



Had the territorial boundaries prevailed, the state of Kansas would look something like this today. No Kansan would need to go to Colorado to see the mountains, for Pike's Peak and a slice of the eastern slope were ours from 1834—until Kansas became a state in 1861! This boundary, showing Kansas as it might have been, has been superimposed over a 1956 National Geographic map.



At the establishment of Kansas territory in 1854 the summit of the Rockies was the designated farthestmost western boundary. Thus Denver, founded in 1858 and named for Kansas Gov. James W. Denver, was within the boundaries of Kansas. Above is a reproduction of a portion of J. H. Colton's map, Nebraska and Kansas, 1854, even before Denver came upon the scene.

# THE KANSAS HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

Volume XXXIII

Spring, 1967

Number 1

## Kansas Territory and Its Boundary Question: "Big Kansas" or "Little Kansas"

CALVIN W. GOWER

SOME leaders in the Territory of Kansas in 1858 and 1859 hoped to receive congressional approval for a state of Kansas with a western boundary at the crest of the Rocky mountains in the middle part of present-day Colorado and a northern boundary at the Platte river. If the Platte had been the northern border of Kansas, the state would include a rather extensive and valuable portion of the present-day state of Nebraska, and if the crest of the Rocky mountains had formed the western boundary of Kansas, a large portion of present-day Colorado would be part of the wheat state.

Such efforts by residents of a territory to establish a much larger state were not uncommon occurrences in 19th century America. Just a few years prior to the endeavors to establish a "Big Kansas" rather than a "Small Kansas," conventions in Iowa and in Wisconsin territory had tried to include within the boundaries of their proposed states rather large portions of what was later part of the state of Minnesota.<sup>1</sup> In addition, in 1845 and again in 1850 with the admission to statehood of Texas and California, congress showed that it was willing to accept very large states into the Union.

What those who favored an expanded state tended to overlook was that Nebraska territory had been in existence for as long as Kansas and, therefore, did not represent an area of unorganized territory which could probably be included in a state of Kansas. This situation contrasted to the circumstances involving much of the territory contiguous to Texas, California, Iowa, and Wisconsin. Despite the fact that congressional approval of the inclusion of part of Nebraska territory in a state of Kansas was not at all sure, the efforts to try to accomplish this in the late 1850's is of some historical

PROF. CALVIN W. GOWER, native of Colorado, with a Ph.D. from the University of Kansas, Lawrence, is professor of history at St. Cloud State College, St. Cloud, Minn.

1. Theodore C. Blegen, *Minnesota, A History of the State* (Minneapolis, 1963), pp. 159, 160. A number of other instances of settlers' efforts to carve out vaster chunks of territory for their would-be states occurred throughout the 1800's.

interest, in part because the debate which resulted in Kansas over the boundary question was linked to the broader struggle between the Democrats and the Republicans in that territory.

The Kansas-Nebraska act of May, 1854, created the Territory of Kansas, which extended from the western boundary of Missouri to the summit of the Rocky mountains and from 37° to 40° latitude on the south and north.<sup>2</sup> The settlers in Kansas territory met and drew up four state constitutions during the territorial period: The Topeka constitution (1855), the Lecompton constitution (1857), the Leavenworth constitution (1858), and the Wyandotte constitution (1859). All of these except the one framed at Wyandotte followed the example set by those who had devised the boundaries of the territory and placed the western boundary at the summit of the Rocky mountains. The Wyandotte constitution put the western boundary of the state of Kansas at 102° longitude, which was considerably east of the crest of the mountains.<sup>3</sup> The Pike's Peak gold rush of 1858-1860 was probably one of the principal factors which prompted the move to set the western boundary of the proposed state of Kansas so far east of the territory's western boundary.

Suggestions to cut off part of western Kansas had occurred even before the gold rush developed. One writer predicted in 1857 that lawmakers would exclude part of the western portion of Kansas and would establish a state which would be about 300 miles long and 200 miles wide.<sup>4</sup> However, until the gold rush took place, the boundary matter did not receive much attention; then it became entwined to some degree with the question of whether or not to annex a portion of Nebraska to Kansas.

In January, 1858, in the council of the Kansas legislature one of the delegates introduced a resolution maintaining that the Platte river was the natural boundary between the territories of Kansas and Nebraska and should become the legal boundary between them. The resolution called for Nebraska to agree to the annexation of southern Nebraska by Kansas.<sup>5</sup> The feeling for this movement became stronger as 1858 passed and eventually became associated with the endeavor to cut off part of western Kansas.

