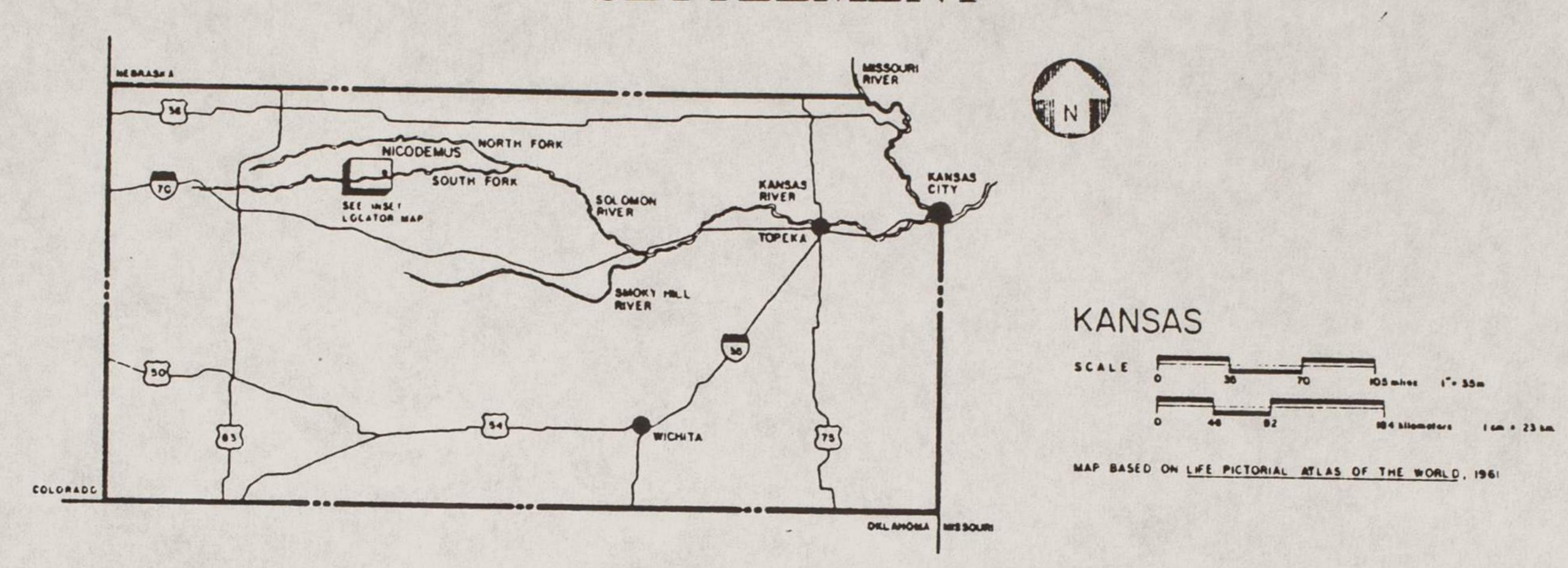
NICODEMUS, KANSAS

A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK BLACK SETTLEMENT



HISTORIC OVERVIEW:

NICODEMUS, KANSAS, REPRESENTS THE EARLIEST AND MOST PROSPEROUS MIDWESTERN BLACK SETTLEMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE MASSIVE WESTWARD MIGRATION OF FORMER SLAVES OUT OF THE SOUTH DURING RECONSTRUCTION. FOLLOWING A TYPICAL MIDWESTERN PATTERN OF TOWN DEVELOPMENT, THE NICODEMUS TOWN COMPANY WAS FORMED ON APRIL 18, 1877, BY THE PROMOTIONAL LITERATURE OF BENJAMIN "PAP" SINGLETON AND LED BY WHITE PROMOTER W.R. HILL, FIVE SEPARATE INFUSIONS OF BLACK COLONISTS, PREDOMINANTLY THE POPULATION OF THE TOWN. BY 1878, NICODEMUS' PROMINENCE, HOWEVER, WAS SHORTLIVED. WHEN THE RAILROAD BY-PASSED THE COMMUNITY IN 1888, THE MAJORITY OF BUSINESSES RELOCATED TO NEARBY COMMUNITIES AND THE TOWN SLOWLY WITHERED. A RESILIENT AND SELF-RELIANT NUCLEUS OF SETTLER REMAINED. TODAY, 45 DECENDENTS OF THESE ORIGINAL IMMIGRANTS RESIDE IN THE COMMUNITY, AND NUMEROUS HISTORIC STRUCTURES STILL EXIST.

