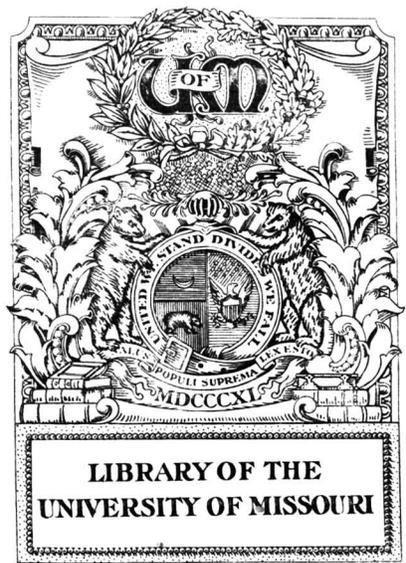




UM Libraries Depository



103264902012



LIBRARY OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

THE GEOGRAPHY OF BOONE COUNTY  
HISTORICAL AND ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY

by

Martineau Knight, A. B., B. S.



SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS

in the

GRADUATE SCHOOL

of the

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

1915

378.7M71  
XK745

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	Page
Acknowledgments-----	3
Position of Boone County-----	4
Economic resources of Boone County-----	11
Transportation in Boone County-----	26
Factors in the early settlement of Boone County-----	35
Early settlement of towns in Boone County----	40
Later settlement of towns in Boone County----	45
The people of Boone County-----	52
Summary-----	54
Bibliography-----	57

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

I desire to thank Mr. D. K. Greger for assistance in finding material for the paper, and Dr. E. B. Branson for advice and suggestions. I am most deeply indebted, however, to Dr. A. E. Parkins, whose help and timely criticism have materially aided in the writing of the paper.

## POSITION OF BOONE COUNTY.

Boone County is almost centrally located in the State of Missouri and is likewise central to that portion of the Great Central Plains that is included within the boundaries of the United States. It is about fifteen hundred miles from the Pacific Ocean, seven hundred miles from the Gulf of Mexico, and nine hundred and fifty miles from the Atlantic Ocean. The natural boundaries of the county are the Missouri River on the south and the Cedar Creek on the east. Its greatest width is about twenty-three miles and its greatest length is about forty-three miles. It lies about thirty-nine degrees north of the equator, thus occupying nearly a midway position in the Warm Temperate Zone.

The Missouri River valley is about six hundred feet above the sea, the bluffs being about one hundred and sixty feet higher. Very little of the surface of the southern half of the county rises over seven hundred and sixty feet above the sea. Northwardly the rise is gradual to the watershed of the

Missouri and Mississippi rivers. This watershed lies near the northern boundary of Boone County and is about eight hundred and eighty feet above the sea at Centralia.<sup>1</sup>

Physiographically, Boone County is located in that province of the United States known as the Upper Mississippi Plains. The physiographic provinces of the county may be described as an alluvial belt, a dissected belt, and a rolling prairie belt.\* The alluvial belt is found along the Missouri River and its tributaries in an area which averages about one and one half miles in width. It is characterized by a flat plain which is drained by tributaries of the river. Some of this area is flooded during highwater stages. Floods of the Missouri are due to (1) melting of snow in the upper basin, and (2) spring rains in its entire basin.<sup>2</sup> As the river bed is of alluvial soil and not of rock, during these floods the current cuts through the soil, often changing the course of the river.<sup>3</sup> In times

<sup>1</sup>Broadhead, G. C.: Geology of Boone County, Vol. 12, Mo. Geol. Survey, p. 375.

<sup>2</sup>Emerson: Life Along a Graded River, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

\*The prairies of Boone County are practically destitute of trees and were originally covered with coarse grass. They are not as smooth, however, as the prairies of Iowa or Kansas.

when the river bottoms are not flooded the greatest erosion is at the base and the outer downstream side of the meander. This would tend to shift the meander down the valley.<sup>1</sup>

The dissected belt or area of Boone County is found in the southern half of the county just north of the alluvial belt and in the east and west of the northern half. Loess covers the tops of the hills and upper slopes in this area from the river bluffs northward three to six miles. The many tributaries of the Missouri have worked backward until the valleys are broad, and the divides narrow, and the topography is typically mature.

The rolling prairies have not yet been reached by streams that are working back from the Missouri River, and therefore have less relief than the dissected area. Moreover, as the rolling prairie is near the headwaters of many streams the valleys are not as deep as are those near the Missouri River. Both areas have been glaciated, but no traces of glaciation are found except patches of drift which have small numbers of erratics in them.

<sup>1</sup>Emerson: Life Along a Graded River, p. 1.

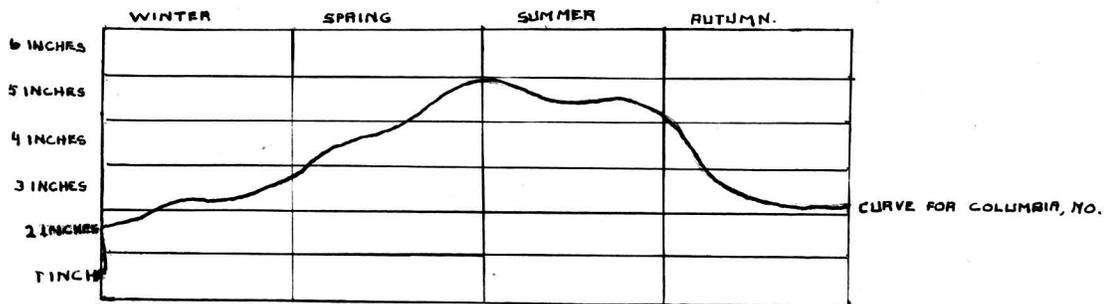
This is probably due to the fact that Boone County was glaciated by the first advance of the ice, which was during the Kansan stage of the glacial period. Most of the topographic features and deposits due to glaciation have been destroyed during the long period of erosion which has elapsed since the retreat of the ice in this early stage. Where rivers cut through thick mantle rock underlain by hard bed rock, the resulting valleys tend to have gentle slopes in the mantle rock but are steep and narrow in the harder bed rock. As the result of glacial deposition and a long period of weathering without much stream transportation the mantle rock in the northern part of the county is thick. On this account the valleys have gentle slopes and the topography is rolling.