On December 16, 1858, editor Sol Miller of the *White Cloud Kansas Chief* voiced the opinion of some Kansans when he noted a move in congress to exclude a western portion from the rest of

2. *United States Statutes at Large*, v. 10, p. 283.

3. George W. Martin, "The Boundary Lines of Kansas," *Kansas Historical Collections*, v. 11, p. 62.

4. C. W. Dana, *The Great West, or the Garden of the World* . . . (Boston, 1858), p. 178.

5. *Council Journal of the Legislative Assembly, Kansas Territory* . . . 1858, p. 125.

Kansas territory and then commented, "This would be well, if they would also effect the proposed change in the Northern boundary." The Kansas delegate to congress introduced a bill shortly thereafter to change the northern boundary of Kansas.<sup>6</sup> Then in January, 1859, a Kansas legislator again introduced the resolution to annex that portion of Nebraska south of the Platte river to the territory of Kansas.

This resolution argued that the determination of the northern boundary of Kansas at the 40th parallel had resulted from "high political considerations in 1854," but since that time conditions had changed considerably. The Platte river was almost impassable at various times of the year and thus formed a natural boundary. That portion of Nebraska south of the Platte was extremely rich and would contribute an abundance of wealth to Kansas, and the addition of the people in that area of Nebraska to the population of Kansas would easily give Kansas enough people to deserve statehood. The resolution stated that most of the inhabitants of the Platte river country desired annexation to Kansas. In addition, "the dismemberment of our own Territory, as now constituted, by the erection of a new Territory on our West, is among the fixed things in the destiny of our nation. . . . In anticipation of that loss the Territory of South Nebraska can today be easily acquired by the Territory of Kansas."<sup>7</sup>

Not everyone in the Kansas legislature agreed with the plan to annex part of Nebraska. The entire question of whether or not to annex the Platte river country and whether or not to cut off part of western Kansas territory can be characterized as a struggle between the "Big Kansas" proponents and the "Little Kansas" advocates. This controversy continued during the remainder of the territorial period, but it became most intense during 1859 and especially during the Wyandotte constitutional convention in the summer of that year.

The "Big Kansas" partisans presented the principal reasons for their attitude in the aforementioned resolution introduced in the Kansas legislature in 1859 calling for the annexation of the Platte river country. The proponents of the "Little Kansas" plan also used the legislature as a forum to express their point of view. They argued that Kansas had plenty of land resources and was commercially independent from the southern Nebraska area. Even if some of western Kansas were chopped off, the state would still include as

6. *Congressional Globe*, 35th Cong., 2d Sess., p. 201.

7. *Journal of the Territorial Council of Kansas* . . . 1859, pp. 23, 71-74.

much territory as Ohio, Illinois, or Iowa. Finally, the annexation of part of Nebraska would permanently damage the interests of that territory.<sup>8</sup>

Advocates of the "Big Kansas" idea carried the day in the Kansas legislature of 1859 and secured passage of a joint resolution asking congress to attach the Platte river country to Kansas territory.<sup>9</sup> During the spring of 1859, various statements appeared concerning the support given such a move by the Nebraskans who lived south of the Platte. A meeting in Brownville, Neb., in April, reportedly brought together a group who favored annexation to Kansas.<sup>10</sup> In May, one paper stated, "We have learned from the most authentic sources that a large proportion of the population in all that portion of Nebraska south of the Platte are in favor of uniting their interests and the country they occupy with the Territory of Kansas." The people in southern Nebraska were reportedly nominating candidates for delegates to the Kansas constitutional convention due to begin in the summer.<sup>11</sup>

Two leading Kansas newspapers differed on the question of annexation of southern Nebraska. The Atchison *Freedom's Champion*, an advocate of the "Big Kansas" movement, favored attachment of southern Nebraska to Kansas, especially if part of western Kansas were sheared off to form a new territory. The *Champion* wanted either to retain the far western portion where many miners might congregate or to gain southern Nebraska with its riches.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, the Lawrence *Republican* opposed the annexation of southern Nebraska, because the paper believed such a movement would endanger the statehood chances of Kansas, would end the community of interests which the Kansans possessed, would make southern Kansas only an appendage to northern Kansas, and would delay Nebraska's statehood movement.<sup>13</sup> Insofar as it opposed the annexation of the Platte river country to Kansas, the *Republican* was a supporter of the "Little Kansas" idea.

