



## Shawnee County Sheriff's Office

1855-2005

J. D. Mauck  
Rich Mergen

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## Foreword

*Occasionally a law enforcement officer has an opportunity for crowning achievement to their career. I have been so honored by being permitted to write the foreword for the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary book of the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office.*

*Just think of it. Before the Youngers, the Daltons and the James boys ever roamed this hard territory of the Midwest, and before Hickcock, Earp and Masterson walked the muddied streets of Kansas cow towns, Shawnee County Sheriff's deputies were keeping the territorial capital of "Bleeding Kansas" safe from crime, mischief and mayhem.*

*The men and women of the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office continue to carry on in a manner that upholds the highest level of duty and sacrifice to and for their community.*

*It is my sincere hope that you enjoy this piece of local history and pass it along from generation to generation.*

*For all the fine men and women of the Sheriff's Office, I thank you for the opportunity to serve.*

**Major Ken Pierce, M.A.**  
**(Retired) 1968-2005**



Ken Pierce began his law enforcement career with the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office in January 1968 under Sheriff Emil Stawitz. Pierce worked as a deputy until leaving the Sheriff's Office to pursue a college degree in June 1969.

Ken Pierce returned to the Sheriff's Office when F. T. "Jim" Chaffee took office in January 1971. Soon after his return to the Sheriff's Office Ken Pierce was promoted to Sergeant and was responsible for Crime Prevention and Training.

In 1975, Ken Pierce was promoted to Lieutenant and assumed an administrative role in budget and planning. In 1979, Pierce was promoted to Captain and was responsible for Communications, budget development, training, and crime prevention.

Ken Pierce was assigned in 1981 as Division Commander of the Patrol and Traffic Units, including supervision of the Sheriff's Office Reserve Unit.

In 1984, Pierce was assigned as Commander of the Criminal Investigations Division and Narcotics Unit. He also supervised the Crime Scene and Evidence technicians.

Ken Pierce was promoted to Major in 1989 where he served as the highest ranking Civil Service employee in the Sheriff's Office. Maj. Pierce had direct supervision over the Division Captains and oversaw all operational policies.

Major Pierce served as Acting Sheriff in February 2000 and remained in that position until Richard Barta was appointed Shawnee County Sheriff by Governor Bill Graves in March 2000.

Major Pierce has received numerous awards throughout his 35-year career including the Medal of Valor on two separate occasions. Major Pierce retired in March 2005.

# The Shawnee County Sheriff's Office

The rewarding part of researching times long gone is that if you study old newspaper stories and documents long enough, you begin to get a flavor or a sense of what it must have been like to live in those times.

When the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department was founded in 1855, there was no budget, there were no employees, and certainly no one was trained to do the job. The few citizens of Shawnee County in the early years all knew each other, at least by sight, so that when an election was held, everyone knew something about the man for which he was voting. Few of the candidates for Sheriff in the first 50 years had experience in law enforcement and even fewer deputies were experienced. The law itself wasn't as fully defined as it would be in later years. Some of the early Sheriffs had as much education as was available at the time, but most were merely literate. There was no guarantee that a deputy would even be literate.

The times were so innocent, that the County Jail at 4<sup>th</sup> and Kansas had barred windows open to the sidewalk level of 4<sup>th</sup> Street. In the summertime, the windows were opened for ventilation and weapons or contraband could be, and was, handed to the prisoners through the bars. Confederates could stand on the sidewalk, visit, and plan jailbreaks with the inmates. All of that happened and was part of the learning curve for the Sheriff's Department. Jail officers were in the habit of wearing firearms inside the jail while they were handling prisoners and learned the bloody way not to allow firearms in the prisoner's areas. Jailbreaks were frequent and some of the prisoners fled as far as Mexico before being caught and returned to the same leaky jail, only to escape again. Nevertheless, the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department learned back then, and is still learning and improving today. Officers with 20 or more years of service can now laugh (or shudder) to think of how procedures have improved during their careers.

In today's era, a Sheriff is likely to have decades of experience and education in law enforcement, although neither experience nor education is required to be elected. Deputies hired today are quite likely to have prepared themselves by earning a four-year degree in Criminal Justice before applying for the job. Many others, if lacking a degree, are in the process of obtaining a formal education in their off-duty hours. Many officers are pursuing graduate degrees to better prepare them to do their jobs and to prepare themselves for leadership roles. Whereas in the past, deputies might seek employment just to have a job, most of the young people serving as deputies today have dedicated themselves to a life's work of protecting and serving Shawnee County as law enforcement officers, and that is what they will do.

Studying the past is amusing and interesting, but it is most valuable for gaining an appreciation of how far the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department has come since 1855, or even since 1955. Shawnee County citizens should be proud of the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department, and of the men and women who serve them. They are still improving, and will continue to do so.

J. D. Mauck



Courthouse 4<sup>th</sup> & Kansas in 1885 – Kansas State Historical Society

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**Sheriff Richard W. Barta  
Shawnee County**



**Shawnee County  
Sheriff's Office  
Sheriff Richard W. Barta  
Law Enforcement Center**

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**To the men and women of the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office:**

This book is a tribute to all the men and women who have served and continue serving the citizens of Shawnee County. A special thanks goes to the committee and others for your dedication and commitment to make this publication a reality. Your research and hard work ensures our rich heritage is preserved.

As we reflect upon the many accomplishments and advancements of this office over the past 150 years, all employees past and present can take pride in their contribution to its success. I am indeed humbled by the many past sheriffs who have preceded me. They have all had a hand in formulating the office and its distinguished history into an agency the citizens of Shawnee County have come to respect and value as a law enforcement agency.

Now we, the many men and women who make up the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office, look to the future with a vision to continue to progress and maintain the integrity of the agency.

We have a lot to be proud of. By working together and with the citizens, we will continue to build upon a legacy of professionalism.

Respectfully,

  
Richard W. Barta  
Shawnee County Sheriff

## Staff Officers



### **UNDERSHERIFF DON BURNS**

**2001-Present**

Don Burns grew up in Osage County Kansas. Don's father became Sheriff of Osage County in 1951 which spawned Don's interest in law enforcement. Don Burns was selected as a recruit for the Kansas Highway Patrol in June 1964. His first duty station was Wamego, Kansas and later his headquarters were at Paola, Kansas. In 1971, Burns was hired by the Kansas Bureau of Investigation as a Special Agent working out of Great Bend, Kansas. Don Burns was promoted to Special Agent In Charge of the K.B.I. Western Region in 1977. He supervised the daily operations of the K.B.I in that region as well as all agents in the western 61 counties of Kansas. He also acted as supervisor of the Laboratory Personnel at the Regional Lab in Great Bend. Don Burns retired from the K.B.I. in May 1993, and accepted a position as Director of Security at Barton County Community College. In 1998 he accepted a job as a Special Investigator with the Kansas Supreme Court Office of Disciplinary Administrator, Topeka, Kansas, where he worked until being appointed Undersheriff in August 2001 by Sheriff Barta.



### **MAJOR RICK HLADKY**

**1977-Present**

Rick Hladky graduated from Onaga High School in 1973. He began his law enforcement career by joining the Shawnee County Sheriff's Reserves in March 1977 and became a full-time sworn officer in October 1977. Rick worked in the Shawnee County Jail when it was located in the Shawnee County Courthouse and under the Sheriff's administration. Hladky worked in Patrol and was promoted to Detectives before he returned to Patrol as a Sergeant. Rick Hladky was promoted to Lieutenant in Patrol before attaining the rank of Captain.

Rick earned his BA in Criminal Justice at Washburn University in 1992, attending classes during off-duty hours. Hladky is also a 2002 graduate of the Federal Bureau of Investigations Central States Law Enforcement Executive Development Seminar and a 2004 Graduate of the University of Kansas Certified Public Manager program. As Captain, Hladky supervised the Operations Division, Criminal Investigations Division and supervised the Services Division of the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office. In other duties, Rick Hladky has written law enforcement grants for the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office that have totaled 1.5 million dollars. Rick also supervises the S.W.A.T. team.

Rick Hladky was promoted to Major on August 6, 2005



## Staff Officers



### **CAPTAIN KERMIT CRANE**

**1977-Retired September 16, 2005**

Kermit Crane is a lifelong resident of the State of Kansas. His interest in law enforcement first began with volunteer work with the Haysville Civil Defense where he had the opportunity to work with Haysville police officers and deputies of the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office. He attended the Kansas State Teacher's College in Emporia and the Barton County Junior College where he studied Criminal Justice. While in school, he served as a Barton County Sheriff Reserve Deputy. After graduation, his first full-time position was with the Great Bend Police Department, in early 1975. He then was hired by the Barton County Sheriff and served as a deputy sheriff until being hired by Shawnee County in October of 1977. Kermit was promoted to Sergeant in 1985, Lieutenant in 1990, and Captain in 1994. As Captain, Crane has served as Division Commander for every Division of the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office. Kermit has been appointed to several service boards and committees, including the Shawnee County Community Corrections Advisory Board. Recently, Captain Crane was appointed by Governor Kathleen Sebelius to the Kansas Wireless Enhanced 911 Advisory Board.



### **CAPTAIN DON CHRISTIE**

**1981-Present**

Don Christie is a life long Kansan, attended schools locally, and pursued his post-secondary education at the University of Kansas. For more than a decade he has been a member of the Capital Area Major Case Squad. In 2004 he completed the FBI Central States Executive Development Seminar.

Christie began his tour of duty assigned to the Security Detention Division (Jail). Christie transferred out of the jail in 1982 and was assigned to Patrol. Of the current roster of Sheriff's Officers, Christie is the last Officer to have served in the capacity as a jailer, before the Sheriff's Office relinquished control of the Jail to the Shawnee County Department of Corrections

After a short period of time in Patrol, Christie was assigned to the Traffic Enforcement Unit. The Traffic Unit was disbanded several years later and he returned to the Patrol Division. In 1987 he was assigned to the Fugitive Warrants Unit and remained there until he was promoted to Sergeant in Patrol in 1994. He was promoted to Lieutenant in Patrol in 1998 and remained there until transferring to the Investigation Division as its Lieutenant in 2000. As a supervisor in the Investigation Division, he had oversight of Detectives, Narcotics and Crime Scene. In 2004 Christie was promoted to Captain (Division Commander) of the Uniformed Operations. He remains in that capacity today.

## Staff Officers



### **CAPTAIN LANCE W.T. ROYER**

**1988-Present**

Royer began his law enforcement career as a dispatcher on the midnight shift one night a week at the Abilene Police Department (Abilene, Kansas) in 1979 while a junior in high school. He left the Abilene Police Department to attend Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas in 1981. While attending Washburn he became a part-time dispatcher, jailer and deputy at the Dickinson County Sheriff's Office (Abilene, Kansas). After graduation from Washburn (in 1985) he became the corrections/communications supervisor at the Dickinson County Sheriff's Office. In 1987, he joined the Kansas Bureau of Investigation as a Law Enforcement Telecommunications Operator. He served in this position until joining the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office in 1988.

At the beginning of his career at the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office, Lance Royer was assigned to the dispatch center and then was assigned to the Patrol Division. Royer served in Patrol for the next 8 years. He was promoted in 1997 to Corporal of the dispatch center. Royer then returned to Patrol as a Corporal and was promoted to Sergeant in Patrol in 1998. He later transferred to the

Process Unit as Sergeant. Lance Royer was promoted to lieutenant in September of 2001. As the Services Division lieutenant he supervised Accounting, Process, Warrants, Records, Fleet Services, Purchasing, Inventory, Building Maintenance, Building Security, Computer Services, Court Security and Reception. He is the NCIC Terminal Agency Coordinator and the NCIC Law Enforcement Security Officer. In addition to these duties he is a crisis negotiator, trainer, and is the special project manager for both the new agency record management system and the in-car computer system. Royer serves as a trainer in his fields of responsibility and in other special fields. Lance currently serves as the Kansas Sheriff's Association's representative on the Kansas Criminal Justice Information System Advisory Board. He has served several times on the technology committee for the Byrne grants for the State of Kansas.

Lance Royer was promoted to Captain on August 6, 2005.



### **CAPTAIN SCOTT HOLLADAY**

**1977-Present**

Scott Holladay received an Associate of Science degree from Kansas State University.

Holladay began his law enforcement career with the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office as a Deputy in October 1977. He served as a Deputy in the Jail and the Traffic Division.

In 1985 he was promoted to Detective where he served in the Criminal Investigations Division, the Drug Enforcement Unit and the Court Security Unit.

In 2000 he was assigned as a Detective to the Professional Standards Unit of the Sheriff's Office. He was promoted to Sergeant in 2003 and to Lieutenant in 2005 serving as the Professional Standards Unit supervisor.

Holladay is currently the Vice-President of the Kansas Internal Affairs Investigators Association and acts as a crisis negotiator for

the agency.

Scott Holladay was promoted to Captain on September 24, 2005.

## Staff Officers



### **LIEUTENANT SCOTT GILCHRIST**

**1994-Present**

Scott Gilchrist graduated from Seaman High School and received a bachelor's degree in Computer Engineering from the University of Kansas in 1992. He was hired by the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office in 1994 and graduated from the 131<sup>st</sup> basic training class at the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center. During his law enforcement career, he has been a field training officer, video training facilitator, SWAT assault team leader, and a Corporal, Sergeant, and Lieutenant in the patrol unit. Lt. Gilchrist is currently the agency Accreditation Manager and the Accreditation/Training Unit Lieutenant in the Administrative Division. He also remains active as a trainer of various subjects for the Citizens' Academy, Reserve Academy, cadets, and in-service training.



### **LIEUTENANT SAMUEL J. LEONE III**

**1994-Present**

Lt. Leone hails from Buffalo, NY, and came to Kansas via Ft. Riley in 1991. He separated from military service and eventually began his law enforcement career as a Reserve Deputy with the Sheriff's Office in January of 1994. In July of that year he became a full-time deputy with the Sheriff's Office. He has served as a K9 handler, SWAT Team member and Commander, and has been promoted through the ranks of Corporal, Sergeant, and now as a Lieutenant in the Operations Division. Lt. Leone also served as the Process Section Sergeant in the Services Division from 2001-2002. Lt. Leone has been active as an instructor in the defensive tactics field and has attended supervisory and tactical training courses. He currently serves as the dayshift Operations Lieutenant.



