in January 1871. Mrs. Carrie Winans, in particular, attempted to get women to vote in the first ward for superintendent of public instruction. Since legislation of 1861 women could vote in school elections. Some interest in the Topeka Association faded during the early 1870’s and the minutes cease in November 1875, when the body probably reorganized as an affiliate to a national suffrage organization. **The women of Kansas won the vote in 1912.**

The early Topeka group wanted equal pay for equal jobs, anything else “fosters a spirit of arrogance in man and of servility in woman.” The *Topeka Commonwealth* in August 1870 applauded the appointment of Miss Lizzie Town as principal of the new Lincoln School, adding apologetically that “ladies ought to receive the same pay as gentlemen for the same work, but they do not and for the present the situation must be accepted.”

Mary Jane would have been interested in the progress of Legislation in Iowa, for her first cousin Stephen B. Shelledy was a member of the general assembly, and Speaker of the House in 1855-57. Stephen was the son of her father’s brother, Edward Shillideay/Shelledy.

The 1984 Iowa Legislature, after debate, agreed that state employees, above all, should receive equal pay for equal work. A good bill to adjust pay schedules passed, and the Governor’s line vetos did minimal harm to the new law. There will be a phasing in of the practice, over three years. But Iowa is one of the first states to correct an old wrong.

Mary Jane would be dismayed over the delay of 114 years.

The City Man Farms - 1875

The 1875 Kansas census recorded agricultural data. John Ritchie's real estate value then is listed at \$28,000.

520 acres fenced	38 acres winter wheat
560 rods board fence	100 acres corn
1304 rods hedge	20 acres oats
	¼ acre sweet potatoes

SUPPORTING THE PROHIBITION LAW - 1879

As Fry Giles saw it, "Topeka has always been most decidedly a temperance town," but not only had many saloons appeared along the streets, there were breweries and distilleries in the area.

Temperance received a great boost when John P. St. John became Governor in 1878. He worked for a prohibitory amendment, and the 1879 legislature voted to put it on the ballot. The Kansas electorate approved prohibition and the state became officially dry. The amendment was not repealed until 1948. John Ritchie spoke at a temperance meeting in 1879, exact date and source not noted:

"John Ritchie, one of the earliest settlers of Kansas, was the next speaker. He had been a consistent temperance man ever since he was of age, passed through the Kansas wars and the War of the Union without a violation of the pledge of the Sons of Temperance. He desired that the newcomers know that he was in favor of the strict enforcement of this temperance law."

"With what propriety does ex-governor Robinson come up here to lecture Governor St. John on desiring to go to the U. S. Senate on this question, when he years ago canvassed the state in company with a minister, asking the support of the moral, temperance people of Kansas, to elect him U. S. Senator over Governor Lane, whom he denounced as a common drunkard." (Applause)

"Governor St. John said he was surprised to learn that Colonel C. K. Holliday presided at the meeting Monday night. I am not. We have a class of professionally temperance men, yet when they go out of town on excursions they always take their jugs along. Colonel Holliday is of that class. Here's George W. Reed and Sam Wood, Greenbackers, with whom I am associated in that cause, but not on the cause of violating the law of intemperance. They did not want me to speak here, but I told them I'd be here. I am glad that I live in this age, and have seen this day, the proudest day of my life, witnessing this acre of people gathered here in the vindication of law, temperance, sobriety, decency,

Christianity, and all that makes a man a man. This meeting is in vindication of our law, which is the vindication of the higher law of Almighty God."

"The General was frequently applauded."

Old Settlers' Picnic - 1879

This gathering, celebrating the 25th year of settlement, was held in Lawrence at Bismarck Grove on September 15 and 16, 1879. John Ritchie was Vice-President of the group and his speech, quoted earlier, came at the close of Monday's evening session. He was there to call the meeting to order the next morning. The item mentions that he had been attending the Greenback Convention also, that Monday in Lawrence. He spoke of his interest in that cause in the temperance meeting speech the same year. [Meeting reported in the *Kansas Memorial* published Kansas City 1880]

Greenback Party

This political party founded in Indianapolis, Indiana in 1874 was active between 1876 and 1884, urging currency inflation by demanding that the government continue "greenbacks" in circulation, the unbacked paper currency issued during the Civil War. Although Greenbackers polled one million votes in the congressional election of 1878, two-thirds from the middle west, their political impotence was demonstrated a year later when the Resumption Act went into effect. This measure provided that the number of greenbacks in circulation be reduced and made redeemable at face value in gold, and was an act that proved popular. The party platform had been a forward-looking one which called for woman's suffrage, a graduated income tax, an eight-hour working day, congressional regulation of inter-state commerce, and a more flexible currency.

MARY JANE RITCHIE
May 1, 1821 - October 18, 1880

She was the fifth woman to arrive in Topeka, then a cluster of cabins and huts beside the Kaw river. Her son, John, Jr., was the third child born in the new town.

