



Tales Out of School

Fall 2011

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY™

Map Making

This issue of *Tales Out of School* features the work of local historian and Great Plains Advisory Board member, Roger Heineken. Roger takes us on a journey to create a deep map, a concept popularized by author William Least-Heat Moon, of the original townsite of Emporia, Kansas. While Roger's work covers roughly 26 miles of streets in the original square mile townsite, we think the concept will engage young map makers' interest in history and geography and is easily scalable right down to a map of their neighborhood, playground, or school.

The Deep Map beyond My Door

by Roger Heineken

My first college apartment was garden level. The plane of my bed was below grade. Rather than count sheep, my imagination drifted to thoughts of buffalo herds that may have passed over the very area occupied by my bed. I thought of hunting parties, horse hooves trampling the soil of my little plot on the prairie.

Several years later I learned that my apartment was outside the old Emporia, Kansas town site, which in the early days served as an unofficial dump. My mind pictures changed to the litter of stopper ink bottles, broken crockery, and store-bought catsup bottles heaped on my little patch of prairieland.

Every square inch of Kansas has an evolving history that began hundreds of millions years ago, drawing from our great inland sea. It gave indigenous peoples the stone for arrow points. Readily available Kansas limestone built the maturing frontier towns before rail service connected to develop these outposts even further.

Jump ahead. Today, there are buildings found in every town that clearly telegraph "repurposed gas station." There is a deep map of history just outside the door, down the street, and out in the field. It is fun to explore the history all around us – in the names of places, in the architecture, and in what is residual from an earlier time.

On January 1, 2011 I began a deep map exploration of the 1868 Emporia town site. My initiative was an amalgam - to raise money in support the ALS Association through Phi Delta Theta Fraternity's Iron Phi Challenge, to model service for undergraduate fraternity men (walk the talk), and to do something special in honor of Kansas history in its sesquicentennial year.

The Iron Phi program was conceived as an athletic endeavor with sponsoring donors. Many registrants were doing marathons or half marathons. At 61, I was certainly no athlete but wanted to find a way to participate. With the approaching state sesquicentennial, I wanted to find a history angle for Iron Phi because I always liked local cultural history and was determined to celebrate Kansas in its special year.

William Least Heat-Moon and his 1991 book, *PrairieErth (A Deep Map): An Epic History of the Tallgrass Prairie Country*, came to mind. I read Heat-Moon's book back when it was published and was fascinated with his novel approach to research his non-fiction book. He walked every road north to south and east to west in Chase County, Kansas. Heat-Moon's book was a rich exploration of a defined place through time, cultures, geology, flora and fauna, and tallgrass ranching economics - a deep map.

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Tales Out of School, a newsletter for elementary and middle school teachers, is published twice a year and is available free of charge to interested persons. A variety of subjects related to teaching Kansas history and the Great Plains appear in *Tales*. Each issue emphasizes a single topic and includes a resource of websites, books, and teaching tools to assist in the classroom. Readers are encouraged to submit items to the newsletter that they believe will be useful to fellow teachers. Past issues of *Tales* are available on the website at www.emporia.edu/cgps. If you would like to have your name added to the mailing list or would like to send suggestions please email us at cgps@emporia.edu.

The Deep Map cont.

I knew early Emporia was a square mile on the prairie between two rivers. William Allen White was born in Emporia in 1868 in the nine-year-old 1857 Territorial-era town. Emporia's favorite son is generally considered the most influential Kansan of all time. White was a member of Phi Delta Theta Fraternity at Kansas University in the 1880s. There seemed to be a developing symmetry. I would walk the deep map of the Emporia town site at the time of White's birth.

Emporia was platted with 144 standard city blocks each separated by its grid of road easements. With 13 streets running north and south and 13 streets running east and west, these streets comprised 26 miles, the approximate length of a marathon. I had my event. I would not strive for speed. I would go slowly during several walking sessions as January weather and time permitted. I planned to photo document my town along the way.

