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In Memory of William Aaron Brandenburg

Annals of Osage Mission

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Annals of Osage Mission, "In Memory of William Aaron Brandenburg" (2016). *William Aaron Brandenburg Collection*. 43.

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In Memory of
WILLIAM AARON BRANDENBURG

✧

BORN, OCTOBER 10, 1869
DIED, OCTOBER 29, 1940

✧

PRESIDENT, 1913-1940
KANSAS STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE
PITTSBURG, KANSAS

✧

PRESIDENT, 1940
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
TEACHERS COLLEGES



THE GAVEL

IN ACCORDANCE with the custom established several years ago, one of the pleasant duties of Dr. Brandenburg, as retiring president of the American Association of Teachers Colleges, was to present to his successor at the Atlantic City convention in February, 1941, a gavel symbolic of the office. To this ceremony he looked forward with keen anticipation, and at various times discussed with associates at Kansas State Teachers College the possibility of selecting for the making of the gavel a piece of wood that would have some special significance for the State of Kansas, or for the cause of education, or both.

After considering several suggestions it was decided to accept the offer of Mr. William W. Graves, of Saint Paul, Kansas, to allow the Industrial Education Department of the College to make a gavel out of a portion of an old bench which had been salvaged many years ago from the discarded furnishings of the historic Osage Mission and Manual Labor School, opened in 1847.

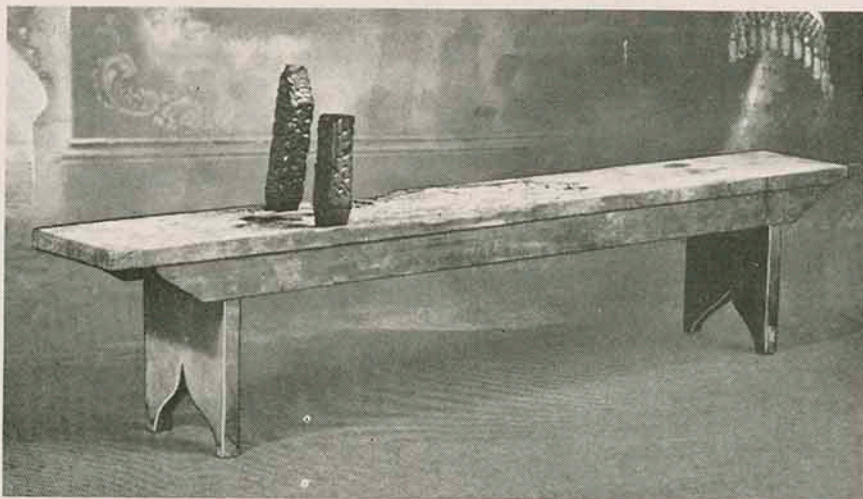
A design contest was held among the students in wood-turning at the College, under the direction of Professor Walter L. Friley, for the privilege of making the gavel. Three students tied for the award: Arthur Robert Kenton, Sophomore, Basehor, Kansas; George Melcher, Sophomore, Clay Center, Kansas; John Leland Lenhart, Senior, Abilene, Kansas. The winning entry was finally selected by lot.

In memory of Dr. Brandenburg, Dr. W. W. Parker, retiring President, presented the gavel to the President-Elect at the annual convention of the American Association of Teachers Colleges at Atlantic City, at the conclusion of the Saturday morning session, February 22, 1941.

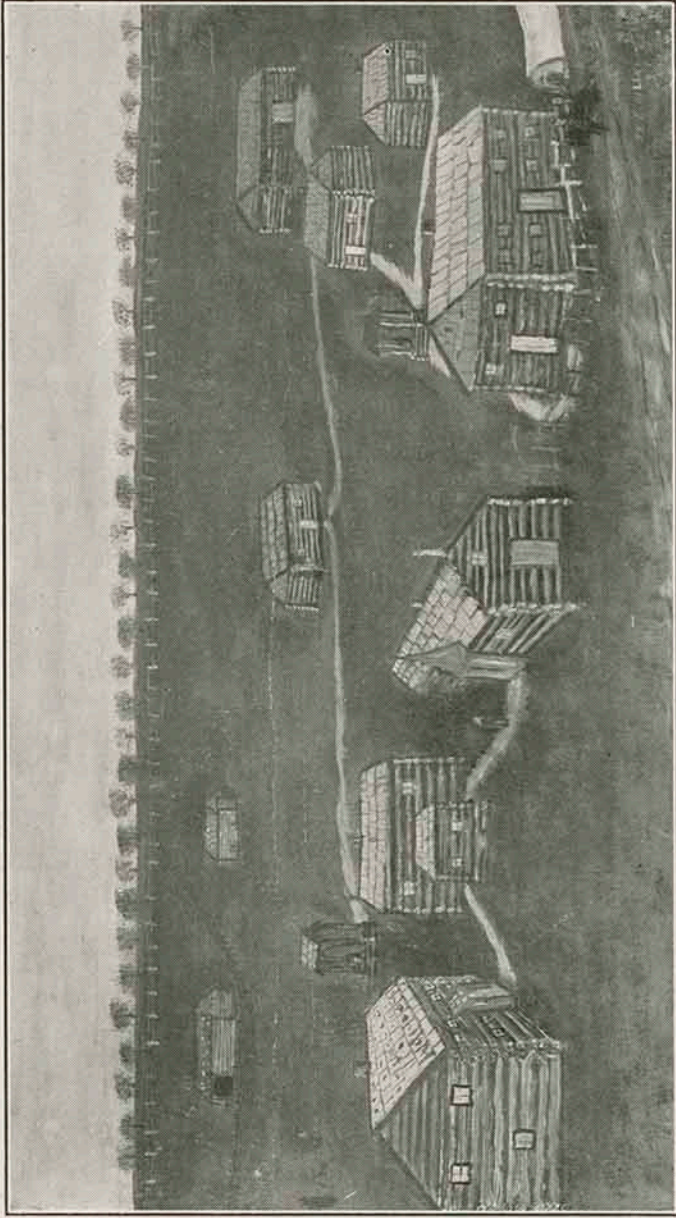
It is worthy of note that the old bench, a relic of the Osage Mission Manual Labor School of nearly 100 years ago, is significant, not only of Kansas history, but also of the type of education for which Kansas State Teachers College has stood for so many years. There seems to be evidence that the bench was used as a work-bench either by a shoe-cobbler or harness-maker in one of the shops of the old Misson School.