Although the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 had provided for vigorous prosecution of anyone caught harboring or aiding runaway slaves, within her first two years in Kansas, in her first cabin home, Mary Jane was helping the clandestine movement, her home a “station” on the Underground Railroad. Her newspaper eulogy (following) details some of her frightening experiences while helping the fugitives.

THE DAILY CAPITAL
Tuesday, October 19, 1880
Obituary
Mrs. Mary Jane Shelledy Ritchie

The many friends of this lady were pained to hear of her demise yesterday at her residence on Eleventh street in this city. Mrs. Ritchie was formerly of Shelby county, Ky., and was the youngest daughter of Caleb Shelledy. When ten years of age she went to live in Franklin county, Indiana. On January 16th 1838, she became the wife of Gen. John Ritchie, and came to Topeka in the year 1855, and had the honor of being the 5th woman who came to this city.

Her experience ran through all the years of trouble that were inflicted upon the state, and of all she had a most vivid remembrance, and on many occasions she gave pleasure and entertainment to her friends in relating the thrilling stories of those early days. In disposition she was genial and social and with these...

Mrs. H. C. Root of Topeka, John Ritchie’s great-niece, recalled of Mary Jane that she was present for many early births in Topeka, which suggests she may have served as a midwife. Mrs. Root spoke of Mrs. Ritchie as one of the most knowledgeable of the ladies of the early community.

One account of her husband's shooting of Marshal Arms says that Mrs. Ritchie, with a babe in her arms, tried to prevent the conflict, but her husband order her into another room and shut the door.

We might credit Mary Jane for prompting her husband's support of woman suffrage. At the very early date of 1867 the organizational meeting for the first Woman's Suffrage Association in Topeka, was held in her home. Carrie Whittaker was elected the first president, although only a schoolgirl at the time. *"after we had lived in town for some time," she explained, "Mrs. Colonel Ritchie came down one evening and she and mother decided to call a meeting of neighbors and organize a Woman's Suffrage Association. It was called to meet at Colonel Ritchie's and my mother took me with her for company coming home. There were not many there it seems tome not more than six or seven."*

"I was then going to school and having some lessons in Parliamentary Law, so when they were getting organized they would call on me to tell them how. After we had things planned, Mrs. Ritchie said, 'Let's put Carrie in as president, she is the only one who can keep us in order.' I said, 'Oh, you can't do that, it will be several years before I am old enough to vote.' They said, 'You'll be old enough long before we have the right.' My father had always said his family of girls had just as much right to help about the government as if we were boys, and mother and he had always taught us to expect woman suffrage in our day." (Mr. Whittaker was the County Surveyor.) The young organization would grow to 193 members.

(Meeting: *Pioneer Women, Voices From the Kansas Frontier*, 191, Joanna L. Stratton, Simon and Schuster, New York.)

Two years before her death, Mary Jane had fallen and displaced a hip that handicapped her movement. In her last illness, she was confined to her bed for seven weeks, with cancer, passing away at age fifty-nine. Her last words, as she lay dying, were to her husband, "You will miss me and you will be lonely."

As part of a war service pension application made by 2nd wife, Hannah, after John's death, the Topeka Board of Health on 5 July 1897 certified that the wife of Colonel John Ritchie died October 18, 1880, of cancer, and was buried in Ritchie's Cemetery South West of Topeka. Records at Topeka Cemetery show that Mary Jane and two infants were reinterred in one grave beside her husband, in 1888, during the year following John's death in 1887.

"Ritchie Cemetery" and it was so called in the 1900 City Directory was land Ritchie had given as a "free" cemetery, the limited use of it over the years largely by colored people. It was marked on the 1873 plat map in Section 12. I cannot be positive, but I fear John placed his wife there. By family tradition, John asked to be buried there himself. (It was news about Mary Jane.)

Mary Jane's portrait show a woman slender and fragile in appearance—no ruddy, robust pioneer look to Mary Jane. Comparing studio prop, I think it was made the same day that a very young Anna and Hale had their picture taken, about 1876-1878, when Mary Jane would have been aged fifty-five to fifty-seven years old.

In her domestic relations as wife and mother she combined a sterling character with many virtues. Frugal and industrious, she was one of whom might truly have been said, "*she looketh well to her household, the hear of her husband doth safely trust in her, she will do him good, and no evil, in all the days of her life, her children also arise up and call her blessed, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy and her tongue is the law of kindness.*"

Life with its many changes of nearly three score years had long since told upon her physical frame, when about two years ago she met with an accident, which rendered her a cripple. Her last illness fell upon her about three months since, being confined to her bed before the last seven weeks. She held a strong hold on life, in the fullness of her wifely and motherly nature, tenderly yet spoke of the void her departure would create, saying to her husband, "You will miss me and you will be lonely."