The struggle between "Big Kansas" and "Little Kansas" advocates came to a climax with the Wyandotte constitutional convention and its aftermath. Kansans had already drawn up three state constitutions by the year 1859, but none of them had been accepted; another attempt was made in the summer of that year. Not all

8. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

9. *The Statutes of the Territory of Kansas* . . . 1859, p. 651.

10. *Topeka Tribune*, May 5, 1859.

11. *Leavenworth Weekly Herald*, May 28, 1859.

12. *Freedom's Champion*, Atchison, January 15, 1859.

13. *Lawrence Republican*, June 16, 1859.

Kansans agreed that the territory was ready for statehood in 1859. The Lawrence *Herald of Freedom* insisted on December 11, 1858, that the people of Kansas did not want early statehood. This paper voiced the opinion that statehood would be too expensive and that the people needed more experience in government. The journal believed that if put to a vote, the question of a new constitutional convention would receive a negative answer. The Lawrence *Republican* and the Leavenworth *Weekly Times*, on the other hand, favored statehood in the early part of 1859.<sup>14</sup>

The vote on the question of a constitutional convention was held on March 28, 1859. The results were: For a constitution and a state government, 5,306 votes; against the proposition, 1,425. The proclamation in which the results of the vote appeared called for the election of delegates to a constitutional convention in June at Wyandotte, but a month later an announcement postponed the convention until July.<sup>15</sup> On June 7 the elections for delegates to the convention took place.<sup>16</sup>

In Nebraska a debate ensued over whether or not to send delegates to the Wyandotte convention. An election was held in June in which voters elected delegates and in one county over 900 out of 1,078 petitioned for annexation.<sup>17</sup>

Because of the action of these Nebraskans and because of the question of what to do about the gold fields, the boundary question became an important matter in the Wyandotte convention. When they passed through Leavenworth in July, three of the Nebraska delegates issued the statement that, "every ten miles of river front [on the Platte] is worth more to Kansas than two hundred miles west of the one hundred and second degree (102°) of west longitude."<sup>18</sup> The Lawrence *Herald of Freedom* also asserted that the Wyandotte convention should exclude the far western lands from the state of Kansas, but for a different reason. It declared that since the agricultural section had no unity of interest with the gold region, eastern Kansas should let the mining area have its independence.<sup>19</sup>

14. *Ibid.*, January 20, 1859; Leavenworth *Weekly Times*, April 2, 1859.

15. Leavenworth *Daily Times*, April 22, May 19, 1859. The total vote of 6,731 was small and seemed to indicate a lack of interest in the election.

16. *Herald of Freedom*, Lawrence, June 4, 1859.

17. Leavenworth *Daily Times*, June 15, 1859; Leavenworth *Weekly Herald*, June 25, 1859. The small vote would seem to indicate a lack of interest in the matter by residents of Nebraska. Apparently few Nebraskans sought annexation of part of their territory to Kansas; the initiative for this move came from a few Kansans, seemingly Geo. W. Martin, *loc. cit.*, pp. 53-79, says Ottum county, Nebraska, cast 1,678 votes "at a previous election" and 900 electors signed a petition for annexation to Kansas (p. 66). He cites J. Sterling Morton's *Illustrated History of Nebraska* (Lincoln, 1905-1913).

18. Leavenworth *Daily Times*, July 9, 11, 1859.

19. *Herald of Freedom*, May 28, 1859.

The Wyandotte constitutional convention held its first session on July 5, 1859, permitting the delegates from southern Nebraska to sit as honorary members of the convention "with the privilege of participating in the discussion of the subject of the northern boundary of the State of Kansas." However, the state boundaries which were first proposed excluded far western Kansas by setting the western boundary at the 25th parallel of longitude west from Washington (102°) and left out southern Nebraska by establishing the northern boundary at the 40th parallel of latitude. The first and only real debate in the convention between "Big Kansas" and "Little Kansas" men did not occur until July 16.

On July 15 one of the delegates from southern Nebraska spoke to the convention in behalf of the movement to secure the annexation of that area to Kansas, and on the following day the convention took up the question of boundaries. The chief opposition to the annexation of southern Nebraska seemed to come from Republicans in general and southern Kansans in particular. S. O. Thatcher of Douglas county feared that the annexation of southern Nebraska would permit the Democrats to regain control of the government of Kansas, and thus he (and, he declared, southern Kansans) opposed the annexation movement. W. R. Griffith of Bourbon county in southern Kansas objected to the Platte river boundary, but he suggested other reasons. Griffith believed annexation of southern Nebraska would endanger the chances of Kansas for immediate statehood and would considerably delay Nebraska's chances for statehood. James J. Blunt of Anderson county, also in southern Kansas, stressed the idea that southern Kansans wanted to retain the balance between the agricultural and the commercial interests which then existed in Kansas. According to Blunt these people feared that annexation would permit the commercial interests to dominate Kansas because of the large river border area which would result. Eventually these opponents of annexation carried the day in regard to the northern boundary.

