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BRAINERD, KANSAS



Welcome to Brainerd, a quiet, crossroads farm community in Butler County, Kansas. Population: 40-50, varying according to the weather, the state of the local economy and the fortunes of the nearby high school football team.

Located about 45 miles northeast of Wichita, the town is situated a few blocks north of Kansas state highway 196, mid-way between El Dorado, the Butler county seat, and Newton, the seat of neighboring Harvey County. It does little to call attention to itself to those whizzing along K-196 en route to the interstate highways (I-35 and I-135) that connect Brainerd to fast-growing Wichita (about 45 minutes to the Southwest) and the rest of the Great Plains -- namely, Topeka, Kansas City, Oklahoma City and the Plains epicenters of Dallas and Minneapolis.

Brainerd's sole surviving roadside landmark (and only retail business) is the Brainerd Feed Store (pictured above), a shed-like structure that backs up to an

abandoned railbed near the intersection of K-196 and the north-south section road referred to on maps as Meadowlark Road. Head a quarter-mile north on this road, past some wheat fields on your left and a few small houses on your right, and you'll come to the Frederic Remington Area High School, enrollment 156. Unless you had business to conduct at the feed store or an event to attend at Remington High, you'd probably never think of stopping at this outwardly ordinary intersection.

But Brainerd has much more to offer than meets the distracted, late 20th-century eye. It's a place full of history, memories and artifacts. A place both typical and unusual -- typical in its late 19th century, Kansas railroad town origins, and unusual in the degree to which it has stubbornly endured, in both the physical remains of its 114-year history and in the vivid memories of Brainerdites past and present.

To continue your exploration of Brainerd, [click here](#), or use the frame at left to navigate to the Introduction section before exploring the remainder of this site.

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