## Joe Kubin Saw McPherson Rise From The Bare Prairie

By L. E. Lindell

The day was warm, the sky clear and a gentle breeze blew from the south the day Joe Kubin, now 98 and the first home steader in Jackson township west of McPherson, climbed down from his covered wagon onto the sod he was later to break and turn into his own farm.

That was 76 years ago in mid-October 1871, more than a year before the townsite of McPherson was laid out by the town company that came down in covered wagons from Salina.

Joe Kubin also came down from Salina to stake out his claim on what was to be known then as "The Flats". There were no trees to be seen in any direction and the only movement was the waving of the heavy prairie grass in the light breeze. The grass was still green for the fall frosts had not yet turned it brown. Came From Wisconsin.

Joe, with one brother and two sisters, arrived in Salina after driving overland in a covered wagon pulled by a team of horses from Wisconsin. His father and mother and other brothers and sisters came a few weeks later and he met them in Topeka and brought them on out to Central Kansas. Most of his sisters remained in Topeka where they found employment.

At the federal land office in Salina Kubin was told there was no land to be had along the Union Pacific railroad grant in the Salina area, and it was from a tip from a livery stable hand that he learned of the open prairie country in a good soil area some 35

The Kubins and their covered Saw The Hopper Invasion. wagon arrived first at the tworoom log cabin of Phil Kumli and his family on Sharps Creek at the northwest edge of what is now Jackson Township northwest of McPherson. The Kumli's, hearing the Kubins were going to homestead near them, invited them to use the second room in their cabin until they could build their own home on their claim. The Kubins welcomed the opportunity.

Stakes Out His Claim.

The next day after arriving at the Kumli homestead Joe Kubin rode away to stake his own claim. which was 160 acre of prairie land in section 15-19-4W, in northern Jackson Township. A neighbor woman living up on Sharps Creek told Joe after he had staked his claim on "The Flats" that he was crazy for homesteading where he did because the "wind will blow yor; ains out "

The first building the Kubin claim was a one-room soddie Joe and his brother built. This soddie was unique for it had a shingled roof and Joe says he believed it was the first shingled roof in this n and in his snare time working for a man up on Sharps Creek cutting posts out of the timber along the creek. His wages were \$20 a month.

"There were a lot of snakes around our soddie," Joe Kubin explained; "but they didn't bother me any. The mosquitoes were so bad they nearly drove me crazy."

When Joe came to what is now McPherson County there was only one house at Lindsborg, near the ford on the Smoky Hill River, but King City, which is now Elyria, was booming and with 17 houses making up the village. There was nothing on the townsite of Mc-Pherson but bare prairie and if you had good eyes you could see one small eight-foot cottonwood

tree off to the southwest from where McPherson now stands. Bobcat Killed On Creek.

"I killed a bobcat up on Sharps Creek once," Joe related, chuckling at his experiences of the past. "I was working for a fellow and we heard the dogs barking down in the timber along the creek. He told me to go down and see what they were making a fuss about so I took my musket and went to see what all the racket was about. I found the dogs had a spitting bobcat cornered in a bunch of elder-

took him up to the cabin to skin." Joe says he remembers hanging community near where Elyria the bobcat up on the side of the log cabin and skinning it. Just as he finished skinning the cat, he turned around and found himself in the winter of 1870-71, calling face to face with a large Indian. There was only one Indian but he | Homestead Colony." In the sumwas enough to frighten Joe. The mer of 1871 when about forty Redman was dressed mainly in a people had settled there, a brickblanket. He grunted a few times yard was started and that fall a and walked into the house. The 20 by 60 foot store building was women in the house were scared erected. By fall the new town had but they gave him a hunk of bread 40 or 50 residences, two hotels, and he put it under his blanket. the big store, a blacksmith shop Outside the Indian eyed the carcus and the lumber yard. of the bobcat and Joe said he gave it to him without any argument. The Indian also put the carcus unthe creek where an Indian camp

had been established. A Tough First Winter.