The matter of the western boundary also received attention. Before debate began on July 16 the suggestion was made to set the western boundary at the 23d parallel of longitude west rather than the 25th as had been suggested earlier. This recommendation resulted from the belief that the "State of Jefferson" which was being discussed in the gold region would have its western boundary along the crest of the Rockies. If so, Kansas should set its western



boundary farther back than the 25th parallel of longitude in order to permit the proposed state (Jefferson) to have a larger area.<sup>20</sup>

This suggestion undoubtedly was not well received by S. D. Houston of Riley county (on the western fringe of the then settled part of Kansas) who was the champion of "Big Kansas" in regard to the western boundary. Houston said, "If we can get the boundary designated by congress in the Kansas-Nebraska bill, and get a road to the mountains, I ask if it is not a question of some magnitude whether Kansas shall not have the grand Pacific Railroad of the country. . . . Suppose you go on and adopt the 25th meridian, you leave Kansas some three hundred miles from the mountains." He continued, "I'd rather have it go to those regions of gold." Houston did not feel that a state the size of the Territory of Kansas would be too large, and he cited the examples of Texas, California, and Oregon. He concluded that if Kansas wanted to be a great state it must secure for itself a large expanse of territory.

William C. McDowell, of Leavenworth county, answered Houston by declaring that the region between the 23d parallel and the gold fields consisted of desert land. McDowell asserted that the gold fields did not have to be included in Kansas territory in order to guarantee the flow of their wealth to Kansas territory. "It will inevitably flow to us." In addition McDowell opposed the type of people who would inhabit the gold region, and feared that the population in that area might soon be greater than that in eastern Kansas, thus wresting control of the territory away from the eastern part.

James J. Blunt of Anderson county stated that the eastern and the western areas of Kansas differed too much, and that conflict would result unless they were split at the 23d, 24th, or the 25th parallel. B. Wrigley of Doniphan county agreed with Blunt, but added that he favored "making the western boundary on the 23d meridian, because I am in favor of attaching Southern Nebraska on the north."

Houston answered his opponents by stating, "How large would a State have to be to be too large? . . . you can run a railroad from here to the mountains in a few years. Is that too large?" Also, he said, far western Kansas was not a desert, otherwise how could all the buffalo roam that area?

20. The move to establish a "State of Jefferson" was an extra-legal step by some of the people who had gone to the gold fields.—See Frederic L. Paxson, "The Territory of Jefferson: A Spontaneous Commonwealth," *The University of Colorado Studies*, Boulder, v. 3 (November, 1905), pp. 15-19.

Houston's words were to no avail. On July 28 when the western boundary question came up again the convention decided to set the border at the 25th meridian west of Washington. The final boundaries for the state of Kansas were: In the south, the 37th parallel; for the east, the western boundary of Missouri; in the north, the 40th parallel; and for the west, the 25th parallel of longitude west of Washington (102°).<sup>21</sup> This development crushed the hopes of the "Big Kansas" advocates and defeated their schemes to annex southern Nebraska and to retain far western Kansas. The controversy did not cease, however, with the close of the convention, and the political character of the argument became more and more evident.

The convention's decision on boundaries brought forth an abundance of newspaper comment upon the move to exclude territory. Most newspapers favored the decision. The Lawrence *Republican* stated that the exclusion of both southern Nebraska and far western Kansas was wise. "It is entirely evident that the gold region could not be included in our government. A State 700 miles long is out of the question." Furthermore, the newspaper declared, the miners would oppose inclusion in such a state. The *Republican* added that the interests of the western area were entirely different from those of the eastern area. Under these circumstances an attempt to force the miners into a political unit which they opposed would be all wrong. Kansans who had striven for popular rights so long should not deny them to the miners. Kansas without the gold region would still be a very large state, but a compact and homogeneous one. The *Republican* bitterly attacked the criticism of the constitution by Democrats and pointed out that they had protested against a large state in the convention but now were complaining because the gold fields had been left out. The real reason for their opposition, said the Lawrence paper, was that they opposed the Free-State character of the constitution.<sup>22</sup>

Another Kansas newspaper, upon hearing that both southern Nebraska and far western Kansas had been rejected by the constitutional convention, announced, "We are fully convinced that this will be the best for Kansas." Later this paper asserted, "The citizens of the gold region and of Nebraska are both busy in organizing state governments, and yet the Democrats would have us believe

21. *Kansas Constitutional Convention, A Reprint of the Proceedings and Debates of the Convention Which Framed the Constitution of Kansas at Wyandotte in July, 1859* (Topeka, 1920), pp. 15, 95, 186, 187, 205-212, 231, 232, 233, 235, 237, 238, 243-246, 250, 257, 337, 375.

