

EARLY HISTORY OF BLACK JACK

The following extract from Cutler's *History of the State of Kansas* summarizes the history of Black Jack from 1857:

"Black Jack is situated on level prairie, and is surrounded by valuable farms, many of them owned by men who emigrated from Pennsylvania in early times, who are largely engaged in raising stock. It is in the south-eastern part of the county, five miles from Prairie City. The creek near which the village stands was named Black Jack by the Mexicans, and the village, when started in 1857, was named after the creek.

The first settlers on the town site were the town company themselves, consisting of William Riley, Daniel Fearer, E. D. Pettengill, S. A. Stonebraker, Secretary, and H. N. Brockway, Treasurer. The first birth in the town was that of William H. Riley, in June, 1858, who died while an infant, this being the first death; the first marriage was that of Joseph Kennedy, to Miss Elizabeth Hanern.

The first school was in a log house, taught by Mrs. Elizabeth Craig, in 1858, with Frankie Miller as assistant. The first sermon was preached in January, of this year, in a cabin by Rev. Samuel Keetsinger. A schoolhouse and church were both built in 1859; the former located on the northeast quarter of Section 7, Township 15 and Range 21, and the latter, the Presbyterian Church, in the town. The Presbyterians and United Brethren had, previous to the building of this church, a union fund, but a misunderstanding arising among them, the fund was divided and each built a church.

The post office was established in 1858, and named Black Jack, S. A. Stonebraker being appointed first Postmaster. In January, 1858, N. H. Brockway and S. A. Stonebraker started the first store in the town.

Black Jack is situated on the old Santa Fe road, over which for many years all merchandise destined for New Mexico and California was freighted. It was also the principal emigrant trail, and some years as many as 60,000 teams traveled this road. This immense traffic was in the main discontinued upon the completion of the Kansas Pacific Railroad to Ellsworth.

This town is situated near the historic battle-field of Black Jack. The battle so named occurred June 2, 1856, a full account of which will be found in its proper place in the general history of the county.

During the war of the Rebellion, a fort was erected here for the protection of the town. On May 8, 1863, Dick Yeagar made a raid upon the village, robbed Brockway & Stonebraker's store, and stole the horses belonging to the overland stage route. On the 15th of August following, Bill Anderson made a raid into Kansas, and on his return from Morris County, where he had killed Capt. Baker, thrown his body into the cellar and burned his house down over him, made a call on Black Jack, intercepted the overland mail, stole fourteen horses, eight of them belonging to the mail, and took some \$2,000

from the passengers. They also broke into and robbed Brockway & Stonebraker's store, carrying away about \$1,800 worth of goods, and setting fire to the store. The fire was extinguished by a determined lady named Mrs. John M. Hays."

BATTLE OF BLACK JACK

The following extract from Cutler's *History of the State of Kansas* describes the battle of Black Jack:

"Capt. Pate's company, once more in camp, began anew their system of marauding and plundering of Free-State settlers on a more extensive scale than before. His campaign came to a sudden and inglorious end on June 2, in an encounter with an armed party of Free-State men, much inferior to his in numbers. It is memorable, as the first pitched battle in which the Free-State men were engaged. Many conflicting accounts of the affair have been published, varying so widely in detail as to throw distrust on the entire accuracy of any of them. The following, gathered from what are deemed reliable sources of information, is believed to be an essentially correct account of the battle of Black Jack. This battle occurred June 2, 1856. Old John Brown came up from the Pottawatomie the day before, Sunday, to Prairie City, with twelve mounted men, including himself, three of his sons - Frederick, Owen and Watson - and his son-in-law, Henry Thompson (who was hanged at Harper's Ferry), James Townsley, a Mr. Winner, a German named Wininger, and Charles Kaizer.

Six of Henry Clay Pate's men had that day made a raid on Palmyra, in retaliation for the Pottawatomie massacre, and had taken several prisoners, among them two of the Barricklows and Dr. Graham. They then concluded they would go over to Prairie City and take that village also. The people were in church when the descent was made. Services were immediately closed, without the formalities of a benediction, and firing commenced. After a round or two of firing, two of the attacking party were wounded. All retreated, effecting their escape to the main command of Pate. Pursuit was made, but Pate's forces were not found that day. About 10 o'clock the same night, Capt. Brown and Shore, having collected their men, started out again to find Pate's men, and about daylight next morning, discovered them near a small rivulet, with quite a little grove of Black Jack oaks, amounting then to but underbrush, on the west and south sides, about three miles from Prairie City.

The Missourians were about seventy-five or eighty in number, commanded by Capt. Pate, of Missouri, and Lieut. Brockett, of South Carolina, and drawn up behind their wagons, which they used for breastworks. Capt. Brown and Shore's men dismounted two or three hundred yards from where the skirmish began, and leaving Wininger and Henricks in charge of the horses, advanced upon the enemy in a curved line, wings farthest advanced. Brown, armed with a revolver, was in the center, in advance, in command. He repeatedly cautioned his men to aim low. Brown's men were armed with a variety of short range guns, while Shore's men had Sharpe's rifles. When within

supposed range of the latter, fire was opened on Pate's army, the whole thirty-one guns going off simultaneously. A second and a third volley were poured in, when Brown ordered an advance, so that the short-range guns of his own men might be more effective. Some of the men started forward on a run, and the line became somewhat broken. When the line was again formed, the order was given to lie down in the grass, then from one to two feet high. From this time, until a flag of truce was raised by Pate's command, firing was promiscuous and continuous. In the meantime, Dr. Graham had escaped from his captors, by running directly across from them to Brown, falling down from time to time in the grass, to escape the shots fired at him by the Missourians. He told Capts. Brown and Shore that they could capture the whole outfit if they persisted, so when the flag of truce appeared and Capt. Pate proposed to capitulate, upon the condition of retaining their arms, Capt. Brown informed him they were not taking prisoners on those terms, and that the surrender must be unconditional. The flag was withdrawn and the battle renewed.

It was soon discovered that Pate's men were one by one falling back, mounting their horses, and "skedaddling." Orelus Carpenter, a crack shot, was detailed to stop that kind of business by shooting their horses, and in six shots brought down six horses, himself having the end of his nose shot off, and receiving the ball in his right arm, near the shoulder. The flag of truce was finally run up the second time, and terms of unconditional surrender accepted by Pate. Only twenty-eight of Pate's men were captured, the rest having escaped during the fight.

The men of Capt. Shore's command actually engaged in the fight were the following: Capt. Samuel T. Shore; First Lieut. Elkanah Timmons; Second Lieut. Elizur Hill; Silas H. Moore, Elias Bassinger, Richard M. Pierson, Orelus A. Carpenter, Sylvester Harris, Augustus Shore, Montgomery Shore, Hiram McAllister, - Collins, William A. David, C. L. Robbins, J. M. Robbins, John S. Edie, James P. Moore, Hugh McWhinney, John McWhinney and Dr. Westfall.*

* A list of those engaged in the battle or holding the horses, made out and subscribed to by John Brown, now in the Kansas Historical Society's collection, gives the names as follows: Capt. S. T. Shore, David Hendricks, Hiram McAllister, - Parmely, Sylvester Harris, O. A. Carpenter, Augustus Shore, James Townsley, - Hayden, John McWhinney, Montgomery Shore, Elkanah Timmons, Jacob Weiner, A. Bunda, Hugh McWhinney, Charles Keiser, Elizur Hill, William David, B. L. Cockrain, Henry Thompson, Elias Bassinger, Owen Brown, Frederick Brown, Salmon Brown, Oliver Brown, John Brown; all reported more or less severely wounded but nine."