Boone County is well located commercially, having access to the main lines of the Wabash Railroad, Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad, and the Chicago and Alton Railroad. The Wabash Railroad and the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad also operate branch lines in the county. Saint Louis and Kansas City

which are about equally distant from the county, afford good markets for the surplus products. Boone County is also situated on the Missouri River and on the old Boone's Lick Trail, both of which were important in the early commerce of the county. The general course of the Missouri River through the state is from west to east. Near the center of the state this direction is changed to a southeast course. Boone County lies to the north of that section that has a southeast course. This gives the county a longer "bank-line," and brings a larger area in commercial contact with the Missouri River than were the course directly from west to east. The Boone's Lick Trail connected Saint Charles, twenty-five miles west of Saint Louis, with Franklin, one hundred and fifty miles farther west. Most of the western fourth of this road is found in Boone County.

Climatically, Boone County does not differ very greatly from the rest of Missouri. Its climate as a whole may be described as continental, that is, a climate with great extremes in summer and winter, and the same contrast showing in the daily temperatures.

It lies in a system of winds known as the Westerlies, that is, winds which blow for the most of the time from the west or southwest. The average rainfall of Boone County is between thirty-five and forty inches, the distribution of which is illustrated by the following graph.



(After Emerson: Geog. of Mo., p. 37.)

As shown by this graph most of the rain comes during late spring and early summer. There is thus sufficient rainfall during the critical season, or the growing season of grains, and a dry harvesting season. A five months growing season, a hot midsummer with sufficient rainfall to keep up the growth of the plant,<sup>1</sup> are necessary for the growth of corn. The maximum

<sup>1</sup>Smith, J. R.: Industrial and Commercial Geography, p. 85.

rainfall of Boone County comes during the time necessary for the growth of the plant. The dry harvest season is an advantage since machinery can be used in the field and the grains will not rot. Missouri as a whole is located between the northern and southern states with respect to frosts. The average date of the last killing frost in the spring in Missouri is between April first and April fifteenth, and the first killing frost in the fall comes between October first and November first.<sup>1</sup> If it were not for late spring frosts and early fall frosts, Boone County would be a suitable location for the growing of cotton. A frost free season from April first to November first is necessary for the growth of cotton.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Smith: Industrial and Commercial Geography, p. 85.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 471.

## ECONOMIC RESOURCES OF BOONE COUNTY.

The old "licks" or salt springs were an important resource in the early days of Boone County. The water from these licks was boiled down until the salt was left as the product.<sup>1</sup> As salt was not only a necessary article of food, but also one of the hardest to transport, it is easy to see just how important the resource of salt was.

After the early inhabitants left the streams the first question which confronted them was the source of water supply. An example of the influence of water upon settlement is the removal of Smithton to the present site of Columbia since the springs were found at the latter place along Flat Branch Creek. The Franklin Intelligencer mentions desirable springs of water at Rocheport as one of its greatest advantages.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Mo. Old Trails Road Assn.: Old Trails Road Book, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Franklin Intelligencer, Sept. 2, 1825.

The soil of Boone County is its chief economic resource. The county has been ranked as an agricultural county from the time of its first settlement to the present. The soils are chiefly of three classes, the alluvial bottom lands along the Missouri River and the larger streams flowing into it; the timber lands in the rough country adjoining the streams; and rolling prairie lands occupying the level to undulating land back from the streams.<sup>1</sup> The area of alluvial lands is about ten thousand acres, with an average value of about seventy-five dollars an acre. The timber lands comprise about three hundred thousand acres with a value varying from twenty-five to one hundred dollars per acre, depending on the quality and locality of the land. The prairie lands include about one hundred thousand acres, averaging between fifty and sixty dollars an acre in value.<sup>2</sup>

The Missouri River bottoms make up the largest part of the alluvial lands. They are made up of a natural levee which has larger amounts of sand in it

<sup>1</sup>Miller: Soils of Boone County, Columbia Herald, Vol. 2, No. 37.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

than the rest of the valley, since the heaviest portion of the load of the river, which is the sand, is dropped first. Back from the levee is the gumbo land, which is heavier loam with less amounts of sand. They are not naturally well drained and are subject to overflows. Back near the bluffs of the river are the terraces, which are remnants of a former higher flood plain of the river. The bottoms were the first of the lands of Boone County to be tilled, as previously stated. Corn, wheat, hemp, and tobacco were first raised on them. Corn could not be shipped as easily as tobacco and hemp for it was bulkier; and there was a greater demand for tobacco and hemp on the European market.<sup>1</sup> The Franklin Intelligencer for June 2, 1826 gives the following advice to farmers: "Many farmers plant six to eight acres of corn when they ought not to plant more than two or three, and over twenty acres to obtain five or six tons of hay." Today most of the bottom land is in cultivation, growing excellent crops of corn, oats, wheat, clover, timothy, and alfalfa. Corn and wheat, however, are grown most extensively. The alluvial soils are the most valuable grain-growing areas in the county since they are more nearly level and are not subject to wash or erosion as the hills farther back. The soil is very fertile.

<sup>1</sup>Franklin Intelligencer, Sept. 17, 1822.

The loess belt which occupies a strip along the bluffs varying in width from three to six miles is of a rolling, rough topography, caused by dissection of the tributary streams of the Missouri River. Emerson says that the loess belt was settled after the river valleys. The loess belt is so indefinitely defined that it is hard to tell just what is meant by the term. It is probable that this belt as defined here was not settled early since it was too difficult to get to it from the river. The water supply was not good; it was too hard to clear since it was densely forested, and it was hard to till being so dissected. The soil is a typical brown loam deposited by the winds, and where it can be farmed produces excellent yields of the standard varieties of crops. It is also the best fruit soil of the county and some commercial orchards are found on it. Where it is in pasturage first class blue grass is grown.

The rest of the rolling timber lands of the county vary from the rough white oak lands to the rolling lands which bear elms, ash, the larger oaks, hickory, and black walnut. The census report of 1880 states in a monograph on tobacco that the white oak lands freshly cleared are preferred for the growing of tobacco in Boone County. While bottoms make the heaviest tobacco, the

ridges make the finest and best for the manufacturer. Soils for tobacco must be well drained.] The white oak ridges, which were the divides between the smaller streams, were well drained and the soil produced the kind of tobacco preferred at this time. The white oak ridges are the least valuable today of all the lands of Boone County. They have been eroded until the best soil is gone and now neither grain nor blue grass can be grown well upon them. Where the better timber land is in cultivation it is well adapted to the standard varieties of farm crops with the exception of alfalfa which is grown to a very limited extent on this soil. The rolling timber land, however, is occupied chiefly by stock farms.

The prairie lands are found in the central and northern parts of the county. They have not yet been reached by the tributaries of the Missouri, and therefore remain almost level; in fact, in the northern part of the county the drainage is not good in some places. The standard varieties of farm crops with the exception of alfalfa are grown on these soils. The fertile soils and the level undulating topography make this area desirable agriculturally.

