

Roughing It on Her Kansas Claim: The Diary of Abbie Bright, 1870-1871—*Concluded*

Edited by JOSEPH W. SNELL

III. THE DIARY, JULY-DECEMBER, 1871

JULY 2—Last evening I saw a deer leap over the sand hills. A shower is coming, we need rain badly. The boys brought more wild plums. *They are nice, not like the wild plums East. They are more like our tame red plums.*

[JULY] 3RD—I had expected to spend the 4th at home. Saw Jake to day, and he says there is to be a picnic down at the old Indian Encampment, and all the neighborhood is invited. Mr. Smith is coming for me ct. Baked in a.m. Good bread, How Philip enjoys it. Called at Roses [Ross'] this p.m. Mr. R[oss] gave me a snake rattle with 10 buttons, It must have been a big snake. Mosquitos so bad I must stop.

[JULY] 4TH—The glorious fourth, not a cloud in the sky. Mr. Smith came for me with a two horse wagon, and we took other women along on the way. There were two dozen there counting the children. Five or six bachelors, I the only single woman—the rest married folks and children.

Of course they teas me. They think I am an old maid 22 and not married Girls marry so young out here.

As I have no stove— they had sent me word not to do any baking. Mrs. Rose [Ross], Mrs. Lane and Mrs. Springer [Summers] had all baked a plenty. Then we had canned fruit, lemonadade—coffee and roast meats. A swing for the children, gay conversation for the elders.

I am tired this evening. Philip did not go to the picnic.

[JULY] 5TH—Washed this a.m. to the garden this p.m. From here it is quite a walk, over a mile. From the garden it is not far to where my dug out is to be. I wish it was finished, for I think Philip would be better if we were farther from the river.

A little way from here and toward the garden, are sand hills. Sometimes I walk a crost them, and sometimes around them. The bigest is 15 or 20 feet high, and hollowed out like a saucer.

The wind blows the sand that way. There are fine yuccas growing

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near there, with bloom stalks higher than I am. The other way from here— toward the North [West] house— is Philip's corn and mellon field. A Mr. Philips was here for supper. He and a Mr. [George] Cramer have claims up the river—and live in a dugout.

[JULY] 6TH—While I am not living on my claim, it is beeing improved all the time. The dugout will soon be finished, and for Philips sake I will be glad to get away from the river. The people here think I am a bunch of contentment, because I dont get homesick, and fuss. If I do not feel well or am blue, I dont tell every Tom, Dick, or Harry, that is all, except that I possess a big bump of adaptability. When brother is not well, I try to be cheerful and hopeful, although I could say, and with truth.

"I am not merry, but would feign disguise
The thing I am, by seeming otherwise."

[JULY] 7TH—This a. m. went to Roses [Ross'] and ground a lot of coffee. . . . *When we went to house keeping, the neighbors said, "if you are only going to stay six months, I would not get this, or that, it won't be worth while, and we will lend you those things." So we get along with few, and don't borrow much either. Sometimes I put the coffee in a bag and pound it.*

Mr. Rose [Ross] brought me a big letter from my home. He said "Miss B—— if you dont get decent letters, you need not expect me to hurt myself carrying them to you." *He is a funny man.*

Mr. Ross has a brother here who is widower. Mrs. Lane teases me about him. I am so used to being teased I just grin and bear it.

[Mr. Ross] . . . keeps a suply of quinine on hand, and some other drugs, and suplies those who have ague— and there are several afflicted now.

But it is Mrs. Rose [Ross] who is the Good Samaritan in this locality. One day when I was there, she was taking care of a sick hearder, who was lying in the shade of the house. She was making broth for him ct.

[JULY] 8TH—While I am waiting for the boys to come to dinner I [will] try and write. You know my object in coming here was a desire to cross the Mississippi and a love of traveling. Well when I came, every body had taken a claim, or was going to. So brother said I should take one too. It was the fashion— and fashion has a great influence on some people. Any person over 21 years of age, can file on 160 acres of land live on it six months, put up a house, do some plowing ct. then pay \$1.25 an acre, and get a pattent or deed. This is the Osage Indian Land that was put on the market within a few years. There is splendid land here, and a prospect of

a railroad near, so some think the claims will become valuable in time.

To be sure a person must put up a great many inconveniences; but to me it is a[?]ility and I think it fine to live this way a while. I have been here some months, and although I have not been living on the claim I have been improving it.

[JULY] 10TH—Last Saturday I walked way past Lanes, down to Marklies [Taylor Markley's], Mr. M[arkley] had told Philip he would be away over Sunday, and his wife was so timid, so P[hilip] suggested I go and spend the night with her. She was so glad to see me, she could talk of nothing else for a while.

They are only half a mile from the [cattle] trail. Sunday a.m. we saw coming over the divide a great heard of cattle *I heard afterwards there were 2300 in the heard*—and some hours later another heard *and so it was all day*. They crossed the river *at the ranch* and moved on toward Wichita.

While we were eating dinner, we heard a noise, and some two dozen oxen [longhorns] had come over the river and were in her garden— We yelled—and with a broom tried to drive them away — Then they went to a corn patch, and it was not safe to leave the house—as they get cross— and their immense horns are wicked looking. Mr. Rose [Ross] told me he had seen steers whos hornes were five and six feet from tip to tip. He also said they were driven north— butchered, and the meat packed in their own hornes—and shipped to Chicago, Such yarns I hear a plenty. Well it was 4 p.m when some men came riding a crost the river for the cattle, and in that time they had nearly destroyed two acres of corn.

I had promised to go to the grove where we had the pic nic, and help organize a bible class, but it was so late before it was safe for me to leave, that I went direct home. J. R had been sick. Jake had been down and took him up with him— I have not done much to day.

Looks like a heavy storm was coming.

[JULY] 11TH—Baked. Slow raising and took me all morning. Plenty of rain last night. The storm must have been terrific out on the prairie.

Philip saw a header who told him a heard of 2000 cattle had stampeeded in the night *down on Slate Creek*, and scattered in every direction. Not likely they will ever find them all. I am so glad they never come this way.

[JULY] 12—I am out of sewing. The river to high to go to Roses [Ross'], and it is too far [to] walk to Springers [Summers'] to get

some stitching done. P[hilip] has had a touch of ague again. Fixed some plums to dry. Wrote a four page account of the picnic. Will send it to a W[ichita] paper.²⁷

[JULY] 13TH—The warmest day we have had. *Out on the prairie there is a good breeze but between the sand hills and the trees, we get little breeze.* I scarcely know what to do, just now I am seeing considerable of the unromantic part of life in Kansas. Even too warm to sleep.

[July] 15TH—Yesterday went to Roses [Ross']—Sewed, and stayed to supper. This a. m. the children came, we forded the river, and went pluming. Gathered eight quarts.

[JULY] 16TH—A cool windy night, and a good sleep. Some of the boys are down from W[ichita]. They stop at the North [West] house, which we call Bachelors Hall. They called this a. m. Brought me some mail. They were full of fun. They are working hard to pay for their claims. Wichita is 18 months old, and claims 1000 inhabitants. It is a fast place in more ways than one.

[JULY] 17TH—Washed, hung the clothes on the bushes to dry.
. . . My washings do not amount to much, two dark shirts for the boys, towels, a sheet and pillow slip, a few things for my self. I have such an old camp kettle to boil clothes in, I do not boil my better clothes as it would rust them.

The boys do not bother me with bed clothes, they sleep on two buffalo robes, and a lot of blankets. They sleep out doors most of the time. I have no clothes line, hang them in the bushes & trees, and the breezes waft them dry. I have no irons, so I go up to Ross' and iron the few starched pieces not expecting to stay long. I am living as simply as possible. Glad when the clothes are clean and smell good.