22. *Lawrence Republican*, July 1, August 11, 25, 1859.

that the Wyandot Convention did a fatal thing in not embracing both sections within the limits of Kansas."<sup>23</sup>

Other newspapers advanced similar arguments. The *Freedom's Champion* of Atchison noted that the people in the gold fields had set the 25th meridian west of Washington as the eastern boundary of their proposed state of Jefferson. This line was the same as the western boundary established by the Wyandotte convention and showed how the miners felt about the boundary.<sup>24</sup> The *Emporia News* asserted itself in favor of the restricted boundaries because the 300 to 500 miles of uninhabited country between eastern and western Kansas created a large gulf between the two sections and also because the miners wanted independence.<sup>25</sup> The *Topeka Tribune* and the *Elwood Free Press* favored the restricted boundaries as set up by the convention.<sup>26</sup>

Only a few newspapers voiced opposition to the decision to cut back on the limits of the proposed state of Kansas. The *Herald of Freedom* of Lawrence disapproved of the expulsion of the mining region with its mineral and forest wealth and maintained that a Kansas reduced in size could not be an important state. Also, this newspaper feared the exclusion of the far western area would injure the chances of Kansas to obtain a railroad.<sup>27</sup> One Leavenworth paper opposed the Wyandotte constitution "because it circumscribes our boundaries, and does not give us territory enough for a first-class State."<sup>28</sup> Two arguments were stressed by the *Lecompton Kansas National Democrat* in protest against the boundary provisions of the constitution. This newspaper stated that the loss of the population in far western Kansas might result in a congressional rejection of the Wyandotte constitution because of insufficient population in Kansas. Also, the *Democrat* said the constitution "disfranchises thousands of the citizens of Kansas settled beyond the western boundary as fixed by the constitution. . . ."<sup>29</sup>

Speakers at various political meetings in the fall of 1859 joined in the argument, but these politicians tended to discuss primarily the elimination of the western portions of Kansas territory from the proposed state. These speeches illustrated more clearly what was already apparent in the newspaper controversy: The dispute over

23. *Leavenworth Daily Times*, July 18, August 12, 1859.

24. *Freedom's Champion*, September 3, 1859.

25. *Emporia News*, August 13, 1859.

26. *Topeka Tribune*, August 18, 1859; *Elwood Free Press*, August 20, 1859.

27. *Herald of Freedom*, July 30, August 20, 1859.

28. *Leavenworth Weekly Herald*, September 24, 1859.

29. *Kansas National Democrat*, Lecompton, September 29, 1859.

the western boundary was to a large extent political in nature and concerned the conflict between Democrats and Republicans. Many Democrats opposed the exclusion of the western territory, while many Republicans approved of the rejection.

The speeches of various people demonstrated this political division. James H. Lane spoke at a rally in Leavenworth in support of the Wyandotte constitution in August, 1859. Lane favored letting the miners set up a territorial or state government of their own and thus subscribed to the boundaries set up by the constitution. M. F. Conway spoke at the same rally, stressing the same points.<sup>30</sup> A few days later Conway gave a speech at a Republican rally in Atchison and said, among other things, "had we retained the Pike's Peak region, the mere mileage of the members of the Legislature and officers going to and returning from the State capital, would more than exceed the cost of the whole State Government."<sup>31</sup> Marcus Parrott, delegate to congress, who ran on the Republican ticket in November, 1859, and was reelected, spoke in favor of the western boundary as set up by the Wyandotte constitution at a Republican rally at Olathe in August, 1859.<sup>32</sup> Ex-Gov. Frederick P. Stanton made a speech at Lawrence in October in which he accused the Democrats of supporting the exclusion of the gold region in the convention, but then turning against the proposition in the months since in an attempt to defeat the constitution. "Doubtless, if the old boundaries had been retained, the Democrats would have been equally loud in their complaints and denunciations."<sup>33</sup>

The Democrats did protest against the expulsion of the far western area. At a Democratic meeting in Kickapoo in August a speaker named Park said the setting of the western boundary at the 25th meridian cut off valuable territory.<sup>34</sup> At a meeting in September at Delaware, Gen. A. C. Davis, speaking for the Democrats, asserted, "The Constitution severs the Territory in the midst of the only desert which it contains, and cuts off that rich country on the West." He believed that if Kansas would retain this western area it would be able to offer more inducements to Pacific railroad builders.<sup>35</sup>

The purpose of most of these speeches was to prepare the people for the vote on the Wyandotte constitution which took place on

30. *Leavenworth Daily Times*, August 16, 1859.

