

Nine ladies from the Perkins County Scarlet Chapeau enjoyed a windy but interesting day in Ogallala on Oct. 18th. They first went to Keystone where they were met by a guide who opened the Little Keystone Church where there was a Catholic altar on one end and a Protestant altar on the other end. Services were held in the little church for many years but now mostly used for weddings.

The first wedding was that of Mr. William Fenwick, and Miss Mary Anna May Knight of Keystone on August 26, 1908.

When the church was first built, Mrs. Georgia Paxton, wife of a prominent Keystone rancher, who organized a group of girls called the "King Daughters." The club conceived of the idea of the church fund raisers and Mr. and Mrs. Paxton contributed to the final cost of \$1,200.

The church was built 18 by 40 feet with seating for approximately 75 people. The dedication service was held on Aug. 16, 1908. There is no heat, electric outlet or running water in the church. At one time there was an outhouse that one could use. The only light was a kerosene lamp.

Although no longer in regular use the "little church" can be opened for visitors and used for special occasions, especially weddings. But most of all it is a source of pride for the small community on the plains.

From the church the group went to Boot Hill Cemetery in Ogallala, there are 54 steps to climb to the cemetery and the final resting place for many early westerners, who helped make Ogallala a booming cowtown. These people—the cowboys, settlers and drifters—came to Ogallala when the railroad and the Texas Trail opened a new market fortune—longhorn cattle.

There are many tombstones of unknown burials, but one of a mother and child has a black wrought iron fence around it. Most all are wooden or plank or rough cross markers, the name "Boot Hill" is derived from people buried there who may have died with their boots on and were probably buried with their boots on. At one time there were 48 people laid to rest there.

Some old time Ogallala family members have moved their deceased members to the Ogallala cemetery. In 1978 five graves were accidentally found and confirmed as Texas Trail era burials.

The statue found on Boot Hill represents Texas Trail cattle drover identified as the Trail Boss; he appears to be looking over the graves and town back over the hill-back to Texas.

Ogallala was about 10 years old when the Union Pacific Railroad company constructed loading pens just west of the main street of town.

There were abundant long horn cattle roaming the open ranges in Texas. The market for cattle was in the north hence the western trail to Ogallala where they sold and loaded on rail cars to be shipped east. It is estimated that over a million cattle came up the Texas Trail between 1870 and 1885.

From there the ladies went to Front Street where they had lunch.

Their next meeting will be in Grant.