The first winter Joe Kubin the milder weather in Texas and when the big blizzards and below ly ancester of McPherson city are zero weather hit the Kansas prair- a few old foundations of buildings ie the cattle "died like flies."

"About half of the 1,200 head of cattle must have died the winter of 1871 and 1872," Kubin recalled. "When spring came Wilson & Simpson hired some of us, along with a few of the Indians, to skin these dead cattle. Some of these cattle were so rotten all we had to do was to cut the skin away from the head and feet and then pull the skin off with a team of

Prairie Fires A Threat.

Joe was married on Sunday March 14, 1873, at Salina, to one of the Goodsheller girls, and with his bride drove down to his sod house on the homestead late that evening. Long before they reached their claim the Kubins saw the smoke of a prairie fire which was sweeping across the dry prairie on the heels of a strong March wind. When they arrived home they found the fire had burned off the prairie grass on the west half of their homestead but did not damage their house or barn. Before he had left for Salina to be married, Joe and his brothers had plowed a fire guard around their house and barn and this probably saved their property from the

"I heard a town company from Salina was going to start a town where McPherson is now located," Joe Kubin recalled with a clear memory for a man 98 years old. "I walked up a little hill near miles to the southeast I could see not been there before.

"I was curious and walked over to see what was going on. I found a bachelor, devoted his time to somen driving stakes and digging a well. A few days later they startmiles to the south. He was told ed building a store. I believe it there was a thriving town in the was the Bowker store, and my area known as King City, which mother was the first customer was on the route of the Santa Fe Bowker had. She bought a \$6 bill of goods.'

> The grasshopper invasion Kubin's memory. It was a Sunday, Joe related, and he was sitting just inside the door of his chickens he had in his yard jumpon the ground.

'and looked up into the sky. the next day that they really start- mately 700. ed doing damage to the crops. The hoppers cleaned out the corn and too tough for them. They flew in from the south

"Those hoppers pitted the hoe handles so badly they were rough."

Back in 1872 the major crops around here were corn and pota- Mr. and Mrs. T. E. Simpson, Mr. toes, Kubin said. Joe didn't plant and Mrs. A. W. Smith, Rev. and breaking the sod with a team of any wheat until in 1874. There Mrs. John A. Simpson, David Mcwas plenty of prairie hay to be Combs, Mr. and Mrs. A. W. found in the low areas. Marvels At Transformation.

early days in McPherson County | C. W. Tilton. at the home of son, J. Kubin, at 505 East Kansas Avenue, one re- three charter members the church cent afternoon. His clear mind members now number 1055. In and vivid memory brought many 1907 under the pastorate of the incidents to his mind that were Rev. C. H. Woodward, the present serious to him back in the 70's church was built at a cost of but which made him chuckle now. about \$40,000.00. In 1928 under He has seen McPherson and Mc- the pastorate of the Rev. E. W. Pherson County grow up from the Freeman, the church was remodtreeless prairie of 76 years ago eled and the Sunday School anto a modern and thriving Kansas nex was built at a cost of \$25,city today. He marvels at the 000. This beautiful structure

Despite the fact he is 98 years and Maple streets. old. Joe gets out and around the large yard around his son's home. Recently he was out and raked the Bowker store. The following part of the yard. Three years ago | are the names of the early memhe spaded the garden. Joe likes | bers: Mrs. Sarah Allcoot, Mrs. Orto talk about the pioneer days, for today he likes to recall things | Louise Allen, John Richey and that happened three-quarters of Lou Richey, Susan Richey, George a century ago. Joe lives in mem- | M. Summerville and wife, H. Bow-

transformation.

# King City Died Young

When McPherson was founded berry shrubs. I shot the cat and in 1872 the death knell was sounded for King City, a young

> now stands. A group of veterans from Ashtabula, Ohio, founded King City it "Soldiers and Sailors Free

Heavily armed cowboys made King City the point at which they gathered their mail, and those der his blanket with the hunk of same cowboys were generous when bread and wandered off down to they attended the Sunday School established in 1872. But despite the Sunday School, King City was not a prohibition town.