I have named this home Cotton Wood Villa. Nearly out of writing paper— Home folks keep us in stamps— Mother send hops—and I make hop yeast— that is why the bread is so good and sweet. Jake rode down on a mule this eve. He is going to town to morrow. Phillip is sending along for some things. I asked him to bring me a pennys worth from town. When he left— I said "dont forget the pennys worth," and as P[hilip] was walking up the path with him, I called, "I must remind you of that pennys worth." He just hawhawed and laughed.

Some of these young men are nice, and we do have merry times, but it could not be, if my brother was not here. He is so quiet and particular, and would soon rebuke me if I should be indiscrete.

27. Abbie's article appeared in the *Wichita Tribune*, July 20, 1871.

He is a good brother. The Roses [Rosses], Jake and others think so much of him. Jake deserves a good wife, and I think there is one waiting for him in Ohio. . . .

JULY 19—Yesterday morning I baked, then went a crost the River for plums. While picking them 6 hearders passed on horse back. There was no trail or path, they go just where they want to. I filled my pail, or bucket, started to waid back, when I saw all six, up the river in a sand bank, a couple were washing clothes, the others were pelting each other with sand. It is quick sand, and very moist.

In p. m. sewed a while, then put the cabin in order, and started down the river waiding from one sand bar to another. So much easier, and nearer than going through the high grass, and not so likely to meet snakes. Today I saw the skelaton of a very long snake caught in the brush. It must have lodged there during the high water.

Mrs. Lane urged me to stay all night, but her brother is with her for company, and Mrs. Merkle [Markley] is alone again, so I went there, which I knew would please my brother. She was glad to see me. Her baby is too heavy to carry—so she stays at home when he is away working.

After breakfast, I called at Springers [Summers], and she went with me to Lanes. Found Mrs. L— in bed shaking with ague. Left Mrs. S— there and went on home. It was almost sun down. I was in the middle of the river on a sand bar—dress up—shoes in hand, when I stoped and looked around. The river made a turn, and the trees seemed to meet over the water. It seemed like a lake. On one side a high bank—the trees coming to the waters edge on the other. O it was beautiful. Think I will never forget the scene.

[JULY] 20—The usual a. m. work, then cut out a basque or sack for me. Am getting out of every day dresses, but have lots of petticoats. Called at Roses [Ross'] this eve. She had so much to tell of her trip to town, and I of my calls down river, we just laughed. The sun went down—and I had to hurry home. I dont like to cross the river unless I can see the sand bars, and it takes time to put off and on stockings and shoes. I promised to go back as soon as my sack is finished, and tell her all I know. "Yes," she said, "and you can manafacture some more in the meantime." The evenings are cool, the mosquitos not so bad.

Brother tells me Jake has ague. Too bad. Papers from home. How they remember us.

[JULY] 22.—Put off writing yesterday until evening, then I had bread to set—and beans to shell, then it was too late. The mellons

are almost ripe. The boys are working at my dug out. It is near our garden. Went up this p.m. to where they are working, then to the garden, and brought eatables home. Philip spoke to me about the old dress I had on, I like to please him so I will wear another. Mr. R[oss] has been to the post office— we have one at the ranch now called Clearwater I believe.

He is calling, and the boys have gone a crost the river. He is horse back, and on account of the quicksand it is dangerous to cross at night with a horse. Two letters for me.

[JULY] 24th—I wanted to wash but it was cloudy. I baked however, and sewed. J. R. will not be here this week, he will help Jake make hay. It is much pleasanter for me, when brother and I are alone. Jake rode by this eve with a big bunch of onions, when I asked for my pennys worth, he said it was up at the house, and if not worth coming for, I could not have it. Then he threw a big onion at me, and rode on. . . .

If it clears off I will wash this p.m. for I want to go down the river one day the beginning of the week. I am drying plums, it is slow work. Evening. Washed and ironed this p.m. After supper went up to Ross' to take their iron home. Mr. Ross asked me if I had seen an account of our pic nic in the Wichita paper. I said no, so he showed me the paper and sure enough, there was the article I had sent. I had signed myself Spectater. Must try and get some letters mailed tomorrow. Have an erand at Summers. Perhaps I may go to the P. O. myself. If I do, it will be the first time. One day this week I will go and sew for Mrs. Ross. If I can get that paper I will send it to you.

The cabin on the envelope is the best I can draw of this place. Back and to the left, are shoe mach [sumac] and arrowwood bushes. Sunflowers and grass grow on dirt roof. It faces the Ninnescah River with large trees between. A grape vine grows up the cabin side.

JULY 30TH—Have not written for some time, as I am nearly out of paper. We had a terrible storm last night, and this morning it just poured down. The roof leaked for the first time. I slept very little and am nodding now. The house looks very untidy, only one side leaked which was fortunate. *Thought I would wash tomorrow, so many things got wet and dirty last night, but I just brought a bucket of water from the river, which is very high, and so muddy, I cannot use it to wash now.*

The editor of the Wichita Tribune, sent me his compliments, and several papers. So I hear, but have not seen. The man who was

to have brought the papers is a hard case. Some threaten him with the "linch law" Do you know what it [is]? Well when they catch a horse thief they hang him to a tree, that is all.

[JULY] 31ST—The end of the month and I have accomplished so little. A good letter from sister Mary. All well at home.

AUG. 2ND—Yesterday washed, cloudy so put clothes on the grass to bleach. This a. m. rinsed— starched, and hung them up to dry. Ironed them as fast as they dried. Mrs. Rose [Ross] lends me her irons. Baked two loaves and a pan of yeast biscuits, made some medacine for Philip, by boiling some roots, stewed plums for supper, mended, went up the river on this side, and picked 3 qts. of plums. There are many green ones yet, and we have been using them six weeks. Wish they would last another six. This was my busy day. We have had corn some time, and the mellons are ripe.

Yesterday was mail day. I dont know when I will have a chance to send to the office. We have a P. O. at the ranch now. The P. O. master says, "Bright's Sister gets more mail than anyone else." I have five or six qts of plums dried. Some I scald in a strong sugar syrup, they are so nice. Dont think I will dry any corn until after we move. I will be farther away from Ross' then and cannot go there so often as I do now. Now I must get supper.

[AUG.] 3—Went to Lanes— They are going to town, and we sent along for \$10 worth of provision. Comming home I killed an ugly snake. Letters to day. . . .

[AUG.] 4—Rainy to day, Had expected Mrs. S[ummers] and Mrs. L[ane] to spend the day here. Mr. & Mrs. Lane were here for tea, we had the biggest mellon I ever saw, but ever. Have been all week making a doll for little Ida S[ummers]

[AUG.] 6TH—Baked up all my flour yesterday, went up to I[ng-mire's] in p. m. Should have gone before, Several of the family have the ague. Their roof leaks— and that is bad. . . .

We have so many water mellons.

When I came home, my limbs ached so badly, and such a head ache. I am afraid it will be ague.

Brother got some flour last night, so I baked two loaves of bread and two pies, and it is Sunday. My head but little better and my limbs ache so. I did not get any mail last night. That plegged creek the Cow Skin is so high, no mail can cross for three or four days. Too bad, for I am sure there are letters for me, between this and Wichita. There are three streams to cross to get to Wichita The Ninnescah— Cow skin and Arkansas, and usually one or the other are high. It has been cool for two weeks, and we have had

much rain. The crickets are so bad. When I turned my bed tick, there was a handfull in the corner, next the wall.

They eat holes in cotton goods. Lost a handkerchief up near the garden. When I found it, it was full of holes, and they were having a hop on and around it.

[Aug.] 7TH—Wonder if I am having the ague. Have had fever some days.

[Aug.] 8TH—Brother says, we will move soon. Felt well this a. m. Gave the cabin a good cleaning. The cat had dragged a rabbit under my bed, and eaten a part. Tom is a nice pet, but sometimes he is a nuisance.

Later I took the tub to the river, and washed the colored clothes. In p. m. went up river, on this side, and found two qts. of plums. Tired and dizzy when I got home.