After removing the portion from which to make the gavel, and other portions disfigured by years of hard usage and neglect, the remainder was restored and refinished to make a somewhat smaller bench, retaining as much as possible of the original wood and the lines of the original design, for permanent preservation.

The work was done in the Department of Industrial and Vocational Education, Kansas State Teachers College, Pittsburg, under the general supervision of Dr. William T. Bawden, Head of Department, in the Wood-Turning and Cabinet-Making classes of Professor Walter L. Friley, and Finishing class of Professor George E. Braley.



Shoe-cobbler's or harness-maker's work-bench, salvaged from discarded furnishings of the old Osage Mission Manual Labor School, opened in 1847.



Original Osage Mission and Manual Labor School
See accompanying historical note

OSAGE MISSION AND MANUAL LABOR SCHOOL
HISTORICAL NOTE

THE ACCOMPANYING illustration, taken from page 53 of the *Annals*, shows the original group of log buildings as they appeared in 1865. The engraving is from a photograph of a painting made by an unknown artist many years ago from a description given him by Charles Beechwood, the first white pupil enrolled in the school. With the passing of the years the log structures were replaced first by frame buildings and later in part by stone buildings, the last log house being torn down in December, 1887.

In June, 1673, Pere Marquette, the French Explorer, discovered the Osage Indians on the Osage and Missouri rivers and drew a map showing their location. The Osages have a tradition that their ancestors were driven or migrated from east of the Allegheny mountains.

On September 17, 1843, Major Harvey, U. S. Indian Agent, entered into a contract with Jesuit missionaries to take charge of a school among the Osage Indians in Kansas, the government to furnish the buildings and to pay \$55 a year for board and tuition of each pupil attending the school. On April 25, 1845, Congress appropriated \$3,456 for the construction of the buildings for a school to accommodate 20 boys to be located at Osage Mission, approximately 30 miles west of what is now the Kansas-Missouri line, and 35 miles north of the Kansas-Oklahoma line. On May 19, 1847, the school opened as the Osage Mission Manual Labor School for boys, and on October 25th a department for girls was added.

In 1848 a trading post and store was established, the first business house on what later become the townsite of Osage Mis-

sion. The Indian Agent's report of April 14, 1848, records an enrollment of 33 Osage boys, "13 more than were provided for;" and a year later, "this is no doubt the best school in the Indian country." In 1850, another school building was added at a cost of \$800, and the enrollment was 53 boys and 29 girls.

In November, 1865, the first white children were enrolled in the Osage Mission School, and in the fall of 1866 the first town school was established as a subscription school.

On July 18, 1868, a reporter for the *Kansas City Journal* wrote that the enrollment in the Osage Mission School included 120 Indian boys and girls, Osages, Miamis, and Quapaws, aged from 8 to 16 years, and 40 white boys and girls. The tuition, board, and clothing of the Indians were paid for by the government at that time at a cost of \$74 a year each.

In June, 1869, Osage Mission was served by three stage passenger, express, and mail lines, connecting with Fort Scott, Baxter Springs, and Fort Gibson, besides three mail routes, "making this point the great central point for travel, business, and mail service in this part of the State."

In March, 1895, a petition was filed in the district court asking that the name of the town be changed from Osage Mission to Saint Paul. An election was held on April 11th, and the following day the court issued an order changing the name to Saint Paul. Effective July 1st, the Post Office Department made the same change. "Thus ends the story of Osage Mission."

The foregoing statement was prepared from data found in the *Annals of Osage Mission*, an illustrated book of 492 pages, by William W. Graves, editor of the *Neosho County Journal*, published by the author at Saint Paul, Kansas, 1934.