### **LIEUTENANT PHIL BLUME**

**1989-Present**

Phil Blume was born and raised in Olathe, Kansas. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in criminal justice from Washburn University in 1987. While pursuing this degree he also completed an internship with the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office. He was hired by the Sheriff's Office on September 25, 1989 and has worked in all three divisions. In his career, Blume has worked as a uniformed officer serving in patrol operations, uniformed process server, vice-narcotics officer, school resource officer, and as an agency representative with the Federal Bureau of Investigations Topeka Violent Crime Strike Force. He also holds memberships in various law enforcement organizations. He served as sergeant in the Services Division as well as sergeant and lieutenant in the Uniformed Operations Division. Lieutenant Blume is currently assigned to the Criminal Investigation Division, and is the polygraph examiner for the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office.

## Staff Officers



### **LIEUTENANT MICHAEL KOLBEK**

**1994-Present**

Lt. Kolbek began his law enforcement career at the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office in Dec. 1994. He was assigned to the Uniformed Operations Division, and in April 1997 was reassigned to the Investigative Division Special Services section conducting undercover work for the agency. In July 1997 Kolbek was promoted to Corporal and assigned to the Uniformed Operations Division, and subsequently promoted to Sergeant in Dec. 1998 as an afternoon shift patrol supervisor. In July 2000, Kolbek transferred to Narcotics and assumed the duties as the Narcotics Sergeant. After a reorganization of the Investigative Division, Kolbek was reassigned as the day shift Detective Sergeant in the Investigative Division. In February 2004 he was promoted to his current position and assigned as an Assistant Division Commander in the Uniformed Operations Division. Kolbek is a former Team Member and Team Commander of the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Team. He is a graduate of the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center, and the Drug Enforcement Administrations Drug Unit Commanders Academy. He is currently enrolled in the Certified Public Managers Course at the University of Kansas, and is currently attending Washburn University. A 20-year veteran of the United States Navy, Lt. Kolbek is married with five children, and is a native of Holton, KS.



### **LIEUTENANT SHANE HOOBLER**

**1989-Present**

Lt. Shane Hoobler, Second shift Lieutenant, is a 16-Year veteran of the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office. As a deputy he was assigned to Operations and the Fugitive/Warrants Unit. He served as a corporal in Operations and Community Services then as a sergeant in charge of the Fugitive/Warrants unit before being promoted to Lieutenant in Operations. Currently Lieutenant Hoobler is one of three Operations Lieutenants he is also the coordinator of the Sheriff's Office Field Training Officer Program as well as the Mounted Posse. Lieutenant Hoobler is currently attending the Kansas Certified Public Managers' Course through the University of Kansas Public Management Center.

## In The Line Of Duty



**1986 Kansas Law Enforcement Memorial  
Statehouse grounds  
Topeka Capital Journal – John Bock**

**Benjamin J. Davidson**  
**Deputy Sheriff**  
**1933**

**Killed in the Line of Duty**

**Gregory A. Stubbs**  
**Deputy Sheriff**  
**1987-1998**

**Died in the Line of Duty**

## In the Line of Duty



### **BENJAMIN J. DAVIDSON**

**Deputy Sheriff & Jailer 1933**

Benjamin J. Davidson was born September 27, 1880 in Marion, Alabama, the son of Milton Davidson. Benjamin Davidson worked in construction in Topeka for a number of years before becoming a jailor for the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department. He was also a part-time pastor for The Church of God at 12<sup>th</sup> and Lane and probably helped lay the stones for that building. While engaged in the construction business, Mr. Davidson was able to build a few rental houses for himself. The Davidsons lived at 905 East Tenth Street in Topeka.

When Sheriff Dean Rogers was campaigning for office, he befriended Benjamin J. Davidson and asked Mr. Davidson to help with Rogers' campaign efforts. After Sheriff Rogers won the election, Rogers asked Benjamin Davidson to become a deputy and jailor for the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department. B. J. Davidson began his duties March 1, 1933. Mr. Davidson often stated that any jailbreak would be over his dead body.

On November 28, 1933, Benjamin J. Davidson was on duty in the jail and was bringing a package of cigarettes to a prisoner in the west ward of the jail at 5<sup>th</sup> and Van Buren. When Davidson opened the jail door, one of four conspirators threw a handful of black pepper into Davidson's face. Then all four prisoners attacked Davidson, one of them taking Davidson's handgun and passing it to the ringleader of the group, Cecil Thornbrugh. Davidson continued to fight his four assailants and Thornbrugh shot Davidson in the chest. As Davidson continued to fight and to come toward Thornbrugh, Thornbrugh shot Davidson a second time in the chest, both rounds passing close to the heart. Davidson began to wrestle with Thornbrugh, who fired a third shot, this one striking Davidson in the elbow. Davidson fell into the stairwell, still wrestling with Thornbrugh, who fell down two flights of stairs with Davidson landing on top of him.

Meanwhile, the other three jailbreakers, all teenagers from the Boy's Industrial School returned to their cells after seeing the serious results of their efforts. When Deputy Melvin J. Oakes responded to Davidson's calls for help, he found Davidson dead, but still pinning Thornbrugh to the floor with his body.

Benjamin J. Davidson was proclaimed a hero in Shawnee County for giving his life to stop the jailbreak. Sheriff Dean Rogers commended Davidson for his dedication, saying that Davidson was one of the most loyal employees he had, and attended the funeral with his staff of deputies. A large squad of police officers under the command of Chief Maurice Leonard and a number of firemen under Lt. J. W. Thompson were also present. Senator Arthur Capper said of Davidson: "Topeka is proud of his fidelity, his devotion to duty, and his undying courage."

Benjamin Davidson's wife, Mrs. Lugenia Davidson, was illiterate and had never worked outside of the home. She was left destitute and with no means of support with her husband's death. Topeka attorney Eliases Scott petitioned officials to provide a pension for Benjamin Davidson's widow. None was provided. Sheriff Dean Rogers presented Mrs. Lugenia Davidson with a check for \$174.24, an amount donated by citizens and employees of the Salvation Army.

The County Commissioners, when presented with a bill for \$430 for the funeral of Benjamin J. Davidson, refused to pay more than \$250. The commissioners objected to the \$329 charge for a coffin, which they said was too expensive.

Mrs. Lugenia Davidson died at age 90 on December 2, 1962.

## In The Line of Duty



### **GREGORY ALLEN STUBBS**

**Deputy Sheriff 1987-1998**

Gregory Allen Stubbs was born in Kansas City, Missouri December 19, 1963 to Janet and Dr. David Stubbs. Greg Stubbs graduated from Topeka High School in 1982 and from the Kansas Highway Patrol Academy in 1985.

Stubbs began employment with the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department in 1987 in the Uniformed Services Division and later transferred to Narcotics Interdiction. During Stubbs employment with the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department, he learned to fly fixed-wing aircraft at his own expense under instructor SNSO Captain Kermit Crane. During the flood of 1993, Greg Stubbs served as Sheriff Meneley's pilot as Meneley surveyed the extent of the flood from the air. Stubbs served as President of the American Pilots Association in Topeka in 1993.

On June 29, 1998, Greg Stubbs was participating in a series of drug raids in Topeka when he began to feel ill. At age 34, Stubbs thought it was a passing discomfort and stopped at a convenience store for Tylenol and a beverage. When he returned to his county vehicle, Stubbs suffered a heart attack and lost consciousness. A civilian noticed Stubbs slumped over his steering wheel and summoned medical assistance. Greg Stubbs did not respond to resuscitation.

Greg A. Stubbs was a ten-year veteran of the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department and had served as Chief of Police of Auburn, Kansas in part-time employment.



**1997 - Deputy Wally Long, Deputy John Schrock, and Deputy Greg Stubbs posed with one of the first Highway "Interdiction" seizures made by the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office.**

# SHAWNEE COUNTY SHERIFF

IN MEMORY OF THOSE  
WHO HAVE MADE  
THE SUPREME SACRIFICE

TOPEKA POLICE  
DEPARTMENT

SHAWNEE SHERIFF'S  
DEPARTMENT

OFF. CASWELL S. MATTHEWS

BENJAMIN J. DAVIDSON

1912

1933

OFF. C. L. "BOOTS" SHIELDS

GREGORY A. STUBBS

1935

1993

CPL. MARC HOOD

OFF. TONY R. PATTERSON

OFF. CHARLES "JOEY" BOHLENDER

OFF. JEFF W. HOWEY

1974

1995

2000

2000



DEDICATED  
TO ALL  
WHO HAVE  
HONORABLY  
SERVED



# Sheriffs of Shawnee County



## GEORGE WASHINGTON BERRY

**First Sheriff of Shawnee County  
August 1855**

George Washington Berry was the first appointed Sheriff of Shawnee County, Kansas Territory. The fact that he declined to serve does not diminish the honor of the appointment, but rather gives us another viewpoint from which to explore the character of the times and the people who lived them.

Berry was born September 20, 1816, in Mason County, Kentucky. His death occurred March 25, 1899. In an age when early death was common, Berry was orphaned by the time he was eight years old. Some sources state that Berry was raised in the home of his uncle, Richard Berry with Nancy Hanks, mother of Abraham Lincoln.

The descendants of G. W. Berry, however, state that his maternal grandmother, Catherine Roebuck, in Mason County Kentucky, raised Berry. Family sources also state that Berry cared for his grandmother in her old age, and that she died in his home in Jackson County Missouri.

Berry found when he became an adult, that he could not compete with the cheap labor in a slave state and moved to Missouri at the age of 20 to seek employment.

By the 1840's, Berry had become established as a freighter. He hauled cargo between Independence, Missouri, Fort

Scott, Kansas Territory, Council Grove, K.T., and Ft. Smith, Arkansas. One of his notable missions was in 1848 when Berry hauled the belongings of the Ward family to the Topeka area. The Meade family was a part of the group that Berry headed and is considered to be the first white family to settle in the Topeka area a few years before Topeka was laid out as a town site.

As the struggle between Pro-Slavers and Abolitionists grew in the 1850's, Berry found the living in another slave state in Independence, Missouri and decided to move to Kansas Territory when it was opened to settlement in 1854. With his experience as a freighter, Berry had seen much of eastern Kansas and selected a homestead in Monmouth Township south of Topeka where he built a log cabin and established a farm.

His wife, Nancy, and five children accompanied Berry, Mary A., James F., Susan C., Martha E. and Nancy W. Berry.

In August of 1855, the first Territorial Legislature appointed George Washington Berry the first Sheriff of Shawnee County. In order for Berry to take office, he was required to post a performance bond. Berry, when he received his commission by a messenger on horseback, turned the message over and addressed his refusal to the Governor of Kansas on the back of the message, saying in part that ".....my hair is too precious to be hazarded by holding the position.". Berry's refusal to become Sheriff is a reflection of the violence in Kansas at the time. Berry was a family man, and a farmer who wanted only to tend to his own business.

By 1865, Berry had two more children, William C. Berry and George Webster Berry. Berry was the most successful farmer in Monmouth Twp. With 102 acres improved, 218 acres unimproved, and 130 acres fenced. The value of his farm was shown to be \$4,000. Berry owned \$140 worth of farm implements at the time.

## **Sheriffs of Shawnee County**

Berry's livestock included four horses, four mules, six milk cows, 18 'other cattle', 15 sheep and 20 swine for a total value of \$846.

Berry's farm production in 1865 included 80 bushels of wheat, 50 bushels of rye, 200 bushels of Indian corn, 100 bushels of oats, 1/8 bale of cotton, 80 pounds of wool, 10 bushels of potatoes, 500 pounds of butter, 75 pounds of cheese, four tons of hay, and 25.5 gallons of molasses. The home manufactured items were listed at a value of \$150 and Berry claimed \$420 in value of animals slaughtered.

George Washington Berry's obituary stated that, "He joined the Christian Church in 1842 and lived a Christian life for over 50 years."

Berry was a charter member of Lodge No. 17, A.F. & A.M.. Berry's family reported that before Kansas Territory had a railroad, Berry traveled to St. Louis, Missouri by steamboat to take Knights Templar degrees in his lodge.

The town of Berryton, Kansas takes its name from George Webster Berry, son of George Washington Berry. Shawnee County can be proud of its first Sheriff, even if he chose not to serve; his contribution to the foundation of the county is substantial.

### **JOHN WESLEY HORNER**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sheriff of Shawnee County  
September 24, 1855-October 20, 1856**

John W. Horner was born in Virginia in 1812, the son of a physician of Scottish descent who was said to have been a veteran of the Revolutionary War. In his early years, John Horner, a self-educated man, established himself as a farmer, a Methodist preacher, and he also practiced medicine.

When Horner was 19 years of age, in 1831, he moved to Ohio where he established a homestead and took a wife. After giving birth to three daughters, Mary, (1834), Virginia (1836) and Eliza (1838), John Horner's wife died. He sold his homestead, returned to Virginia and married Mary Jane Clemmons before moving his new family to Keokuk, Iowa where he established another homestead.

In Keokuk, Iowa, three children were born to the Horner's, Margaret (1841), Martha (1843) and John Wesley Horner, Jr. (1844). John Horner next moved his family to Henry County, Indiana where another daughter, Mary Jane was born in 1847. Then two sons were born to the Horner's, Josiah on September 15, 1849 and George in 1852.

February 1855 found John W. Horner and his family in Shawnee County, Kansas where Governor Andrew Reeder appointed him Justice of the Peace. Horner served as Justice of the Peace for seven months at the end of which, he was appointed Sheriff of Shawnee County when George Washington Berry refused to serve. In addition to his duties as Sheriff, John Horner also served as Tax Assessor.

John W. Horner resigned as Sheriff of Shawnee County October 20, 1856 and by 1859 was settled in Huntsville, Alabama where his last child, Minnie Bell was born in January 1859. The next year, 1860, found the Horner's living in Ozark, Missouri where they remained until the outbreak of the Civil War.

Even though he was 49 years of age when the Civil War began, John Horner enlisted as a private in the 34th Missouri Volunteers in August of 1862. In 1863, because of his medical expertise, John Horner became a military surgeon before being captured by Union forces in 1864. Horner was held as a prisoner of war and tended the other prisoners until his death of unknown causes in 1865.

One of John Wesley Horner's sons, Josiah Horner, found employment as a cowhand driving trail herds from Texas to Kansas's railheads in the late 1860's. By 1871, Josiah, or 'Joe' had fallen in with others who were robbing banks and rustling cattle. On October 10, 1874, Joe Horner was involved in a gunfight that resulted in the death of a 'Buffalo Soldier', as Black cavalymen were known, and the wounding of another.

## **Sheriffs of Shawnee County**

'Joe' Horner's criminal career ended in 1877 when he was jailed for robbing the bank at Comanche, Texas. History does not record how Joe Horner escaped from jail, but after he did, he found a job driving cattle to Ogallala, Nebraska.

Upon arriving in Ogallala, Josiah Horner legally changed his name to Frank Canton and went on to become employed by the Wyoming Stock Grower's Association. His job with the Stock Grower's Association was to drive small ranchers and farmers out of Johnson County, Wyoming.