[Aug.] 10TH—Baked yesterday, in p. m. fever came worse than ever. P[hilip] said I was getting ready for the ague, and had better take quinine. So I did, and this a. m. another dose, by to-morrow I think the quinine will help me. I do not have chills. Shall not tell the home folks, it would only worry them. Philip went to W[ichita] this morning, and will bring me writing paper. Copies of a W[ichita] paper and their compliments ct. came. I will write another article—as soon as I am free of this pesteriferous ague.

[Aug.] 12TH—Last eve Philip brought me three letters. Here comes the waggon and we move.

[Aug] 16TH—Moved at last. All I remember of the moving, was sitting in the waggon, holding the cat. When we got here, the fever had me, and I could not do a thing. Philip made a bed on the floor, and I laid down. My bed was not fixed yet. When evening came, I was better but scarcely able to walk. Philip had worked all day—besides moving, had hauled two loads of wood, and Sunday, was not able to be up. J. R. who has been working on his claim, and sleeping there, came over, but he is poor help.

We had callers too and the house all in confusion.

Monday I managed to bake, and Philip fixed things around the house, but at 11 had to lie down with chill, and in the p. m. I had to do the same. I had taken quinine but not enough. My fever was over by sun down, but his kept up all night. Yesterday a. m. it left for a short time, then came back, and he was delirious. When I cooled his head with wet towels, the tears would fall. I was in trouble.

When J. R. came for supper, I had him go and see Mr. Rose

[Ross], who came back with him. He said it was an attack of billous fever, and left medacine. This a. m. Mr. Rose [Ross] came again. Brother is better. I am so thankful—thankful—

This is my day for ague, but I have taken such big doses of quinine, it may not come back, but the quinine its self makes me half sick. Philip does not complain, he is so patient. I must lie down part of the time, but hope we will soon be well. I think it would have been better for us, had we moved from the river sooner.

[Aug.] 17TH—A letter, two papers, and two pens came, glad for all. Did not need to lie down all day. It is 4 p. m. have just one hour to write. Brother is still poorly, has fever sometimes, and dont know what he says. My appetite is coming back. These are our dark days, but I am not homesick. I am glad to be with P[hilip] every once in a while I can do something for him.

Sometimes I think if I had not come, he would not have stayed in this ague infected place.

[Aug.] 18TH—Last night he was wild with fever. I cannot write what I suffered. To day he is quite sane, but so weak. Washed this a. m. and baking now.

[Aug.] 19TH—The usual work then spent the rest of the day, trying to make something to tempt his appetite.

[Aug.] 20TH—This is Sunday, had expected to write so much, when my work was finished, but not dressed yet. Mrs. Springer [Summers] and son came. The mail came yesterday— a letter from sister Mary, in it a very handsome colar. and Mrs. L[ane] sent along fresh buffalo meat. So I was fixed for dinner.

J. R. had put a big mellon in the well to cool. After dinner when he brought it in, it slipped out of his hands shot right at Mrs. S[ummers], fell at her feet and broke in two—

It was so funny, I was glad to have something to laugh at. It eased a nervous strain I was suffering from. After they left I wrote a long letter home. Jake went to W[ichita] and has been sick and not returned yet. So many have, or had the ague, I believe it is always so in new settlements. Brother is getting well slowly, but his appetite is poor. Had intended having soup for dinner of the buffalo meat, but was too inexperienced to make it for company. We had [it] for supper however, and it was good, and he ate a little of it. *It is terrible to be sick, out on the frontier.*

[Aug.] 21ST—I call this place Cottonwood Rest. I want to describe it, if I can. So if I read this journal in years to come, I can then shut my eyes, and know just how it looks now.

This is Township 29, Range 2 West, in Section 29. I think this description is correct.²⁸

We are about a mile from the river. There is a bank here, which many think was the bank of the Ninnescha—at some time back. From here to the river it is very level, and my garden is on this level meadow not far from the dugout. Back of us is prairie a little rolling. The men first dug a well, and at 6 or 7 ft. found plenty of water. They covered it, and it is reasonably cool. Not far from the well they dug a trench like walk into the bank, when the sides were 4 ft. high a 12 by 14 ft. hole was dug out, logs laid to fit the sides. When high enough—a big log was laid acrost the middle the long way, then split limbs and brush were fit on top for a roof, and that covered with dirt piled on and pressed down. A fire place, and chimney were dug out and built up, at one end, plastered with mud and it answered well.

The logs used in Philips cabin as well as in this dugout, were trees cut down by Squaws the last two Winters. Owing to a scarcity of feed, caused partly by the grass having been burned in the fall, and an unusual amount of snow, the trees were cut down for the horses to eat the buds and limbs.

This room is a little larger than the cabin. My bed in the corner has one leg. A limb with a crotch at one end, is sharpened at the other end, and driven into the ground, 6 feet from one wall and $2\frac{1}{2}$ from the other. A pole is laid in the crotch—with one end driven into the ground wall. This supports poles the ends of which are driven in the ground wall at the head of my bed. Then comes my hay filled tick, and my bed is a couch of comfort. The double shawl along the side, and the single one at the end—and it looks neat. Next to the bed, is my trunk, then the table— The next side has the fire place. The door is opposite the table, then the buffalo robes on which brother sleeps, and his roll of blankets. While in the corner at foot of my bed are boxes and various things including the tub, which is often pushed under the bed.

Boxes are nailed to the wall, in which the table furniture is kept, also some groceries. Our chairs are pieces of logs.

[AUG.] 22ND—The day has been warm, the sun will soon set. I am sitting on the wood pile. The view from here is beautiful. In front is the meadow with its tall grass—and a few buffalo wallows, which are filled with sunflowers,

Acrost the river with its fringe of trees—is the I[n]gmire dugout. That is the only sign of civilization in my circle of vision. Then

28. Abbie had the S. E. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 29, T. 29 S., R. 2 W.

toward the right, a little back of the river are the sand hills and a clump of cottonwoods.

While farther on are Philips big trees—and the cabin which we cannot see from here. Still farther on are his corn and mellon field. While still farther on is the branch, with scrub trees, which shuts off the view of the North [West] house, where the men batch, and be yond that is another branch and brush, which cuts off their view of Lanes—Springers [Summers] and Merkels [Markley's].

"Beautiful for situation" this certainly is.

[Aug.] 23^d—Set the house to rights, made yeast, then went to the garden. Gathered two dozen late cucumbers—a cantilope and a mellon—and came back J. R. came with corn and we had dinner. After wards I com[b]ed and changed my dress and sat down to write letters. Later—Messers. Smith, Stafford²⁹ and Jake came. They teased Philip; told him "You wont keep your housekeeper long." "My gun is loaded" was all he answered, as he pointed to where his gun hung.

Jake is going to town, so I gave him letters to mail—and sent a lot of mellons along for them and Mrs. Lane. One of Philips steers died, they think of Texas fever. It is such a pity. He was a good worker— Now the yoke is spoiled.

[Aug.] 24th—Heavy shower last night. As we have no door to close it rained in some. Browned coffee ct.

[Aug.] 25th—This p.m. I sat down to write, when a waggon drove up to the door. I went out—and there was Mr. Rose [Ross] with brother H[iram Bright] from Ind. and cousin Tom [Evans] from Ill. We were so surprised and glad to see them.

SEPT. 1st—Wanted to write before; had no time. When one has nothing but a dutch oven to bake in, and four men to eat bread (J. R. does not stay on his claim as he should) it keeps one busy.

Must go back and write up. I had baked the Fri. they came. Then baked again Sat. to have bread and pies over Sun. It was supper time before I got ginger cookies baked. Brother H[iram] had found some elder berries at the river, enough fore one pie. There were five of us for dinner, so I cut it into five pieces, Mr. Rose [Ross] coming while we were at dinner. I treated him to my piece. *So I never got a taste of the pie, and there are no more elderberries. I flavored it with whiskey and they pronounced it good. We always have a bottle of whiskey on the shelf in case of snake bites, but I never knew any one to taste it.*

29. William H. Stafford was born in Indiana in 1842. When Abbie knew him he was still single but in 1882 he married Emma A. Boyd. He served in the 72^d and the 116th Indiana regiments during the Civil War, then moved to Illinois and finally to Kansas in 1870.—Andreas-Cutler, *History of Kansas*, p. 1408.

