The Deer Creek community, later named Stull, was settled principally by people of German ancestry. In 1857, six of these families were living in the area. Two of the families were those of Isaac Stulls and Jacob Hildenbrands. Some of their descendants still live there. Others of the group were from the Pennsylvania Dutch and some had fled Germany for more freedom and to escape military duty.

The community is located on County Road 442, and is midway between Lawrence and Topeka, about 10 miles south of Lecompton. It was apparently called Deer Creek after a small stream that meandered through the area. In 1899, when a United States post office was to be opened there, the government asked for a list of suitable names for the office. The Post Office Department chose to name it after the newly chosen postmaster, Sylvester Stull. Thereafter the settlement was known as Stull. The office was closed in 1903. The mail was then picked up at the Lecompton Post Office and delivered over a twenty-six mile route of dirt roads with a team of horses, which was later replaced with cars and the roads became graveled and paved highways.

The first business in Stull was started about 1899 when J.E. Louk opened a general store in his living room of his home which was where the United Methodist Church is now located. Later a telephone switchboard was placed in the back of the house, and the post office was also housed in this building. In 1904 the John Kraft family became Louk's business partner and some months later bought his share of the store.
H.C. Swadley built a store across the road to the west which was later sold to Kraft who moved his store into it. Dr. Calvin Maust practiced one day a week there and Albert Deister opened a barber shop, which was used for some years. About 1910 Eli Hogan and J.E. Louk built a store on the north side of the road. One year later it burned with all the contents. In 1914 Sylvester Stull replaced it with a two story building with living quarters on the second floor. The following merchants occupied that store at various times: Sylvester Stull, Mr. Coffman, Albert Deister, and A.B. Mitchell of Lawrence. In 1923 Chris Kraft purchased that building and moved across the road to the north side. He operated it for 15 years and then sold out to Charles Houk in 1938. Houk operated it until his death in 1955. That was the last grocery store in Stull.

Other businesses included blacksmith shops, a sorghum mill operated by Henry Stull, a flour mill and cider press run by Ed Deister, and a millinery shop owned by Lillie Boehringer.

The Stull people were interested in education, so two schools had operated in the community prior to Kansas becoming a state. One was about one and one-half miles south of Stull on a farm owned by August Kampschroeder. The other, dated 1860, was two and one-half miles southeast of Stull, near a rock quarry on the former August Walter farm, now owned by Dan Rockhill. It was a two-room log cabin on a bluff, at the foot of which was a well. It was a community project, which was taught by a parent or teacher paid by subscription. Children came to it from miles around; church and Sunday school were also held there with a Mr. Brown doing the preaching.

The next schoolhouse was a frame building located about one-half mile west and one mile north of Stull on the southeast corner of what most know as the Wm. Henry, Jr. farm. It was built by Peter Eberhart, Sr., for the use of his own children, with a teacher hired and paid by him. A year or so later, John Damm Sr., and Jacob Hildenbrand offered to pay part of the expenses if their children could also attend. Other parents asked for the same privilege and the enrollment thus increased. This school operated for about five years.

On August 1, 1879, E.S. and Lucinda Lane deeded to the board of School District No. 48, one and one-fourth acres of land about one and one-half miles west on the road that ran west from Stull. Mr. Eberhart's school was then purchased and moved to the new location, where it would be more centrally located. The move was accomplished with a stump-puller and horses. The building had to be anchored every fifty to one-hundred feet, winched forward as far as it would go, then re-anchored further on and the process repeated as many times as necessary to get the job done. The task took two weeks.

When set on the new site, the schoolhouse faced the east, and was furnished with walnut benches having at least three pupils to each one. It was painted brown on the outside and named "Brown Jug". However the building was later painted white and re-named "Deer Creek", for the little creek nearby.

In 1895, ten feet were added to the length of the schoolhouse, making it's size about twenty feet by forty feet. This would accommodate the fifty students then enrolled as more benches were needed, as well as accommodation for the large wooden buckets of drinking water. The schoolhouse was used by the Lutheran congregation for church services on Sunday mornings and by the United Brethren in the afternoon.

