

# Almira Sheffield Peckham Cordry

(1863 – 1949)

Almira Cordry was Kansas DAR's first State Historian. She served in this position from 1910 to 1921. During this time she compiled two volumes of history of the state society from 1894 to 1911. This seventeen year history was gathered from old reports, letters, and records. In addition she wrote the story of marking the old Santa Fe Trail separately, thinking it might be published some day. Parts of this work were gleaned from the letters of the old settlers to Emma Stanley and Grace Meeker. Almira's hope was to keep the memory of the old Trail alive, so that coming generations would never need to ask "Where is it?" This correspondence remains in the Kansas DAR archives. She made Kansas the only Santa Fe Trail state with a written history of the trail marking. With a little research, the *Marking the Santa Fe Trail* can still be found.

Almira Sheffield Peckham was born at Onarga, IL on Oct. 10, 1863, the daughter of James P. Peckham and Almira Chesebrough Sheffield, pioneer residents of Illinois. At the age of five she moved to Kansas with her parents, who settled in Manhattan. She grew to womanhood there and was graduated from Kansas State College (Kansas State University). She married Thomas A. Cordry in 1888 in Clay Center. The couple subsequently lived in several central Kansas towns where Cordry was engaged in the newspaper business. He died in 1914 of a heart attack.

She was a life member and state historian of the DAR, and a member of the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic. She took a special interest in the welfare of ex-servicemen and corresponded regularly with many of them throughout the country.

Almira died October 16, 1949. Funeral services were held at St. John's Episcopal Church and, burial was in Oakwood Cemetery. Survivors include two sons and one daughter, eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