That day the men were up and over the country and along the river. When they came back at eve—they had made arrangement to go hunting Monday, and said I should bake a lot of bread. I set yeast that eve, and baked all a. m. Sunday, got dinner, after that was tidied up, I was glad to lie down. I had taken quinine to ward off the ague. I would not be sick while they were here, if I could help it. After resting, felt better and got supper. Another heavy shower and it came in at the door.

Monday put the house to rights, packed provision and bedding—and were ready when Jake drove up with a team of mules to a waggon, and J. R. and George [Cramer?], who lives with Jake, rode the other two. They loaded an open barrel in which to pack the meat, a sack of salt, wood to cook with, bacon & skillet, bread and coffeepot, ct. The driver [Jake Sohn] called to me "Here is a good place to sit," and I climbed up to the spring seat, over which a blanket was folded. "All ready" and away we went to the south west, away from the Ninnescah, all in gay spirits, *I was the only girl; they all treated me so thoughtfully.*

I had given up going on a hunt, after we had so much ague. Now we were on the way, and it was quite exciting—

The buffalo had been within six or eight miles of us a few days before. The hearers had shot some, and driven others away. Now there was no telling how far we would have to go, or if we would see any at all. When out about six miles we passed two carcasses that had lately been shot.

We went by a dogtown, and saw them frisk into their holes. We also saw antelopes, prairie chickens and a gray wolf. This was upland prairie, short grass—buffalo grass, no trees or brush in sight.

All watched to see the first buffalo—which we spied some five miles on, and to our left. We went on, and soon saw five more, within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. It was decided, that as Brother H[iram] and cousin Tom had to hurry home, the hunters would try to get one or more of those, and go no farther. So we camped there at Sandy creek, fed the mules—and had lunch. Philip and Jake being the best marks men—started in the direction of the buffaloes. The depression of the creek hiding them somewhat. They are very hard to kill, unless close enough to shoot them in the eye, or back of the shoulder. Rather than run a chance of losing them, they decided to wound them that they could not run far. The one Philip shot, had its leg broken and went a little farther, but the other one though wounded went a bout a mile. The men hitched the team, we drove near the first one, and we all got out of the waggon, they walked nearer.

I stayed by the team. We were all looking at the fallen monarch of the prairie, when unexpectedly he jumped up made a dash toward the team, which in turn dashed to run, I being near grabbed a bridle, and managed to hold them.

That was the buffalos last effort, he fell and was dead. *Unless you have seen one you have no idea how ugly and savage they are.*

The boys complimented me on "saving the day" as they said.

They began at once to cut up the meat, some at one anamel, and others had driven over to the one farther away. They saved only the hind quarters. While they were doing that—nine big ones passed within half a mile, and in the distance we saw a great heard cross the divide, graze on this side, then cross back.

We drove back to Sandy creek—and camped for the night, as it was well toward evening. The boys spread the waggon cover on the grass—then cut the meat in pieces to cool, and put it on the cover, while cousin Tom and I got supper.

We had brought wood for fire, and cooking water along.

Besides bacon—we had buffalo stake, bread and coffee, which we ate from and drank from tin cups. How all enjoyed that supper. How they joked and laughed, for every one was satisfied with the days sport.

My eyes hurt from looking so much, and the hot sun. Brother H[iram] put a robe under the waggon, and I laid down—using a comfort for cover, as it grew cool when the sun went down. I kept on my sun bonnet—to keep insects out of ears and hair. I did not sleep much, the boys were so noisy. A skunk chaced J. R. and he could not come back to camp, until one of the boys—went out and shot it. Then when all would get quiet, I suppose someone would say something funny, and another laugh would follow.

The first thing we heard Tuesday early, was brother H[iram] crowing with all his might. Some salted and packed the meat in the barrel, others got breakfast, and still others fed the mules.

That over we started back, with all the mules hitched to the waggon. I drove some miles "four in hand," and felt great.

Sometimes I drove through a buffalo wallow, where they had lately rolled in the dust, and we would all get a jolt. Brother H[iram] and cousin Tom, were pleased with the hunt: so was I. After we have been having the ague so much, I had not expected I would have a chance to go.

We reached home before noon. Mr. Rose [Ross] came and got some meat for himself and I[n]gmires—. We did not want much.

I set sponge [yeast] at once to bake, as the boys leave tomorrow and I want bread for their lunch. I pelted the sponge, and baked after the others had gone out to sleep.

Brother H[iram] wanted me to go with him, but I said no, I will stay the six months—and I wont leave P[hilip] now. Up early next morning. I wanted to go along as far as Lanes. A heavy dew, and the boys thought I had better stay home, but I wanted to go so badly.

They went ahead, I followed holding up my clothes the best I could. My shoes, stockings, and even garters got wet. When we reached North's [West's] house they were hitching the team. When we got to Lanes I got out, and they drove on. It hurt to see them go. Mr. & Mrs. L[ane] and her brother were all ailing. I tidied the house, and worked all a.m. to give her a rest. After dinner I got a chill then fever.

I said I must go home, I did not want to leave brother alone. She urged me to stay, that Mr. L[ane] would take me home in the morning. I knew how it would go in the morning, and said if they would get the pony, I'd go.

When I got as far as the North [West] house (bachelors Rest) I stoped to rest. George lifted me from the saddle, Mr. Smith made a cup of tea—and after a time was able to ride on, Mr. Smith insisting that George get a horse and ride along. I thank them whenever I think of it as I was hardly able to sit on the pony, and I found Philip with fever again.

SEPT. 1ST—Wrote to mother and rested.

SEPT. 2ND—Almost discouraged, Philip still has fever. I had another chill, and have no appetite.

[SEPT.] 3D—Baked two loaves for over Sunday. If we dont eat more, they will last a long time. I fed and watered the ox. He is quite a pet, although he has long hornes, I am not afraid of him. I fed him corn and mellons. When I call him, he comes as far as the roap will let him. I was moving him to a new feeding place, and he put his nose on my shoulder. Too bad his mate died. They were such a good yoke of oxen—and so tame.

Thousands and thousands of Texas cattle, were driven north this Summer. Some have been allowed to graze on this side of the river before crossing. Texas cattle generate—I think that is the word—in their feet during the long trip, a substance that poisons the grass— This does not hurt them—but if native cattle eat that

grass it poisons them and they die of what is called Texas fever.³⁰ That is what killed the one ox.

Philip thinks he is a little better this evening. J. R. just came. He should stay more on his clame. Brother H[iram] brought us apples, material for a shirt for P[hilip] and calico for me a dress. Such a lot of writing paper—and buff envelopes. P[hilip] had brought a lot along from W[ichita]. So I'll not soon be out of writing material.

[SEPT.] 4TH—Philip scarcely able to walk. J. R. said he would go to Roses [Ross'] for medacine yesterday p.m. Then put it off until to day. Now he is sitting on the wood pile. Philip said "Can you go?" Yes, I am planning to go, as soon as the table is emptied, I told him.

I am stronger than yesterday. Arming myself with a stout cane off I started. It is hard walking through the long meadow grass. When near the river I saw a big snake curled up under a tree. It did not move, and I backed away, badly scared. I had my cane, but was too weak to kill it.