At this time, the district board consisted of A.J. Osborn, D.W. Dews and W.O. Slusser, and they decided to hire an experienced teacher for the first time. They also decided to dig a well. The work
was done by C.L. Cantrell and cost $257.78. Prior to this, the larger boys carried the drinking water in the wooden buckets from a neighbor's well, consuming as much time as they could when doing it, without bringing down the wrath of the teacher on their heads.

In the 1897-1898 report Sylvester Stull and A.E. Wilson were the board, and Eva Bates the teacher with 53 students. Some other board members over the years were George Hildenbrand, Chas. Nichols, Ray Baldwin, W.F. Wulfkuhle, L.E. Wilson, Fred Wulfkuhle, W.P. Henry, Albert Hildenbrand, Wm. Henry, Jr., Roland Kraft, and Glen O'Connor. Some of the teachers include Norah Gee1an, Raymond Hoffsommer, Mildred Wilson, Jessie Glenn, Carrie Hanna, Rosemary Scheter, Nadine Trowbridge, Edna Mae Hays, and Florence Demeritt. The district was disorganized May 21, 1963, when part of it was added to Lecompton School District No. 36.

Many happy times had been spent at Deer Creek School. There, pupils and parents took part in lyceum debates, voted in general elections, held box suppers and presented programs. Especially delightful to the youngsters were the last day of school dinners that ended the school term. Up until the time of consolidation, 7th and 8th grade students had to take county exams before they could leave the 7th grade and graduate from the 8th grade to enter high school.

Lane's (or Deister's) grove which was just south of Stull and north of Deer Creek was one of the favorite gathering places of the area. There they held camp meetings, picnics and Harvest Home fairs. Contests to determine the best horseshoe pitcher, wood chopper, or nail driver were held. The ladies displayed their cooking and sewing talents, and the children teetered or swung on rope swings attached to the trees. Organized baseball was also a popular sport played against six local teams: Watson, Tecumseh, Lecompton, Clinton, Belvoir, and Lone Star. These games were primarily played when the fields were too wet to till.

Stull early felt the need for a church. For a few months the people met in each other's homes, or the school house. In 1859, a number of settlers organized the Evangelical Emmanuel church. Among them were Bahnmaier, Heil, Fricker, Zebb, Nuffer, Gress, and Eberhart. A Rev. C. Berner wrote a report that he had held a few meetings there during the winter that were quite successful.

In 1867, the church members voted to construct a building where they could hold church services. Jacob Hildenbrand donated the land on which the church and a cemetery were located. The congregation received donations and built the church for $2,000. The church was constructed of native limestone and was known as the Evangelical Emmanuel and Deer Creek Mission. It also, was referred to as the German church. George Michael and Caroline Wezstein Bahnmaier mortgaged their farm to give $100 toward the building. The hill upon which it was built was named Emmanuel Hill. The following folks have been visited by the authors and they recall their childhood attendance at the old church: *Elizabeth Bahnmaier, Amelia Wulfkuhle Nichols, Helen Bahnmaier Wulfkuhle, *Edwin Hildenbrand, Florence Bahnmaier Mitchell, Ernest and Frances Bahnmaier Wulfkuhle. Those with an * in front of their names are members of the Lecompton Historical Society. Edwin Hildenbrand recalled names of a few more living people who attended there when a child: Dorothy Hildenbrand Moss, *Naomi Hildenbrand Nelson Adair, *Margaret Bahnmaier Dark, Arthur and Pearl Boehringer Wulfkuhle, Mabel Zeeb Damm, *Raymond Hoffsommer, *Paul Hoffsommer, Esther Unger Swallow, Irene Hoffsommer Wulfkuhle, *Katherine Brass Johannings, *Clyde Kampschroeder, Irene Kampschroeder Kennedy, Violet Kampschroeder Kennedy, Ann Kampschroeder Bond, and Harvey Houk. There are others, but this is all we could name at this time. Ernest Wulfkuhle said that it was George Houk, who used to go up early and start the fires in the two wood burning stoves, one on each side.