Later, Josiah Horner, now known as Frank Canton moved to Oklahoma where he served as a Deputy U.S. Marshal and led armed assaults on many dangerous outlaws, all assaults ending in their arrests. In 1907, Frank Canton became the Adjutant General of the Oklahoma National Guard, a position he held until his death in 1927.

### **BENJAMIN J. CASTLEMAN**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sheriff of Shawnee County**  
**Appointed by the Legislature in October, 1856**  
**Resigned March 23, 1857**

Benjamin D. Castleman, born in Missouri, came to settle in Tecumseh, Kansas as a merchant in June of 1856. Because he was from Missouri, because he settled in Tecumseh, and because the 'Bogus' Legislature appointed him Sheriff of Shawnee County, Mr. Castleman probably leaned toward establishing Kansas as a slave state.

In 1856, the settlers at Topeka, all 'Free State' men, found themselves isolated from those communities east of them and forbidden from buying necessities from merchants in 'Slave State' towns. These circumstances caused the Topekans to organize a raiding party consisting of 150 men or more to raid the town of Tecumseh to forcibly procure merchandise needed. The most prosperous store in Tecumseh belonged to Benjamin Castleman. The raiding party seized over \$3,000 in goods from the Castleman store on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of September, 1856, took the booty back to Topeka and divided it among themselves and others.

Less than six weeks after he was robbed, Benjamin D. Castleman accepted the appointment of the Kansas Legislature to become the Sheriff of Shawnee County. Castleman served as Sheriff of Shawnee County until he resigned March 23, 1857.

It should be remembered that during the years that the Legislature was appointing county officers, including that of Sheriff, that Topeka and Shawnee County did not recognize or honor those appointments, nor were Topekans always aware of the identity of the office holders.

By November of 1859, Benjamin D. Castleman was serving as a Deputy U.S. Marshal. The Legislature, in an attempt to eliminate the leaders of the Free State Movement, caused warrants for the arrest of some of the leaders.

One of these warrants was to arrest Col. John Ritchie of Topeka on a federal warrant for 'Tampering with the Mail'. Benjamin Castleman, possibly remembering Ritchie's participation in the raid on his store in 1856, came to Topeka to serve the warrant on Ritchie. Col. Ritchie refused to be arrested and U.S. Deputy Marshal Castleman returned to Tecumseh in defeat.

## Sheriffs of Shawnee County



(Kansas State Historical Society)

### **JAMES BARNES WHITAKER**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County**  
**March 23, 1857-November 30, 1857**

James B. Whitaker was born February 21, 1832 in Boston Massachusetts. Whitaker attended public schools until the age of 14 when he took a job with the New York & Boston Air Line Railroad. Whitaker was employed with a surveying crew for the railroad and, showing an aptitude for the work, was encouraged by his employers to attend Brown University at Providence, Rhode Island to pursue a degree in civil engineering.

In March of 1856, Whitaker moved to Cairo, Illinois and became an assistant city engineer. Just two months later, in May of 1856, James Whitaker moved to Tecumseh, Kansas and set up his own business as a surveyor.

Although he was running a successful business as a surveyor, Whitaker accepted appointment as Sheriff of Shawnee County in March 23, 1857 and was also appointed Deputy U.S. Marshal at about the same time. Whitaker served as Sheriff of Shawnee County until November 30, 1857 when Jehial Tyler took office.

Whitaker remained in Topeka, Kansas after his term as Sheriff and served as the Shawnee County Surveyor from November 5, 1861 to November 2, 1869. James Whitaker also served as City Engineer for the City of Topeka, and as Street Commissioner.

In 1858, James B. Whitaker married Jane V. Close of Auburn, NY and raised four children in Topeka: James Edgar Whitaker, Francis Leslie Whitaker, Frederick Holland Whitaker, and Kittie Whitaker.

### **JEHIAL TYLER**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County**  
**November 30-1857-March 1859**

Jehial Tyler, a resident of Brownsville, (now Auburn) Kansas Territory, was nominated at the first Free State Party convention in Brownsville on September 17, 1857.

Unfortunately, Territorial Law called for Sheriffs, Surveyors, and Register of Deeds to be appointed, with no provisions for election by popular vote.

In response to the wishes of the people, Governor F. R. Stanton appointed Jehial Tyler as Sheriff of Shawnee County on November 30, 1857.

At the time of his appointment, Jehial Tyler found that not only was there no jail in existence at the time, but there were no funds to build a jail and no funds to pay the expenses of holding prisoners in the County. Tyler was authorized to issue certificates for the advance payment of taxes so he could obtain funds to perform his duties.

Little is known about Jehial Tyler, except that in a list of voters in Kansas Territory, Tyler is shown to be from New York. The census of the Kansas Territory taken in 1860 shows J. Tyler living in Douglas County in the Wakarusa Census Division.

# Sheriffs of Shawnee County

## THOMAS W. MAIRES

**Sheriff of Shawnee County**  
**March 1859-January 14, 1860**

Governor James Denver appointed Thomas W. Maires, a resident of Tecumseh, Kansas, to the office of Sheriff of Shawnee County in March of 1859 upon the resignation of Sheriff Jehial Tyler.

As soon as April 7, 1859, the newly appointed Sheriff Maires drew criticism in an editorial in THE TOPEKA TRIBUNE:

*Sheriff Maires has three deputies in Topeka. One black Republican, one Democrat, and one Conservative. We do not exactly understand this catering to the different parties, but presume that he wishes to play a part with all that he may stand a better chance for success at the October election. One deputy is enough for this part of the country, and we would suggest that his honor stick to his party in making selections for under-sheriffs.*

The term 'black Republican' was used in the years before the civil war as a pejorative term to describe a Republican who was thought to lean too much toward rights for slaves.

Thomas Maires, in 1855, before he was appointed Sheriff, invested in some land in southeast Shawnee County. Maires and several of his relatives platted a town site that they named "Mairestown". The location of the town site was east of present day S.E. 45<sup>th</sup> and Shawnee Heights. Unfortunately for Maires, nothing came of the venture.

After the election of November, 1859 provided an elected Sheriff, Thomas W. Maires returned to private life.

During the years 1859 and 1860, a severe drought struck western Kansas. The eastern counties, including Shawnee County organized to send aid to the starving residents of the drought area. In November of 1860, a relief meeting in Tecumseh issued the following proclamation as reported in the *Auburn Docket November 20, 1860*:

*Resolved—That we respectfully request Ex-Sheriff Thomas W. Maires, to aid his destitute neighbors by undertaking the mission proposed to Mr. Hoogland. We make this request relying upon his generosity and kindness, and his appreciation of the condition of many families in our neighborhood to whom aid and assistance must be promptly extended for the sake of humanity.*

# Sheriffs of Shawnee County



(Kansas State Historical Society)

## ALONZO HARRY HALE

**First Elected Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1860-1863**

Alonzo H. Hale was born in New York in 1812, son of Consider Hale. Hale's mother died when he was nine years of age.

Hale married Millicent C. Leonard in Pierrepont, New York February 29, 1844. The Hales had five children by the 1860 Kansas Territorial census, Emma E. Hale, Leslie L. Hale, George E. Hale, Spencer Hale, and Mary Hale.

It was not until 1856 that Alonzo Hale moved to Kansas Territory, settling in Brownsville (now Auburn) where General James H. Lane commissioned him as a Captain in the company at Brownsville. Captain A. H. Hale and his company participated in the Price Raid in the fall of 1864 wherein several Topekans were killed. The fallen are remembered at a Civil War memorial at Topeka Cemetery.

In the first authorized election in Shawnee County, Alonzo H. Hale was elected the first Sheriff of Shawnee County on November 8, 1859, defeating his opponent, John Kinney. The election ended the revolving door of appointments and resignations that existed before.

At the time of the 1859 election, Shawnee County's borders were entirely south of the Kansas River, extending as far south as Osage City, placing Topeka on the northern border. Within a few months, the Territorial Legislature redrew the boundaries of Shawnee County to its present configuration, placing Topeka in nearly the center of the county and made Topeka the county seat. Alonzo Hale then moved his family from Brownsville to Topeka. His residence was at 8<sup>th</sup> and Harrison which was the future site of the first Topeka High School.

Hale was elected to a second two-year term as Sheriff of Shawnee County, during which time he bought the Topeka House, a hotel formerly owned by John Stewart. Alonzo Hale was also active buying and selling real estate while serving as Sheriff.

After serving his second term as Sheriff of Shawnee County, Alonzo Hale was appointed Deputy U.S. Marshal, an office he held for several years. Hale moved to Kansas City, Missouri in 1865 and finally to California in 1877.

## CHARLES C. WHITING

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1864-1867  
Deputy Sheriff 1863**

Charles C. Whiting was born February 26, 1837 in Fryeburg, Maine, a son of Ahial F. Whiting, a house carpenter. Whiting came to Topeka, K.T. with his father in 1855 where they were employed in building some of the first houses in Topeka.

Whiting was elected Constable of Topeka Township in 1858. In 1863, Charles C. Whiting and several others entered the race for Sheriff of Shawnee County. One of Whiting's opponents was James A. Hickey, Undersheriff. Soon after announcing his candidacy, Hickey left on a trip back east to visit his mother. Sheriff Alonzo Hale appointed Charles C. Whiting to serve in Hickey's place on June 24, 1863. Hickey wasn't available for the campaigning before the election in 1863 and Whiting won the election. Two years later, C. C. Whiting was elected to a second term. James A. Hickey served as deputy sheriff for a total of 20 years under different sheriffs at different times.

## Sheriffs of Shawnee County

Charles C. Whiting was very active in many events around Topeka in the 1860's, including his competition in a sulky race at the Topeka Fair Grounds. The purse was said to exceed \$30,000. The drivers were not to weigh less than 128 pounds without carrying a handicap weight. Whiting, weighing in at 129 ½ pounds, didn't have to carry extra weight. Whiting served as Councilman and also Recorder for the City of Topeka.

After serving as Sheriff of Shawnee County, C. C. Whiting was appointed U.S. Marshal, Kansas District, by President Andrew Johnson, March 7, 1867. Whiting resigned from that office during protests that occurred when one of Whiting's deputies killed a 'friendly Pawnee Chief'.

During his tenure as U.S. Marshal, Whiting became good friends with James Butler (Wild Bill) Hickok who served as Deputy U.S. Marshal. Hickok visited Topeka and served for a short time as a scout for the Topeka Cavalry in 1868.

Charles C. Whiting fell ill with pneumonia and died of the disease in January, 1870 at the age of 32.



(Kansas State Historical Society)

### **SHERMAN BODWELL**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1868-1869**

Sherman Bodwell was born August 3, 1835 in Chardon, Ohio, a son of Anson Green Bodwell, a furniture maker and farmer.

In 1856, Sherman and his brother, Rev. Lewis Bodwell arrived in Topeka, Kansas Territory from New Haven, Connecticut. Rev. Lewis Bodwell was a Presbyterian minister, while Sherman was a member of the Congregational Church. In 1857, Bodwell's father, mother and siblings moved to Topeka.

Sherman Bodwell joined the Kansas Volunteer Cavalry August 23, 1862 as a private, but was promoted to First Sergeant the next month and was promoted to 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in December 1862. Bodwell saw action during the Civil War and suffered a severe leg wound in a skirmish in southwest Missouri. Lt. Sherman Bodwell's military unit also fought in the Price Raid in October of 1864.

In 1867, Sherman Bodwell called upon his former comrades in arms to support him in his campaign for Sheriff of Shawnee County. Chester Thomas, Jr. was narrowly defeated in the election by a vote of 615 to 634.

After successfully serving one term in office, Sherman Bodwell declined to run for a second term and went to work for the U.S. Post Office.

Sherman Bodwell was killed September 12, 1871 on the northeast corner of Sixth and Kansas Avenues when he stepped off the sidewalk into the path of a drunken man on an uncontrolled running horse. Bodwell was dashed to the ground and only regained consciousness for a brief time before passing away later that evening.

## Sheriffs of Shawnee County



(Kansas State Historical Society)

### CHESTER THOMAS, JR.

**Sheriff of Shawnee County**

**1870-1873, Two terms**

**1884-1885 One term**

Chester Thomas, Jr. was born April 10, 1837 in Troy, Bradford County, Pennsylvania, the son of Chester Thomas, a Sheriff of Bradford County, PA in 1851.

Chester Thomas, Jr. began his career at age 19 as a soldier in the Engineer Corps, serving in Minnesota in 1856. By 1860, the Chester Thomas, Sr. family, including Chester Thomas, Jr., came to Kansas. Chester Thomas, Jr. was employed as an express messenger driving a coach from St. Joseph, Missouri and later from Atchison, Kansas to Denver, Salt Lake City and points in California. The routes took Mr. Thomas through unsettled Indian Territory and exposed him to many dangers. Records show that Mr. Thomas made 80 trips across the plains during his employment. Chester Thomas, Jr. drove the first Major and Russell Stage Line coach to cross the plains.

During the Civil War years, Chester Thomas, Jr. worked for the Major & Russell Stage Line in stations at Denver and Central City, Colorado. President Abraham Lincoln appointed Chester Thomas, Jr.

as Captain and Commissary of Substance with headquarters in Denver, Colorado.

After the war was over, Chester Thomas, Jr. returned to Pennsylvania and married Miss Lorenia Lindley and moved to Shawnee County, Kansas in 1866. The couple lived on a farm near Wakarusa.

Chester Thomas, Jr. ran for Sheriff of Shawnee County in 1867 and narrowly lost to Sherman Bodwell. After Bodwell refused to run for sheriff in 1869, Chester Thomas, Jr. ran again and won the election, defeating James A. Hickey by a margin of 922 to 388. Hickey had spent the months before the election visiting his mother 'back east' and failed to be present for the campaign. Thomas served his first term of two years and then was elected for a second term.

In 1876, Chester Thomas, Jr. was elected Treasurer of Shawnee County and began a second term in that office in 1878.

In 1883, Chester Thomas, Jr. again ran for the office of Sheriff of Shawnee County and defeated Michael Heery, Horace E. Bush, and J. A. McCall. Chester Thomas Jr. declined to run for another term of office in 1885.

In 1887, Chester Thomas, Jr. was in poor health, but served as Secretary of the State Fair Association. He died August 15, 1888 at the age of 51. At Chester Thomas, Jr.'s funeral, said to be the largest in Topeka to that time, the Rev. F. S. McCabe said, "Mr. Thomas was in many respects a fair representative of the early settlers of Kansas...."