After a long but most patient period of suffering, she passed to her final rest October 18, 1880 at the age of 59 years, 5 months and 17 days.

She made a will giving all her earthly goods to her children and her soul to Jesus. Her husband and children tender their most sincere thanks to neighbors and friends for kind acts during her last illness and at her burial.

"Gone hence from earth's illness, care, turmoil and strife to enter anew on a far higher life."

(Will index, Topeka, lists no will filed for Mary Jane.)

John's Remarriage - 1881

Some Property to Sons

John returned to Franklin, Indiana to find a mate for his late years, there marrying on October 27, 1881 to Mrs. Hannah Beall, said to be "of Cincinnati" and then about age 43. The new Mrs. Ritchie brought a daughter and son-in-law with her to Topeka. As I cannot name the son-in-law with certainty, I shall not, but I think I have him identified. If he is the man I believe him to be, he remained in Topeka.

For the 1870 census of Franklin, Indiana, a 32-year-old wife, Hannah was listed with John Beall, tanner age 40. With them were a son Wallace, age 15, and a daughter, Carrie, age 13.

Immediately before leaving for Indiana (note dates) John settled property on his sons. These are Quit Claim Deeds.

10-21-1881 Index Book 10

- ∞ John Ritchie to Hale Ritchie, 320' by 420' East Side of Madison Street. The actual deed reads, "east line of Madison Street extended 530' south of S. E. Madison and 10th Avenue East, running easterly at right angles with said line 320', northerly east side of Madison for 450'. (I think this adds to 1100 block Madison property where married son, Hale, was then living.)
- ∞ John Ritchie to Anna M. Ritchie (son Hale's wife; son John is not yet married) Lot, west side Kansas Avenue 1670' south of SW corner of Kansas Avenue and 10th Street, running west at right angle with Kansas Avenue, 150' south at right angle to last named line, 75' east.
- ∞ John Ritchie to John Ritchie, Jr.
150' by 175' lot, East side of Kansas Avenue
50' by 150' lot, East side of Monroe Street
150' by 200' lot, East side of Quincy Street*
(*may be John Jr.'s later residence)

In 1883 on September 12, John gave Hannah a trace on the east side of Quincy Street.

And in 1883 he gave another piece of land to Hale and John Jr. – part N ½ SW 5.12.16. This can be identified as the odd-shaped piece on the 1873 plat map, in Section 5. Later, for his lime kiln, Hale hauled stone "from out on Deer Creek," and this piece was on Deer Creek.

Hannah sold lots in Topeka for years after John's death, and very likely returned to Topeka to visit. By her Civil War service pension application filed several years after John's death, making a claim as his widow, she was living in Indianapolis by 1899, her attorney writing that he had made several trips to Topeka to settle the estate. The

attorney remarked, in a letter, that his client was entitled to one-half of her husband's estate, but being generous toward the sons, had claimed only one-third.

John's last illness, reported in his newspaper obituary, was from "impaction of the ilium" (an obstruction). He died at eleven o'clock in the morning on August 31, 1887, aged seventy. After being a Kansan for thirty-two years.

He was attended by Dr. H. W. Roby, Dr. Branstrik, and one Dr. Ritchie was consulted. (Brother, Dr. Andrew, was deceased.)

It was Dr. J. C. Mitchie, per a printed bill with his name and dated October 5, 1887, who attended John Ritchie two to four times daily from August 25th to August 29th. On the last day of John's life, Dr. Mitchie was with him constantly. The previous day he had been present for five hours. His total bill was \$84.45.

George B. Palmer of 261 Kansas Avenue handled the funeral arrangements, including purchase of cemetery lot, for a total of \$368.50. A casket cost in 1887 was \$75, and there was a charge of \$30 for ten carriages, \$3.50 for gloves and crape, and \$5 for 100 chairs.

By family tradition, John wanted to be buried in the "free" Ritchie Cemetery, southwest of Topeka, that he had established, and where it would appear that Mary Jane was placed. He was buried in the Topeka Cemetery, and during the next year Mary Jane and her two infants were reinterred and placed beside John.

These few "estate settlement" papers state that final disposition of the estate came on April 3, 1899. Hale and John, sons, were the estate administrators, their attorneys being Hungate and Thompson. Attorney Hungate would be Otis Hungate, son of John's sister, Sarah Ritchie Hungate.

Of estate business, there is nothing but a notation that Inventory Appraisal and Allowance came on November 3, 1887. Those documents should be filed with estate settlement papers, but are not. They must be somewhere, perhaps in another court. My inquiry as to where they might be sought goes unanswered.