The remains of the church still stand
proudly on the hill. A rock wall surrounds the church, and along this wall hitching posts were provided for horses and teams. The oldest section of the cemetery is at the bottom of the hill under a huge Scotch pine tree. The tree is over one hundred years old, and it is believed to be the oldest specimen of its kind in the state. The trunk is twelve feet, five inches in circumference. At one time a small tombstone was embedded in the base of the trunk. The inscription on the stone reads: Bettie and Frankie Thomas who both died in 1879. The stone has been broken off and removed by vandals. Twisted, thick branches are entwined in the tree's foliage. Some of the branches are the size of a thirty year old tree.

The cemetery is divided into two sections; the main cemetery at the bottom of the hill and a small family cemetery on the hilltop. Esther Wulfkuhle who is the great granddaughter of Jacob Hildenbrand, the cemetery land donor, said he decided to start a small Hildenbrand family cemetery there at the top of the hill when his son died. The land on the east side of the road leading to the church still belonged to Jacob Hildenbrand and this is still their cemetery today.

The stone church near the top of the hill, had a foot-wide plaster arch vaulted over the pulpit at the north end of the sanctuary, with space provided on the platform in the northeast corner for a choir. Closets on either end of the arch were used for storing hymnals and religious literature. Standing near the road, with its doors always unlocked, it offered tempting shelter to weary travelers, and many are said to have used its peaceful interior for a brief respite.

This church at first conducted its meetings in the German language. Later the meetings were cut down to one Sunday a month. Mary Holloway Richardson recalls that when she was a child that Hanna Lena (Wezstein) Noe would walk from her home, which is the present home of David and Margaret Noe, her great grandson, to Stull to the church each of those Sundays, just because the service was in German. The distance was over three miles, quite a distance for a woman in her 80's.

In 1921, it was evident a larger church was needed so James Brass, George Hildenbrand, A. Hoffsommer, J. Unger, and A. Walter solicited funds for a larger new building. They raised over $11,000 in pledges and the next year the church was built on a corner across the road from the cemetery, which was purchased from Adam and Belle Scheer. The church was dedicated in June 1922 with a total cost of $20,000. In 1923 the church conference gave permission to change its name from Deer Creek to Stull Evangelical church. In 1946, it merged with the United Brethren church and was called the Evangelical United Brethren Church. In 1968 it merged again to be known as the United Methodist Zion Church.

The Church of Christ at Stull was started in the Mound schoolhouse in 1906 through the efforts of John E. and Vinalee Rake. By 1912, the membership reached forty, enough to warrant erecting a building. Some of the early members were Rake, Denewiler, Moore, Deister, Downs, Hume, Roberts, Roller, and Montfoort. In 1913 a frame building was erected one-quarter mile west of Stull with lumber hauled from the J.W. Kreider lumberyard at Lecompton. In 1974 this church building was purchased by the Army Corps of Engineers as part of Clinton Reservoir. The church then constructed a new building across the road from the Stull cemetery, which was dedicated in June 1975. Church and other meetings are regularly held in this building.

Deer Creek had many uses, but one of them was the baptismal rites for people in the Stull and Big Springs communities. Iona Spencer tells that her grandfather Wm. B. Herschell, was baptised in that creek in an area south of Stull. It was wintertime and an inch coating of ice had to be broken before he and the preacher could enter it. He was fully immersed! Members of the Big Springs United Brethren church stood by with heavy blankets to wrap around him and the minister as soon as they came out of the water. There were many baptisms by the Church of Christ in the creek right behind the first church building.

Stull has a long history, but part of it was unfortunately contrived for amusement and contains no truth. Several unusual tales have been circulated about the area, relating that the cemetery is haunted. A stable boy was supposed to have
killed the Stull mayor there in the 1850's. The tales note that if a murder happens in a cemetery, according to folklore, demons have access to its inhabitants. The cemetery wasn't there in the 1850's, and the place was never organized as a town so there was never a Mayor. Also, there are inane eye witness accounts about witches, ghosts, werewolfs, ghostly voices and footsteps. All these tales make great ghost stories for gullible people, but sound ridiculous to the local inhabitants who have never had such experiences nor heard of them from their ancestors.