Beginning on January 1 and concluding on Kansas Day 2011, I explored old Emporia in about 12 sessions of walking. I snapped approximately 1200 good images. Ironically, Kansas Day on January 29th is the anniversary of W. A. White's death in 1944. I organized my trek of old Emporia to finish at the William Allen White House State Historic Site.



The Charles Squires-designed 1901 Lyon County Courthouse as photographed by a LIFE photographer in January 1938 from atop the Poehler Mercantile building. The Poehler is on the site of the first purpose-built Lyon County Courthouse. This courthouse confection deserved a penny postcard (center). The dramatic courthouse entry arch was salvaged and erected in the mid 1950s as the auto entrance to the Casa Bonita limestone roadhouse a few miles east of Emporia. In 1962 the club building exploded due to a gas leak. Today, the lonely arch sits on private property visible from the 1931 Hwy 50.



I've lived in Emporia since 1969. I know Emporia and its history pretty well. My trek took me onto streets I had never traveled in 40 plus years. I discovered that my slowed, crisscross navigation through the town gave me a new appreciation for many of our architectural landmarks. Walking against traffic on a one-way street gave a fresh perspective on what we normally see from a car whizzing by, always in the same direction. I was able to get up-close and personal to read the bronze plaques most people never take the time to read.



Few appreciate this fine design axis point of the First Christian Church's front door alignment with Market Street. Today it goes unnoticed. Market is one-way with traffic moving south away from the church.

I realized how many wonderful buildings from the 1920s are still part of Emporia's architectural fabric. In the town site are two axis design elements, one of which is hidden and unappreciated because the street is now one-way in the wrong direction.

I passed very near the site of the MKT railroad depot which is now a soybean elevator. Emporians today do not realize this was where the Ringling Bros. Barnum and Bailey Circus off-loaded and set up its big top in the first half of the 20th century. In 1898 this was where Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Congress of Rough Riders of the World show performed. Emporia's population was 7,500 then. The Wild West Show drew a crowd of 15,000 for the matinee and another 10,000 for the evening performance according to contemporary Emporia Gazette reports.



One of the first events held in the newly built Broadview Hotel in September 1923 was the state-wide meeting of the Ku Klux Klan. The hotel was one-half block from the Emporia Gazette and William Allen White, the KKK's loudest critic.

January was a great time to appreciate the magnificent scaffold of mature trees that dot the old part of town. I tried

The Deep Map cont.

to imagine the same streets before the Dutch elm disease in the late 1960s-early 70s decimated 90 % of our old American Elms arching over every street. I found two USD Zone 6 -9 evergreen magnolias growing in Emporia's USD 5b zone. I also found two examples of topiary in the old town site.

Mysteries abound.

In 1924 the Old Settlers Association (precursor of the Lyon County Historical Society) placed a plaque on the bank building at the southwest corner of 6th Avenue and Commercial St. The plaque notes Emporia's founding on February 22, 1857 along with the site of the first building, the first newspaper, first church service, etc. In 2007, Emporia celebrated its 150th anniversary on February 20. All contemporary town histories point to this date as the day the town claim was surveyed. The old settlers knew it was a two-day ride to Lecompton to file the claim to make Emporia official. They also probably liked that their founding date coincided with Washington's Birthday. I do not know why or when the anniversary date changed.

In 1976 a plaque was placed by the Daughter's of the American Revolution on the octagonal masonry fire-proof law library attached to the frame home of founding father, Preston B. Plumb. It implies that the Colonial Revival mansion was built in 1894. I know this is not true and I wonder why there was not better research or better wording. The plaque distorts history rather than documenting it. Plumb's home was an 1870s Italianate Victorian re-styled in 1894 by Mrs. Plumb after the senator's 1891 death. The non-symmetrical portico is a dead give-away that the house was remodeled. Colonial Revival style is symmetrical.

The home of Emporia founder, Preston B. Plumb, was made-over in 1894 following his death in 1891. The Italianate Victorian was transformed into a Colonial Revival manse. The column squarely blocking the front door is atypical of Colonial Revival symmetry, evidence that the house was remodeled. The fire-proof law library appears to the right of the photo.