I called acrost to Roses [Ross'], who live near the bank, and one of the girls brought the medacine over. Mrs. R[oss] has the ague now. Coming home the wind waved the grass that it looked like waives, and I got dizzy— I feared I would fall, and wondered what next—

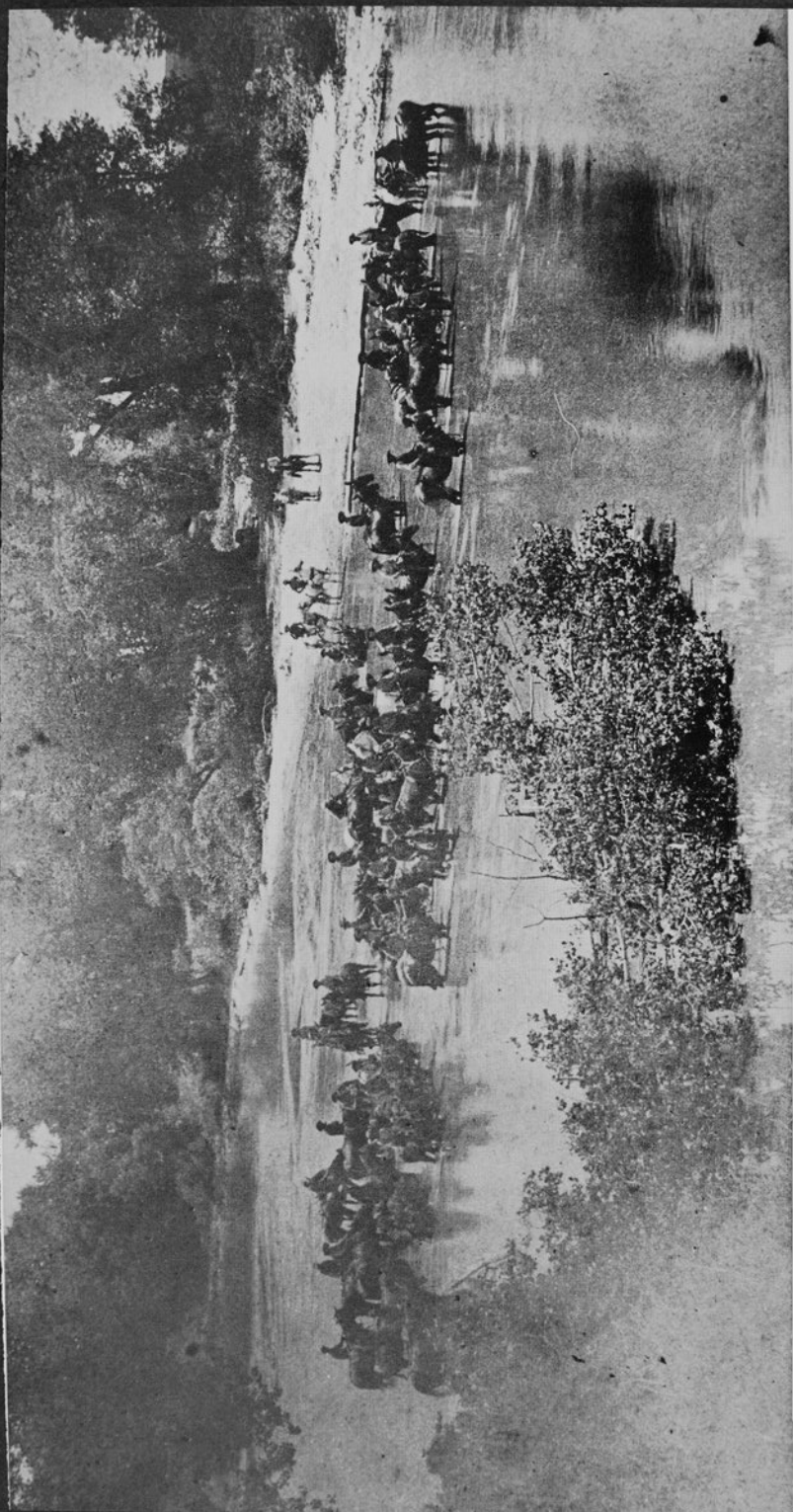
I finily got to a bunch of Sunflowers that grew in a buffalo wallow. There I shut my eyes, and rested in their shade until I felt stronger— Brother was watching for me, and glad I got back, while I was glad to give him the medacine, and lie down.

This p.m. I made new pickle for the meat and fixed some to dry. After it is salted enough I get on top the dugout and hang it down the chimney. Very very handy—only one must be careful not to have a big fire.

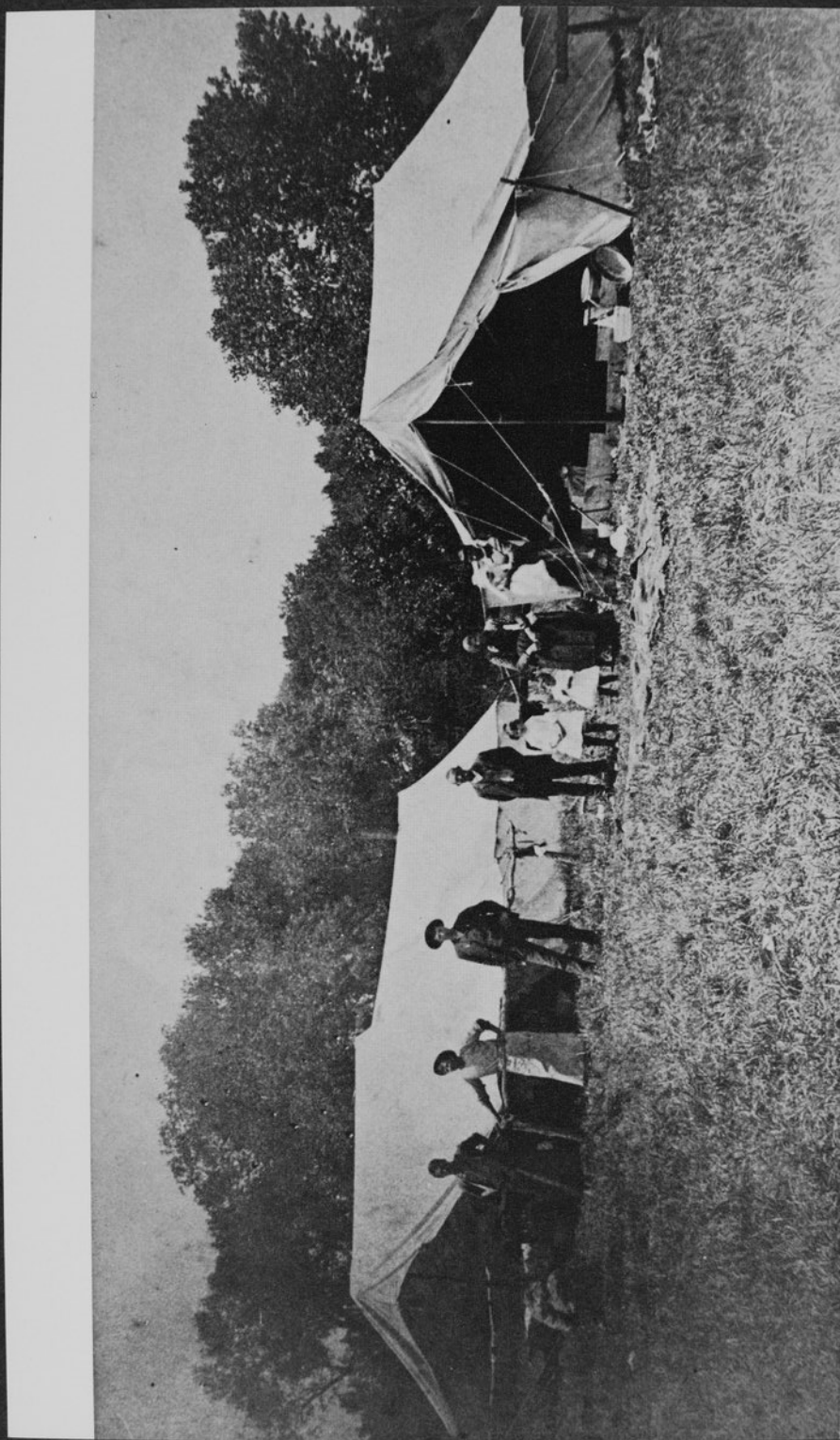
I am asked sometimes if I am not sick of Kansas. No I am not. It is very sickly, nearly every one gets the ague. But so it is in most new settlements, and one is not always careful. Philip was hardly over the billous attach, when we went on the buffalo hunt, and the long ride in the sun was too much for him. I took that walk through the wet grass the morning the boys left, and I think that brought on the chills and fever again.