Then came the county spent in McPherson County was a election and the choice of McPhertough one. A local ranch by the son as the county seat. The peoname of Wilson & Simpson had ple almost immediately began moved in 1,200 head of cattle moving their houses and one of from Texas and they came late in the hotels to McPherson and soon the fall. The cattle were used to King City was nearly depopulated.

Today all that is left of this earnearly hidden in the grass.

#### Churches Came In With The Early Pioneers Of City Of McPherson

The first religious service was held in the first building erected by Harrison Bowker in July 1872. Rev. Ambrose Shelley a United Brethren minister and usually known as Father Shelley took charge of the service and preached the first sermon.

In its early days McPherson was very religious little town and as soon as the McPherson Town Company building was completed in 1873, all denominations met together in the large hall on the second floor. The following denominations had a representative minister who took his turn in the pulpit: The Methodist, Rev. John Simpson, the Baptist Rev. D. McGregor, the Congregational Rev. Hoddle, the United Brethren. Rev. Shelley, the Free Methodist, Rev. William McClintick. A union Sunday school was carried on by Clarence Bowker, Superintendent and Miss Helen Scofield Organist. Each church denomination commenced early to count its membership with a deep desire to soon have a place of meeting all to themselves. However it made no difference to the church goers who preached. Perfect peace and harmony governed all and each Sunday the hall was usually filled to capacity.

The McPherson Town Company soon after organizing offered three lots for church purposes to my claim and five and a half any church that would apply for them. The Baptist church was something on the prairie that had the first to make application and the first to erect a church. Their minister the Rev. McGregor being liciting all McPherson people interested in the erection of this church structure. When the buildin was completed in 1874 all denominations were invited to attend here and they gradually withdrew as each became able to acquire a church home.

The Baptist church was first the summer of 1874 is vivid in organized Dec. 11, 1872 in Centennial District, at the Byron Williams home. The charter members were, Mr. and Mrs. Byron Wilsoddie when he noticed the few liams, Mr. and Mrs. D. D. Carpenter, Mrs. John Carpenter and ing around picking at something | mother, Mr. and Mrs. Hoisington, Julia and Nathan and a Mr. How-"I went to the door," Joe said, ard with D. D. McGregor as pastor. The first home of this organ-Grasshoppers were starting to ization was in the new school fall out of the sky into the yard house in King City. When McPherlike snow flakes. In a little bit son became the county seat in they were coming down thick and | 1873, it was deemed advisable to fast and within two hours they ob- move the oranization to McPherscured the sun. It wasn't until son. Present membership approxi-

The First Methodist Episcopal Church of McPherson was organgardens but the prairie grass was | ized in the McPherson Town Company building which served as a 13th day of April, 1874. The Rev. true. They didn't eat the wooden er and first pastor. The charter handles out of the hoes but they members of the church were as follows: Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton Barcus, Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Felton, Mr. and Mrs. C. P. McAlexander, Hester Tull, Miss Mattie Tull, Joe Kubin told the story of his Mrs. J. R. Wright, Mr. and Mrs.

From a beinning of twentystands on the corner of Kansas

The Conrgegational church was organized in September 1873, in pha Shepherd, Mrs. Hewett, Mrs. ker and wife, Alvin Bliss, Benjamin Yale, C. B. Bowker and wife, E. A. Dodge and wife, H. A. Hendry and wife, Mary Miller, John W. Hill and wife, William West and wife.