Most of these stories have been circulated by nearby college and university students, who used these absurdities as an excuse to come to the cemetery to hold parties and leave debris. Some stones have been knocked over, and the one in the tree stolen. This causes resentment on the part of the townspeople toward the intruders. The Stull people would very much like to lay these ridiculous tales to rest. They have put a barbed wire fence around the old stone church, and the sheriff and his deputies keep a sharp watch on any night activity there. Some of the townspeople also watch the cemetery and report anything unusual. People can be picked up for trespassing and jailed or fined.

Today Stull cannot be called a town; in fact it is barely a hamlet. The Post office and general store are long since gone. The community consists of a few houses, a machine shop, two churches and a volunteer fire department. Some people of the area would like to restore the old stone church and make it an historical symbol of a past era. It had great impact on the early community, and would give the present generation a feeling of permanence and promote interest in their past.

The people who settled on the fertile land near Deer Creek were mostly farmers. They brought with them a rich heritage which has been imparted to the present generation living there. All generations have been aware that the Deer Creek - Stull area is a beautiful, peaceful, and kind place to live.

Iona Spencer and Sara Walter

See map on page 10 for location of Deer Creek and other communities some of which are no longer in existence.

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THANKS!

Thanks to the following people for these artifacts recently placed in the museum:
1. Telescope used by Phil Sehon during W.W.I. by Curt Sehon and Phyliss Martin.
2. Lyons School programs by Romona Heil Phillips.
3. 1961 Centennial papers and programs by Earl Sanford.
4. Thomas Lee Hardware Plate from Lecompton by Betty Traxler.
5. Lane University Articles by Harold Bigsby. His grandparents Rosa Martin and Charles Richards attended Lane.
6. Denzil Gibbens for a 1940 Kansas University football program that lists four individuals from Lecompton: Denzil, Chester Gibbens, Floyd and Lloyd Svoboda.
7. Gas light by Dorothy Rake.
8. Betty O’Conner for a crochetted table cloth.
9. Also thanks to: Mae Holderman for preparing the budget; Sara Walter and Elizabeth Johnson for hosting several tours; Sally Wright for making several speeches to organizations about Lecompton; and the curators David and Darlene Paslay, Opal Goodrick, Dorothy Shander, and George and Arlene Simmons for their work on new displays this year.

Paul Bahnmaier
CHRISTMAS VESPERS

The Christmas Vespers at Lane University were attended by a capacity crowd of over 220 people. The Lecompton Historical Society would like to thank the following for making this such a successful event: Cindy Daniels and Frances Sanford provided the piano and organ music; vocal selections by Rev. Don and Joy Flanner; and the Lecompton Methodist Church choir which was under the direction of Kim Morris Stewart. Members of the choir were: Maxine Dark, Ruth Stauffer, Kristi Powell, Nancy Morris Howard, Carol Morris Kibbee, Bob and Mary Lou Salisbury Morris, Marlene Hackathorn, Judy Kibbee, Brenda Kibbee Hastert, Carol Higginbotham, Mary Sue Morris Christman, Gary Merritt, Gina Banks Clement, Steve Higginbotham, Rhonda and David Howard, Mike Stewart, and Paul Bahnmaier. Thanks also to Opal Goodrick for the programs, and Karen McConnell and Diane Meir for the reception. Thanks also to Sara Walter for the tree and Jeff Goodrick for taking the group photo.

The following people helped decorate the building for the Christmas season: George and Arloene Simmons, David and Darlene Paslay, Iona Spencer, Maxine Dark, Marie Traxler, Ron and Diane Meir, Rich and Karen McConnell, Mae and Wally Holderman, Opal Goodrick, Dorothy Shaner, Denzil Gibbens, Ralph Davis, and Louise McElhaney.

Paul Bahnmaier

L.H.S. ALUMNI BANQUET

Don't forget the Lecompton High School Alumni Banquet on May 26th 1990. If you know the addresses for former teachers the Alumni Association would like to invite them to this event. The classes of 1940 and 1970 will be honored. This special event will be called a Celebration of Excellence. Committee members are Greg Howard, Roy Paslay, Paul Bahnmaier, Jeff Goodrick, Sam Smith, and Kenny Smith. Teenie Oldham and Judy Sanford are in charge of address changes. Kim Stewart and Brenda Hastert the program.