The administrators came into possession of the following:

Cash	\$ 3,402.32
Military script	179.24 "uncollectable"
Agreement with Douthitt	650.00 "uncollectable"
Notes owed to John Ritchie	20,402.69

(numbering 62)

John was survived by one sister, Sarah Hungate of Topeka, and by three brothers. Dr. James Ritchey, eldest of that family, died in Jasper County, Indiana the following year. Dr. Samuel Ritchey of Jasper County was gone in 1890. The youngest son of the family Lawrence P. Ritchey of Franklin, Indiana, lived until 1907. Sarah Hungate died in 1913.

JOHN RITCHIE - EULOGY IN *THE TOPEAK COMMONWEALTH*
Tuesday Morning September 1, 1887

At 11 o'clock yesterday morning Colonel John Ritchie breathed his last, dissolution resulting from impaction of the ilium. He was one of the earliest and most conspicuous of Kansas settlers, and carved out for himself name, fame and wealth by sturdiness of character and persistency, and although deemed eccentric in many things he did, was ever recognized as the friend and champion of the poor and downtrodden, and a genuine, unselfish, conscientious philanthropist of the old school.

He was born in Uniontown, Muskingum County, Ohio on July 17, 1817. His parents removed to Westchester, and Colonel Ritchie's boyhood was passed in Butler County, Ohio and in different sections of Indiana. In March of 1855 he came to Kansas to remain and on April 3 came to Topeka and located on Section 6, Township 12, Range 16, where his residence now stands. He pre-empted a quarter section and engaged in farming and in building Ritchie block, where the first state legislature met, and which was the first brick block in the city.

Colonel Ritchie was a member of the Leavenworth [they mean Wyandotte] Constitutional Convention. He was an active participant in the troubles of 1856 and was for a time a free state prisoner in Lecompton prison. During the war he enlisted as a private in Company A, Fifth Kansas Cavalry, (Lane's Guards) of which he was made captain after its organization. He was later commissioned by the government to raise an Indian Regiment, was Colonel of it, and was brevetted Brigadier General two weeks before the close of the war. He was identified with the free state cause from the first and was an admirer of John Brown, assisting him to escape from an attacking party when he was leaving Kansas for the last time, and sharing his bed with the old hero the last night he ever spent in the state.

On January 16, 1838 he was married to Mary J. Shelledy at Franklin, Indiana. His first wife, the mother of his two children now living, Hale and John Ritchie, Jr., died October 18, 1880. Colonel Ritchie married again at Franklin, Indiana on October 27, 1881 to Mrs. Hannah Beall of Cincinnati, Ohio.

One of the Kansas pioneers, speaking of Colonel Ritchie, said that while it was true in a measure that he was eccentric, there was no man in Kansas more prominently identified with the early history of the state. He was a strange combination of character; impulsive, impetuous, yet generous to a fault. He has probably given away more property than any man in Kansas. He was public spirited if the cause in which his support was sought was of the right kind as he believed, and once at a meeting to provide aid---negro he subscribed what was in those days a magnificent sum, \$1500, even if he was necessitated to go to the bank and borrow the money. He was a staunch friend of the negro and used to say that no less than \$100,000 worth of runaway slaves had passed to safety through his place.

His impetuosity was such that he would pull a brigadier general off his horse if his orders did not suit. He was a strong advocate of women's rights, and of religious inclination in his eccentric way.

A reminiscence of his unswerving character is given in his controversy with Dr. Teft, a deacon of the Congregational church, of which Colonel Ritchie was a staunch member. He and Dr. Teft had a misunderstanding and the colonel asserted that the doctor had prevaricated. He was called to task by the church, and upon the earnest solicitation of friends, finally agreed to apologize. He got up in the church and did so, but just as he was concluding caught the eye of Deacon Teft, saw triumph there, and this was too much for the doughty colonel.

"I will apologize" he shouted, "for I have promised to. But Dr. Teft did tell what was not true. You can turn me out of your church but you can't turn me out of the church of Christ."

His philanthropy was fully evidenced in his gift of 160 acres of ground to Washburn College. He was a strong prohibitionist and especially bitter on that score.

One of the lamentable acts of his life, in which, however, he was fully justified, was the shooting of Deputy U.S. Marshal Arms, which happened along in 1859. [1860] In those days Free State men were indicted on every pretext, and Colonel Ritchie was among the number. Deputy Marshal Arms held a warrant for the Colonel and one day being bantered by friends for not serving it, started out to "get his man" as he expressed it, and lost his life. The shooting occurred in the old-fashioned house at the corner of Eleventh and Monroe. Colonel Ritchie warned Arms not to cross the doorway, and when he did so, fired, killing the officer almost instantly. The Colonel was honorably acquitted.

Colonel Ritchie leaves property valued at \$250,000 most of which is in city lots which are a part of his original claim. Although the man was not an office seeker, he enjoyed a political fight as well as any man in the world. He was elected mayor of the city of South Topeka in July 1885. Nearly 20 years ago "Ritchie's Addition" was taken into the city against the colonel's protest, and since that time he has never paid any taxes to the treasury. The matter was kept in the courts until 1885, when it was decided that the tax titles on his property were void, thus establishing the long mooted question as to whether Ritchie was in the city or not.