These were all steadfast mempers meeting with all denominations until 1877 when a shell of a church was erected, rude benches were installed and meetings were opened for the first time. The building was completed, equipped and dedicated November 27th., 1880. The beautiful structure now occupied by the Congregational church membership stands on the lots donated to the church in 1873 by the Mc-Pherson Town Company. Present membership, approximately

400 members. The Presbyterian church was organized in June 1879 by Timothy Hill of Kansas City. The following are the charter members: Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Myers, Stella Myers, G. B. McGranahan, John Connell, Joseph McDermid, S. M. Bohon, Mr. and Mrs. F. E. Barber, Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Allen, Mrs. Mary Bradbury. At their first communion (Nov. 21, 1879) there were 38 members. This organization held their first meetings in McCann's hall, up-stairs in what is now the Daily Republican building. From 1879 to 1883 the membership increased to 141 members. The Presbyterian church has

438 members at this time, 1947. The first four churches organized previous to 1880 have been mentioned, and believe it or not- heading of recent history.

In the McPherson Daily Republican, dated April 18, 1947 there are 21 churches listed in McPherson with time and place of meeting for the following Sunday. There are 22 announcements by churches in various parts of the county. This does not include Lindsborg and area for being so arge Lindsborg would announce her own. Who can doubt the good ness and stability of our county

#### The Old Water And Light Plant Was All Trouble

By Ed Weilepp

On November 24, 1908, the ity of McPherson paid out \$52,-000 to purchase the water and light plant. On July 23, 1910, that plant burned to the ground and out of its ashes, little by little, grew one of the finest municipal water and light plants in the state of Kansas.

But before that day in 1910

when the plant and its sins went and light plant had caused nothand in its own way, excitement. ecords are not clear, the first water and light plant in the young city of McPherson was built by a rivate concern known as the he present plant. Plant Soon Sold

was still pretty much of a "gad- west. get." Electrical appliances were almost unheard of.

with Western Water for the pur- limits. chase of water for fire protection and lights for street lights for

it went into the hands of the recourt house at that time, on the Livingston Cushing and C. E. Gibones. You won't believe it, but it's John A. Simpson was the oraniz-share of the financially strapped 1 plant.

On June 1, 1898, Wise inform- Four Big Townships ed the city of McPherson that if The first townships organized Umbrella For Top water and lights went off.

Nothing much was thought of this until the night of July 3, 1898, when the First National Bank, located where the Grand Building now stands, caught fire.

No Water For Fire

When firemen arrived to fight the blaze, there was no water, E. H. Heithecker and F. D. Entriken went to the water plant to get the water flowing out, as the Daily Republican of that day reported, Mr. W. E. Stout, plant engineer, refused to turn on the water as he was under orders of the U.S. Court not to do so. A revolver was pointed at him and under protest he then turned on the water." But it was too late, the bank

ourned to the ground. This waterless-lightless situa-

tion continued and soon the city First Came Here was being flooded with letters from insurance companies threat- By W. J. Krehbiel ening to hike fire insurance rates wagons.

Paid The Bill

city commissioners voted to "pay up," Western Water received a check for \$1,125.25, and the water and lights went back on.

The plant continued in the ands of the receivers, losing money and causing the town fight to continue until 1907. By this ther. time C. E. Gibson, of Boston had acquired most of the ownership lonely claim southwest of Lindsof the plant and dickering was started for the purchase of the property by the city.

The City Buys It

A deal was made and on Nov. 24. 1908, the city voted by a 1,to extend it: \$16,000 for the elec-

Repair work was started and burned to the ground.

Since that time there have been city squabbles over the plant manager, expansion, new services and machinery but through it all the plant has continued to grow.

### The County Once Went To The Rockies

By Ed Weilepp

In 1860 McPherson County extended from its present eastern boundary to the Rocky Mountains. At that time it was known as Peketon (also Pekton and Peckton) County and the county seat was established at Beach Valley.

The 1860 state legislature declared that "all that territory west of the sixth principal meridian and south of township 16, in Kansas Territory, be and is hereby erected into a county, to be known by the name of Peketon County.

"Ashel Beach, A. C. Beach and Samuel Shoff, be and are hereby appointed commissioners to divide said county into election precincts, fix places for holding election and make all necessary arrangements for the first election in said county.