Boone County in general may be classed as a county devoted to general farming and live stock farming, with grain farming not highly developed in the bottom lands. The soil may be classed as poor to good, and as having a rather wide adaption to crops.

The increase in farming as an occupation in Boone County is shown by the following statistics. The census of 1880 gives the following figures for Boone County.

Acres of corn,	75,931	bushels,	2, 537,850
Acres of oats,	15,832	bushels,	291,453
Acres of wheat,	27,903	bushels,	357,021
Acres of tobacco,	66	pounds,	40,956

The census report of 1910 gives the following report. Boone County ranked twenty-fifth among the counties of the state in the total value of all crops. The total production of crops in Missouri in 1910 was \$220,663,724, of which Boone County produced \$2,772,948.

Acres of corn,	127,102	bushels,	3,474,978
Acres of oats,	91,038	bushels,	2,846,813
Acres of wheat,	14,539	bushels,	334,553
Acres of emmer and spelt,	21,183	bushels,	288,363
Acres of hay and forage,	40,290	tons,	42,756
Acres of tobacco,	14	pounds,	6,700

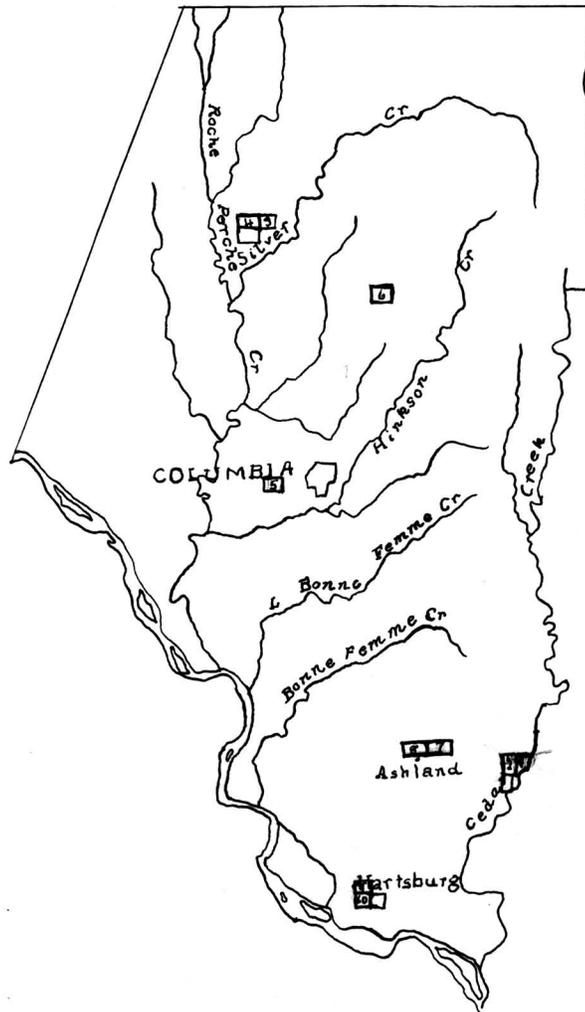
The decrease in the acreage of wheat and tobacco is the most striking contrast between the figures for 1880<sup>1</sup> and 1910.<sup>2</sup>

The change in farming may be shown in still another way. The following table shows the number of farms classified by size in 1880 and 1910.

	1880 <sup>3</sup>	1910 <sup>4</sup>
Under 3 acres	23	1
10 to 19 acres	92	100
20 to 49 acres	448	418
50 to 99 acres	745	1,092
100 to 499 acres	1,374	1,558
500 to 999 acres	78	37
1,000 acres and over	13	1

As we would expect with the increase in population and the increase in the price of land, the larger farms, that is, farms over five hundred acres decrease in number as do also the very small ones under three acres. The medium sized farms increase in number with the increase in value of land.

<sup>1</sup>Census Report 1880: Statistics of Ag., p. 196.  
<sup>2</sup>Census Report 1910: Sup. for Mo., p. 675.  
<sup>3</sup>Census Report 1880: Statistics of Ag., p. 68.  
<sup>4</sup>Census Report 1910: Sup. for Mo., p. 653.



NUMBERS IN SQUARES CORRESPOND TO NUMBERS OF SECTIONS ON PAGE 19.  
BLANK SQUARES HAVE ABOUT THE SAME VALUE AS ADJOINING NUMBERED SQUARES.

The following figures taken from the assessor's office of Boone County, and the accompanying map show the variation and distribution in the value of the land, due to the difference in topography and kind of soil. The land is assessed at one-third its cash value, and each section represents one square mile.

1. Section 17, Township 46, Range 11 - Average \$2 per acre.
2. Section 18, Township 46, Range 11 - Average \$4 per acre.
3. Section 15, Township 50, Range 13 - Average \$2.75 per acre.
4. Section 16, Township 50, Range 13 - Average \$3.75 per acre.
5. Section 9, Township 48, Range 13 - Average \$10.25 per acre.
6. Section 30, Township 50, Range 12 - Average \$7.50 per acre.
7. Section 1, Township 46, Range 12 - Average \$14.25 per acre.
8. Section 2, Township 46, Range 12 - Average \$15.75 per acre.
9. Section 8, Township 45, Range 12 - Average \$17.50 per acre.
10. Section 17, Township 45, Range 12 - Average \$28 per acre.

Numbers one and two are situated in the extreme eastern part of the county on Cedar Creek, where the land is dissected by the many small tributaries of the creek. The divides are comparatively sharp and the soil has been washed down off them until the land is almost non-productive. Numbers three and four are the white oak

lands of Perche township that are as non-productive as numbers one and two. They are also maturely dissected by Perche Creek and its tributaries. Numbers five and six are lands found in a radius of about ten miles from Columbia. They are not so maturely dissected and the soil is of a better quality. Numbers seven and eight occur on the prairies near Ashland and are considered among the valuable lands in the county. Numbers nine and ten are found in the Missouri River valley near Hartsburg and according to assessment are the most valuable lands of Boone County. In these figures it must be remembered that the better lands would naturally have better improvements upon them and this would make the difference between the poor and good lands of Boone County greater than the value of the bare land would show.

These data then show that the value of the land of Boone County is influenced by the soils, location, and topography, the more valuable land being on the prairies and in the river valleys while the less valuable land is found in the dissected white oak regions.