Paul Bahnmaier

EAGLE FLIES AGAIN

A beautiful hand carved Bald Eagle in front of the American Shield has been created and donated to the City of Lecompton by Ellen Duncan. This outstanding piece of art will be installed on the front of City Hall. It will certainly be something you won't want to miss when you visit. Thanks Ellen for a job far beyond the ordinary.

Paul Bahnmaier

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

We want to thank our members who have renewed their membership. We feel since our Winter issue was mailed out early and with the rush of the holiday season, that some have overlooked renewing their memberships. If you have not renewed, you will find a notice in this newsletter.


Iona Spencer

Ray Gieseman

Remembered Lecompton

The Estate of Ray Gieseman gave to the Lecompton Historical Society a fabulous collection of maps, pamphlets, books and other territorial artifacts. He also bequest to the Lecompton Historical Society his family farm of 212 acres. Ray was a
true historian and spent many years researching information about Lecompton. His generosity to this organization and town was far beyond the ordinary and will long be remembered.

**WORK ON CONSTITUTION HALL TO BEGIN**

Work on Constitution Hall should begin around April 1st. Four signs have been placed in front of the building describing the history of the building; different uses and owners; information of the archeological dig completed in 1988 and how the building will look when restored.

Information from the Kansas Legislative Research Department indicated $194,383 has been appropriated for work on the building. As of July 1, 1989 $40,025 had been spent on the project.

**ROADSIDE PARK TO BE UPGRADED**

Thanks to concerned citizens Denzil Gibbens, Ralph Davis, Opal Goodrick, Nancy Howard, Mayor Bill Reynolds, and City Council members Dorothy Shaner, Denzil Hackathorn, Carl Bahnmaier, Harold Williams and Scott Campbell; the State of Kansas has agreed to preserve and improve the historic roadside park at the junction of U.S. highway 40 and the Robert Steele Road (County Road 1029 which is the paved road into Lecompton from the south).

Paul Bahnmaier

**EISENHOWER CELEBRATION**

The Eisenhower Celebration is nearly here. 100 barrels were donated by Denzil Gibbens to be used for flowers. The following individuals helped with the painting: Denzil Gibbens, Mae & Wally Holderman, Opal Goodrick, Chet Gibbens, Ralph Davis, Dorothy Shaner, Marie Traxler, Ron Meir, David Paslay, Charlie Paslay, Maxine Dark, Bruce Beresford, and Rich McConnell. Twelve welcome flags have been purchased by the City of Lecompton. Opal Goodrick, Vicki Roberts and Maxine Dark helped sew on the letters. On June 8th the I-70 Association is sponsoring a tour of Lecompton. Howard Duncan has written a two-act play about the Eisenhowers that will be presented that day. The United Methodist Church will serve a lunch to the tourists.

Paul Bahnmaier

"Ida", a two-act play about Dwight Eisenhower's parents, Ida Stover and David Eisenhower, has been written by Howard Duncan. It will be presented with local talent at Lane University on three occasions. The first presentation will be at the May 10 regular membership meeting on Thursday evening. The second performance will be at 2:00 pm Sunday afternoon, May 27th, when the general public is greatly encouraged to attend. The final performance will be Friday morning, June 8, as part of the Eisenhower celebration tour.

This play is presented in two acts: the first taking place in 1885 when Ida and David were students at Lane University in Lecompton, and the second in 1940 at their Abilene home when they both were in their late seventies. It reviews their very interesting histories which started with some first-hand memories of the Civil War.

**BATTLE OF FORT TITUS AGAIN TO BE REENACTED**

The Missouri Civil War Reenactors Association will reenact the battle of Fort Titus again for our Territorial Day celebration June 23 and 24. Plan to attend this interesting event.

Paul Bahnmaier
Joe Foley passed away December 4, 1990 at Lawrence. He was a contractor with List and Clark Construction and later established Foley Construction Company, Inc. He was born August 13, 1913 at Tonganoxie. He married Dorothy Holladay. She died April 9, 1989. Survivors include a son Francis (Sonny), four sisters Mary Hughes, Mildred Lawrence, Margaret Kellum and Louise Girair, three brothers Gene, James and Jerome, six grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Burial was in Hubbel Hill Cemetery in Tonganoxie.