# Sheriffs of Shawnee County



(Kansas State Historical Society)

## **SPENCER PITTMAN WADE**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1874-1877 Two Terms**

Spencer P. Wade was born February 11, 1840 in La Salle County, Illinois, the son of William B. and Caroline Burbank Wade. At the age of 14, in 1854, Spencer Wade moved with his mother and father to Kansas. They filed a claim on a homestead near Meriden in Jefferson County. After two years spent improving the homestead, William B. Wade was elected to the Territorial Legislature where he helped to construct the constitution for the new state. In 1857, William B. Wade moved his family to the northwest corner of what is now Tecumseh Township, Shawnee County.

Spencer P. Wade enlisted in Company E, 11<sup>th</sup> Kansas Infantry on August 19, 1862 and served that unit as a Commissary Sergeant until the end of the war.

In November of 1873, his party nominated Spencer P. Wade as candidate for Sheriff. Wade defeated Thomas Welch by a margin of 2129 votes to Welch's 1090 votes. During the election of 1875, Spencer P. Wade faced J. L. Price and defeated Price 1985 votes to Price's 412.

As Sheriff, Spencer P. Wade held a good reputation and the public was pleased with his service until a series of jailbreaks began. At the time, the jail was in the basement of the courthouse located on the southwest corner of 4<sup>th</sup> and Kansas. The jail being a few feet below grade, at least half of the jail windows were adjacent to and accessible from the sidewalk. A person on the sidewalk could shake hands with an inmate, or pass him a pistol if he so desired.

During this time, Sam Lappin, a State Treasurer jailed for embezzlement escaped from the Shawnee County jail. The explanation for the first escape was that Lappin had soaped himself and squeezed through the bars. This explanation was not accepted by the public because Lappin was described as a 'portly' man and it was observed that not even his head would fit between the bars.

This was just the beginning of many jailbreaks that continued until authorities learned more about preventing them. In the meantime, Sheriff Spencer P. Wade was held responsible for the lack of security at the jail.

Spencer P. Wade died in Topeka, Kansas at the age of 68, February 24, 1908.

# Sheriffs of Shawnee County



(Kansas State Historical Society)

## WILLIS D. DISBROW

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1878-1881 Two Terms**

Willis D. Disbrow was born in Ohio in 1836 and came to Shawnee County, Auburn Twp in 1858. Disbrow enlisted in the 6<sup>th</sup> Kansas Cavalry Regiment and was quickly promoted to Commissary Sergeant. After the war's end, Disbrow was mustered out of the Union Army July 18, 1865 in DeVall's Bluff, Arkansas.

Willis Disbrow was employed by Shawnee County as a deputy, Undersheriff, and jailor for several years and under different Sheriffs before he was elected for his own terms as Sheriff. Disbrow served as jailor during the time that the many jailbreaks occurred. Fortunately for him, the serving Sheriff took the blame for the jailbreaks, even though Disbrow was on duty when the breaks occurred.

In November 1877, Disbrow won his first term as Sheriff by defeating J. A. Polley, 1441 votes to Polley's 836 votes. In November of 1879, Willis Disbrow won his second term as Sheriff, again defeating Polley 1955 votes to Polley's 830 votes. There is no record that Polley ever ran for Sheriff again.

Willis Disbrow and his wife, Mary S. Disbrow had four children, Eva Lillian Disbrow, born in January, 1875, died in August, 1875; Harry E. Disbrow, born 1876; Homer M. Disbrow, born June 2, 1881, died July 12, 1882; and Ana Gertrude Disbrow, born 1883, died 1921.

Willis D. Disbrow died in Topeka, Kansas in 1900 and is buried in Topeka Cemetery, where we find many of the well-known pioneers of Shawnee County. Mary S. Disbrow drew a pension from Willis' Civil War service and died October 18, 1915.

## HORACE E. BUSH

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1882-1883 One Term**

Horace E. Bush was born August 25, 1831 in Onondaga County, New York. He enlisted in Battery D, First New York Light Artillery at the outbreak of the Civil War and served under General George B. McClellan, fighting in nearly all of the major battles that McClelland commanded. Bush was discharged in July 1862 with a disability caused by an illness.

Horace Bush moved to Auburn Township, Shawnee County Kansas in May of 1863 and by the fall of 1863 he was commissioned as a Captain to command the Auburn Company of the Kansas Militia. Captain Horace E. Bush participated in the Battle of the Big Blue and suffered three shots through the left side of his head and one through his left arm. Another round passed through his clothing and stuck in his right side.

Bush and his family owned a large farm only ½ mile south of Auburn. Newspapers reported in June of 1870 that Bush was building a \$2,000 stone barn on the property. In addition to farming and raising cattle and hogs for market, Bush served as Treasurer of Auburn Township for three years, Township Clerk for one year, and served as a member of the Kansas State Legislature in 1871.

In November of 1881, Horace E. Bush ran for Sheriff against J. A. McCall. Bush received 1572 votes and McCall received 1563 votes. McCall contested the results and a series of cases were filed in District Court.

## Sheriffs of Shawnee County

The District Court ruled that the election was flawed and that neither man was fairly elected. The court further ordered that Bush and McCall divide the two-year term.

Governor St. John solved the dispute by appointing Horace E. Bush Sheriff of Shawnee County for the full term.

While serving as Sheriff on November 28, 1882, H. E. Bush was attempting to arrest the Cook brothers at 10<sup>th</sup> and Taylor Streets when he suffered a severe gunshot wound to the instep of his right foot.



(Kansas State Historical Society)

### **ANDREW M. FULLER**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1886-1889 Two Terms**

Andrew M. Fuller was born in Oquawka, Henderson County Illinois to John M. and Malinda Morriss Fuller. Fuller volunteered to serve in Company F, 10<sup>th</sup> Illinois Volunteer Infantry and fought in several engagements throughout the war and was mustered out in July 1865.

At the end of the Civil War, Fuller was employed as a farm implement salesman and was eventually working for the Moline Plow Company. Fuller's sales area included Kansas, southern Nebraska and northern Missouri. Andrew Fuller chose Topeka, Kansas as his home and opened an agricultural implement and carriage business.

In 1881, Fuller was elected Treasurer of the City of Topeka and served one year in that capacity. One of Andrew Fuller's social activities was to serve as Captain of the Flambeau Club. The Flambeau Club consisted of a drill team of men who carried torches in nighttime parades and executed marching maneuvers with them. Topeka's Flambeau Club traveled to Chicago, Denver, and other cities to perform, in addition to entertaining Topeka's citizens.

Andrew Fuller was elected Sheriff of Shawnee County in the November 1885 election and served two terms. During both terms, Sheriff Fuller employed Willis D. Disbrow (a former Sheriff) as Undersheriff, William H. Gill as Jailor, and Alfred A. Kuykendall as Deputy. Kuykendall also served under Sheriff John M. Wilkerson for two terms.

After serving as Shawnee County Sheriff, Andrew Fuller was appointed Chief of Police, City of Topeka, after which he became a ticket agent for the C.R.I. & P.R.R. railway company.

# Sheriffs of Shawnee County



(Kansas State Historical Society)

## JOHN M. WILKERSON

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1890-1893 & 1907- July 13, 1909 Four Terms**

John M. Wilkerson was born August 12, 1844 in Madison County, Kentucky. When Wilkerson was six years of age, he and his parents moved to DeKalb County Missouri and also lived for a time in Buchanan County Missouri.

In 1863, Wilkerson moved to Kansas and enlisted in Company B, Fifteenth Kansas Cavalry September 26, 1863. During his two years of service, Wilkerson participated in most of the battles his unit fought in Missouri, Arkansas, Indian Territory, and Kansas, including the Big and Little Blue battles in Westport. He was discharged in October 1865 and returned to Shawnee County, settling in the Muddy Creek area.

John Wilkerson married Jane Cunningham August 2, 1868 in Jackson County, Kansas. Jane Cunningham died in December 1875. Wilkerson then married Amanda Stockton in Buchanan County, Missouri on December 25, 1876. By the spring of 1879, Wilkerson and family were living on a 160-acre farm in the North Topeka area.

Wilkerson won the November 5, 1889 race for Sheriff of Shawnee County with 2120 votes against Buck Miller's 1430 votes. During his first term, Wilkerson earned a reputation as a good 'thief catcher' and was well respected by the citizens of Shawnee County.

In the elections of November 3, 1891, Wilkerson ran for his second term against three other candidates: John Mileham, E. B. Webber, and Lee Humbert. John Mileham was the closest contender, but lost to Wilkerson's 2344 votes to his own 1923 votes.

During Wilkerson's second term presented Wilkerson with his most difficult challenge. In the Kansas House of Representatives, both the Populist Party and the Republican Party claimed majority control of the House when they were seated in 1893. The Populist Party controlled the Senate, causing the Senate to support the Populists in the House.

On February 15, 1893, Republican House Speaker, George L. Douglas led the Republican house members to the chambers where the Populists were meeting and demanded entrance. Entrance being denied, Douglas smashed the doors to the chamber and the Republicans took possession of the chamber.

As violence threatened the Capitol, Governor Lewelling called upon Sheriff Wilkerson to bring order to the proceedings in the Legislature. Sheriff Wilkerson responded that he had no jurisdiction over legislative matter, but that he was the 'regular guardian of the county peace'. Wilkerson deputized several hundred citizens to maintain order in the area of the Capitol, while Lewelling called upon the State Militia to safeguard the Governor and maintain order within the Capitol building itself. The Kansas Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Republicans and the Populists disbanded, ending the dispute.

After completing his 2<sup>nd</sup> term as Sheriff, John M. Wilkerson served as deputy sheriff and as an officer of the Topeka Police Department. In 1896, John Wilkerson served one year as Chief of Police for the City of Topeka.

In November 1906, John M. Wilkerson ran for Sheriff and again won the office for his 3<sup>rd</sup> term. On November 3, 1908, Wilkerson won an unprecedented fourth term to begin in January 1909. This term was short-lived, however, because of a scandal that occurred in the Sheriff's office July 10, 1909.

## **Sheriffs of Shawnee County**

Sheriff Wilkerson and Deputy Sheriff George Ward were involved in an altercation wherein Ben Johnson was beaten unconscious in the Sheriff's office. It seems that Sheriff Wilkerson had acquired the reputation of often being intoxicated in and around the courthouse and had been warned by the County Attorney that he could be removed from office for the behavior. The warnings had gone unheeded and testimony was presented that Sheriff Wilkerson was intoxicated during the fight.

The law at the time held that any public official that was not subject to recall would forfeit his office for public intoxication. John M. Wilkerson resigned as Sheriff of Shawnee County on July 13, 1909 to avoid an almost certain ouster by the District Court. Col. J. D. Norton was appointed by Governor Stubbs to complete Wilkerson's term of office. John Wilkerson and his family were allowed to remain in the Sheriff's living quarters for a short time and a son was born to them there on July 23, 1909.

County Attorney Schenck said of Wilkerson after Wilkerson's resignation:

"As a fearless officer of the law, he never has had an equal. Truthful, he was, almost to a fault. He had the biggest heart of any man I have ever known. True to a friend, he was always, and as an official, he has only the one weakness. If Wilkerson had let liquor alone, he would have been an ideal officer and man. Whisky alone is responsible for his downfall."

### **DAVID NEIL BURDGE**

#### **Sheriff of Shawnee County 1894-1895 One Term**

David N. Burdge was born in Ohio in 1850, the son of a farmer, Joseph Burdge. When the Burdges moved to Menoken Township, Shawnee County after the Civil War, David Burdge and his brother, Joseph J. Burdge became teachers in the public schools.

David Burdge became a teacher in the Auburn, Kansas schools. David Burdge chose one of his former students, Florence Ashly Dyche of Auburn as his wife and married her in 1879. David and Florence Burdge had two daughters, Pearl and Agnes.

In 1885, David Burdge began serving a total of four years as the elected Clerk for the City of Topeka. As Burdge ended his tenure as City Clerk in 1888, the Burdge family moved into 407 Woodlawn in the newly incorporated town of Potwin Place. Burdge's wife, Florence, purchased the home from the Barnett family who were moving to California. David Burdge then became the City Clerk for the town of Potwin Place, serving in that capacity until he began as Undersheriff for Sheriff John M. Wilkerson in 1892 and 1893.

In 1893, David N. Burdge won the election for Sheriff of Shawnee County by a comfortable margin. Burdge got 2993 votes and his closest competitor; Samuel Kerr received only 759 votes.

During his two-year term of office, David Neil Burdge enjoyed the reputation of being especially efficient and diligent in his prosecution of bootleggers and 'jointists'. When Burdge stood for election for a second term, the bootleggers and their patrons united to defeat Burdge in the November 1895 election.

# Sheriffs of Shawnee County



(Kansas State Historical Society)

## **ROBERT B. KEPLEY**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1896-1897 One Term**

Robert Bailey Kepley was born March 22, 1861 in Bourbon County, Kansas, making him the first Sheriff of Shawnee County to be born in Kansas. Robert Kepley married Mamie Foster in 1886 in Bourbon County Kansas after moving to Topeka in 1883.

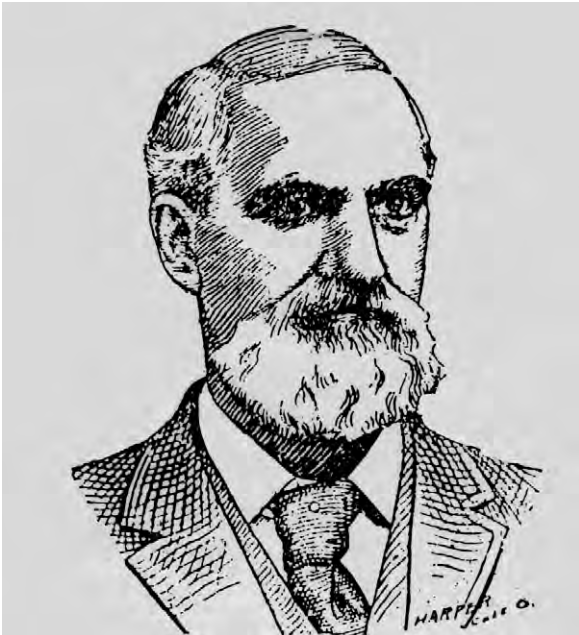
Robert Kepley was a successful contractor and builder in Topeka and other Kansas towns, serving as a member of the State Board of Public Works for two years.

In November of 1895, Robert B. Kepley defeated incumbent Sheriff D. N. Burdge by a vote of 4020 to 3670. In contrast to Sheriff Burdge, Sheriff Kepley wasn't overly zealous in pursuing bootleggers and illegal 'jointists' and this resulted in his defeat for re-election in the November 6, 1897 election when Porter S. Cook defeated Kepley, gaining 4888 votes to Kepley's 4762 votes.