Mining is one of the less prominent industries of Boone County. As early as 1872 a mine was opened at Brown's station, and in May, 1881, a mine was opened at Persinger. Boone County ranks sixteenth among the counties of Missouri in the coal production for the year 1914. The total production was eighteen thousand, two hundred and fourteen tons, which was sold at the mines at an average of two dollars per ton, making the total value thirty-six thousand, four hundred and twenty-eight dollars. The coal is bituminous. There are four mines which are being worked in Boone County and are known as the Davis and Watson, the Hubbard and Son, Hutsell and Miles, and the W. R. Prather mine, which were opened in 1910, 1911, 1902, and 1892, respectively. All of the companies own one hundred and fifty acres of land each, except the Hubbard and Son company which leases fifty acres. All have access to the Wabash Railroad for shipping facilities. The Davis and Watson mine was worked two hundred and ninety days in 1913; the Hubbard and Son, two hundred and fifty days; the Hutsell and Miles, one hundred and sixty-three days; and the W. R. Prather, one hundred

and twenty-five days, all employing non-union miners. The following table will show the number of employes in the different mines and the distribution of labor throughout the year.

	Owner - Davis & Watson	Hubbard & Son	Hutsell & Miles	W. R. Prather	Total
Miners					
Winter	18	12	16	25	71
Summer	18	4			22
Other Help					
Underground					
Winter	7	2	2	6	17
Summer	7	1			8
Above ground					
Winter	2	2	3		7
Summer	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	2
	53	22	21	31	

The coal bearing beds of the mines are in the Cherokee formation of the Des Moines group of Pennsylvania age. The formation is made up of alternating layers of clay, shale, coal, sandstone and limestone. The maximum

thickness in Boone County is about one hundred and thirty feet. The Hinkson Creek and its tributaries have dissected the beds about the mines, and several of the mines are operated from slopes where ravines have cut the coal beds. The seams of coal vary in thickness, being two feet and ten inches in the Davis and Watson mine, three feet and six inches in the Hubbard and Son, Hutsell and Miles, and W. R. Prather mines. The maximum depth of the shafts of these mines is one hundred and thirty-four feet.]

At present there are four quarries near Columbia from which rock are being taken. All are quarrying in the Burlington limestone. Probably the most important is the Judge Stewart quarry which is about a mile southwest of Columbia on the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad. The Fellows quarry is about a mile south of Columbia. The old Richardson quarry, about two and a half miles north of Columbia, is worked only intermittently and is not as important as formerly. The rocks from these quarries are used principally for building stone and road metal. In the central portion of Boone County along the bluffs of the Missouri River are several quarries. They are

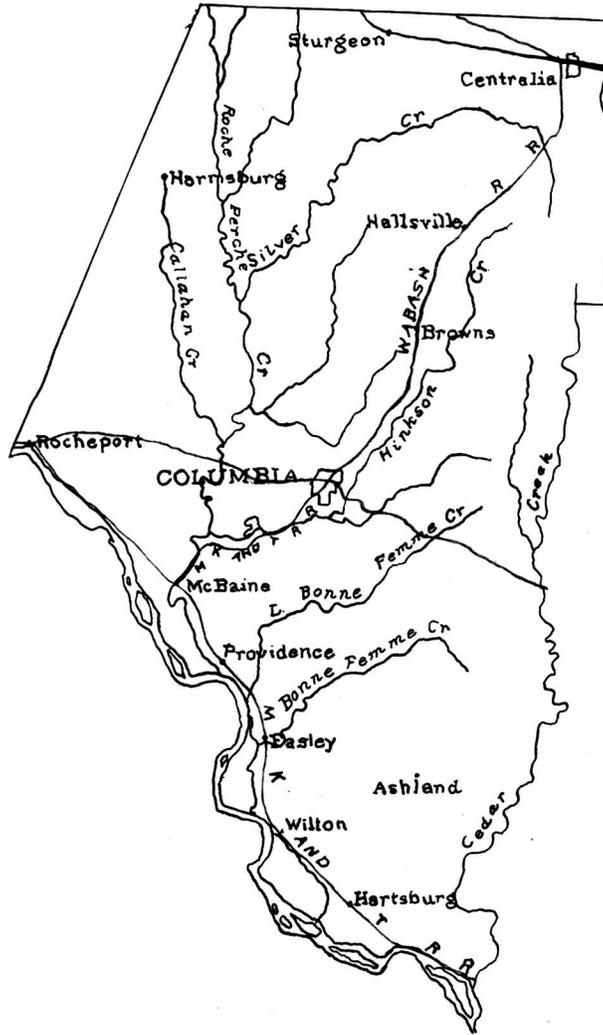
]Wilson, W. B., Clay Slips in Coal Mines, p. 9.

located near Providence, Wilton, and Rutland. Here both the Burlington and Chouteau formations are quarried. The principal uses for the stone from these places are for railroad ballast and rip-rapping on the Missouri River. There are no statistics for the production of rock from any of these quarries.

The clays from the Pennsylvania shales in Boone County are suitable for brick making. At one time there were two kilns in operation about a mile east of Columbia. At present only one is producing brick. There are also brick kilns at Centralia and Sturgeon. There are no fire clays in Boone County in sufficient quantities for quarrying.

The grist and flour mills and brick kilns are the only manufacturies in Boone County which rely directly on the resources of the county for their existence. There is a flour mill located in Columbia and several grist mills located in the various towns of the county. The shoe factory in Columbia was probably due to cheap labor, and a bonus from the town. Manufacturing is not of high rank among the industries of Boone County.

Map of Boone County.



Old Boone's Lick Trail. *wrong.*

## TRANSPORTATION IN BOONE COUNTY.

The location of Boone County in the Boone's Lick country, which was bordered on the south by the Missouri River and was cut by the Boone's Lick Trail, was most advantageous for attracting settlers during the early history of the county. The location of the Boone's Lick country is not agreed upon by all authors. The more common descriptions are: "All central Missouri;"<sup>1</sup> "that land where the flood plain and loess belt widens and graded valleys extend far northward;"<sup>2</sup> "Franklin County;"<sup>3</sup> and as "nine upper counties of the Missouri River, Clay, Charitan, Howard, Boone, Cole, Cooper, Saline, and Lafayette."<sup>4</sup>

Merchandise was sent by way of Saint Louis, either by boat up the river to Franklin or later Independence, or by wagon over the Boone's Lick Trail to Franklin. The Boone's Lick Trail was the most famous highway in the

<sup>1</sup>Campbell: Gaz. of Mo., pp 66.  
<sup>2</sup>Emerson, F. V.: Geog. of Mo., p. 42.  
<sup>3</sup>Flint: Geog. of 1832, p. 287.  
<sup>4</sup>Switzler: Hist. of Boone Co., p. 128.