In early days he had an earnest desire to see every man own a home, and following out the idea he gave away a large number of lots to those who were unable to buy. The lots on which the Fifth Avenue Hotel stands, were given away by him. It is estimated that the property belonging to Colonel Ritchie, sold on execution, in this city, is now worth \$500,000.

While the Colonel had his faults—and who has not?—there is not a man living who can deny the fact that he was an honest, fearless, upright man. He had the courage of a lion,

and the heart of a woman. He was averse to display of any kind, and dressed more like a prosperous Kansas farmer than a quarter millionaire. His physiognomy was very strongly marked by sharp gray eyes that glittered with a strange light when the old man became engaged in political debate. His furrowed cheeks, shaggy eyebrows, and firmly set lips half concealed by an iron-gray beard, his head crowned with fast-silvering locks, were prominent indications of the characteristics of this remarkable man.

His two sons, Hale Ritchie and John Ritchie, Jr. who were both born in Topeka [error] and have families, are living here and stood by their father's bedside when the end came. Mrs. Ritchie and the two sons, who are now bowed in grief, have the sympathy of the entire community with their sorrow. The writer, who has known the entire family for nearly 30 years, can say with truth that no father could have received more tender care and watchful solicitude that has been shown their father by Hale and John. Mrs. Ritchie and her daughter and son-in-law have also been very solicitous for the Colonel's comfort. The funeral services will be, conducted at the family residence by Dr. F. S. McCabe today, at 3 PM.

THE DAILY CAPITAL
Friday, September 2, 1887
Laid To Rest

Sad Honors Paid Colonel John Ritchie the Pioneer
His Virtue Told In Verse

Dr. McCabe's Address—A Largely Attended Funeral

The funeral services over the remains of the late Colonel John Ritchie took place from the family residence on Quincy Street at 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon. The services were conducted by Rev. Dr. McCabe. After the singing of a hymn, a poem written for the occasion was read by Mrs. DeGeer. The scriptures were read and prayer was offered by Dr. McCabe. An address of which the following is an outline, was delivered by Dr. McCabe.

"Those who perform that part in history which, in our American phrase, is called settling a new country, are always persons of enterprise and courage. The emigrants who first came to Jamestown...That which has been true of pioneers, as a rule was emphatically true of the pioneers of Kansas...they were the skirmish line of the army of freedom. The pioneers of Kansas came to this soil under the impulse of a sacred purpose. In their trials and struggles they were sustained and guided by a great principle...In that role of representative men, the name of Colonel John Ritchie holds an honorable place."

"Colonel Ritchie was a man of marked individuality. He had been so long and so conspicuously connected with the history of this community that his peculiarities were well known. He was a man of courage, both physical and moral, and of great firmness and tenacity of purpose."

"In an early day he gave freely for the establishment of schools and churches. Very recently he has made large contributions to an educational enterprise, which he regarded

as worthy of support. The founding of Washburn College is owing in great measure to his foresight and liberality. He was a man of Christian faith, and he believed that genuine faith brings forth friends."

"The old citizens and pioneers of Kansas lose by the death of Colonel Ritchie one of the most useful and distinguished of their number. The members of the Grand Army of the Republic, and all who were in the contest for freedom, in the territorial days, or in the civil war, feel that a brave soldier and a true comrade has fallen. Pioneers, comrades, members of this bereaved household, may the divine strength be granted to you in this hour of loss and sorrow."

"Whether or not Colonel Ritchie shall have a costly monument of granite or marble is a question of little moment. He leaves behind him two monuments which shall endure. One of these is that institution of Christian learning whose buildings and groves we now look out upon—an institution whose streams of pure and blessed influences shall flow on, we trust, while this state remains. His other monument is this commonwealth itself—this broad and populous and mighty and free state of Kansas for which our friend, and you his colleagues and comrades, wrought and suffered in the time that tried men's souls."

The address of Dr. McCabe made a telling effect upon the large audience assembled, which consisted for the most part of old pioneers of Kansas. Probably never before in the history of Topeka has there been a funeral at which so many gray-haired men and women were present. Promptly at 3 o'clock forty members of the Lincoln post marched into the year and broke line among the many citizens already assembled.

The many colored people at the funeral services of him who had done so much for their freedom, and since for their comfort and happiness, showed the regard his kindness and liberality had won from these once friendless and defenseless freemen, who, but for such noble men as Colonel John Ritchie, might have yet been smarting under the galling yoke of oppression.

The number present consisted mainly of the pioneers of Topeka, old settlers of Kansas, and the leading men of the city, both professional and business. Many, who were familiar with the early troubles of Kansas, came from their country homes—five, eight, and ten miles away. The total number would perhaps reach 500. Carriages and hacks filled the streets on all sides.