Kepley hired an attorney to contest the election, holding that the election board 'counted out' 264 votes that should have been counted for Kepley. The District Court ruled that Porter S. Cook won, but only by 100 votes.

Robert Kepley ran a third time for Sheriff November 11, 1899, but was soundly defeated by the incumbent Porter S. Cook by nearly 2000 votes.

Robert Bailey Kepley died April 27, 1912 in Shawnee County, Kansas.



(Kansas State Historical Society)

## **PORTER S. COOK**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1898-1902 Two Terms**

Porter S. Cook was born in Pennsylvania in 1842. He married his wife, Alwilda and had one daughter, Nonie Cook in 1869 before coming to Kansas. In 1875, the Cook family was farming in the Dover Township, but by 1880, they were on a farm in Mission Creek, Wabaunsee County Kansas.

At some point in time, Porter S. Cook sold his farm and moved to Topeka, opening a livery stable. Cook operated the livery stable until he ran for Sheriff of Shawnee County in 1887. Porter Cook defeated Robert B. Kepley on November 6, 1897 by a narrow margin, Kepley receiving 4762 votes and Porter Cook, 4888. Kepley contested the election results, but Cook prevailed and took office in January of 1898.

In November of 1899, Porter S. Cook again faced Robert B. Kepley in the Sheriff's election. This time, Cook won with a comfortable margin with 3967 votes to Kepley's 2099 votes.

During this term of office, the Legislature changed the general election years from odd numbered years to even numbered years, giving Sheriff Cook a three-year term instead of the normal two-year term.

## Sheriffs of Shawnee County

During his tenure as Sheriff, Porter Cook had occasion to host the infamous Carrie Nation in his jail. A Topeka Police officer had arrested Carrie Nation while she was demolishing the Senate saloon. Ms Nation said of Sheriff Cook, "Mr. Cook was Sheriff and I was treated very nicely by him and Mrs. Cook. Mrs. Cook's mother was visiting them at this time, a woman thoroughly in sympathy with my work, and I believe that the influence of this good woman was the cause of my being treated so well, for after she left things were very different."



(Kansas State Historical Society)

### **ALBERTUS T. LUCAS**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1903-1906 Two Terms**

Albertus T. Lucas was born in Brimfield, Perio County Illinois July 26, 1867. He moved with his family to a farm in Mission Township, Shawnee County in 1868. The Lucas family moved to Auburn Township before moving to Topeka in 1880, so that John E. Lucas, Albertus' father, could work for the City of Topeka.

Lucas married Mary Miller January 27, 1896 in Topeka and they had one child, Helen. A. T. Wells Fargo & Company Express employed Lucas for four years after he worked in a livery stable in Topeka for eight years. Albertus Lucas' first experience in law enforcement was his employment as deputy sheriff in 1897 and 1898 under Sheriff Porter S. Cook.

Albertus T. Lucas ran for his first term as Sheriff in November of 1902 and won the office over three other candidates. F. M. Stahl, Lucas' closest opponent received 3884 votes, but Lucas received 5169 votes. Lucas ran again in 1904 and received 5046 votes, while Darrel Marken, the Democratic candidate, received 1746 votes.

One of the challenges to Lucas' leadership abilities occurred during the flood of 1903 when Lucas and his staff participated in rescue and loss prevention activities.

Sheriff Lucas ordered the many deputies he had out patrolling the flooded areas in boats to 'shoot down any persons found plundering'. THE TOPEKA STATE JOURNAL of June 2, 1903 stated: "It is only by making an example of a few of the supposed thieves that North Topeka can be protected."

Although the Governor pondered declaring martial law, local authorities convinced the Governor that Sheriff Lucas had the situation under control.

# Sheriffs of Shawnee County



(Kansas State Historical Society)

## **JONATHAN DORR NORTON**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1909-1912 Appointed and one Term**

Jonathan Dorr Norton was born October 22, 1841, a son of Washington A. and Caroline Harper Norton in Harpersfield, Ashtabula County Ohio. Norton received his education in Cleveland, Ohio.

When the Civil War broke out, Jonathan Norton's brothers enlisted, but Jonathan was rejected for active service because he had lost the use of an eye in a boyhood accident. Norton was accepted by the Ohio National Guard and rose to the rank of Colonel, commanding the Sixteenth Regiment.

Norton was Chief Clerk and Cashier for the Cleveland & Toledo Railroad Company for eight years and was also a member of the Ohio State Senate for two years before moving to Topeka, Kansas to work for the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway in the Treasury Department in September of 1887.

Jonathan D. Norton married Ada Sheffield of Napoleon, Ohio December 24, 1863. They had five children in Ohio that survived childhood and only the youngest, Ralph H. Norton, moved to Topeka with them, the others having begun careers in other cities.

Jonathan Norton was a highly respected businessman in Topeka and was active in many civic affairs, including six years service as a member of the Topeka Board of Education. When Sheriff John M. Wilkerson was forced to resign from office in July 1909, Norton was appointed by Governor Stubbs to serve the remainder of Wilkerson's term of office. Because of Norton's excellent reputation, the newspapers and citizens applauded the appointment.

In November of 1910, Jonathan D. Norton was elected Sheriff of Shawnee County, defeating W. E. Schlichter (Democrat), 5767 votes to 4602 votes. At the time, Sheriffs were limited to two terms of office and the partial term Norton served in Wilkerson's place counted as another term of office, making Norton ineligible to run again in 1912.



## **LLEWELLYN L. KIENE**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1913-1916 Two Terms**

Llewellyn L. Kiene was born March 2, 1868 in Putnam County, Illinois. He was the eldest of 12 children of Francis A. and Rose Kiene. His father was born in Alsace, France in 1839 and emigrated with his parents to America in 1847.

Llewellyn first became a public school teacher in Shawnee County before he became a newspaper reporter for the Topeka Daily Capital in 1891. Kiene worked his way up to become first the City Editor and finally the Managing Editor of the Topeka Daily Capital. In all, Llewellyn Kiene worked at the Topeka Daily Capital for over twenty years before he decided to run for Sheriff of Shawnee County in 1912.

(Kansas State  
Historical Society)



## Sheriffs of Shawnee County

While he was working for the Topeka Daily Capital, Llewellyn Kiene almost drowned in the flood of 1903 by putting himself in harms way while covering the story of the flood. Kiene became stranded, surrounded by rising water, at Gordon and N. Van Buren and had to be rescued. Three boats tried to rescue him before the fourth boat was able to carry him to safety.

Because of his excellent reputation in Shawnee County, Llewellyn Kiene won the election in 1912 and then served a second term when he won the 1914 election with a margin of over 8,000 votes.

During his last term of office, Sheriff Kiene had the responsibility of protecting the murderer of a nine year old girl in the County Jail which was attached to the Sheriff's living quarters. A crowd of 4,000 gathered outside of the Sheriff's residence, finally forcing their way into the jail area.

Sheriff Kiene, however, had secretly moved the prisoner to the Douglas County Jail during the night. The mob realized it had been foiled when one of their number climbed to the peak of the roof of the Sheriff's residence and shouted down to the mob: "Gentlemen, I beg to inform you that the prisoner is not here."

Llewellyn Kiene also served as a member of the Topeka School Board and was Chairman of the Shawnee County Draft Board during World War I. Kiene died in 1924.



(Kansas State Historical Society)

### **HUGH C. LARIMER**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1917-1920 Two Terms**

Hugh C. Larimer was a clerk at the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway in 1912 and was residing at 1526 Buchanan according to RADGES TOPEKA CITY DIRECTORY. How and when Larimer arrived in Shawnee County has not been recorded, nor is his relationship to other Larimers then living in Topeka known.

It has been recorded, however, that once he entered public life as Undersheriff of Shawnee County in 1913, serving under Sheriff Llewellyn Kiene until 1916, Larimer was very successful as a public servant. His two terms as Sheriff, from 1917 until 1920 inclusive, earned him high praise from the community. It was said that if the law would allow it, Larimer could have served many more terms.

After serving as Sheriff of Shawnee County, Hugh C. Larimer was elected County Commissioner for two years. After serving as County Commissioner, Larimer was elected Clerk of the Court of Topeka, serving from 1925 through 1928.

# Sheriffs of Shawnee County



(The Topeka Daily Capital)

## ROBERT MILER

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1921-1924 Two Terms**

Robert Miler was the most experienced law enforcement officer ever to run for Sheriff when he ran for election in 1920. Miler had just completed four years of service as Undersheriff in Hugh Larimer's administration of 1917-1920.

Before serving as Undersheriff, Miler was a special agent for the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway in the Chicago, Illinois terminal for three years. Before his Santa Fe employment, Miler served as a detective in the Kansas City Police Department after serving nine years with the Topeka Police Department. In all, Miler brought about twenty years of experience with him as he assumed the duties of Sheriff of Shawnee County.

While Miler was serving with the Kansas City Police Department, the Industrial Workers of the World, a communist labor organization founded in 1905 was causing disturbances on the streets of Kansas City. Miler was charged with finding a way to stop the organization from disturbing citizens on the city streets. Miler's solution was to "send them to the hospital first, and then try them afterwards". After several demonstrators were beaten and hospitalized, the demonstrations ceased. Although we have become more civilized

since, it is interesting to see what was accepted and condoned in the early 1900's.

While Sheriff of Shawnee County, Miler was notified that a man suspected of murdering a well-known silent film director, William Desmond Taylor, was on a Santa Fe train that would pass through Topeka coming from Los Angeles.

Miler and deputies met the train in Topeka and arrested Walter Underwood. Underwood was quoted as saying, "Well, you've got me and you've got a big one."

The victim of the murder, William Taylor, directed such movie stars as Charlie Chaplin, Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle, Lillian Gish, Robert Valentino, Mary Pickford, and others of the time.

After serving four years as Sheriff of Shawnee County, Robert Miler served one year on the Topeka Fire Department and as a jailer in the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department. In 1927, Miler denied rumors that he was planning to run for Mayor of the City of Topeka.

## Sheriffs of Shawnee County



(Kansas State Historical Society)

### **OSCAR W. CARLSON**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1925-1928 Two Terms**

Oscar W. Carlson began his working career as a carpenter for the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway. When Hugh Larimer was elected Sheriff and began his administration in 1917, Oscar Carlson found opportunity to change his career path and become a deputy sheriff. His law enforcement career was interrupted when Carlson enlisted in the Fifth United States Engineers during World War I.

After serving fifteen months in the Fifth United States Engineers, Carlson returned home March 26, 1919. While Carlson was serving in the U.S. Army, Robert Miler was elected Sheriff of Shawnee County. Sheriff Miler appointed Oscar W. Carlson Undersheriff in his administration.

At the end of Robert Miler's second term as Sheriff, Oscar Carlson ran for Sheriff and easily won the primary election with 4,724 votes against Jim Going's 2,535 votes. When Carlson took office on January 12, 1925, his staff of deputies presented him with a gold star with the points set in rubies.

Oscar W. Carlson ran unopposed for his second term and was possibly another sheriff who could have served more terms had the law allowed it. Being elected President of the Kansas Peace Officer's Association also honored Carlson's reputation as an excellent law enforcement officer.



(Kansas State Historical Society)

### **WAYNE HORNING**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1929-1932 Two Terms**

Wayne Horning continued what was at the time a trend of Undersheriffs succeeding their Sheriff at the end of the Sheriff's two year term. Appointed Undersheriff by Sheriff Oscar Carlson, Horning ran for Sheriff after Carlson's term and defeated W. M. Boyd by 8,500 votes. Horning ran unopposed in the 1930 election for Sheriff.

Before Horning was appointed Undersheriff in Carlson's administration, Horning was a motorcycle deputy sheriff, which was called Highway Patrol and enforced the traffic laws in the county. As Sheriff, Horning appointed another motorcycle deputy, Everett Probasco, as his Undersheriff.

After successfully serving his two terms as Sheriff, Horning was employed by the Topeka Police Department. After some years of service as Chief of Detectives, Horning was appointed Chief of Police for the City of Topeka by Topeka's Mayor Barrett. When Mayor

John F. Scott replaced Mayor Barrett in 1939, the new mayor appointed Charles D. McKnaught as the new Chief of Police after Horning's resignation.

The City of Topeka had recently placed the Topeka Police Department under the supervision of a Civil Service Board. It was unclear whether Horning could return to his duties as Chief of Detectives after resigning as Chief. Horning held that his resignation was only from the appointment as Chief of Police and that he was entitled to resume his employment with the Topeka Police Department.

# Sheriffs of Shawnee County



(Kansas State Historical Society)

## **DEAN F. ROGERS**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1933-1936 Two Terms**

Dean F. Rogers was a native Kansan, being born in Oberlin, Kansas October 17, 1892. Upon graduating from high school in Decatur County, Kansas, Rogers enrolled at Washburn University and became captain of Washburn's football team and played on the team as a tackle. He was also a charter member of the Alpha Delta fraternity.

Rogers graduated from Washburn University in 1914 and immediately opened a tire company that he named the Shawnee Tire Company. The tire company was located at 116 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street. His tire company grew into a statewide business.

When the United States entered World War I in 1917, Dean F. Rogers enlisted in the U.S. Navy and posted a large advertisement in the Topeka Daily Capital entitled "I AM OFF TO WAR". Rogers stated in his ad that his business would be left in good hands while he was gone.

Rogers returned to Topeka and his tire business after the war. In August of 1932, at the beginning of the Great Depression, Dean Rogers faced nearly twenty other Republican candidates for Sheriff and won the nomination. In November of 1932, Dean F. Rogers was elected Sheriff of Shawnee County. Newspapers remarked at the time that the trend of Undersheriffs becoming the next Sheriff had been broken as Everett Probasco, Wayne Horning's Undersheriff, had been defeated in the primary election.

Soon after assuming the duties as Sheriff of Shawnee County, Dean F. Rogers was elected president of the Kansas Peace Officer's Association.

Dean F. Rogers and his wife were killed in an automobile accident near Tucumcari, NM on January 9, 1973. The Rogers were living at 1932 SW High Street and were on their way to Mesa, AZ to spend the rest of the winter.



## **ROY A. BOAST**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1937-1940 Two Terms**

When Roy A. Boast was elected Sheriff of Shawnee County in November of 1936, he was the first Democrat to be elected Sheriff of Shawnee County in forty-one years. The last Democrat to be elected Sheriff of Shawnee County was Robert B. Kepley who was elected for only one term in 1895.

Roy Boast selected George W. Hornbeck as Undersheriff. Hornbeck had been the Superintendent of Parks for the City of Topeka and had supervised 600 workers on relief in the renovation of Gage Park during the Depression years.

During his first term of office, Sheriff Roy Boast instituted shifts at the Sheriff's Department that allowed service to the citizens twenty-four hours per day. He also cut the jail expenses by forty percent. As he campaigned for his second term, Boast claimed to have served over 6,000 legal papers during his first term and had made six arrests for murder.