Kansas extended west to the Rockies and included Pikes Peak

Part of Marion County

On Feb. 17, 1865, Peketon up in ilame and smoke, the water County was abolished and what is now McPherson formed a poring but city fights, court litigation tion of Marion county which, old records say "was at that time Sometime back about 1888, the established and which extended from the west line of Chase County to the present western boundary of the State of Kansas.

The boundary lines of McPher-Houston Water and Light Com- son County were fixed in 1867 pany on the approximate site of and the legislature gave the county its present name. It was from that time until 1870 at-The plant was soon acquired by tached as a township to Saline the Western Water and Electric for judicial purposes. The county Company, but apparently McPher- comprised 1,080 square miles and son was not yet ready to support a took in three townships which plant. Almost every home had its now belong to Harvey and two own well, there was an abundance which now belong to Reno County. of public watering troughs for It ran 36 miles from north to the horses and the electric light south and 30 miles from east to

The final change was made in 1872 when, at the insistence of On March 30, 1891, after a C. C. Hutchinson and with the ight which threatened to split concurrence of the members from McPherson right down the middle, McPherson, the south row of the city passed an ordinance which townships was lopped off and the put into effect a 20 year lease county was reduced to its present

Political Move?

This move came as a blow to King City, a little town southwest of the present town of Elyria. But Western Water couldn't King City was in a fight to bestand prosperity, and on May 21, come the county seat, but when 1891, the county went "flat bust- these six miles were cut off, the At that time its mortgages city was then too far south in the and debts totaled \$68.863, and county to become the county seat.

Lindsborg felt that by strikceivers, the Central Trust Co., of ing off this row of townships, it New York. John W. Ashman would stand a better chance of becoming the permanent county son each received a one-third sent, a position which it held in

However, it was relt that Linds-This brought about the famous borg was too far north from the fight between the city and the re- center of the county and in 1873 ceivers of the water and light an election was held which moved plant and their agent, a Mr. Wise. the county seat to McPherson.

the city did not pay its back water and light bills amounting to \$1.- what is now Spring Valley, Lone ed a large umbrella. The maxi 650, the company would discon- Tree, King City, Groveland, Hay- mum speed attainable was 20 tinue service to the city. By June es, Little Valley, Superior, Tur- miles an hour when the ground 7 the deadline had passed the key Creek, Mound, Meridian and was level. At the time, the speed five other townships which later limit in most communities was went to Harvey and Reno Coun- eight miles an hour. One law reties; Smoky Hill, which compris- quired that if the driver of an ed what is now known as Smoky automobile met a woman driving Hill, New Gottland, McPherson, east half of Jackson, Harper and of the car, and lead the woman's Union; Sharps Creek, which comprised what is now known as South Sharps Creek, Castle, Marquette, west half of Jackson, Harper and Union; and Gypsum Creek. Battle Hill, Canton, Empire, Delmore and Bonaville.

New Gottland and Meridian were organized in 1873 and other townships followed soon thereaf-

# County Was Prairie Before Settlers

unless some sort of fire protectithe first settler in 1859, McPhertion was forthcoming. The city son county was a vast uninhabited dads even considered buying one prairie, flat in the south and hilly of those new-fangled "chemical in the north. There were no trees except along the Smoky river in the north, along its tributary Finally, on Sept. 5, 1898, the creeks, along Gypsum creek in the northeast, Turkey creek in the middle south and along the Little Arkansas river in the extreme southwest portion of the county. Wild life was plentiful—buffalo, elk, antelope, deer, prairie chickens, beaver, some coyotes, a few wild cats and an occasional pan-But when Sharp staked out his

