

Henry Avis, one of the best known of the Pony Express riders, spent most of his life in and around Kansas City. He used to run up to Atchison and Leavenworth occasionally, when I was engaged in newspaper work in these towns, and I met him several times. He was a most interesting figure.

Henry Avis was born in 1840. When a boy of nine years he came with his parents from St. Louis to Kansas City on a Missouri River steamboat. While still in his 'teens he was employed in breaking and training horses around Kansas City and Fort Leavenworth, at which he was a youthful expert. The overland wagon trains had an overwhelming appeal to his adventuresome nature, and at the age of 18 years he joined Major Dripps, the well known Indian trader, and accompanied him with a train of supplies for his trading post near Fort Larmie, Wyo. While there he entered the service of the government carrying the tri-weekly mail to Salt Lake City. With the inauguration of the daily service he was given the run from Mud Springs through Fort Laramie to Horseshoe Creek a distance of 90 miles. One experience that he always took great pride in was that of the carrying of Lincoln's inaugural address in seven days and seventeen hours or three days less than schedule time. On one occasion when the Indians were on the war path young Avis doubled his run when one of the other riders refused to go, and won a bonus of \$300 or about six month's pay.

With the discontinuance of the Pony Express service Avis turned his attention to gold seeking with which he met with a fair degree of success. He then returned to Kansas City where he spent the remainder of his life. He kept abreast of the times and was active almost to the time of his death. He was ill only three days. One of his ambitions was to live to be 100 years old but he did not attain the goal. He passed away on March 19, 1927, at the age of 86 years.