(Kansas State Historical Society)

## Sheriffs of Shawnee County

The newspapers of the time reported that the Republicans almost regained the Sheriff's Office in the November 1938 election, but that Roy A. Boast narrowly defeated his Republican opponent, Paul Anderson.

One of the deputies that Sheriff Roy A. Boast retained in his service was William Frey, a deputy who had served under two previous sheriffs who were Republican.

Roy A. Boast died in Topeka, Kansas in July 1967.



(Kansas State Historical Society)

### **WILLIAM R. 'BILL' FREY**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1941-1943 One and one-half terms**

When Sheriff William Roy Frey took office he brought with him ten years service and experience in the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department. Frey served as deputy under Sheriffs Horning, Rogers, and Boast, two Republicans and one Democrat.

William Frey was born February 22, 1907 and spent his early childhood in the Silver Lake, Kansas area, but graduated from high school at Seaman High School.

William R. Frey married Ethel Wooster. They had no children.

While serving as a deputy sheriff, William "Bill" Frey was selected to attend the Federal Bureau of Investigations' Police Academy in Washington, D.C. The course of study was several weeks long and included instruction and training in many facets of law enforcement. Frey reported that the F.B.I. uses figures of men as targets at their firing range. Frey said that the F.B.I. never used bulls-eyes as targets because they had never known a criminal to wear one. William Frey was required to pay his own expenses for the trip and training.

Sheriff Bill Frey was elected for a second term, but in October of 1943 enlisted in the U.S. Navy and resigned his office. The Governor Andrew Schoepel accepted the resignation on a Friday, leaving the office of Sheriff vacant over the weekend. William Frey recommended that Elburn M. Beal be appointed as the new Sheriff, but Beal was unable to post bond and take office until the following Monday. That meant that the deputies on duty had no authority.

Sheriff William Frey was the first Sheriff up to his time to not fulfill the term for which he was elected, but because of his patriotism he was not criticized.

After returning from the U.S. Navy, William Frey bought a drug store on Medford Street. Frey operated the drug store until his death. William Frey died of a brain tumor after a short illness on July 1, 1961.

# Sheriffs of Shawnee County



(Kansas State Historical Society)

## ELBURN M. BEAL

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1943-1946 One Term, One Year Appointment**

Elburn M. Beal was born in Topeka, Kansas November 23, 1895. Before entering public service, Beal was employed by the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway and Topeka Title & Bond Abstract Company.

Elburn M. Beal served in the U.S. Army during World War I with the 110<sup>th</sup> Field Signal Battalion of the 35<sup>th</sup> Division. After his discharge in 1919, Beal was associated with Woods Motor Company, Van Dorp Sheet Metal & Roofing Company and the Capper Foundation.

In 1933, Elburn Beal became a deputy sheriff under Sheriff Roy A. Boast. He continued as a deputy sheriff with Sheriff William R. Frey. When Sheriff Frey resigned his office in 1943, Frey highly recommended that Elburn Beal be appointed Sheriff of Shawnee County to complete Frey's second year of his second term. Governor

Andrew Schoepel agreed with William Frey and appointed Elburn Beal to serve the remainder of Frey's term.

After serving the remaining 13 months of William Frey's term, Elburn Beal announced his candidacy for a full term as Sheriff in the election of 1944. Beal won the Republican primary and ran unopposed in the general election.

In 1946, Elburn Beal ran for his second full term as Sheriff against William Coates. Beal won by 3 votes and William P. Coates contested the election on the theory that Beal had already served two terms and 4 absentee votes were not counted. The lower court ruled that this was not the case and Coates took it to the Supreme Court that ruled that Beal had served two terms.

In August of 1947, the Shawnee County Board of Commissioners appointed Elburn M. Beal to the post of Register of Deeds for Shawnee County. Beal served in that capacity until he died in May 1966.



## WILLIAM P. COATES

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1947-1950 Two Terms**

William P. Coates resided at 224 Greenwood in Potwin Place with his wife, daughter and two sons. Coates was a veteran of World War II, serving as a pilot in the China-Burma-India Theater, returning to Topeka as a Captain in the Army Air Corps.

Coates began his law enforcement career before the war with the Topeka Police Department and had thirteen years experience when he left for military service. When Coates returned from the war, he was elected Sheriff of Shawnee County in November 1946 and was re-elected over candidate Harry Johnson in 1948.

(Kansas State  
Historical Society)

## Sheriffs of Shawnee County

Sheriff Coates' first staff consisted of E. A. Kiene, Undersheriff, Charles Bradbury, Harvey Bahner, Charles French, Earl Coffman, Mrs. Florence Kirk and Stanton Johnson, deputies. Mrs. Pearl Martin was retained as Matron and A. P. Challis as night jailer. Charles Johnson was appointed day jailer on a temporary basis.

After Coates had served his two terms, his Undersheriff, Edward A. Kiene became Sheriff and hired William Coates as his Undersheriff. Coates served three years as Undersheriff before resigning to attend to a business in Coffeyville, Kansas.

William Coates returned to Shawnee County to run for Sheriff once again in 1956, but lost the race in the primary election to Jerome E. Brown.



(Kansas State Historical Society)

### **EDWARD ARTHUR KIENE**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1951-1954 Two Terms**

Edward Kiene was born in Valencia, Kansas January 12, 1896. He graduated from Topeka High School and married Bertha Maxwell in 1919 after service in World War I. Edward and Bertha Kiene had a daughter, Martha Jean who died in 1920. They had two sons, William R. Kiene and Edward M. Kiene.

Kiene's uncle, Llewellyn Kiene served as Sheriff of Shawnee County during the years 1913-1917.

Ed Kiene was employed by his father, Guy Kiene in the grocery business in College Hill area until he was appointed Clerk of Police Court for the City of Topeka in 1940.

In November 1946, immediately after being elected, Sheriff William P. Coates appointed Ed Kiene as his Undersheriff, to begin duties in January 1947. Kiene served as Undersheriff for four years under Sheriff Coates and then filed for his own term of office in the Republican primary of 1950.

Ed Kiene, upon election as Sheriff of Shawnee County, appointed William P. Coates as his Undersheriff. Coates resigned as Undersheriff in 1952. Sheriff Kiene appointed Jerry T. Kreipe to replace Coates. Kreipe had served as Undersheriff under Sheriff Elburn Beal and had worked for the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department for the previous fifteen years.

During Ed Kiene's last year in office, three of his deputies ran for Sheriff in the Republican primary. Sheriff Kiene took all three off the payroll until the election was over and then immediately rehired them even though one of the deputies ran his campaign by running down the current Sheriff's performance.

Kiene's Undersheriff, Gerald Kreipe won the Republican nomination, Stanton Johnson and Charles French lost.

After leaving office in 1954, Ed Kiene was employed as a parole officer for the State of Kansas until he retired in 1963. Edward A. Kiene died February 11, 1978 at his home at 3707 SW 29<sup>th</sup> Terrace of an apparent heart attack.

# Sheriffs of Shawnee County



## **ALLEN ENGLER**

### **Sheriff of Shawnee County 1955-1956 One Term**

Allen Engler was born October 13, 1909 on a farm one mile west of Pauline on land homesteaded by his grandfather. The Engler family was engaged in the livestock business with a well-known line of polled Hereford cattle.

Engler attended the Pauline grade school and graduated from Washburn Rural High School. Engler entered the family livestock business and took over a partnership involving the Mulvane Farm near Rossville until that partnership was dissolved in 1951.

In 1954, Engler ran for Sheriff of Shawnee County as a Democrat and narrowly won the election over the incumbent Undersheriff Gerald T. Kreipe.

After serving as Sheriff of Shawnee County, Allen Engler ran for his second term in 1956 claiming the following and other accomplishments in his first term:

#### **(Kansas State Historical Society)**

1. He added two patrol cars and four new deputies to improve patrol service.
2. Engler provided uniforms for all patrol officers.
3. He provided the first 24-hour county patrol service.
4. He cut the cost of feeding jail prisoners from \$1.25 per meal to 68 cents.

Engler ran for Congress in the Democratic primary in 1956, touting his background as a stockman and success as a Democratic Sheriff. Engler was not nominated in the primary.

After losing the chance to go to Congress, Engler ran as a write-in candidate for Sheriff in 1956 and received only 6,634 votes. Republican Jerome Brown was elected with 24,044 votes to 17,451 Democratic votes for Ira Price.

Two days before he was to turn the Sheriff's office over to Jerome Brown, Engler was ousted from office because of a fistfight that occurred in his office between Engler and a deputy. Engler later appealed the case to the Kansas Supreme Court and the Court ruled that Engler should not have been removed from office without five days notice and a hearing wherein Engler could present a defense.



# Sheriffs of Shawnee County



(Kansas State Historical Society)

## **JEROME E. 'RED' BROWN**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1957-1960 Two Terms**

Jerome E. Brown was a native Topekan, born April 13, 1903 to Benjamin and May Brown. He had two brothers, George E. Brown and William Brown.

Brown started his employment as a representative of a drug company, but went to work for the Topeka Police Department in 1928 as a patrolman. Jerome Brown was promoted to Patrol Sergeant May 9, 1941 and to Detective April 8, 1945. Some of his time in the Patrol Division, Jerome "Red" Brown spent as a motorcycle officer.

Jerome E. Brown retired from the Topeka Police Department April 9, 1952 with twenty-five years of service. Brown, upon retirement, was employed as a Deputy U.S. Marshal until he ran for Sheriff in the primary election as a Republican candidate in 1954. Brown was defeated in 1954 for the Republican nomination by Gerald Kriepe. In 1956, Brown won the nomination of his party for the office of Sheriff of Shawnee County.

In the November 6, 1956 general election, Jerome E. Brown faced Democrat candidate Ira S. Price, a Topeka restaurant owner, and Allen Engler, a write-in candidate. Brown received 24,044 votes, Price received 17,451 votes and Engler received only 6,634 votes.

As Brown took office in 1957, he retained Mrs. Pearl Engstrom, radio dispatcher, Anthony Leal, process server, Deputy Charles A. Hooper, and jail cook Beryl Young. Brown appointed George Hornbeck as Undersheriff, J. H. Niel as process server, former Sheriff Roy Boast as tax collector. Deputies hired by Jerome Brown were William Al Jenkins, Jr., Harvey J. Coulter, Clarence H. Wangerin, Jay G. Ruby, Wilson M. Jones, Marion A. Henry, Alfred W. Fager, Martin J. Cummings and Eddie Dodson. Harry Burman and Charles Williams were hired as jailers.

Jerome E. Brown ran for his second term in 1958 against Louis M. Fieger, Democrat. Fieger had recently retired as a foreman at the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Shops and was entering the race with no law enforcement background or political experience. Brown received 19,519 votes while Louis Fieger had 18,666 votes.

Jerome E. Brown died February 23, 1989 in Topeka, Kansas after a long illness.

## Sheriffs of Shawnee County



### **VERNON L. ROBINSON**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1961-1964 Two Terms**

Vernon L. Robinson was born May 1, 1925 at Clayton, NM. He moved to Topeka in 1948 after serving in World War II in the U. S. Navy. Robinson was recalled to active duty and served in the 174<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion during the Korean War after working for the Topeka Veteran's Hospital for two years.

After returning from the Korean War, Robinson became employed by the Topeka Goodyear plant where he worked for sixteen years, ending his employment as a supervisor.

In 1956, Vernon Robinson was appointed Undersheriff by Sheriff Allen Engler. When Engler was ousted from office two days before his second term ended in January 1957, Robinson acted as Sheriff for the two remaining days of Engler's term.

Vernon Robinson ran for Sheriff of Shawnee County in the Democratic primary of August 6, 1956, but lost in the primary to Ira Price by 285 votes.

In November of 1960 Vernon L. Robinson was elected Sheriff of Shawnee County after running on a platform of decreasing juvenile delinquency.

In his first term of office, in 1961, Vernon Robinson arranged for his deputies to receive basic law enforcement training at the six week recruit school at the Topeka Police Department. Robinson had promised constituents before he was elected that he would see that all deputies would receive formal law enforcement training.

During his terms in office Robinson was active in raiding and closing the small private clubs in Shawnee County that circumvented Kansas liquor laws by selling \$1 lifetime private club memberships.

In June 1963, ouster proceedings were filed with Judge David Prager charging that Robinson had allowed a prisoner to be a large when he should have been confined to jail. Judge Prager ruled that although Robinson's conduct was improper, his conduct did not rise to the level of willful misconduct. Attorney General William M. Ferguson appealed Prager's ruling to the Kansas Supreme Court. The Kansas Supreme Court reversed Judge Prager's ruling and ordered that Vernon L. Robinson be ousted from office. Robinson appealed for a rehearing of the matter and was denied.

Vernon L. Robinson died of a cerebral aneurysm at age 49 in February 1975.

## Sheriffs of Shawnee County



### **LEWIS H. FALLEY**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
September 1964-January 1965 Appointment**

Lewis H. Falley was a native Topekan, born in 1914. Falley was a contractor in the Topeka area who filed as a Republican for Sheriff in the 1964 election.

After Vernon Robinson was ousted from office, Undersheriff F. T. “Jim” Chaffee assumed the duties of the Sheriff as Acting Sheriff early in September 1964. At the same time, Chaffee was running for the office as a Democrat. Currently serving deputies were active in Chaffee’s campaign.

Republican Governor John Anderson appointed Lewis H. Falley to serve as Sheriff until the newly elected Sheriff would take office in January 1965.

Upon taking office as an appointee, Lewis Falley, as the new Sheriff, was responsible to select the deputies that would serve under his new administration. Sheriff Falley declined to hire F. T. Chaffee, Donald Becker, Ken Hendrix, and John Lawson. Falley said that the latter three had been campaigning for Chaffee. Sheriff Falley did retain Mrs. Dona DeMore as his secretary, and Stan Johnson, a process server. When Chaffee asked Falley if Falley had fired him, Falley replied, “I didn’t fire you. I just didn’t hire you.”

Lewis H. Falley remained in office, lost the November general election, and was replaced by F. T. “Jim” Chaffee in January 1965.



### **FESTUS T. ‘JIM’ CHAFFEE**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1965-66, 1971-80 12 Years**

F. T. “Jim” Chaffee was born in Almena, Kansas in 1916. F.T. Chaffee and his father, Thomas F. Chaffee started Chaffee and Son Plumbing in Topeka. During World War II, Chaffee served in the Merchant Marine in the South Pacific. After the war, Chaffee returned to the plumbing business with his father until he was appointed Undersheriff by Sheriff Vernon Robinson.