Central West. It was surveyed in 1815 from Saint Charles, twenty-five miles west of Saint Louis, to Franklin, Missouri, a distance of one hundred and fifty miles. This road gave a land route from the well established settlements of east Missouri to the Boone's Lick country, which included Boone County. In the early days it was not much of a road, not more than a trace or a hint of a road's direction. The surveyors sought, however, the easiest grades and the shortest way.<sup>1</sup> The smaller streams were forded. Before the Boone's Lick Trail there were no towns or villages and only scattering stockades and forts. Towns were built at numerous places along the trail soon after it was constructed. It also changed the types of settlement. Previous to the building of the road the settlers had not lived far apart, due to the frequent Indian attacks. The road, however, offered easy communication and as a result homes were scattered all along it.

Some of the older journals placed the old Boone's Lick Trail at six miles north of Columbia,<sup>2</sup> and some journals place it in Columbia.<sup>3</sup> At Franklin, which was the terminus of the Santa Fe Trail the goods were transferred to wagons and prairie schooners and sent over

<sup>1</sup>Mo. Old Trails Assn.: Old Trails Road Book, p. 2.  
<sup>2</sup>Broadhead, G. C.: Santa Fe Trail in Mo. Hist. Rev., p. 319.  
<sup>3</sup>Switzler; Hist. of Boone Co., p. 133.

the trail to Spanish and Mexican settlements in the Southwest.<sup>1</sup> The flood plains of the Missouri River did not become important land highways, although portions of them were used. They were often wet and heavily forested, while the prairies a few miles back from the river were smooth and not forested. Another reason for placing the roads on the ridges was that the Indians could be detected more easily from there.

The Missouri River was a much used route of transportation for forty years after 1803 when Jefferson ordered Captain Lewis to go to the source of it. As civilization and population spread westward the river was used as a warpath in the conflicts against the Indians, Mormons and Mexicans.<sup>1</sup> "Hunters supplanted the Indians on the Missouri, overlanders the hunters, Boats displaced canoes, steamers boats, and railroads steamers."<sup>2</sup> The fur traders sent merchandise, traps, and general equipage in large keel boats up the river, and the men followed on horseback or afoot.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Harvey, C. M.: Fur Trade as an Empire Builder, in Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 103, p. 529.

<sup>2</sup>Chittenden, H. M.: Early Navigation on the Mo., in the Nation, Vol. 77, pp. 18-19.

<sup>3</sup>Harvey, C. M.: Fur Trade as an Empire Builder, in Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 103, p. 529.

The early emigrant who came down the Missouri River was confronted with great dangers, as the river had a swift current, sandbars, snags, and whirlpools. In season of low water numerous banks of a kind of quicksand appear in the Missouri River. Many boats have been stranded on bars of this sand in the river and finally with all their cargo sunk into it. Other difficulties such as stemming the current fifty-four miles to gain five and in another instance thirty miles to gain one and a half, were encountered every fifteen to thirty miles.<sup>1</sup>

Major Amos Stoddard describes early commerce on the Missouri: "Most of the produce of the upper country is floated to market on Kentucky flats, which are of various sizes from forty to sixty feet long, from twelve to fifteen feet broad, with roofs of thin boards to secure their cargoes from water. They require from three to five men to navigate them. Keel boats, however strongly manned, cannot possibly ascend to any great distance in the middle of the current, in some places cannot make head against it." Boats usually ascend from fifteen to twenty miles a day. When the water

<sup>1</sup>Stoddard, Amos: Historical and Descriptive Sketches of Louisiana, p. 371.

is low, referring to the Missouri River, a boat will float from twenty-five to fifty miles in twenty-four hours; in middle state from sixty to seventy miles, and in the season of freshets ninety to one hundred miles."

There was also danger in following the current for it ran next to the banks or on the outside meanders and oftentimes acres of land were cut down by the current, causing land slides into the river. There was less danger to send produce during the times of high water or at a time which varied from April to June, for then the bars were covered, islands were not so in the way, and the water was deep enough to allow the boats to be propelled outside the current. However, with the introduction of steamboats on the Missouri in 1819 dangers were lessened to a great extent.<sup>2</sup>

That the Missouri River became more and more important as a pathway to the west is shown by the fact that the eastern terminus of the Santa Fe Trail was transferred from Franklin to Independence, so as to make an additional hundred miles of water route.<sup>1</sup> Although at one time the Missouri was the most important commercial route, after the building of railroads it

<sup>1</sup>Switzler: Hist. of Boone Co., p. 491.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 138.

rapidly dropped in importance until the exports of the county were shipped almost entirely by rail. The Missouri River then afforded a water route which was used despite its being difficult to navigate by the early emigrants in reaching Boone County. When these emigrants settled in the county the Missouri River was used as a commercial route over which their produce could be shipped to market. There has recently been a resumption of river traffic, which promises a renewal of this method of transportation to something like its former importance.

The main lines of the Wabash, Chicago and Alton, and Missouri, Kansas and Texas railroads, and the branch lines of the Wabash, and Missouri, Kansas and Texas are found in Boone County. An examination of Jefferson City, Moberly, and Glasgow sheets of topographic maps, which also contain maps of the railroads, show that the railroads which cut the northern portion of the county follow the divides, while the Missouri, Kansas and Texas in the southern portion of the county follows the higher portions of the valley of the Missouri River. This is the natural thing to expect, for in all cases railroads follow the easiest grades and avoid crossing streams as much as possible.

The North Missouri Railroad Company, which has come to be the present Wabash, was incorporated March 3, 1851,<sup>1</sup> and the road was completed through the county in the autumn of 1858.<sup>2</sup> Boone County subscribed one hundred thousand dollars to the capital of this company. Callaway and Howard counties, to the east and west of Boone County, respectively, refused to make a donation to the railroad, in fact were opposed to its being built on their lands. The route which had been planned through the central portion of the county was therefore changed to the northern portion.<sup>3</sup> No doubt the character of the topography also had something to do with the change of plans. Had it followed the first planned route the railroad would have crossed through mature topography of three counties, while the present route follows the younger, smoother topography farther north.<sup>4</sup> The branch line of the Wabash from Centralia to Columbia was chartered as the Boone County and Jefferson City Railroad, January 30, 1857. The citizens of the county wanted to build

<sup>1</sup>Poor: R. R. Man., 1910, pp. 901, 1080.  
<sup>2</sup>Switzler: Hist. of Boone Co., p. 491.  
<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 371.  
<sup>4</sup>Poor: R. R. Man., 1886, p. 945.

a railroad from Columbia to some point on the North Missouri Railroad.<sup>1</sup> Possibly the present route was chosen because it was the shortest route to the North Missouri Railroad which did not cross the maturely dissected country to the east and west of it. The road was completed to Columbia in 1867.<sup>2</sup> The Kansas City, Saint Louis and Chicago Railroad, which is now the Chicago and Alton, was opened May 1, 1879.<sup>3</sup> The Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad was built through Rocheport in 1892 and 1893.<sup>4</sup> The branch line of the Missouri, Kansas and Texas from McBaine to Columbia, which was at first known as the Midland Railroad, was built in 1894.