Mr. Smith had chills and fever, and was flighty, he thought he

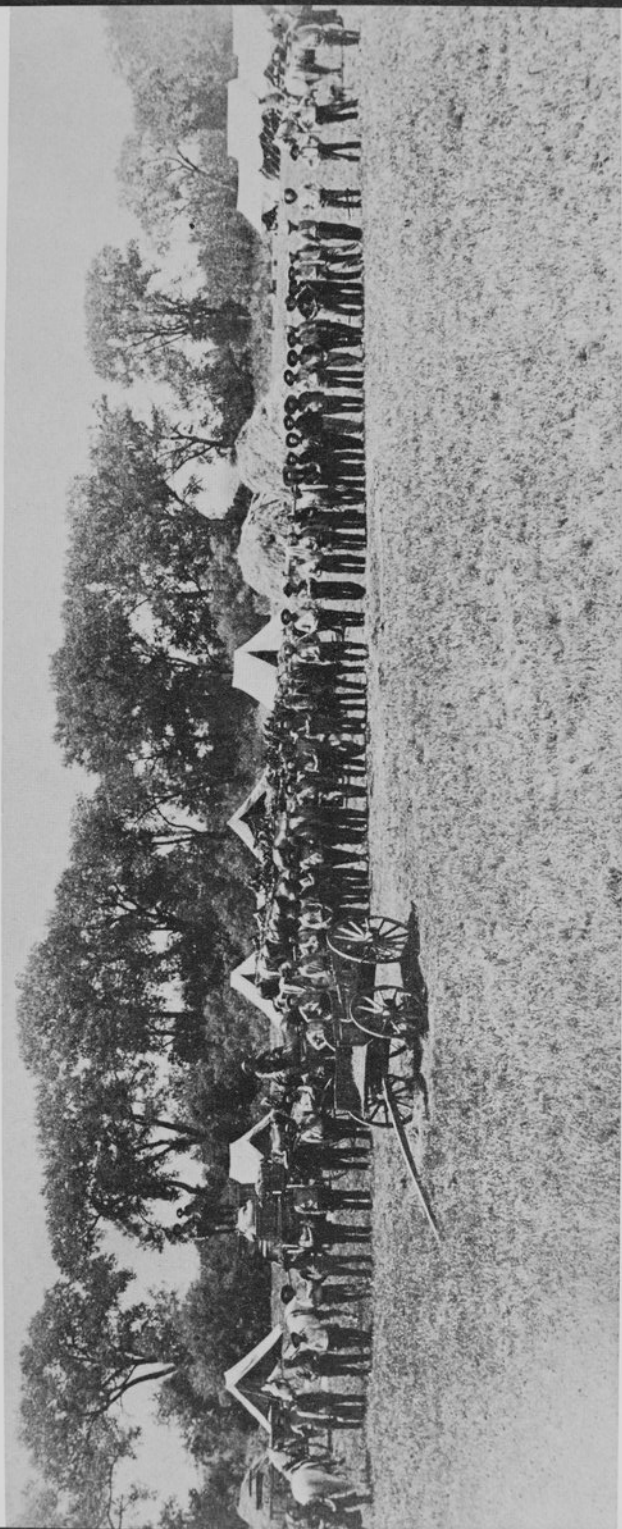
30. Texas or splenic fever was carried by ticks which infested the immune Texas long-horns. Domestic cattle were particularly susceptible to the disease, which was a constant menace to the welfare of Kansas farmers in the areas of the cattle trails. The modern name for Texas fever is bovine piroplasmiasis or bovine babesiosis.



This and the following two photographs, taken in 1886, show work crews of the Chicago, Kansas and Western railroad (long since abandoned) then building across the property of Philip Bright. The picture may have been taken at the site of the future railroad crossing of the Minnescah river.



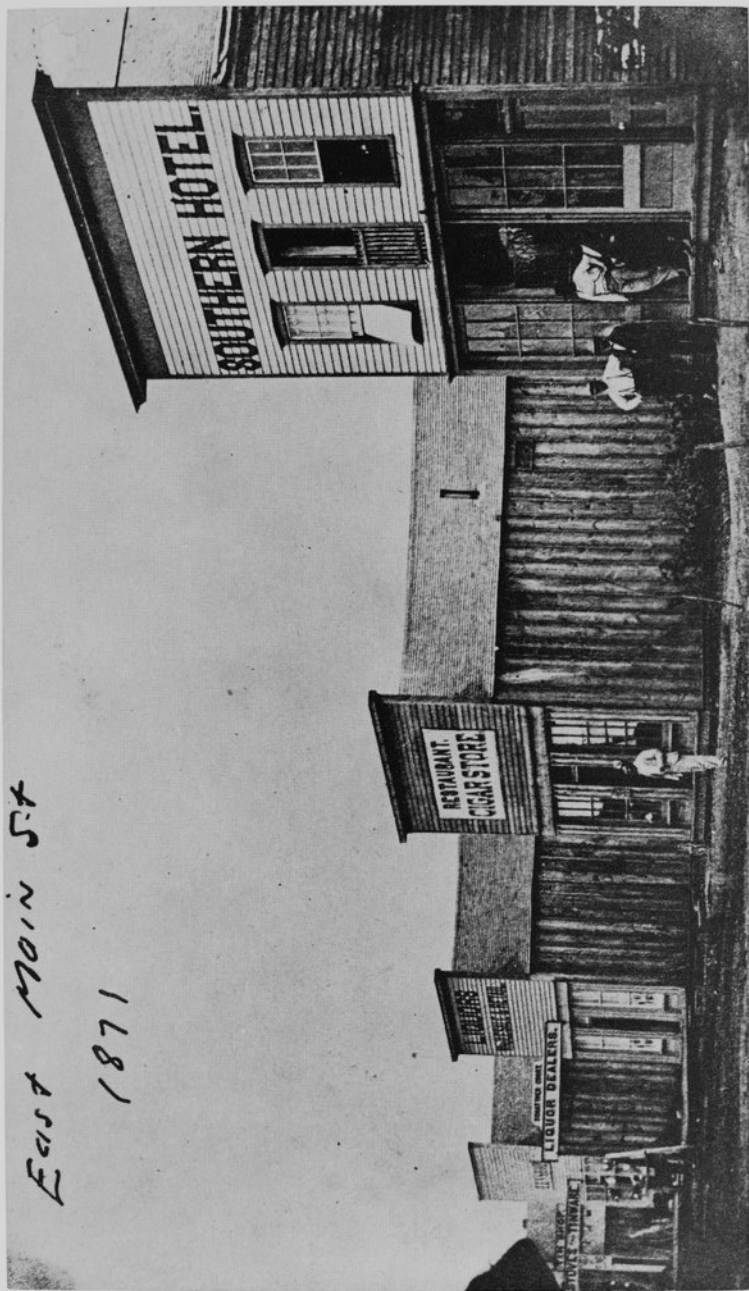
Abbie wrote of this picture, "On Philip's claim in Kansas along the Ninnesch river. The cabin was across the river, among the trees."



"Taken when the R- R- was built through Philip's claim. Our cabin was among the trees. The Ninnescah river is back of the tents."