When Sheriff Robinson was ousted from office in September 1964, Chaffee assumed the duties of Acting Sheriff until Governor John Anderson appointed Lewis Falley to serve as Sheriff until the end of Robinson’s term in January 1965. Both Chaffee and Falley were candidates for Sheriff in the November 1964 election. F. T. Chaffee won the election and took office in January 1965.

When F. T. Chaffee was sworn in as Sheriff, he appointed fifteen deputies to road patrol in newly designed uniforms. Chaffee reported that this was the largest number of deputies to be assigned to road patrol in the history of the department. The new uniforms were described as charcoal grey with black trim, with white crash helmets.

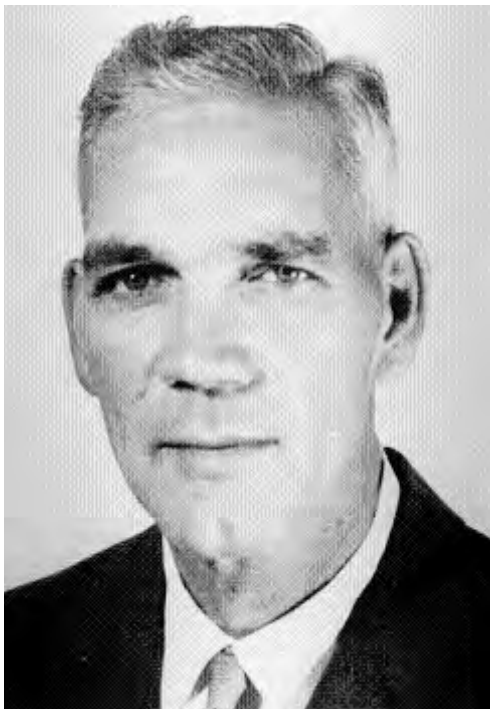
## Sheriffs of Shawnee County

In 1966, Sheriff F. T. Chaffee received the Andy Griffith Award for performing the single most meritorious act by a peace officer in the United States. Chaffee had single-handedly disarmed a dangerous suspect.

In the general elections of 1966, Chaffee lost his bid for a second term to Emil Stawitz who served two terms of two years each. In the general elections of November 1970, Chaffee once again was elected Sheriff of Shawnee County, defeating Emil Stawitz. Chaffee was elected again in 1972, 1974 and 1976 because the law had changed in 1970 and allowed a Sheriff to serve more than two consecutive terms. In 1976, Chaffee was elected to the first four-year term allowed by yet another new law that allowed four-year terms and served through 1980.

During Chaffee's tenure as Sheriff of Shawnee County, he successfully encouraged County Commissioners to adopt a Civil Service Board to give deputies status as civil service employees, ending the practice of a new Sheriff bringing in a new staff of officers and giving deputies career status in their chosen profession. The first Civil Service Board began in 1973. All officers serving when the Civil Service Board started were grandfathered into the system and gain permanent status and rank.

F. T. Chaffee declined to run for Sheriff again in 1980. He died at age 85 in 2001.



(Kansas State Historical Society)

### **EMIL E. STAWITZ**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1967-1970 Two Terms**

Emil E. Stawitz was born January 5, 1913 in Kirkwood, Missouri and moved to Topeka, Kansas with his parents in 1916. Stawitz graduated from Topeka High School.

Stawitz entered service with the U. S. Army in 1942 and served in the South Pacific Theater during World War II. After he left the Army, Stawitz was in the Army Reserves as a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant and was employed by the Topeka Post Office.

In November 1960, Emil Stawitz ran for Marshal of the Court of Topeka against Harry Nelson and won the election 24,457 votes to Nelson's 22,621 votes. Nelson had been appointed to the office by Governor George Docking to serve until the next election.

Harry Nelson refused to vacate the Marshal's office and Stawitz filed a lawsuit to eject Nelson. The District Court issued an order for Nelson to vacate the office, but the Kansas Supreme Court ruled that the election for Marshal of the Court of Topeka of 1960 was nullified because some of the precincts did not have the Marshal's election on

the ballot. The Court ruled that Nelson would occupy the office as appointed until the next election, which was then in 1962. In 1962, Stawitz ran for office again, and was elected again and was finally allowed to take office.

In 1966, Emil E. Stawitz ran for Sheriff against incumbent Sheriff F. T. Chaffee and won, taking office in January 1967. Stawitz ran for and won a second term in 1968.

The law limiting a Sheriff to two terms was changed by the 1970 election, allowing Stawitz to run for a third term. F. T. Chaffee won the election of 1970.

Emil E. Stawitz died November 12, 1994 in Topeka, Kansas at the age of 81.

# Sheriffs of Shawnee County



## **EDWIN E. RITCHIE**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1981-1993 Three 4-Year Terms**

Edwin E. Ritchie was born April 21, 1929 in Topeka. The Ritchie family moved to Valley Falls in the mid 1930's where Ed Ritchie graduated from high school in 1948. In 1950, Ritchie was drafted into the U.S. Army and served in the Infantry in Korea as a machine-gunner.

On returning from Korea, Ritchie worked for an ambulance company and Goodyear before become a Topeka Police officer in 1953. Ritchie was assigned to traffic enforcement and became well known in downtown Topeka as a motorcycle traffic officer. In 1963, Ritchie was assigned to Narcotics and Vice and rose to the rank of Captain. In 1980, Ed Ritchie retired from the Topeka Police Department to run for Sheriff of Shawnee County.

Ritchie won the election of November 1980 over incumbent Undersheriff Ed Smith. During Ritchie's administration in the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department, deputies were taken in under the Kansas Police and Fire retirement system. Before being included in KP&F, deputies might have had to work in law enforcement until age sixty-five. Under KP&F, deputies may retire at age 50 with twenty-five years service or at age 55 with twenty years of service.

The Shawnee County Sheriff's Department grew in numbers of deputies during Ritchie's administration, putting more deputies on patrol, in warrants, and in the process department. Part of the growth in the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department was because of the transfer of the jail administration to a civilian authority. Deputies working in the jail were given the choice of remaining in the new civilian jail organization or in keeping their status as civil service employees in the Sheriff's Department. Those officers transferring from the jail were given jobs in Patrol, Warrants, Administration and Process.

Edwin E. Ritchie declined to run for a fourth term in the 1992 elections and began his retirement.



## **DAVID R. MENELEY**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
1993-2000 Seven Years**

David R. Meneley was born January 30, 1946 in Marshalltown, Iowa. His family moved to Shawnee County and he graduated from Seaman High School.

David Meneley joined the Topeka Police Reserves as a trained volunteer police officer and later joined the Topeka Police Department as a civil service employee. During his employment with the Topeka Police Department, Meneley worked in Patrol, a special tactical unit, a motorcycle unit, the Scientific Investigative Unit, and Detectives. Meneley was also a member of the Strategic Weapons Assault Team.

In 1988, David R. Meneley was granted a leave of absence from the Topeka Police Department to run for Sheriff against incumbent Sheriff Edwin E. Ritchie. Meneley lost that election and returned as a candidate for Sheriff in 1992 as a Republican against Democratic candidate Earl Hindman

## Sheriffs of Shawnee County

and won the election. In 1996, Meneley ran for his second term as Sheriff against Democratic candidate Tim Cochran and was re-elected with a large majority of the votes.

In February 2000 Meneley was ousted from office.

Meneley ran for Sheriff in the August 2000 primary election, but was defeated for the Republican nomination by Richard W. Barta.

During Meneley's administration as Sheriff, the K-9 unit was re-established and put into service. Officers were trained in Voice Stress Analysis, an alternative to the polygraph. Meneley ordered personal computers to be installed so that almost every officer had access to a PC and county jail and offense report records. Under Meneley's supervision, the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department responded to citizen's needs during the 1993 flood. Meneley planned and executed the move of the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department into the Law Enforcement Center where it is now located.



### **RICHARD W. BARTA**

**Sheriff of Shawnee County  
2000-Present**

Richard W. Barta was born in Ellsworth, Kansas August 21, 1946 and was raised on a farm outside of Lucas. He graduated from Lucas High School in 1964. Upon graduation, Barta enlisted in the U. S. Navy and served with the 'Swift Boats' in the Vietnam War.

Upon discharge from the Navy, Richard Barta was accepted for employment by the Kansas Highway Patrol in 1968. Barta served with the Kansas Highway Patrol until he retired with the rank of Major in 1997. Barta, after retiring from the Highway Patrol, was employed by the Kansas Lottery as an enforcement officer.

Barta earned an AA degree from Barton County Community College in 1973, graduated in 1979 from the Central Missouri State University Traffic Management Institute, received a Bachelor of Arts at Washburn University in 1987, and is a graduate of the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy, 208<sup>th</sup> Session.

Richard W. Barta married Marcia L. Cobb in Norwalk, California in 1966. The Bartas have four children, Julie Renae, Tamara Lynn, Jonathan Wayne, and Tonya Marie. They are all married and the Barta's now have eight grandchildren.

In 2000, Barta was selected by the Republican Party and appointed Sheriff of Shawnee County by Governor Bill Graves to complete David Meneley's term. Barta defeated Meneley for Sheriff in the Republican primary of 2000 and went on to win the general election in November 2000. Barta was re-elected for a second term in November 2004.

During Barta's administration, he began efforts for the Sheriff's Office to achieve accredited status through CALEA. Barta also started a Citizen's Academy in 2003 to expose selected citizens in the duties and responsibilities of the Sheriff's Office. Barta also re-created a position of General Counsel to the Sheriff, reassigned an Office Assistant II as an Inventory Specialist, and hired an experienced accountant.

Sheriff Barta has been responsible for upgrading deputy's firearms and enhancing the fleet management/maintenance program, equipping patrol units with mobile computers, radars and video cameras, obtaining rifles for officers, creating a state of the art property room, producing a monthly newsletter, starting a Victim Assistance Program, creating a citizen's survey and developing a state-certified Reserve/Part-Time Officer's Academy.

## Sheriff Election Results

1855	George Washington Berry	Appointed
1855	John Horner	Appointed
1856	Benjamin D. Castleman	Appointed
1857	J. B. Whitaker	Appointed
1857	Jehial Tyler	Appointed
1859	Thomas W. Maires	Appointed
1859	Alonzo Hale John Kinney	Elected
1861	Alonzo Hale	Elected
1863	Charles C. Whiting	Elected
1865	Charles C. Whiting	Elected
1867	Sherman Bodwell	634
	Chester Thomas Jr.	615
1869	Chester Thomas Jr.	922
	James A. Hickey	388
1871	Chester Thomas Jr.	Elected
1873	Spencer P. Wade	2,129
	Thomas Welch	1,090
1875	Spencer P. Wade	1,985
	J. L. Price	412
1877	Willis D. Disbrow	1,441
	J. A. Polley	836
1879	W. D. Disbrow	1,995
	J. A. Polley	830
1881	Horace E. Bush	1,572
	J. A. McCall	1,563
	John Mileham	882
	P. H. Smith	80
1883	Chester Thomas Jr. (Rep)	2,593 *
	Michael Heery	2,121
	Horace E. Bush	482
	J.A. McCall	140
1885	Andrew M. Fuller (Rep)	3,346 *
	J. S. Earnest (Dem)	2,297
	William Gibbs	510
	J. W. Stewart	67
1887	Andrew M. Fuller	2,939 *
	S. T. Cromwell	1,057
	George Bell	162
1889	J. M. Wilkerson (Rep)	2,120
	Buck Miller	1,430

1891	J. M. Wilkerson (Rep)	2,344
	John Miliham	1,923
	E. B. Webber	242
	Lee Humbert	21
1893	David N. Burdge (Rep)	4,312 *
	P. E. Cook (Peoples)	1,391
	Samuel Kerr (Dem)	1,230
	T. B. Carter (Prohibition)	136
1895	Robert B. Kepley (Dem)	4,020
	David N. Burdge (Rep)	3,670
1897	Porter S. Cook (Rep)	4,888
	Robert B. Kepley (Dem)	
1899	Porter S. Cook (Rep)	3,967
	Robert B. Kepley (Fus)	2,099
	J. F. White (Ind)	395
1902	A. T. Lucas (Rep)	5,169
	F. M. Stahl (Ind)	3,884
	Daniel Marken (Dem)	1,034
	R. M. Vansant (Soc)	118
1904	A. T. Lucas (Rep)	5,046
	Daniel Marken (Dem)	1,746
	R. M. Vansant (Soc)	210
1906	J. M. Wilkerson (Rep)	5,348
	T. W. Thompson (Dem)	4,677
	Paul Herman (Soc)	140
1908	J. M. Wilkerson (Rep)	7,146
	Frank B. Simms (Dem)	6,121
1910	Jonathan D. Norton (Rep)	5,767
	W. E. Schlichter (Dem)	4,602
	Alexander Schulz (Soc)	225
1912	Llewellyn L. Kiene (Rep)	6,712
	W. E. Schlichter (Dem)	5,805
	J. P. Fidler (Soc)	312
1914	Llewellyn L. Kiene (Rep)	13,582
	Alonzo Sauls (Dem)	5,472
	G. L. Bradford (Soc)	641
1916	Hugh Larimer (Rep)	12,067
	W. E. Schlichter (Dem)	9,979
1918	Hugh Larimer (Rep)	5,019 *
	W. E. Schlichter (Dem)	1,687
1920	Robert Miler (Rep)	8,375 *
	Frank Summers (Dem)	3,793

## Sheriff Election Results

1922	Robert Miler (Rep)	8,586	*
	W. E. Schlichter (Dem)	7,072	
1924	Oscar W. Carlson (Rep)	11,338	*
	C. E. Mattmiller (Dem)	7,200	
1926	Oscar W. Carlson	Unopposed	
1928	Wayne Horning (Rep)	19,049	*
	M. W. Boyd (Dem)	10,576	
1930	Wayne Horning (Rep)	Unopposed	
1932	Dean Rogers (Rep)	18,461	*
	Neill Rahn (Dem)	17,442	
	D. W. Nolan (Ind)	114	
1934	Dean Rogers (Rep)	22,811	*
	Lige W. Cook (Dem)	13,437	
1936	Roy A. Boast (Dem)	21,048	*
	Paul Anderson (Rep)	20,365	
1938	Roy A. Boast (Dem)	19,670	*
	Paul Anderson (Rep)	17,577	
1940	William Frey (Rep)	25,766	*
	Jack Beard	15,680	
1942	William Frey (Rep)	16,693	*
	W. C. Stetham (Dem)	7,761	
1944	Elburn M. Beal (Rep)	Unopposed	
1946	William P. Coates (Rep)	17,840	*
	Harry L. Johnson	13,417	
1948	William P. Coates (Rep)	25,201	
	Harry L. Johnson (Dem)	17,503	
1950	Edward A. Kiene (Rep)	20,571	
	Kelly Richetti (Dem)	13,700	
1952	Edward A. Kiene (Rep)	35,486	*
	Welton Stolt	NA	
	James Isaacs	NA	
1954	Allen Engler (Dem)	18,658	
	Gerald T. Kriepe (Rep)	17,423	
1956	Jerome E. Brown (Rep)	24,044	
	Ira S. Price (Dem)	17,451	
	Allen Engler	6,634	