At 10th Avenue and Exchange Street north of the White historic site is perhaps the most curious house I saw on my exploration, The renovated Italianate Victorian is a two-story duplex today. What makes me scratch my head is that the house has a three-story enclosed porch on the west. I am told that the top story apartment accesses the top two porches while the ground floor connects to the first story porch. Most people pass

this house and never notice this unique aspect.



Perhaps the strangest house in Emporia is at the corner of 10th Avenue and Exchange Street just north of the W. A. White House State Historic Site. The two-story house features a three-story porch.

Along the BNSF railroad main line I came upon a Western Union Telegraph Co. manhole cover. I thought all telegraph lines were on poles above ground. This needs more inquiry. Google Images has no Western Union manhole covers like the design of the one I came across.



This Western Union Telegraph manhole cover can be found trackside between Humboldt Park and the old Emporia Harvey House site.

The manhole cover was very near the mysterious steps that exist today in the former Humboldt Park. Since the late 1970s the park has been the site of the Lee Beran Emporia Recreation Commission facility. I now understand that Emporia's Harvey House existed one block to the west adjacent to the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe depot. Today the site is a parking lot but from 1888 to 1938, Emporia's Harvey House was full-service with hotel, dining room, lunch room, and newsstand. The trackside path enabled lodgers to stroll off a fine dinner in Humboldt Park just a block away. Friendly Harvey Girls probably suggested this amenity to patrons during a lay-over.

Fremont Park and Humboldt Park are twins. They are dedicated, one block square city parks flanking Commercial Street a few blocks removed to the east and west. These parks date back to our earliest Territorial days. Emporia founders were very deliberate and thematic in naming the town, streets, and places inspired by a Greek seaport on the northern coast of Africa. Emporia's (emporium, trade center) streets were named Commercial, Merchant, Mechanic, Market, Union, and Exchange near the city center. Then there are street names honoring government – Constitution, Congress, State. Outlying street names reflect rural dynamics of rivers, woods, and

The Deep Map cont.

countryside. The whole square mile town is bordered by streets named East and West Streets, and South and 12th Avenues.

Emporia was founded as an Abolitionist town and later would be on Quantrill's list of towns to be raided like the fate of Lawrence. Fortunately, that never happened. I could understand why a park would be named for John C. Fremont who was the first Republican, anti-slavery candidate for president in 1856. I couldn't understand why the European explorer, Alexander von Humboldt who was born in 1769, was selected as the name for our western twin park. After my deep map walk of the town, I spent time trying to understand this logic, which seemed inconsistent with Emporia founders' deliberate nomenclature themes.

Mystery solved!

John C. Fremont was an explorer earlier in his life in the first half of the 19th century. He was charged with finding a route for the transcontinental railway across North America in 1849. Many species of plants are named for Fremont including a variety of cottonwood tree. Humboldt was well known in the Western Hemisphere among literate people. I now understand the themes.

Fremont explored North America and was an anti-slavery Republican. Humboldt in an earlier period explored South America. Humboldt died in 1859 when Emporia founders were laying out the design of Emporia which may have inspired the choice of names. Humboldt came first and the west-side park is on the left. Fremont followed so his namesake park is on the east/right. Humboldt, Kansas is also named for this rock star of exploration. Early settlers on the frontier probably felt like explorers and identified with these two daring men.

Nineteenth century Americans were enthralled with ancient European cultures, particularly Greek history, which gave America models for government, philosophy, law, and the wildly popular Greek Revival architecture. Napoleon shot the nose off the Sphinx and created an Egyptian craze in the West. Exploration was appreciated, and in Emporia we have a hidden-in-plain-sight residual of the founder's inspiration, intellect, logic, and reason.

In one square mile, Emporia has so much to see and understand if we just take the time. Mortgage red-lining, before the 1960s Civil Rights Act, created our neighborhood of tiny, sometimes sub-standard homes in Emporia's historic African-American community. I photographed the building that was the first Emporia restaurant to break the color barrier by 1950. The courageous G.I. veteran restaurateur reached a reckoning with his religion and of what he had fought for during WWII, according to his son. While founded as an anti-slavery town,

apartheid existed here for far too long.

