

Kansas Genealogical Society

INTRODUCTION TO THE OBITUARY INDEX Kansas 1870-1999

This individual based index allows the researcher to quickly determine if an obituary is available and where it is located in the Kansas Genealogical Society Obituary Collection. The Kansas 1870-1999 index consists of 613,225 records of individuals appearing in newspapers of various counties in Kansas between the years of 1870 through 1999. The actual number of individuals represented is approximately one-half of the total number of records. This variation is explained below.

KGS volunteers started clipping obituaries almost from the beginning of KGS and donated to the KGS Library. The selection of obituaries clipped and the construction of the book was entirely at the discretion of the person doing the clipping. Therefore, no inference is made that this is a complete collection of individuals that died in Kansas during the years cited. Not all of the contributors adhered to the best genealogical practice; the identity of the newspaper and issue date have not been recorded in all cases however the obituaries are complete. Many deaths did not occur in Kansas as many obituaries of former residents were published in Kansas newspapers. The obituaries, as usual, consist of anything from a simple death notice to profuse eulogies.

Properties of the Index

The obituary collection contains many duplicates. These can occur because the obituary appeared in more than one newspaper or more than one edition of the same newspaper. References to all duplicate obituaries have been included in the index so that researchers may find all information available in this collection.

Notwithstanding duplicate obituaries, men generate a single record. Women, because of their marriages, are treated differently. Each woman, if she married, and if the obituary contains sufficient information, she will generate three records: (1) By her married surname and given name(s), (2) By her maiden surname and given name(s), and (3) By her married surname and husbands given name(s) with the title of Mrs. A woman with two husbands will generate five records, etc.

The obituary collection is grouped roughly by the county in which the newspaper was published. The book code corresponds exactly to the county codes appearing on the automobile license plates of Kansas. e.g., FO = Ford County, BA = Barber County, etc. The county book code may be used to approximate the residence of the deceased person to distinguish between individuals having the same name. The year of death can serve the same function.

KGS Volunteers input the data comprising this index. To say that the job was a challenge is an understatement. Every effort has been made by these volunteers to maintain accuracy of the data. However, errors are an unpleasant fact and we do not have the resources to complete a formal proofreading. We would appreciate being notified of any typographical errors that are found so that corrections can be made.

Obtaining Copies of Obituaries

Copies of obituaries may be obtained, by mail, from the Kansas Genealogical Society for a donation of \$5.00, postpaid, *per individual*. To order by mail print and fill out the order form mail, along with your remittance, to Kansas Genealogical Society, PO Box 103, Dodge City, KS 67801-0103. This donation will include copies of all duplicate obituaries, if any.

Copies may also be obtained by visiting the KGS Library, Village Square Mall, Lower Level, 2601 Central, Dodge City, KS.