31. *Freedom's Champion*, August 27, 1859.

32. *Lawrence Republican*, September 1, 1859.

33. *Ibid.*, November 3, 1859.

34. *Leavenworth Weekly Herald*, August 13, 1859.

35. *Ibid.*, October 1, 1859.

October 4, 1859. The advocates of the constitution emerged triumphant, with a vote of 10,421 for the constitution and 5,530 against it.<sup>36</sup> Undoubtedly the western and northern boundary issues were only two of the many issues involved, but on those particular questions the "Little Kansas" men won a victory.

The next big step for supporters of the Wyandotte constitution was the attempt to secure recognition by the national congress. In the discussions in congress the western boundary question continued to receive attention. Even before the Wyandotte constitution had gained the approval of the people of Kansas, reports had circulated that the constitution would be turned down by congress. The chief reason for this expected rejection was that the population of Kansas would not be large enough, since the exclusion of the Pike's Peak country might bring the population of Kansas down below the 93,000 required by the English act.<sup>37</sup>

After the Wyandotte constitution had secured the assent of the citizens of Kansas, serious discussion of it began in Washington. As early as December, 1859, a Leavenworth newspaper reported that the "admission [of Kansas] will be made contingent upon an acceptance of the Gold Region as part of our domain," and in January, 1860, the paper reported that "the Democracy have endeavored to create the impression that the Gold Region is a legitimate portion of Kansas, and that the Wyandotte Constitutional Convention exceeded their authority in excluding it from the limits of our State." The journal called for a memorial by the Kansas legislature declaring against the inclusion of the gold region within Kansas and in favor of the establishment of an independent territory in that area. Such a move might defeat "the hope of the Democracy . . . to prevent the creation of more *Free States*," the newspaper asserted.<sup>38</sup>

This endeavor to attach the gold region to Kansas continued to possess strength as the bill to admit Kansas into the Union came under discussion in congress. The reason the Democrats were trying to attach the gold fields to Kansas, one newspaper charged, was their belief that such a step either would prevent passage of the bill to admit Kansas or else would prevent the organization of a new territory in the gold region.<sup>39</sup>

Rep. Galusha A. Grow introduced a bill for the admission of

36. *Leavenworth Daily Times*, November 4, 1859.

37. *Leavenworth Weekly Times*, August 13, 1859.

38. *Leavenworth Daily Times*, December 12, 1859, January 7, 1860.

39. *Lawrence Republican*, February 9, 1860.

Kansas into the Union on February 15, 1860, and six days later Sen. William A. Seward introduced a similar bill in the senate.<sup>40</sup> The following day the *Leavenworth Times* reported that southern senators were trying to fasten impossible conditions onto the bill. "Jefferson [the extra-legal territory set up in the gold region] shall be annexed—or Nebraska, or both—when Jefferson demands a separate political existence, and Nebraska asks admission as a State, each declaring that they cannot and will not be attached to Kansas."<sup>41</sup> By April 13 the house had admitted Kansas under the Wyandotte constitution but senate approval was yet to be secured. Then, on June 13 an announcement appeared in the press that Kansas had been thwarted in its statehood attempt by the majority of the Democrats in the senate, led by the Southern Democrats who opposed Kansas as a free state.<sup>42</sup>

About eight months later the state of Kansas came into being with the restricted boundaries established earlier by the Wyandotte constitution, and Kansas included neither southern Nebraska nor the gold fields. The dream of the "Big Kansas" adherents was not fulfilled, but possibly the "Little Kansas" advocates were more realistic, since apparently large numbers of people in both the gold region and in southern Nebraska opposed any enabling act which would have created a "Big Kansas." Also, the smaller Kansas seemed to contain enough territory to enable it to develop satisfactorily in subsequent years.

40. *Congressional Globe*, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., pp. 795, 848.

41. *Leavenworth Daily Times*, February 22, 1860.

42. *Ibid.*, April 13, June 13, 1860.