I touched and read the plaque noting the first well dug in the town site in 1858. No longer would early settlers have to travel to our two rivers to haul water for livestock and domestic use. This was a real step forward in 1858.



The first well in Emporia was a convenience to early settlers. No longer would water be hauled from the rivers for domestic use and livestock.

I photographed the stump of the Blacksmith Elm, which had been cut down in 2010; a forged iron sign hook was embedded in the trunk of the living tree. I wondered why the 1898 Charles Squires-designed Romanesque Revival Emporia Presbyterian Church limestone has very little of the ugly black lichen discoloration like the limestone details of buildings nearby. I communed with Quaker Park, site of Emporia's first Friends settlers and meeting house. I wondered if "sylvan" was selected for the street name because of Quaker William Penn's Pennsylvania and perhaps the original home of Emporia's first Quakers.

Lyon County may hold a record as the county seat with the most purpose-built courthouses – four. I passed by all the locations including the two extant buildings. The current courthouse is attached to the previous one, which serves as an annex. The second 1901 courthouse was razed to build number three. One vestige of the Squires-designed courthouse is the massive limestone arch through which taxpayers passed conducting county business. In the early 1950s the arch was salvaged and reassembled four miles east of Emporia as a auto portal at the Casa Bonita roadhouse/supper club. It stands today a bit lonely, as the roadhouse was destroyed in an explosion in 1962.



The former Senate Apartment building features a penthouse and rooftop lawn.

The Deep Map cont.

I passed by the pre-WWII apartment building with its penthouse. This is the only building in old Emporia with a lawn on the roof. The lawn never has an incursion of dandelions due to being three stories up. I visited the addresses associated with the great Finney bond scandal that rocked Kansas during the Great Depression.

The first automobile west of the Mississippi River came to Emporia from Chicago to be featured at the 1899 Emporia Street Fair. By 1907, automobiles were becoming a common site on Emporia streets, though many streets were not yet paved. The automobile brought purpose-built gasoline filling stations to Emporia. The pattern of changing traffic routes in a growing city becomes apparent as these buildings were no longer in financially viable locations as the town grew. For decades these structures were re-purposed for many types of enterprises. The oldest and most interesting architecture is nearest city center.

Old re-purposed gasoline filling stations can be found everywhere in old Emporia. Usually the most interesting and oldest are near city center.



I walked streets and places captured by LIFE magazine photographers between 1936 and 1941. I walked where scenes for *In Cold Blood*, *Murder Ordained*, and *Mary White* were filmed. I crossed the intersection of K-99 and Hwy 50 where

on October 15, 1969 a large group of mostly students blocked traffic. The Moratorium to End the War in Vietnam was a coordinated day of protest across the US.

Emporia offers so much more to investigate. New questions rise in my mind because I chose to stroll through the streets of old Emporia to celebrate Kansas Statehood in the 150th year and the legacy of William Allen White, our resident Sage. My initiative to participate in the Iron Phi Challenge to support the ALS Association has been remarkably successful as the deep map exploration seemed to capture the imagination of so many who donated to the cause. Many like me have lost friends to the fatal disease.



Some of the debris dumped in my neighborhood decades ago which washed out of the graveled alley near my first apartment in Emporia. These items are early 20th century, probably pre-1920s before the subdivision was annexed into the Emporia city limits.

My Iron Phi Challenge [page](#) and the [website](#) are linked here.

I value that I explored old Emporia to create a personal deep map to better understand the local cultural history beyond my door. Thank you, William Least Heat-Moon. I still have some of the bottles and debris that washed out of the graveled alley across from my apartment, now so long ago.



