



Area Cities

Alden

Alden is located in southwestern Rice County.

Alden originated in the manner of many western towns; land was homesteaded along the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad. The original city of Alden was established in 1881 and named after the son of Mr. Nickerson, the division superintendent of the AT&SF.

Alden flourished in its trade area. During its heyday, Alden boasted a hotel, a hat shop run by Miss Fanny Proffitt, a telephone office, an automobile agency, a livery stable, several hardware stores, a cold storage locker, blacksmith shops, several service stations, a funeral parlor and furniture business. Several other businesses include a drug store, a number of grocery stores (one of these was a J. S. Dillon store, perhaps the first Dillon store), at least four doctors at different intervals of time, several cafes, a creamery, a public library, the Mazda theater, a newspaper, and a bank (one of the oldest banking concerns in Rice County).

The Santa Fe Depot in Alden was built in 1884, moved once to allow for the extension of Pioneer Street, then moved again after the railroad stopped passenger service in 1965. At one time in the 1930s sixteen trains stopped here each day. The depot now houses a museum.

Bushton

Bushton is located in the northwest corner of Rice County.

Early settlers began arriving in Bushton and the surrounding communities in the late 1800s. Most of these families were of German origin, coming from Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, and other parts of the Central United States.

Bushton's close proximity to [Wilson Lake](#), located 30 miles to the north, and [Kanopolis Lake](#) 30 miles to the east, offers some great fishing, boating, and camping. Hunting opportunities are numerous with [Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife](#) area 20 minutes to the west and [Quivira wildlife area](#) 40 minutes to the south.

Chase

Chase is located in Rice County on US 56 in south central Kansas.

The Santa Fe Trail ran east/west across the county following the route of US 56; the [ruts](#) can be seen at various places



Area Cities

Geneseo

Geneseo, is located on K 4 and K 14 in south central Kansas.

Geneseo's central location made it an early center for railroading. At one time, it was served by the AT&SF, Frisco, and Missouri Pacific railroads. Only the Union Pacific still passes through Geneseo, but highways K 4 and K 14 provide easy access to the community.

Early settlement of the area began with the homesteading movement of the 1870s. In geological circles, the area is known as the Geneseo Uplift. The town overlooks the Little Arkansas River valley to the south, while not far to the north the water flows to Thompson Creek and into the Smoky Hill River. The high ridge between the two river systems was found to be ideal for railroad development.

For those seeking recreation, Geneseo is close to [Kanopolis Lake](#) - only 16 miles to the dam. The lake offers great fishing and hunting, and two beautiful state parks in the area provide other opportunities to enjoy the outdoors. Geneseo also has its own nine hole [golf course](#).

Little River

Little River is located in eastern Rice County near the Little Arkansas River near Hwy 46 in south central Kansas.

The old brick Burke Hotel still anchors Main Street. Alber Park at Main and Prairie offers a new gazebo.

Lyons

Lyons is the county seat of Rice County in south central Kansas and has a beautiful courthouse square.

Both Lyons and Rice County abound in history. Four miles west of Lyons on Hwy 56 is a large concrete cross, which was erected by the Knights of Columbus of Kansas to commemorate the martyrdom of Father Juan de Padilla, the first Christian martyr on the North American continent. Father Padilla was slain by a group of hostile Indians in 1542, before any person who came over on the Mayflower was born. About a mile south of this cross is the old Buffalo Bill well, hand-dug, which is reputed to have been dug and cased by the famous Indian fighter and buffalo hunter, William Mathewson, commonly called Buffalo Bill. The Rice County Historical Society restored this well.

Rice County is on the route of the old Santa Fe Trail, which was surveyed in 1825. In 1867 the county was created by the legislature and was organized in August 1871. The county was named in honor of Brigadier General Samuel A. Rice of the U. S. Volunteers, a Civil War hero who was killed at the battle of Jenkins Ferry. The first settlers entered the county in February 1870. Buffalo were plentiful in the county as late as 1871 and were a staple food for early settlers.



Area Cities

Raymond

Raymond has the distinction of being the oldest town in Rice County. Established in 1871, it is located in the southwest corner of Rice County in south central Kansas.

At one time the population rose to five hundred people, when it became the inspection point for cattle on the Chisholm Trail heading to the Pacific Railroad at Ellsworth. Raymond became a rough cow town at this point and was known as one of the wickedest towns in the country. It became a rendezvous point for cowboys, gamblers, and restless types with its 13 saloons. The American House, a three-story hotel became the center of social activity. Rowdy cowboys would shoot out the bright lights on the chandeliers and many mirrors.

Raymond fell victim to a series of fires on the west side of Main Street between 1904 and 1905. The buildings were burned one-by-one with an uncanny regularity. Out of these fires, a brick business section was constructed. Over the years businesses came and went. Only a few businesses remain, but Raymond still survives.

Sterling

Sterling, located in Rice County in central Kansas, is the home of Sterling College, a 4-year Presbyterian School. The city has one of the prettiest parks in Kansas, built around a lake at the southeast corner of town. The park is the site of many of the local special events and on a summer evening is full of people enjoying its features.

The rich surrounding countryside of the Arkansas River valley is the basis for strong agricultural component to the local economy, but manufacturing is also important. Connected by rail and highway, Hwy 96 to Wichita and Great Bend, Sterling has an excellent transportation infrastructure.

When you're in Sterling, spend a little time driving around town. There's a Carnegie Library, a brick depot, an active downtown, and many fine old homes that have been beautifully maintained. Be sure to see the old stone castle-like building on the campus of Sterling College.