Evelyn M. Sheldon passed away January 13, 1990. She was Assistant Manager of the Yarn Barn in Lawrence. She was born May 6, 1908 in Alton, Missouri. She received a bachelor's degree in home economics from K.S.U. She was a volunteer with the Girl Scouts. She was a member of the United Methodist Church in Lawrence. She married Martin Hollister Sheldon at Oskaloosa. Survivors include two daughters Susan Bateman and Paula Kahn, a brother Merle and two step grandchildren. Burial was in Pioneer cemetery.

J. Russell Migliario, 80, passed away January 11, 1990 at Little Rock, Arkansas. He was born November 5, 1909 at Wellington, Kansas, the son of Joseph and Lillie Migliario. He lived in Mt. Hope most of his life and was a retired farmer. He was a 33rd degree masonic member of Albert Pike A.F.& A.M. lodge and Midian Shrine in Wichita. He was survived by several step children and two cousins, Lee Brunekow and Ronald Jones. Burial was at Mt. Hope, Kansas.

Barbara J. Michal, 65, of Lawrence passed away November 18, 1990 at home. She was Executive Assistant to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs at the University of Kansas. She retired in 1986. She was born June 12, 1924 at Salina, the daughter of Glenn M. and Irma Lantis Garrison. She was married to Robert B. Michal April 19, 1943 at Madison, Wisconsin. He survives. Other survivors include two daughters Jeanett Michal and Sandra Mai, two sons John D. and Larry E. Michal, her mother Irma Garrison, four grandchildren. Burial was in Pioneer cemetery at Lawrence.

Elmer J. Petesch passed away October 15, 1989. He was born March 13, 1913 at Potter. He was a farmer and stockman in the area. He was a member of Corpus Christi Catholic Church, Knights of Columbus and Moose Lodge. He married Mathilda Sieve April 30, 1940 at Valley Falls. She survives. He maintained a beautiful yard after retirement. Survivors include five brothers Earl, Andrew, Francis, Leo and Raymond, three sisters Irene Newell, Evelyn Schramek and Irma Moriarty. Burial was in Mount Calvary Cemetery in Topeka.

Dorothy L. Kapp passed away January 23, 1990 in Kansas City. She was born February 1929 in Kansas City. She graduated from K.S.U. with a degree in child development. She received a master's degree from the University of Wisconsin and had studied at Yale University. She worked for the Kansas State School for the Deaf in Olathe and was an instructor at K.U. She was a member of many professional organizations and had had many articles published on child development. She married Paul H. Kapp. He survives. Other survivors include a brother John and four step sons Paul, Kenneth, John and James. She always maintained a strong interest in Lecompton.

Paul Bahnmaier
It is fairly common local knowledge that the City of Lecompton hit its population peak of an estimated 5500 persons in about 1856 when it was the newly founded Capital of Kansas Territory. It fast turned into a town with many vacant lots and underused buildings when the tide of territorial power changed. Records on population seemed to be well hidden until about 1888. The general trend since that time is shown in the above graph. Howard Duncan

THE LECOMPTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, Lecompton, Kansas 66050 is a non-profit corporation for the preservation of historical sites. We are eager for continued membership and new members!

Individual membership is $3 per year, from December to December, while couples membership is $5. Life membership is $50 per individual. Contributions are tax deductible. Checks should be made payable to the Lecompton Historical Society, and mailed to Mrs. Iona Spencer, R.R. #1, Lecompton, Kansas 66050.

* * * * * * * Please Clip And Mail With Your Check * * * * * * *

___ $3 Annual Individual Membership
___ $5 Annual Household Membership
___ $50 Individual Life or Memorial Membership
___ Other Contribution $ ___

Name ___________________ Address ____________________

City ____________________ State ___________ Zip Code _____
Stull is added to this map circa 1856 by E.B. Whitman and A.D. Searl, General Land Agents at Lawrence, from "Map of Eastern Kansas". As it was called in 1857 it is here also called Deer Creek.