

When the L & N Railroad opened its new line, running south of Cincinnati through Central Kentucky in the spring of 1877, it coincided with the arrival of Nicodemus town promoters, W.R. Hill and Rev. Rountree. After spending time convincing members of various Scott and Fayette County churches to migrate to Kansas, the many who decided to go had the financial means and now easy transportation out of central Kentucky. The many who left Scott county left from Paynes Depot near Midway, Georgetown Depot, and the Saddieville Depot. The trains took them north to Cincinnati and then west into the Western Frontier. The last stop was at Ellis, Kansas a mere 35 miles south of their new home. A measles outbreak depleted the energetic travelers, causing a 2 week quarantine stay in a make shift tent town at Ellis. Emma Williams was 8 months pregnant and welcomed the much needed rest before the two day journey, by foot, north to Nicodemus. Upon arrival and seeing no above ground housing and, no tree in sight for miles, this barren landscape took its toll. Over 60 members of the first group returned to Kentucky or Eastern Kansas cities. In 1878 Williana and Daniel Hickman arrived with the second group and she was quoted as saying "When we got in sight of Nicodemus, the men shouted, "There is Nicodemus!" Being very sick, I hailed this news with gladness. I looked with all the eyes I had. "Where is Nicodemus? I don't see it." My husband pointed out various smokes coming out of the ground and said, "That is Nicodemus." The families lived in dugouts. We landed and once again struck tents. The scenery time was not at all inviting, and I began to cry."