With the opening up of these railroads the price of merchandise and commodities rapidly declined. There were two factors in the decrease of the price; one was that the merchandise could be transported more easily by railroads; and the other was that machinery gradually took the place of hand labor. As railroad transportation was faster than water transportation, perishable goods could be shipped. In the northern portion of the county the farmers could reach the railroads easier than the river, and as it grew to be the

<sup>1</sup>Switzler: Hist. of Boone Co., p. 488.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 492.

<sup>3</sup>Poor: R. R. Man., 1886, p. 679.

<sup>4</sup>Williams: Hist. of N. E. Mo., pp. 234-235.

chief agricultural portion of the county the railroads soon took the place of rivers in transportation.

## FACTORS IN THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF BOONE COUNTY.

Boone County was a part of the Boone's Lick country which was in the direct path of westward emigration. The Missouri and Mississippi rivers led away from the general westward immigration by the Ohio, Tennessee, and Cumberland rivers. The chief sources of emigrants in Boone County were Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and North Carolina.<sup>1</sup> Since the leading products of these states were tobacco and hemp, both of which were largely grown by slave labor, emigrants from these states sought land suitable for the production of tobacco and hemp, and likewise a region into which they could take their slaves. The Missouri Compromise permitted slavery in Missouri, and the Boone's Lick country rapidly gained fame for its rich land and healthful climate and its adaptability to the crops named. Consequently a steady stream of emigrants from these states set in in the decade 1820-1830. Not until the Kansas prairies began to attract settlers,

<sup>1</sup>U. S. Census Report 1880, Vol.

and not until the gold discoveries of California drew adventurous spirits to the Pacific Coast did the Boone's Lick region cease to be a goal for many of the emigrants settling along the Missouri River and the Boone's Lick Trail. Some of the factors which directed settlers toward Boone County were undoubtedly the similarity of soil and climate to that of Kentucky, Virginia, and Tennessee, but above all was the notoriety the country already had from the accounts of the fur traders and early explorers.

There were many reasons<sup>1</sup> for the early settlements not spreading to the prairies. First, most of the settlers were accustomed to a wooded country like the bottom lands and thought land that would not raise timber was worthless. Second, the timber afforded material for cabins and land that did not seem worth the trouble of clearing was of little value. Third, rushes stayed green in the winter and afforded pasturage and nettles growing on the low bottoms near the river gave fibre from which clothing was made. Fourth, there was constant danger from the Indians and in such

<sup>1</sup>Emerson, F. V.: Geog. of Mo. (Note) These reasons were based principally upon Flint: History & Geog. of the Miss. Valley; Stoddard: Sketches of Louisiana.

instances the river afforded easy communication with settlements to the east. Fifth, the prairies were considerable distances from the Missouri River and were separated from it by a belt of maturely eroded country which was not only difficult to traverse but afforded ambuscades for the Indians. Sixth, the prairies were not considered home-like and were not inviting to the early settlers. James Hall in his "Notes on the Western States" describes the prairies as follows: "In the winter the prairies present a gloomy, desolate scene, the fires pass over them and consume every vegetable substance, leaving the soil bare and the surface perfectly black. The winds sigh mournfully over the black plains but there is no object to be moved by its black influence, not a tree to move its long arms in the blast, nor a reed to bend its fragile stem - not a leaf, not even a blade of grass to tremble in the breeze. There is nothing to be seen but the cold dead earth and the bare mounds, which move not and the traveler with a singular sensation almost of awe feels the blast rushing over him, while not an object visible to the eye is seen to stir." This very vivid description shows that some of the people in 1832 when this book was written did not consider the prairies homelike or in any way inviting.

The river route was the most important factor in the settlement of Boone County and it early fixed a relatively dense population in a narrow zone along the river.

As previously stated, the three types of topography of Boone County are the river valleys, the dissected areas, and the rolling prairies. These three types of topography show a marked influence on the spread of population. The river flats were the first of the areas to be settled. This was probably due to several factors: first, they bordered the Missouri River, the main artery of traffic and communication; second, the water supply for stock was also furnished by the river; third, the superior fertility of the soil; fourth, the general idea that the untimbered lands back from the river were not fertile; and fifth, the supply of food furnished by the river could not be obtained farther back. It was nearly a decade after the first settlement that this idea that the untimbered prairies were not fertile was corrected. The flood plains were not suitable for homes as they were subject to overflows, were not well drained, and the inhabitants were subject to malaria, or "chills" as it was called. These

factors forced the early settlers to move back off the flood plains on the terraces which were not subject to overflow. From here the population gradually spread up the valleys of the side streams and on the adjoining ridges. The people thought that the prairies could not produce crops of any value until it was found by accident that they would produce tobacco of a better quality than that grown in the river valleys. On the dissected prairies, or white oak ridges as they were called, the tobacco did not grow so rank, the leaves being smaller and thinner and more easily cured to a bright yellow, which was in demand in Europe at this time. James Hall in "His Notes on the Western States" says: "A farmer had better settle in the midst of a prairie and haul his fuel and rails five miles than undertake to clear a farm." This idea prevailed about 1832.

1Hall, James: Notes on the Western States, p. 103.

## EARLY SETTLEMENT OF TOWNS IN BOONE COUNTY.

At the focus of travel either by river or by road a town is generally found. On a graded river a favorable town site is often present where a meander touches the bluffs of the valley. The swiftest current in a meander swings against the outer shore of the meander, thus bringing deep water and easy landings for boats near the shore, and such locations are not subject to floods. At such points where tributaries give easy access to the country for considerable distances from the river a town site is especially favorable.

The first settlement of Boone County was made by emigrant Kentuckians who located on the east side of Moniteau Creek, which is in the extreme western part of the county and this area was afterwards known as "Thralls Prairie." The settlement was situated about four miles north of the present Rocheport and was perhaps chosen by these settlers since it was the only piece of land along the creek which was not heavily timbered.<sup>1</sup> It was also

<sup>1</sup>Switzler: Hist. of Boone County, pp. 130-131.

on a stream which afforded direct transportation to the Missouri River and thence to Saint Louis, the base of supplies.