The pallbearers were chosen from his oldest and most familiar friends. They were ex-Governor Crawford, H. D. Rice, Edward Bodwell, W. H. Fitzpatrick, John Armstrong, and T. P. Farnsworth. Two beautiful bouquets of flowers were arranged by the G.A.R. ladies and placed upon the lid of the coffin, and according to their custom, the ladies had a beautiful silk banner laid upon his breast. At the conclusion of the services the coffin was placed under a tree in the yard where all could have an opportunity of taking a last look. The remains were then placed in a hearse and conveyed to the Topeka Cemetery.

(Omitted, Mrs. DeGeer's poem of seven verses.)

Obituary files Kansas State Historical Society Library, Topeka.

A FEW INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF GENERAL JOHN RITCHIE

Paper read before the Native Sons and Daughters of Kansas by Mrs. H. C. Root on April 27, 1903. (Kansas State Historical Society Library, Topeka.)

[Mrs. Root was Colonel Ritchie's great niece. I am not quoting her paper in full because it is repetitive of his newspaper obituary]

“He was uncompromising in his opinions, and believed that slavery was a great wrong...He was suspected in 1856 of harboring a runaway slave, and one Sunday morning at 4 o'clock, forty U.S. soldiers came to his house and demanded admittance. He parleyed with them until after daybreak when he permitted them to search his house. The slave they were seeking had been at his house the day before, and at nightfall had been sent, with a party to guide him, on his way towards Holton, Kansas. John Ritchie took this method of delaying the soldiers to give the slave time to get away.”

“At the breaking out of the Civil War, Mr. Ritchie enlisted a private in Company A, Fifth Kansas Cavalry, known as Lane's Guards, and was made captain. The colonel of this regiment was killed in battle and Captain Ritchie was in direct line of promotion. [By military records, he was already Lt. Colonel] At this time Charles Robinson, was governor but as he and Mr. Ritchie had had some differences, he refused to advance him to the colonelcy, which act was so resented by Mr. Ritchie that he resigned.”

“Soon afterward, in 1861, he was commissioned by the government to raise an Indian Regiment and was Colonel of it. While this regiment was on duty in Missouri he received certain orders from General Blunt, which did not meet with his approval so he positively refused to obey. For this act of disobedience, Colonel Ritchie was court-martialed and confined in prison for so time. Through the influence of Senator Lane, he was afterwards paroled and came home. He was never tried for this offense, and a short time before the war ended he was made Brigadier General.” [This is the only reference seen to this story but it sounds on the mark.]

“It is said he should be given the credit for making Topeka the capital city. His fine work consisted in the wording of the bill by which the capital cannot be moved except by a majority of all votes cast. Colonel Ritchie was public spirited and generous...the Rev. Bodwell said of him, ‘All the stone needed...quarried and delivered free at the spot. In building and twice re-building the church, his teams and helpers and hands were never lacking.’”

Mrs. Root states that Ritchie was opposed to the name change for the college, from Lincoln to Washburn, and concludes, “He was often called a ‘crank’ for he was a man whose opinions were in advance of his day. The press has truly said of him, ‘Take John Ritchie out from the history of Kansas and a golden link is forever lost from the chain of events from early territorial time until the present.’”

RITCHIE PLOT - TOPEKA CEMETERY - TOPEKA, KANSAS

The large monument for John and Mary Jane centers the plot:

Colonel John Ritchie	1817-1887
Mary Jane Ritchie, his wife	1821-1880

West of the monument:

John Ritchie	1856-1926
Josephine Ritchie	1861-1937

John S. Ritchie (son of Hale and Anna and my father)	1882-1951
---	-----------

East of the monument:

Paul A. Ritchie (son of Hale and Anna)	1895
---	------

Hale Ritchie	1851-1920
Anna Ritchie	1855-1928

Hale Newton Ritchie (son of John S. Ritchie and my brother)	Dec. 12, 1908 – June 12, 1948
Helen Beatrice Ritchie, his wife	Jan. 11, 1914 – May 15, 1947

Jack Ritchie (son of John S. Ritchie and my brother)	Died 1962
---	-----------

Also in the plot, by cemetery office records:

Fred H. Ritchie (son of Hale and Anna)	Died 1941
---	-----------

Infants Mary and Elizabeth, reinterred with Mary Jane Ritchie, in one grave, in 1888.

My brother, Jack, went into the last space. That is why my mother is buried at Mount Hope Cemetery. She placed a Ritchie in the last space.

HALE RITCHIE
Son of Colonel John and Mary Jane Ritchie

Born Jan. 27, 1851 at Franklin, Johnson County, Indiana

Died Dec. 24, 1920 at Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

Married Anna Mapes Rowland on Oct. 26, 1876 at Topeka, Kansas.
Anna was born Aug. 28, 1855 at Lawrenceburg, Dearborn County,
Indiana, the daughter of John and Sarah (Armstrong) Rowland. Anna died
in 1928 in Topeka. Hale and Anna are both buried in Topeka Cemetery.