East Main St

1871



As Abbie departed from Kansas late in November, 1871, she visited Mrs. A. C. McLean in the Southern Hotel on East Main street, Wichita. Photo courtesy Wichita Historical Museum Association.

had a two story head, and could not keep track of the upper story. That amused the boys. With all our ague—some funny things happen—and on our free days—we have some hearty laughs. I do not write all that happens—only a sketch.

The sun is setting, the sky is a glorious vision of colors.

[SEPT.] 5TH—Another day gone, and little done, Philip is so concerned lest I do too much, and get sick. . . . *This p. m. I sewed, mended, made a bag out of a gingham apron, for the dried meat. The meat hung around until I was tired seeing it. I want to take some East when I go home. When the hearers out here need meat, they kill a steer, slice the meat thin, hang it on roaps in the air, and it soon dries. Then it is called "jerked meat." The air out here on the prairie is so dry and pure, it soon dries. Mrs. Lane gave me some jerked meat they had bought from a hearer. It was sweet and nice.*

Philip is much better. His appetite is much better than mine. J[ohn] went away this morning. I watered Reddie [the ox] this evening. Had to dip so much water. Another lovely evening.

[SEPT.] 6TH—Philip continues to improve, his appetite is coming back.

I tend the ox—must dip up so much water for him. This a. m. washed, p. m. baked two loaves of bread and a pie. Had the ox to feed and water this evening again.

Will answer letters now.

[SEPT.] 7TH—The sun is just setting, a great red ball in the West. To the south we see a great volumn of smook. A prairie fire, but out of sight.

[SEPT.] 10TH—Have not written for two days. Had time, but there was nothing of special interest to write. Finished P[hilip's] shirt, all but button holes. No mail for some days. Two weeks ago brother H[iram] was here. Time passes— My six months will soon be up. Philip wanted to take me on a trip to Indian Territory, but we have both been too ailing. I think I will go home, and he will likely spend the winter in Indiana. Have been thinking of going to the cabin, since I feel stronger. Went this p. m. Took my time and walked slowly. Sometimes it seemed as if I was taking good bye looks. Perhaps I was. It is a long walk. I find I am not nearly as strong as when I came to Kansas.

We have corn, mellons and potatoes—back of the cabin. I tried to eat a mellon—but have taken so much quinine, that mellons sicken me. Such a lot going to waste.

The cabin, so lonely— I could not even rest there— The walks to well and river grown over. It did not seem like the old cheerful place, and I left— Went up the river to the plum patch, found three qts.

Was acrost the river from the Rose [Ross] house. Would have gone over, but had on such an old torn dress— I still have a little self respect left.

Coming home I stopped at my garden and got sweet corn for supper. Had dried apples soaking. Stewed some plums—drained them, and boiled the apples in the plum juice, and they are much better.

Do not think I will have a chill tomorrow. I am getting thin, I will soon look like the man who had ague so long, that he looked like two knitting needles, stuck in a mellon seed, as Bess Bee [Belle Butler] said of some one.

[SEPT.] 14TH—George came with mail. Jake had been to the P. O. Two letters and two papers. Mr. Smith is sick again. George said they expected the doctor from Wichita. I gave him letters, and asked him to give them to the Dr. to mail in W[ichita]. George had scarcely gone when I had a chill and went to bed. Philip got supper, and made me a cup of tea.

Last week W[ichita] Tribune had "Here and there from Brains journal" on front page. Quite flattering, but it was too poor an article for such a conspicuous place.³¹ John went down the river this morning— wish he would stay a week— makes me so much less work.

[SEPT.] 15TH—Philip had a chill to day, but it did not last long.

The baking was a trouble to day, I must make new yeast before I bake again. Mother sent me hops again—and I will make yeast soon.

When Mrs. North [West] moved to town—she gave me her cat Jimmie, Now the mice and rats are so bad up at Bachelor Hall, that they borrowed Jimmie.

I will miss him. He often slept at my feet.

When on our hunting trip, the handle of the teakettle was broken, and it made it very unhandy to use. Now Philip has fixed it. He is so handy about the house, when he is well. He made a darning needle for me, out of a piece of wire. Browned coffee, and pounded a can full, in p. m. copied my expenses for the year, and did other writing.

31. Abbie's second article was a condensed version of her diary written in a facetious manner. It appeared in the *Tribune*, September 7, 1871.

[SEPT.] 16TH—There were two angry people here to day—and we are not our good natured selves yet. J. R. uses P[hilip's] blankets. Fortunately he sleeps out, or up at his clame most of the time when not working down at the ranch or elsewhere. This morning P[hilip] saw that they were lousy. His indignation was justafiable.

We put one at a time in the big camp kettle and boiled them, and I finished them in the tub. Such heavy work. Now I hope he will get blankets of his own, and sleep else where. I hope we wont be sick tomorrow, it will be Sunday, and I must go and do some baking.

[SEPT.] 17TH—Neither of us feeling well to day. Letters for both & papers. The other day I heard some one call— Went to the door, there was a hearder on a horse, when he saw me, he jerked off his hat. He was surprised to see a woman. He inquired about some lost horses—then rode on. His horse had four brands W.4-O-A. one below the other. A few horses have been in P[hilip's] corn patch, and a white one has spoiled my garden—and comes here and eats the corn P[hilip] wants for the ox. He was tame, so P[hilip] caught him and tied a tin can to his tail, which I hope will keep him away. Jake sent up some sweet potatoes. We could not get any sweet potato plants last Spring when we wanted to plant the garden.

[SEPT.] 22ND—A long time since I wrote. I hate to begin, for I know I will get tired writing and miss some things. Monday while I baked, Philip went to see the neighbors—and get the mail. Came back at noon—and reported Mrs. L[ane] very sick. He thought I had better go down. It was 3 p. m. when I started. Took a loaf of fresh bread along for Mr. Smith, who is getting better but has no appetite. Thought it would be better than soda biscuits. Had quite a visit with him. He told me of parts of New Mexico and Arizona he had been in, and wished I could see them, particularly Jacobs Well and Inspiration Rock. When I left he said, "Be very careful, dont try and do too much, and get sick."

There had been a log acrost the branch where I used to cross, it was gone and I had to take off shoes and stockings and wade. It was a miry place, and I went in over my feat, such ugly mud, had trouble to wash it off.

Found Mrs. L[ane] in bed— Mr. L[ane] just able to crawl, and her brother getting supper. Mush and milk, coffee and pie.

The L[anes] are one of the very few, who keep a cow. After supper fixed to bake bread next day, then commenced at the dishes,

which sat around in confusion, seemed not to have been cleaned for some days.

A little room, two beds, a table and stove. The brother sleeps out in another building, where they keep barrels ct.

She moved to the other bed while I made hers, then back, while I made that one also. Then I bathed her. She has what she calls "the flu." East we call it dysentery. What with waiting on her, and the mosquitos so many, there was little sleep for me.

Next morning waited on her (wonder who did it when I was not there), washed dishes, pots and pans, I had not found the evening before, dressed a chicken, browned coffee, and what not. Had chicken and sweet potatoes for dinner. It was long after noon when the bread was baked, and house tidied up. Then they wanted me to go to the P. O. I was too blind to see, what I do now, that any one who could eat as heartily as they did, were better able to go to the office than I was. I got on Cricket their Mexican pony and rode over. It was the first time I had been to the trail since I came in April. Struck the trail as the last of a heard were crossing the river. I asked a hearder if it was safe for me to go on. He said, "no danger, the beeves are a mile or more ahead, these are young cattle and laggards." Forded the river—rode to the post office, only to be told that one of the boys had been there, and taken it along. Coming back, a large flock of prairie chickens flew up, and frightened the pony. I managed to stick on. Mrs. L[ane] required waiting on during the night, but I got some sleep.

Wednesday. One of the boys [Jake Sohn] passed, and gave me a letter from sister Mary. Set yeast to bake again. She takes medacine day and night. When morning came baked pies and bread. From some hunters Mr. L[ane] bought a piece of buffalo meat as big as my body. He put in on the table, and I was expected to cut it up, and salt it down, which I did. When dinner was ready I was too sick to eat. They talked of going to town soon. "I can go to day," she said. I was surprised, as she had only set up while I made her bed.

