

Quantrill's Raid: The Destruction and Rebuilding of Lawrence, Kansas

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Growing up in Lawrence, we have been immersed in the rivalry between Kansas and Missouri since childhood. Both of us remember watching aggressive basketball games between the University of Kansas and the University of Missouri while listening to our parents yell harsh things about Missourians. In third grade, when we toured historical sites around the town with our classes we began to understand the origin of the rivalry, the Border War. As a hub for Free Soilers, Lawrence was the perfect target for Confederate William Quantrill remove. During the raid, Sami's great-great-great-great grandfather had to hide in the woods with his father and uncles. Quantrill's raid was the most critical point in Lawrence history, yet we only knew the basics of the attack. Because we wanted to learn more about the origins of our hometown, its history, and gain a new perspective on the event, we decided to research Quantrill's Raid on Lawrence in 1863 and the subsequent rebuilding of the town.

Our historical research has given us a greater appreciation for our town. To begin our research we read secondary sources online and in print in order to get a more in-depth overview of the topic. We also watched documentaries and interviews of Civil War historians found on the web. Then we went around our town visiting and taking pictures at grave sites of prominent figures, historical markers and local museums, such as the Watkins Museum of History and the Carnegie Building's exhibit on early Kansas. We continued our primary source research by visiting local archives at the Lawrence Public Library and the Spencer Research Library. To find additional primary sources we read speeches, government papers, letters, and archived newspapers online.

We decided to create a website because we wanted to use a variety of media to enhance people's understanding of Lawrence's great history and the context of Quantrill's Raid.

Additionally, we decided on a website because, while there are many collections on Quantrill's Raid, there has not been one that examines all the contributing factors and effects of the raid. We chose a dark color scheme of black, white, and dark red to capture the emotional intensity of the raid. For our quotes, we decided on a font that would mimic the boldness of the news headlines of the time.

Quantrill's Raid was the largest attack on American civilians until the September 11, 2001 attacks. Well over one hundred men were murdered in front of their families, leaving many widows and children without fathers. Additionally, almost all of the infrastructure of the town was destroyed, totaling \$39,878,253.91 in damage, in today's currency. Our topic fits this year's theme because despite the trauma and massive destruction from Quantrill's Raid Lawrence was able to overcome the tragedy and turn it into a triumph by becoming stronger and more prosperous than ever before. The rebuilding attracted more people to Lawrence and allowed for the city to transform into the flourishing town it is today more than 125 years later.