The years 1816, 1817, and 1818 witnessed a great inflow of emigrants into the Boone's Lick territory north of the Missouri River,<sup>1</sup> as the Indians in 1815 relinquished this country by treaty. The majority of these settlers came along the Boone's Lick Trace\* and settled in groups near one another for protection against the Indians.<sup>2</sup>

Soon after the founding of "Thrall's Prairie" the old town of Persia was located in the northwest section of the county where the Boone's Lick Trace crossed the Perche Creek. This was not only an advantageous position through the great amount of travel on this road but at this point it was possible to build a dam across the creek, thus furnishing waterpower, making it a center for grinding grain and sawing logs.<sup>3</sup> The town grew rapidly and at one time competed with Columbia for the county seat. From the time of the loss of this contest the town dwindled until it sunk into oblivion.

<sup>1</sup>Switzler: History of Boone County, pp. 133, 176.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 280.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 133, 176.

\*The Boone's Lick Trail is often called the Boone's Lick Trace.

In the year 1819 below the present site of Providence the town of Nashville was laid out on a Spanish grant of land. At this point the Missouri River is narrower than its average width, making the current a swifter one. This was the nearest point on the Missouri River to the "Two Mile Prairie," which was one of the earliest settled of the prairies, and the town no doubt was located here for this reason. It was also near the mouth of the <sup>Little</sup> Bonne Femme Creek. The village, however, was on the outside of the meander which began to cut the bank and soon this small town which promised to be one of the largest shipping points on the river was swept away.<sup>1</sup> *flood 1844*

The town of Rocheport was laid out in 1825 on a New Madrid claim at the mouth of the Moniteau Creek. The location of this town was partly in response to a ferry at this point. Soon after the ferry was started a warehouse was located here. The town soon became very prosperous, being a shipping point for a large area of country and at one time threatened the future growth of Columbia.<sup>2</sup> The Franklin Intelli-

<sup>1</sup>Switzler: History of Boone County, p. 147.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 177.

gencer, September 2, 1825 published an advertisement for the sale of lots in the town of Rocheport. The reasons given for its being a desirable place in which to locate were, a superior harbor, supply of good water from springs, a fertile surrounding country, a good class of people, and good roads.

Along with the organization of Boone County as a separate county from Howard, November 16, 1820, came the question of the location of a county seat. At the time no town had been organized which filled the requirement of being situated in the geographical center of the county. Smithton was founded with the expectation of fulfilling this requirement. A donation of fifty acres of land, two public squares, \$2,000 in money, and two wells of water caused it to be accepted as the county seat. However, the water supply had not been thoroughly investigated and dissatisfaction, caused by the difficulty, caused the location to be changed in 1821 to the east of Flat Branch Creek. The name of the town was changed from Smithton to Columbia.]

Wrong!  
 These  
 were  
 for  
 Columbia  
 p. 161  
 Switzler

There are several other towns that were unimportant in the early settlement of the county. However, since they without exception owe their location to rivers brief mention should be made of them. Stoneport was laid out on the Missouri about a mile above Claysville in 1836.<sup>1</sup> At one time this village was thought of as a possibility for the state capital, due to its being located on the river near the center of the state. The first building of Providence was erected in 1844 on the banks of the Missouri.<sup>2</sup> The Missouri River has since changed its course, leaving the town some distance off the river.

Ashland is an example of an early town not founded on a river. This town, however, belongs to a later group, the first storehouse not being erected until 1853, and the town itself was not incorporated until 1877.<sup>3</sup> The "Two Mile Prairie" extends up to the town limits on the east, and as the surrounding country was especially rich it became thickly settled rather early, and its distance from the river caused it to be a suitable location for a storehouse. The large stock sales at Ashland also caused it to be a center for the surrounding country.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Switzler: History of Boone County, p. 639.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 638.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 633.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 634.

## LATER SETTLEMENT OF TOWNS IN BOONE COUNTY.

As shown by the previous chapter in this thesis, the early settlement of Boone County was influenced by the rivers and roads.\* The later settlement is not so largely due to natural physiographic features but to the location of railroads and the University of Missouri. The center of the early population was situated very near the Missouri River. The census report for 1860 gives the following data regarding the distribution of population in Boone County.

North Group.	Population
Bourbon township-----	1,892
Perche township-----	2,811
Rocky Fork township-----	<u>2,083</u>
Total-----	6,786

\*See page 41 for early settlements in the northern portion of the county.

## South or River Group.

	Population
Missouri township (including Rocheport)-----	3,157
Columbia township-----	3,207
Cedar township-----	<u>4,922</u>
Total-----	11,286

At this time the North Missouri Railroad had just been completed through Boone County and had not had time to influence the settlement along it. It will be noticed that each township of the southern group outnumbered each one of the northern group. The census of 1880 gives the population of the new towns of Sturgeon and Centralia, which were on the North Missouri Railroad, as six hundred and fifty-six and seven hundred and three, respectively. The new township of Centralia had been organized from Bourbon township. The following statistics are given for the township.

## North Group.

	Total population.
Bourbon township-----	2,832
Centralia township-----	1,334
Perche township-----	2,521
Rocky Fork township-----	<u>2,430</u>
Total-----	9,117

## South Group.

	Total population
Missouri township-----	3,443
Columbia township-----	6,917
Cedar township-----	<u>5,945</u>
Total-----	16,305
Total, Columbia excluded,	12,979

From these figures it will be seen that all the townships show an increase of population. Excluding the three thousand, three hundred and twenty-six people of Columbia, which had a railroad connecting it with the railroad in the northern part of the county and also the university to influence its growth of population, we find the greatest increase in pop-

ulation in the north group of townships. The census report of 1910 gives the following figures for these townships.

North Group.

	Population.
Bourbon township-----	2,502
Centralia township-----	2,615
Perche township-----	2,152
Rocky Fork township-----	<u>2,134</u>
Total-----	9,403

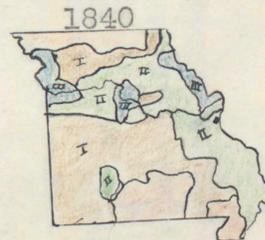
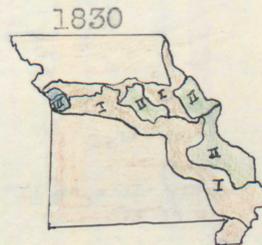
South Group

	Population.
Missouri township-----	2,619
Columbia township-----	13,251
Cedar township-----	<u>5,260</u>
Total-----	21,130
Total, excluding Columbia-----	9,662

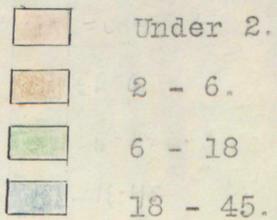
Excluding Columbia in this census the figures show that the North Group has increased in population, while the South Group has decreased. There has

then been a gradual shifting of the greater density of the population from the southern part of the county to the northern, influenced by the location of the railroads and by the fertility of the soil.