Their Children and Grandchildren

Frank Rowland Ritchie	1877-1939	No children
Frederick Hale Ritchie (Fred)	1880-1941	Never married
John Scott Ritchie	1882-1951	
Frederick Hale Newton Ritchie	1907-1948	
Jack Ritchie	1909-1962	
Robert Arquet Ritchie	1915	
Mary Evelyn Ritchie	1923	
Oliver George Ritchie	1886-1944	
Alice May Ritchie	1916	
Georgana Ritchie	1919	
James Oliver Ritchie	1926	
Richard Donald Ritchie	1928	
Frederick Marvin Ritchie	1933	
Mary Margaret Ritchie	1889-1974	
Margaret Evelyn Wright	1913	
Richard Hale Wright	1918	
Betty Jean Wright	1921	
Paul A. Ritchie	Died 1895	

HALE AND ANNA RITCHIE

Their daughter, Mary Margaret Ritchie Wright, left a recollection of her father.

“He was Hale Ritchie with no middle name, and was about five years old when brought to Topeka in 1855. Before the 1951 flood did so much damage to my own house and possessions, I had a daguerrotype picture of my father at about age four, sitting between his mother and father, and probably taken before they left Indiana.”

“Topeka was so much smaller when he was a young man and he knew everyone. I had his diary once, written at that time. After every entry, telling of attending a party, he always wrote, ‘Had a good time,’ and I’m sure that he did. He attended Manhattan Agricultural College, now Kansas State. I have the desk he used while there. He was a member of Topeka’s first baseball team.”

[This team was the Western Baseball Club, organized in 1870. Bob Ritchie, my brother, has a picture of the team, taken between 1870 and 1880. By Radge’s 1880 Topeka Directory, for the 1879 season they were “the strongest in the west.” His listing of 1880 players has Ritchie at shortstop.]

“About 1875 Anna Rowland came from Rantoul, Illinois where he widowed mother then lived, to visit her half-sister in Topeka. Her sister, Elizabeth Hughes Randall, was much older than Anna and had children near Anna’s age. They had moved from Rantoul to Topeka so that Mr. Randall could work at the Santa Fe shops. While making her visit, Anna met and married in 1876, the gay young blade, Hale Ritchie. They first lived at 1116 Madison in the old stone house that was a wedding gift from Hale’s father. They lived there until after John was born in 1882. But before Ollie was born in 1886 they had built the nine-room frame house at 1118 Madison, next door.”

“After John’s birth, my mother wasn’t very well and with the big house she needed help. As long as I can remember, we always had a hired girl who lived in the back bedroom upstairs. When I was born, 1116 and 1118 Madison were the only houses on the east side of the street. Father evidently sold lots to people on the west side of Madison, because there were five houses over there.”

“My father owned and operated a lime kiln on a part of his property, hauling stone from land he owned out on Deer Creek. His lime was used for many of Topeka’s business buildings. When cement came in use in the 1890’s, the kiln was shut down. It was a brick-lined well which extended from the top of the hill behind Madison Street down to the bottom. This was filled with stone and fire made below, and kept burning night and day until it was lime.”

“Through the years Dad had built houses on vacant lots on his land. Altogether, he built sixteen houses, and moved two in, modernizing them for rental.” [Hale had built the three houses south of 1118 Madison and still owned them at his death.]

“My Dad always had horses to haul wood and stone, and kept a cow. South of 1118 to 12th Street he kept a large garden, which he loved to care for, but how we children did hate to help him. We had a single buggy, pulled by Old Dan. I can’t remember my brothers using it for themselves, as young people now use cars, but perhaps John courted Frances in it. We took a wagon to go for apples.”

“A German family across the street from us were the only people I knew who put up a big Christmas tree with ornaments and candles. We never had a tree, and how I did love to look at theirs. Christmas was not observed, among our friends at least, in such excess as it has been in later years. We children hung our stockings, usually from a doorknob in the sitting room, as our fireplace was in the “front” room, which was used only for company. Our base-burner was in the sitting room which we used until Dad installed a furnace”.

“Mother gave us gifts, but my father always gave us money and it would be found under our plates on the dining room table. The table was always set the night before with plates left upside down. There was always plenty of candy and nuts. One Christmas morning I arose early to see what I had received and discovered Ollie trying to read *Huck Finn* by moonlight. He received a little steam engine about this time and I was as thrilled as he was. I was given a rocking chair one Christmas and kept it until after I was married. I remember my china doll with black hair, and when she was broken I buried her in the backyard. When I was about ten years old my parents gave me a piano called the Wing that I kept until it was ruined in the 1951 flood. It had two extra pedals, one of them the ‘mandolin.’ I was given music lessons from a Professor Worrall who came to the house in a long-tailed coat and a high hat.”

