

Loy Library 1992

## General JOHN BAYLESS

John Bayless was a civil engineer who helped found the town of Highland and surveyed the townsite. He was a native of Broome County, New York . He came to Kansas in 1855 shortly after Kansas became a territory. He had a family of eight children who came with him to Kansas.

He was sent out west by the locating committee of the Susquehanna Western Emigration Company of Kirkwood, New York, to locate a townsite for eastern emigrants. The officers of the Susquehanna Western Emigration Company were General John Bayless, President; P. G. Johnson Vice-President; J. B. King recording Secretary; and S. B. Lowe corresponding Secretary.

When he arrived in Kansas he took a claim to land that joined a quarter owned by John Powers Johnson who was planning on founding an inland city. He decided to join Mr. Johnson. The town company was soon organized and General John Bayless surveyed all the streets, alleys, and lots in Highland. He was a member of the town company.

He also served as the representative from Doniphan County in the first Kansas State Legislature. He remained in Kansas for several years acquiring large tracts of land in Doniphan County.

The family became scattered at the beginning of the Civil War. He returned to New York where he died in 1893.

Children William E. Bayless wife came with him to Kansas but died in 1858. He married Miss Patterson a teacher at the Iowa Sac and Fox Indian Mission in 1862. He owned

what is now the George Smith farm and engaged in farming and breeding shorthorn cattle for many years. In later life he was compelled to spend most of his time in warmer climates. He eventually moved to Arizona.

Stuart Bayless married "Puss" Shields who was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs John Shields, a pioneer family of Highland. They also moved to Arizona.

Samantha Bayless his daughter of General John Bayless married Mr. A. J. Minier in 1855. They had five children: Wayne who died in infancy; Frederick an accomplished musician; John B. who was in the hotel business; Abram a farmer and banker and musician; Julia who married Dan Skrieves general store at Axtel, Kansas.

Abraham M. Minier married Miss Mabel Hunter. They had four children: Mabel, Dorothy, Merton and Mary Minier. He was cashier at Citizens Bank and First National Bank of Highland.

Daughter Mary is receptionist at Dr. Corder's office in Highland

May 6, 1994

Dear Darlene:

Mary Minier will introduce Rev. Susan Hartley, pastor of the Highland Methodist Presbyterian Church and Bellevue United Methodist Church of Leona, KS.

Mary's background:

(pronounced Samantha)

Mary's Grandparents, Abraham John and Cemantha Bayless Minier, came to this vicinity in 1855.

They were among the first families who came here. Cemantha's father, General John Bayless, formed the Susquehanna Western Emigrant Society in New York in 1854. The Society's purpose was to come to Kansas and vote to make Kansas a free state rather than a slave state. John Bayless crossed the Missouri River at Lawrence and watched as 800 people came from Missouri to vote and returned to Missouri after voting. (As you know the fraudulent elections were thrown out.)

John Bayless had five sons and 3 daughters (including Cemantha). Four of the sons were able to vote when another election was held. J.P. Johnson, John Bayless and others formed the Highland Town Company and surveyed the town. Many of the Highland abstracts have John Bayless' name on them.