This circa 1915 image of Humboldt Park shows a well maintained and appointed green space west of Commercial Street. The park with its bandstand, benches, cast iron tiered fountain, and gracious strolling paths was merely one block east of Emporia's Harvey House. The lighted Emporia sign let train passengers know they were passing through nationally famous William Allen White's town. Today, the steps remain that allowed Harvey House lodgers connection to the park by a trackside path. The Emporia concrete letters still exist though they have been moved so they can be read from the parking lot of the Lee Beran Recreation Commission facility, which now occupies the park.

The Deep Map cont.

Author's Bio

Roger Heineken is on staff of the Emporia State University Memorial Union and holds a BFA in Art from ESU. He works supporting the William Allen White House State Historic Site, is a resource person regarding local history, and does step-on tour guide work for the Emporia Conventions and Visitors Bureau. He serves as a member of the Center for Great Plains Studies Advisory Committee.

Books

PrairieErth, A Deep Map

By William Least Heat-Moon
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1999
ISBN: 9780395925690

A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail

By Bill Bryson
Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2006
ISBN: 9780307279460

At Home: A Short History of Private Life

By Bill Bryson
Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2011
ISBN: 9780767919395

U.S. History Map Activities

By E. Richard Churchill and Linda R. Churchill
Walch Publishing, 2004
ISBN: 9780825143496

8 Wonders of Kansas

By Marci Penner
Kansas Sampler Foundation, 2011
ISBN: 9780976540816

Nearby History: Exploring the Past Around You

By David Kyvig
AltaMira Press, 2010
ISBN: 9780759113008

Walking Brooklyn: 30 Tours Exploring Historical Legacies, Neighborhood Culture, Side Streets, and Waterways

By Adrienne Onofri
Wilderness Press, 2007
ISBN: 9780899974309

Online Resources

Your Special Town

Lesson Plan Grades 3-5

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/04/g35/specialtown.html>

This lesson asks students to consider the unique and special features of their hometown and to create a presentation or performance that could be used to welcome visitors to the town. In the process, students will gain an awareness of the human and environmental factors that make places unique.

Sharing Your Town's History

Lesson Plan Grades 3-5

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/17/g35/tghope.html>

The idea for this lesson plan was inspired by Kristen M. Stutts of Devon Forest Elementary/New Hope in Goose Creek, South Carolina, who received a teacher grant from the National Geographic Education Foundation in support of a year-long project called Project Hope (Helping Our People and Community).

This lesson introduces students to the concept of historic preservation and asks them to find out about places of historic significance in their town. Students will create pamphlets or Web pages that showcase some of these places. Ideally, they will be able to get their pamphlets distributed to the community or have local organizations link to their Web pages.

Where Do You Live?

Lesson Plan Grades 3-5

<http://ofcn.org/cyber.serv/academy/ace/soc/cecsst/cecsst060.html>

After completing this activity the student should be able to increase his/her awareness of the make-up of the immediate community.

History of the Local Community

Lesson Plan Grades 6-12

<http://ofcn.org/cyber.serv/academy/ace/soc/cecsst/cecsst027.html>

The purpose of this activity package is to provide students with activities that will familiarize them with the local area they live in and develop an awareness of how their local community has been influenced by history. The activities also help them become aware of how the local community influences their lives today.

Local History: Mapping My Spot

Lesson Plan Grades 3-8

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/lessons/mapping/index.html>

In an era of great mobility and immigration of families from other countries, students' homes are a haven and an anchor in a neighborhood. By learning about architectural styles and periods and identifying the best features of their homes, students begin to see their homes as places of value in relation to the broader community portrayed on the panoramic map of their town.

Students create their town's history for coming generations and place themselves on the map in a literal as well as figurative sense by producing portions of an updated version of an early twentieth century panoramic map from the American Memory collections. To complete this project, they gather information from a variety of primary sources, including the early twentieth century map, photographs, drawings, and site visits. Each student contributes to the revised map by creating a contemporary map of her or his block.

Old Map, New Map: Let's Compare

Lesson Plan - Elementary

<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/teachers/lessons/elementary/oldmap.asp>

Students will recognize changes that have taken place over time in their community. Students will speculate on why transportation routes, businesses, industry, and homes are in given locations.