1958	Jerome E. Brown (Rep)	22,193	*
	Louis M. Fieger (Dem)	21,865	
1960	Vernon L. Robinson (Dem)	26,051	
	George W. Hornbeck (Rep)	22,428	
1962	Vernon L. Robinson (Dem)	21,388	
	Jerome E. Brown (Rep)	16,150	
1964	F. T. Chaffee (Dem)	30,134	
	Lewis Falley (Rep)	22,415	
	Bud Davis	3,248	
1966	Emil Stawitz (Rep)	23,871	
	F. T. Chaffee (Dem)	21,891	
1968	Emil Stawitz (Rep)	28,071	
	Richard A. Mills (Dem)	27,176	
1970	F. T. Chaffee (Dem)	25,913	
	Emil Stawitz (Rep)	24,741	
	Maurice Towle Jr.	391	
1972	F. T. Chaffee (Dem)	38,393	
	Edward C. Smith (Rep)	26,295	
1974	F. T. Chaffee (Dem)	34,388	
	Lee Jamerson (Rep)	22,694	
1976	F. T. Chaffee (Dem)	35,125	
	Ken Hendrix Sr.	29,073	
1980	Ed Ritchie (Dem)	33,386	
	Edward C. Smith (Rep)	31,726	
1984	Ed Ritchie (Dem)	41,043	
	Edward C. Smith (Rep)	27,135	
1988	Ed Ritchie (Dem)	35,628	*
	David Meneley (Rep)	31,108	
1992	David Meneley (Rep)	42,559	
	Earl R. Hindman (Dem)	35,808	
1996	David Meneley (Rep)	47,749	
	Tim Cochran (Dem)	26,350	
2000	Richard W. Barta (Rep)	46,612	
	Mike Padilla (Dem)	25,495	
2004	Richard W. Barta (Rep)	55,541	
	Donald Bruner (Dem)	22,231	

\* Denotes Unofficial

Some results provided by  
Shawnee County  
Election Office



# Sheriff's Office Buildings & Courthouses



## SHAWNEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE

**Tecumseh, K.T.  
1856-1859**

The Kansas Territorial Legislature formed Shawnee County and selected the County Commissioners in 1855. Tecumseh was designated as the county seat even though it was located in the extreme northeast corner of the county. The residents of the county had no voice in the matter. At the time of its formation, Shawnee County was bounded on the north by the Kansas River and there were six additional townships in the south part of the county.

The first Shawnee County Commissioners were W. O. Yeager, William Yocum, and Edward Hoogland. Their first meeting of record was in September of 1855. The first action taken by the commissioners was to accept the resignation of Sheriff George Washington Berry who had refused to serve. John Horner was appointed Sheriff of Shawnee County at the second meeting of the commissioners who also signed papers to build a county courthouse in Tecumseh. As there was not yet a mechanism for collecting taxes, the commissioners authorized bonds to be sold to finance the \$8,500 courthouse.

Construction did not begin on the courthouse at Tecumseh until the spring of 1856. The construction was of brick and stone. The courthouse was forty by fifty feet in size and two stories in height. There was a columned portico on the north side of the building facing what is now 5<sup>th</sup> Street.

During the years of 1855-1857, the citizens of Shawnee County were displeased with the actions of the 'Bogus' Territorial Legislature and refused to pay taxes or to recognize the authority of the appointed Shawnee County officials and would not conduct business at the Tecumseh courthouse.

By 1858, the Free-State people of Kansas gained control of the Territorial Legislature and allowed Shawnee County to have a general election in October 1858 to elect officials and to select a county seat of the voter's choice. Topeka was voted to be the new county seat. The citizens of Tecumseh refused to vote in the election.

Edward Hoogland, one of the appointed original Shawnee County Commissioners, was also serving as Probate Judge of Shawnee County. The Free-State Legislature had provided that the Probate Judge of a county was to receive the election returns and certify them. Edward Hoogland chose to lock up the election returns and refused to certify them.

The new chairman of the Shawnee County Board of Commissioners, Jeremiah Murphy and Frye W. Giles, County Clerk, compiled a list of indebtedness for Shawnee County and found that the indebtedness was over \$11,000, including the cost of the Tecumseh Courthouse bonds. The new Shawnee County Commissioners ruled that any debt incurred before the first Monday in October 1857 was null and void as the citizens of Shawnee County were not represented when the debts were made.

Frye W. Giles loaded up all of the Shawnee County papers and moved them to Topeka, the new county seat, in spite of Judge Edward Hoogland's refusal to certify the election. In Topeka, Shawnee County business had to be transacted in a number of different offices until a new courthouse could be built.

Photo of the Tecumseh Courthouse was from an 1859 lithograph of Tecumseh and provided by Doug Jones, President, Shawnee County Historical Society 2005.

## Sheriff's Office Buildings & Courthouses



### SHAWNEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE

4<sup>th</sup> & Kansas Avenues  
Topeka, Kansas  
1868-1896

Shawnee County was without a recognized courthouse since October of 1857 when the legislature designated Topeka as the county seat and reshaped Shawnee County to place Topeka in the center. The reshaping was done by removing six townships on the south end of Shawnee County and by adding three townships on the north across the Kansas River. The business of the county was conducted in various buildings and offices in Topeka.

On February 1, 1867, THE TOPEKA TRIBUNE announced that a special election would be held on February 12, 1867 to approve the issuance of bonds in the amount of \$50,000 for the purpose of building a new courthouse and jail. The election resulted in approval of the bonds and by March 22, 1867, the site for the new courthouse was selected at the southwest corner of 4<sup>th</sup> and Kansas.

(Kansas State Historical Society)

The new courthouse was designed to be 50 feet by 70 feet and was three stories tall. The jail was placed in the basement of the jail with space for thirty-two prisoners. The foundation was laid by June of 1867 and the building was completed by January 1868. The courthouse was equipped with indoor pit toilets with a shaft for waste to accumulate in the alley behind the courthouse.

Unfortunately, prisoners from the jail occasionally escaped from the jail area into the waste shaft, climbed the filthy walls to the first floor where they exited the shaft through a toilet seat. Once on the first floor, at night, it was an easy matter to break out of the courthouse to freedom. Another weakness of the jail was that as the jail was in the basement, the jail windows, though barred, opened at sidewalk level. Contraband could easily be passed to prisoners through the open windows. Many jailbreaks occurred from the courthouse at 4<sup>th</sup> and Kansas.

After a newer courthouse was built in 1896, the courthouse at 4<sup>th</sup> & Kansas Avenues, in use for less than 30 years, became the Reid Hotel and then the Norva Hotel. The Norva Hotel was torn down in 1977 and a parking lot was put in its place.



(Kansas State Historical Society)

## Sheriff's Office Buildings & Courthouses



(Kansas State Historical Society)

### SHAWNEE COUNTY JAIL & SHERIFF'S RESIDENCE

434 SW Van Buren

1887-1964

In 1886, construction was underway for a new Shawnee County Jail attached to new construction for the residence of the Shawnee County Sheriff at 5<sup>th</sup> and Van Buren.

Although the jail under the courthouse at 4<sup>th</sup> and Kansas Avenues was less than twenty years old, the location of the jail at sidewalk level, the many escapes, and the difficulty in hiring competent jailers led Shawnee County Commissioners to let bids for the new structure. Located at 5<sup>th</sup> and Van Buren Streets, the construction of a Sheriff's residence adjacent to the jail allowed the Sheriff to be very close to day-to-day operations in the jail. Previously, jailers were hired for about \$30 per

month to oversee the inmates and to see to their care. Some jailers were overpowered by inmates and had no help available to them; and at least one jailer was bribed to absence himself from the jail during a jailbreak. Having the Sheriff living on the premises offered more supervision and security.

When the new jail was built, it was thought to be escape-proof because of the hardened steel bars and stone and brick construction of the jail. It was found, however that the lock mechanism was so large that a spoon handle could be used to turn the tumblers. Although the new jail didn't suffer the escapes that the old jail had, the citizenry attacked the jail on more than one occasion with the intent to extract and lynch a prisoner. On one occasion, they succeeded, and Nat Oliphant was dragged from the jail and hanged at 6<sup>th</sup> and Kansas. Newspaper editorials at the time stated that the motivation of the citizens was not spontaneous outrage at the crime committed, but the certainty that the Governor would commute a death sentence to life imprisonment.

The various Sheriffs occupied the living quarters attached to the jail until the jail was condemned in 1947 and County Commissioners decided that state statutes did not require them to furnish living quarters for the Sheriff. Plans were being made to house the county prisoners in the Topeka City Jail and the Sheriff's proximity to the jail was no longer required. The Sheriff's Office, however, was next door to the jail. The Shawnee County Jail at 5<sup>th</sup> and Van Buren, despite being condemned in 1947, continued to be used until another new courthouse and jail was built.

**1957 – Sheriff's Office personnel standing on the south steps of the Shawnee County Jail at 5<sup>th</sup> & Van Buren.**

**Undersheriff George Hornbeck (front row, left end)  
Sheriff Jerome Brown (front row, right end)**



# Sheriff's Office Buildings & Courthouses



(Kansas State Historical Society)

## SHAWNEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE

5<sup>th</sup> & Van Buren  
Topeka, Kansas  
1896-1964

Several factors entered in to the Shawnee County voters approving building a new courthouse at 5<sup>th</sup> and Van Buren in 1896. Although the courthouse at 4<sup>th</sup> and Kansas Avenues was less than 30 years old, Shawnee County population had grown from 15,000 to over 50,000 with more growth anticipated. The old courthouse was too small for the volume of business.

Another factor favoring a new courthouse is that structural steel had begun to be used in building construction in the 1880's, making taller and more impressive buildings possible. The old courthouse was a mere three stories, but the new courthouse was to be five stories with a large tower. Last, but not the least of the considerations were the sanitary facilities. The old courthouse had unsanitary indoor pit toilets,

while new buildings featured indoor plumbing with flush toilets and sewer lines. There was a

great appeal to the voters to approve an impressive, tall, and modern courthouse for the Capital City of Kansas.

At an election on November 7, 1893, voters in Shawnee County approved issuing bonds in the amount of \$150,000 for the construction of the new courthouse. Bids received for the structure totaled \$127,675, but an additional \$20,000 was spent for the addition of a new courtroom. The building was dedicated in 1895, but business began in the new courthouse in the spring of 1896.

Only forty-two years later, in 1938, talk of building yet another new courthouse began. Part of the reason for considering a newer courthouse was the fact that the jail was deemed unfit for occupation at the time, and a new jail could be constructed as part of a more modern courthouse.



1961 – Sheriff's Office personnel standing on front steps of Courthouse, 5<sup>th</sup> & Van Buren

Sheriff Vernon Robinson  
(2<sup>nd</sup> row, fourth from the left)

Deputy Larry Good (3<sup>rd</sup> row, fifth from the left)  
started for the Sheriff's Office in January 1961  
and retired in 1989.

## Sheriff's Office Buildings & Courthouses



Topeka Daily Capital - Staff

### **SHAWNEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE**

**200 SE 7<sup>th</sup>  
Topeka, Kansas  
1965-Present**

When the new courthouse was completed in 1965, the Sheriff's Department located its offices in the basement on the north wing that contained the jail on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup>, floors. A parking compound on the east side allowed parking for employees and loading and unloading prisoners.

During the first several years, all Shawnee County Sheriff's Department business was conducted in the north wing of the courthouse. In later years, Crime Scene and Evidence lockers were moved to a warehouse at Forbes Field. Shift change for Uniformed Division officers was located first at Forbes Field, then at the Fairgrounds, later at the Shawnee County garage at 21<sup>st</sup> and S. Topeka before moving to the new Shawnee County Maintenance facility on Lower Silver Lake Road.

It was not until the Sheriff's Department moved into the new Law Enforcement Center in 1998 that all of the Sheriff's Department could be located under one roof again.



**1971 - Sheriff F.T. "Jim" Chaffee (center with dark suit & white hat) and other SNSO personnel in front of the Shawnee County Courthouse, 200 East 7th. Photo - Dwayne Juedes**

# Sheriff's Office Buildings & Courthouses



## LAW ENFORCEMENT CENTER

**320 South Kansas  
Topeka, Kansas  
1998-Present**

In the early 1960's, Urban Renewal hit Topeka and a large section of town known as 'the bottoms' was demolished so that urban blight could be cleaned up, residents could move to better housing, and an industrial park could be constructed.

The area for Urban Renewal was generally from Fourth and Kansas Avenues east to Adams and north to Crane Street. On the northeast corner of 4<sup>th</sup> and Kansas stood the 'Owl Drug Store', a fixture in Topeka for decades. Above the drug store on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor was 'The Cozy Rooms', said by many to be a 'house of ill-repute' since the early 1900's, if not some years before then. Everything in the area was leveled and construction began.

The Montgomery-Ward Company, already located downtown, constructed a new building surrounded by a large parking lot at the northeast corner of 4<sup>th</sup> and Kansas. The business thrived until the early 1980's when Topeka followed the lead of other cities and began construction of Westridge Mall on the west side of town. Montgomery Ward was one of the anchors for the new mall and soon

closed the store at 4<sup>th</sup> and Kansas Avenues, leaving the building unoccupied.

By December 1995, the Topeka Police Department had moved into the west end of the building from their former location at 5<sup>th</sup> and Jackson Streets and plans were underway for the Shawnee County Sheriff's Department to move from the crowded basement of the Shawnee County Courthouse to the east end of the old Montgomery Wards building. That plan was put on hold until a traveling museum, The Treasures of the Czars, could be installed and complete it's run at the location.

After The Treasures of the Czars exhibit was over, planning began in earnest to move the Sheriff's Department into the building. Construction on the Sheriff's Department offices began in November 1996, but the move wasn't complete until September 1998 because of design and construction problems. A new Shawnee County Sheriff's Department badge was issued to commemorate the move and an open house was hosted for the public on September 12, 1998. The cost of the construction of offices in the building was \$3.1 million dollars.



The large "plaque" (at left) is a replica of the Law Enforcement Center commemorative badge and is proudly displayed in the receptionist area and lobby at the Sheriff's Office.

The LEC commemorative badge was designed by Sheriff Dave Meneley and Reserve Major Joe Iarossi.