“My parents were both Republicans but Mother more so than Dad, as he voted for Bryan. My mother urged us kids never to tell anyone about it. She later came to admire Bryan but I doubt if she would have voted for him.”

“Late in life, Hale and Anna moved into a new cottage they had built at 1126 Madison, renting out the larger house.”

“My father dropped in the yard on Christmas Eve 1920 at 70 years old, while chopping wood. Mother didn’t find him until the next morning. It was ten days before my daughter, Betty, was born and Mother was afraid to tell me. But Otis Hungate called, and Tal and I went up at once.”

“Mother’s life was never the same again and she moved from the cottage to the upstairs half of her home at 1118 Madison until her death in 1928.”

Betty Wright Leech, a granddaughter, remembers

“Going to Grandmother Ritchie’s house meant walking by the stained glass window above her stairway. It meant nonpareil candies, which she kept in a small dresser drawer, which always smelled of camphor. Grandma spent hours playing dominoes with me and in her wisdom made me keep score. Staying all night with her was lovely, for the trolley turned around at the trestle on 12th and Madison streets and made a delightful dinging noise in the process. The ice cream wagon had bells and grandma kept her soup bowl handy so we could go out to get several dips of ice cream in it when we heard the bells.”

Mary Ritchie Jarboe, another granddaughter

“The Ritchie home at 1118 Madison was my family’s home from 1930 to 1939. On the wall three feet from this typewriter is the beautifully carved brass hardware from the front door of the house, the doorknobs and a two-piece doorbell. Aunt Maggie Wright was wise enough to remove them when the house was given up during the great depression.”

“The ice cream wagon horse was the last horse to leave the streets in Topeka. It came daily so long as we lived there, and bowls still went out for the cream. The glass window that Betty remembers was a hall window of plain ruby-red plate glass. The last time I drove past the place, the red window was intact, after 100 years.”

“The front staircase and banister were of walnut, the other woodwork oak. There was a back staircase with its own outside entrance, planned for household help. The house had two baths but the upstairs one was probably added. Hale and Anna eventually added a double porch. Maggie mentioned the front room, the one I knew having a corner gas grate. This front room had sliding doors where it adjoined the sitting room. Between sitting room and dining room were French doors. It was not a grand house, but had space and comfort, and much individuality.”

“When we moved into the house in 1930, the large, black iron wood cookstove was still in the kitchen. Under linoleum on a kitchen counter my Dad found some Confederate paper money. The cellar was a storehouse for the many gadgets that Hale found interesting, having sent away for many of them. Hale had one of the first autos in Topeka. He and his boys took it to a pasture to get acquainted. In snapshots of her, I note that Anna Ritchie’s skirts went to the floor, even into the 1920’s.”

“My father told of the fishing and hunting trips, with the train delivering and picking up the party at Hale Ritchie’s discretion. A young black man named Jody, who helped Hale and who had perhaps worked at the lime kiln, went along to tend the fires and cook.”

“The streetcar trestle was not in use, but still in place, in the 1930’s, and my brothers dared to walk across on the ties. Very soon, the bridge was removed and I made the concrete abutment that had held it my own lofty tower about the world.”

“Hale and Anna’s children were young adults in the heyday of Vinewood Park, a very scenic amusement park and lake southeast of the city. My parents told of its pleasures, and I have seen postcards of the park. They told of sledding parties on 11th street hill, a rather steep slope from Madison east to Jefferson. With gaping surprise, I once watched my father don ice skates and glide away down Shunganunga Creek. He, too, had been young once and finding things to do on Madison Street.”

“The children of Hale and the children of John, Jr., lived two blocks from each other, and were close in friendship. From dim recollection of my father’s many stories, I know the cousins were often companions. Jim Ritchie of San Jose, California (Ollie’s son) has written that his parents were especially close to Hale and Edith Ritchie, one of John Jr.’s sons.”

“Anna visited her California sons more than once. There are snapshots of her in Yosemite Park, and her granddaughter Margaret Wright Maxwell remembers a train trip to California with her mother and grandmother. Regularly, Anna went to Colorado during the summer. My own mother and her firstborn, another Hale, went out with her one summer, that time staying near Manitou.”

“My grandfather Hale Ritchie died before I was born and I was less than five years old when Anna died. I do remember being at Grandmother’s house on a day that seemed solemn and I was not allowed inside. My father took me for a long walk down to the creek, a place where I was never allowed to go by myself, even years later. By magic, he pulled miniature playing cards from bush and tree. Those small cards have a way of bringing to mind that day. A day when I now understand that Anna lay very ill.”

“In the portrait of Anna with grandson Hale—Anna is wearing a garnet pin. I have the pin.”