borg and thereby gave the creek for the cowboys, roving Indian and the whole area its name, there was little game in the southern on the Santa Fe Trail south of and, counting the revolutions of part of the county. The noise and Galva and for Gerry's trading post the wheel, drove a mile west, Gusbustle of the Santa Fe Trail, then on the Fort Harker Trail in Tur- tafson going with them. After over 40 years old, had driven wild key Creek township. But soon a search of about an hour, they 500 majority to buy the plant for life to the trees and brush of the settlers came, lured by the Home located the marker at the corner \$52,000. This included \$36,000 north. Herds of Texas longhorns, stead act. In 1866 a few settled of what now is Main Street and for the water plant and \$10,000 fattening on the luxuriant Mc- in scattered localities along the First Street. Pherson grasses, had driven the Smoky and Gypsum creek, but tric plant and \$5,000 to extend buffalo west to Rice county where from 1868 they came in droves, early McPherson county settlers practically completing the initial journeyed for the hunt. In 1866 was under way when the plant the Reece brothers came upon 18 McPherson city was a two-year- sure, the men drove due south buffalo in the Gypsum creek valley, a few small herds ventured near Marquette in the next few years and in the early seventies county except for occasional ago.



WHERE THE TALL CORN GROWS-Broom corn, not wheat, was the big crop in McPherson County before the turn of the century and this old picture from the Daily Republican files shows one



BROOM CORN HARVEST-After broom corn was baryested the women and children had their urn to work .too. The broom corn was brought in and placed on a long table, where it was sorted and the brush straightened. It was scraped to get rid of the seeds and the brush then was cured in the sun and wind. It had to be kept from getting damp during the curing process. Sometimes the corn brought as much as \$100 a ton.

### First Autoists Were Pioneers In 1902

Pioneers in a more modern ense, F. A. Vaniman and H. J. Harnly in 1902 traveled in a one cylinder, four-and-a-half horsepower, side crank, side-steered Oldsmobile from McPherson to Colorado Springs, bringing the first "horseless" carriage into many towns along the way.

The car, owned by Mr. Vaninan, was equipped with an acetylene lamp, single-tube bicycle tires, curved dash, hanging step footrest, and a second seat with its back to the first so that passengers could look out into the dust behind. The machine weighed 650 pounds and on the dash

"REMEMBER, IT HAS RUN ND IT WILL BUN AGAIN."

a buggy, he should stop, get out

Before the two men could start on their trip, they had to have a spade, rubber boots, a tow rope, jack and chains, and a tarpaulin (a prairie schooner cover). Gasoline was available only at carried on the rear seat with the J. E. Gustafson, McPherson jew- as late as 1884. luggage. The travelers had to be eler, remembers from tales told their own mechanics, for there by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. the open prairie. The homesteadwere no garages.

**Ureated Sensation** 

The car created a sensation in nearly every town it visited and parents located on a homestead the trip almost was made by car. where the Bay refinery now is. But two miles from their destination the car's transmission broke tion in April, 1872, and immed-Just before Isaac Sharp became and a team of horses towed them into town. For the benefit of modern mo-

orists, the average speed was 12 miles an hour for the round trip; the average distance covered per day was 104 miles; and the average cost of gasoline was once cent a mile.

Quite different from 1947.

trays, one of which was killed at the edge of the McPherson townsite in 1875.

County Was Prairie

bands, Fuller's ranch and tavern around the wheel of the wagon

Many residents of Madagascar there were occasional small herds are believed to be descendants of in the Natural corral southwest | Malayans whom ethnologists beof Marquette. Otherwise the buf- lieve must have journeyed to the This, however, comes under the falo was extinct in McPherson island in small boats centuries cation of McPherson city was the county had plenty of sod

#### Livestock Raising Started Early In McPherson County, With Huge Ranches Livestock, a profitable occupa- and Poland China hogs. Thomas

chores and food, horses for chores In 1893 he shipped and exhibited and transportation, and hogs and a steer weighing more than two sheep for food and trade.