Spread of Population in Missouri as Shown by the  
Statistical Atlas of the United States, 1914.



Population per square mile.



1890



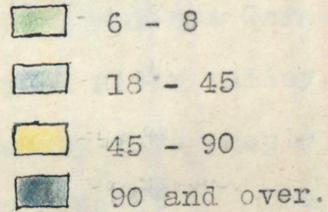
1900



1910



Population per square mile



## THE PEOPLE OF BOONE COUNTY.

There were three distinct classes of early settlers; the aristocratic planters, poor whites, and slaves. The census of 1860 shows that there were eight hundred and eighty-five slave holders in the county, and five thousand and thirty-four slaves. The total white population of 1860 was fourteen thousand, three hundred and ninety-nine. The slave holders held most of the county while the poor white non-slave holders were usually tenants or day laborers. These people also brought with them the southern plantation type of government.

The census of 1910 shows that two hundred and eighty four people in Boone County are foreign born. Of this number one hundred and twenty-four are Germans who reside principally in the Missouri River valley. There are also three hundred and twenty-five people in the county who are of direct German descent. The assessor of the county says that as a rule they are a thrifty class of people who take good care of their farms.

The total number of illiterates of voting age in the county is seven hundred and sixty-seven, which is high in comparison with the other counties north of the Missouri River. Over half of the total number of illiterates, however, are negroes. One of the reasons for the illiteracy of the rest may be due to the roughness of the extreme eastern, northern, northwestern, and western portions of the county which prevents easy communication.

Persons who are acquainted with the people of Boone County have told me that the people who live on the rolling prairies and in the portions of the Missouri River valley are of a progressive type, who are in moderate circumstances, while those people who dwell upon the white oak ridges are in a state of civilization of half a century ago, and might be said to be in a state of poverty.

## SUMMARY.

In the foregoing sections of this thesis I have attempted to bring out the following points concerning Boone County.

1. Boone County is centrally located in the Warm Temperate Zone in the United States and Missouri. This position with the suitable climate, favorable topography and fertile soils, and commercial routes of the Missouri River and the Boone's Lick Trail made Boone County well situated for early and later settlement.

2. The principal economic resource of the county is the soils which are suitable for raising the standard farm crops. There are not enough mineral deposits in the county to make mining an important industry. Therefore the chief occupation of the people is agriculture.

3. The county was well situated for early transportation, both by land over the Boone's Lick Trail and by water on the Missouri River. Although the Missouri River was difficult to navigate, it furnished

the easiest method of transportation, especially after the introduction of steamboats on the river. With the building of railroads through the county, the traffic along the Missouri gradually dwindled until the chief method of transportation today is by railroad rather than by water.

4. The increasing demand for tobacco and hemp lands, the good climate, the methods of transportation offered by the Boone's Lick Trail and the Missouri River, the topography of the county, and the water supply were the chief factors which influenced the early settlement of Boone County.

5. The early towns of Boone County were almost all located on the Missouri River. This was due to the importance of the river as a commercial route, the fertility of the soil, and the connection to the back country. Some of the small towns were located on the Boone's Lick Trail at the focus of travel.

6. The later towns of Boone County were located on the railroads rather than on the rivers, as the railroads opened up a new country to direct commerce, and the center of population gradually shifted from the southern to the northern portion of the county.

7. Boone County is inhabited by several types of people, who respond in illiteracy and wealth to their environment.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Broadhead, G. C.

Geology of Boone County.

Mo. Geol. Surv., Vol. XII., p. 375.

Santa Fe Trail in Missouri.

Mo. Hist. Review, Jan., 1910, p. 319.

Bureau of Mines, Mining and Mine Inspection, State of  
Missouri.

27th Annual Report, pp. 50, 60, 71.

Campbell.

Gazette of Missouri, pp. 55, 56.

Chittenden, H. M.

History of Early Steamboat Navigation on the Missouri  
River.

The Nation, Vol. 77, pp. 18-19.

Emerson, F. V.

Geography of Missouri, pp. 22-65.

Life Along a Graded River, pp. 2-16.

Flint.

Geography of 1832, p. 287.

Franklin Intelligencer, years 1822-28.

Hall, James.

Notes on Western States - Prairies, p. 73.

Harvey, C. M.

Fur Trade as Empire Builder.

Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 103, p. 524.

Story of Santa Fe Trail.

Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 104, pp. 775-785.

Miller.

Soils of Boone County.

Columbia Herald, Vol. 2, No. 37.

Missouri Old Trails Road Association.

Old Trails Road Book, p. 2.

Poor.

Manual of Railroads, 1887-1910.

Smith, J. R.

Industrial and Commercial Geography, p. 85.

Stoddard, Amos.

Historical and Descriptive Sketches of Louisiana,  
pp. 371, 372.

Switzler.

History of Boone County, pp. 125-491.

United States Census Bureau.

Reports of 1860, 1880, 1900, and 1910.  
Statistical Atlas of the United States.

Williams, Walter.

History of Northeast Missouri, pp. 234-235.

Wilson, W. B.

A Study of Clay Slips in Coal Mines, pp. 8-9.

*Approved, May 15, 1915*  
*A. E. Perkins.*



UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI  
COLUMBIA

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Columbia, May 22, 1895.

Mr. Walter Miller  
Dean of the Graduate School

Dear Sir

I have read the thesis of Miss Catherine Knight  
on "The Geology of Boone County" and approve it as fulfilling  
the requirements of the thesis for the degree of master of arts.

Very truly  
Yours,  
James S. Miller.

DUE	RETURNED
NOV 22 '82	
	APR 11 '82 MU
OCT 22 '82	JUL 24 '82 MU
APR 30 '85 MF	
JAN 15 1988	DEC 19 1987
JUL 21 1988	OCT 27 1988 MU
AUG 07 1996	JUL 23 1996
DEC 13 1996	NOV 25 1996
JUL 12 1997	APR 21 1997
JAN 25 1998	JAN 13 1998
JAN 29 1999	OCT 06 1998 MU

Form 104





010-100750144

378.7M71  
XK745  
Thesis  
1915