Longhorn steers and oxen joinfarm uses, many of the early setfor John A. Peterson of Marquette, herding Texas cattle in King City and Turkey Creek townships and at Dole's ranch in Canheard objections that the cattle

ad Texas fever. However, many of the settlers n the southern part of the county was pasted a paper with these had their own huge cattle herds popular in the early 1870's for and thousands of cattle with the brand of Thomas Finan roamed herds of cattle held for grazing usually a part of the earliest set- planted if the fields were not tlements in McPherson county but fenced in. Some of the cattlemen Instead of a top, the car carri-these ranches soon dwindled as kept herds near McPherson for nrifty settlers came who desired

to till the soil. Andy Roy, an old settler in Turtey Creek township, was a breed-

tion in McPherson county today, Lay also raised many hogs and came early to the county as the C. A. King was a stockman and pioneers used cattle for farm cattle breeder, feeder and shipper.

In the New Gottland area were Olaf Hokanson had more than two tlers objected to the cattle herds thousand sheep on his sheep ranch

In Canton township, C. H. Way on and Battle Hill townships, French Draft and Cleveland Bay thoroughbred and registered hors

The cattle raisers were not too there was no herd law and the the land. The pioneer ranch was destroyed the crops the settlers the college boys who came west in the summertime for adventure

er of pure bred shorthorn cattle start as a livestock raising center.

## Handkerchief Helped Find McPherson

By Mark Anson

A covered wagon, with a white Gustafson.

J. E. Gustafson was just a year and a half old in 1872 when his The family moved onto the locaiately built a sod house as living quarters.

Couldn't Find Markers

In May, the men who founded McPherson arrived in the vicinity to locate the townsite they proposed to stake. But a difficulty arose immediately—they couldn't find Sod Houses Varied the corner stones. Seeking help, they went to the Gustafson home-

Gustafson showed them the corner stone marking the section line on his homestead, but another difficulty arose. There was no measuring tape to mark the mile As far as known Isaac Sharp to the next section marker, half had the county to himself except buried beneath the prairie grass.

The men tied a handkerchief

Locate Corner

stead.

From there it was simple. Still settling by the end of 1874 when using the handkerchief as a meafrom the stone they had just found, searched less than half an hardened in the sun. hour, and located the stone at what now is Kansas and Main.

> So, with the aid of a handkerchief and a wagon wheel, the lofound 75 years ago.

#### tons at the Chicago Worlds Fair. ed with teams of horses in the a number of sheep and the setbreaking of the prairie sod and tlers made their candles from the planting of wheat, corn and sheep tallow and used the wool some vegetables. But except for to spin into thread and cloth. M.

he operated. began raising horses and raised

as cattle herders. Thus the county got an early

#### Dugouts, 3 Types Of Sod Houses In Days Long Ago By Mark Anson

The first settlers in McPherson county both around McPherson city and in the county built their homes of sod or lived in dugouts drug stores and groceries, but handkerchief tied around a rear for timber to build a frame house they usually had a quart or two wheel, located the townsite which was a rarity. These dugouts and at most, so a five-gallon can was grew into the city of McPherson, sod houses in many areas lasted

> Dugouts were usually dug on er would take two forked poles, put them down into the sod at each end of the dugout with the forked ends upright and put a pole across the forks. Other poles would then be laid to form the sides of the dugout, with grass, brush, and sod piles on them. Sometimes the dugouts were flat on the ground and grass would grow on the sod roof. The roofs of both dugouts and sod houses were usually a long blue stem grass which frequently grew to be quite tall on the house tops.

> There were three types of sod houses. Some were laid up rough, others plastered, still others hewed off smooth. The sod for the houses were broken with twelve inch breaking plows and these long strips broken into smaller lengths with a spade. Laid on each other to make a wall the grass roofs helped hold them together. A rarer type was a semisod house of boards covered with sod. Plastered houses were plastered inside with lime and sand. Sometimes keel, a type of soapstone, was used for a roof.

> Built Adobe Houses Later in the history of the county, adobe houses became common. Soil and straw were mixed by letting horses tramp on it and the mixture pressed into wooden bowls about twelve inches long, six inches wide, and four inches thick. These bricks then were

> While there is some question as to whether there ever was a sod house in the city of McPherson there have been several adobe buildings here. And the rest of houses and dugouts