The dishes were not finished when I had a chill. I said I must go home, I was feeling so badly. By the time they got Cricket—the chill was over, and fever had come on.

When I passed the Hall Jake came out with a paper for us. Mr. Smith was getting supper, Mr. Philips was there.

They invited me to stay for tea, but I rode on. Their fresh buffalo and sweet potatoes did not tempt me.

I was anxious to get home, and anxious about Philip.

I took the foot path across the branch between the Hall and our place because it is nearer. Cricket did not want to cross, and at a steep place whirled around and started back. I talked and coaxed and got to the bottom again, thinking he would waid acrost, but he made a big jump, and started up the bank full tilt. I grabbed his main and kept my seat. It is a mystery to me how I ever kep on, for I had a mans saddle—and was riding side ways. They say "angels take care of children, and old people," wonder to which class I belong.

I remember nothing more of the ride home, when brother lifted me from the pony, and I could not stand.

I sat on the grass until he staked Cricket, then he helped me in. I have been wondering to day how I lived to write about it. I promised brother I would never ride Cricket again. He said he was not safe for me to ride, and was angry at them for letting me come home a lone—when I had fever.

[SEPT.] 23D—I feel much better than I expected to, after my long ride home last evening. Philip took Cricket home this morning. He is going with them to W[ichita]. I sent along for some things. Have been very busy to day, so many things to do. Started hop yeast which I will thicken with corn meal in the morning, then dry. Baked two loaves of bread. The boys were out and had been using sour dough and soda. Brownd coffee and ct.

SEPT. 24—I did not have the house rid up yesterday morning, when Mr. Newcomer came. He is the father of Mrs. Elsworth & Mrs. L[o]ucky. He is here on a visit. They expect to go on a buffalo hunt, and want me to stay with Mrs. E[lsworth] who is not well, until they come back. I scarcely knew what to say. P[hilip] does not like Elsworth— he owes brother—and he has the name of running off cattle ct. I was puzzled what to say, but told him P[hilip] was not home and it would all depend on him. He said he would be back this morning. He gassed about an hour— then left. Now an hour is a long time to loose, when one has baking on hand ct. I put the bread in pans, made dry yeast, put it on paper to dry. Then I scraped three mellons, got about 3 qts. of juice, this I boiled down, then thickened with plums, long after dinner when it was boiled enough. Besides the bread I baked a plum pie. Did not feel well, but there was so much to do—after being away so long, but at 5 p. m. I had a chill— and John had to get his own supper. I slept pretty well last night. This morning I got up early

and got breakfast. I felt so hungry, as I had not had any supper. I put the house in order, then washed and combed, and sat down to write. This is Sunday, and I intend to rest. Expect Philip towards evening.

[SEPT.] 25—Philip went to W[ichita] was gone one night. . . . [He] came home about 3 p.m. yesterday, and had walked nearly all the way from W[ichita]—20 miles. He brought me a cake of chocolate, nutmegs, medacine, and nice cakes. I wanted a couple pounds of brown sugar for baking. We have plenty white. He got 7 lbs. because he could get that much for a dollar. Lanes will bring the sugar and some other things when they come home.

Have not been well to day, a bad attack of diarheoea. Last night I wanted to go out, and there was a skunk in the door way. The prairie is on fire somewhere acrost the river, and behind a divide. In the evening the reflection is georgeous. There have been fires several days—and the air is quite smoky. It is early for prairie fires.

This p.m. I finished "I Dreamed a Dream the other night." I'll send the paper home, if it is published.

SEPT. 30TH—Since Monday have been in bed nearly all the time. Had an attack like Mrs. L[ane]. Thankful to be better. I came the nearest to being homesick I ever was. Philip has been doing the cooking. I have no appetite, and that worried him. It is laughable to see him bake flap jacks for himself. To be ill and not see a woman for a week—is hard luck. I am better so let us rejoice. We have not seen Jimmie cat to day. I am afraid a coyote or gray wolf caught him last night. Philip has gone to see if he can shoot a prairie chicken. The sun is seting— I must take a look at this last of Sept. sun set. and may a picture of it be on memories wall for a long time. This p.m. I took a little walk looking for Jim cat, did not find him.

OCT. 1ST—A beautiful morning. Two letters from home. They have kept us in papers—so we have kept track of the Franco Prussian War, ct. The Springers [Summers] were here to day, Mr. S[ummers] is a tease. It seems to him I ought to marry one of these young men. I'd rather keep them as friends.

When they left, they went to our mellon patch. Since I am taking quinine, I cannot eat mellon—it makes me sick and there are so many going to waist.

I ought to write two or three letters to day but do not feel able.

OCT. 3D—Wanted to wash yesterday, but the tub leaked, so I

put it to soak. Baked with the new yeast, and the bread is a "perfect success." Also baked ginger snaps.

Mrs. Springer [Summers] here to see if I would stay with the children [Elisha and Ida] while she went with the men on a hunt. *I promised I would, and they will come for me tomorrow.*

Wrote letters until my hand got tired.

[OCT.] 4TH—Washed in a. m. and ironed. *Summers did not come for me.* Saw prairie fire, such a sight.

[OCT.] 6TH—Yesterday we had a real wind storm. Had a blanket up at the door with sticks across it to keep it from blowing up all the time. When it was open great rolls of tumble weed would come in. What a house we had.

Mended a pair of pants, and vest for Philip and tried to read. Towards evening, a thunder storm came. Then it was as unpleasant as it could be. Cold wind and almost dark. This is the way some people live all winter. *How true it is that one half the people do not know how the other half live.* I have not wished myself elsewhere, for I want to see how it would be to live on the frontier in all seasons.

I was chilly, although dressed warm, and went to bed early to get warm.

OCT. 14—Over a week since I wrote in my journal. I should have taken it along. Now I have much to write, and most likely will miss some things of interest.

Saturday I was fixing a duck for dinner, and a goose for Sunday, when Jannette Rose [Ross] came with a letter for me. Father sent me a draft of \$300.00 to prove upon my claim.

Then Mr. Springer [Summers] came for me, they were ready to start on a hunt. He wanted brother to go along, but he said he was not well enough. *Then he asked John—and he went.* He was in a flurry about "shooting irons." Wanted all he could get.

I would rather have stayed home, but had promised Mrs. S[ummers] I would stay with the children. He had a good saddle, and the best riding horses I have seen in this state. I enjoyed the ride, my horse paced along. Mr. S[ummers] who is from Va., talked all the time, with his southern accent. He declared that if he was a young man I "should never leave the Ninnescah single." I laughed at him, and said there are very nice young men in the East. When we crossed the branch, we saw a very large snake. The largest I ever saw, "Well" he said "if I were not in such a hurry I'd get off and kill it."

They had the waggon packed, and left soon after we got there. When leaving Mrs. S[ummers] said, "There is nothing in the house but flour and bacon." I thought she was joking.

When dinner time came, one of the children said "I guess you will have to bake bread for dinner." I looked, but there was not a crum of bread in the house. And no soda. She had started "salt risin" in a tin cup, but that would not be ready before night, and I had never baked any. I had left duck dinner, with good yeast bread ct. Here were three of us, and almost an empty larder. I found a few potatoes and dried fruit, also yeast—and started bread at once—which I baked Sunday.

When we were out on a hunt we were gone one night, and I never thought they would be away more than two nights at the longest. Well they left Saturday morning and never got back until Wednesday evening.

It was windy all the time they were gone. Pieces of the chinking would fall out from between the logs, on the south side of the house. The house which was 18 by 14 had no windows. Along one side were two beds—at one end a stove, along the other side were a table and chairs—and at the other end chests or trunks.

The neighbors were too far away to go calling, and none came to see us. The children were good, but we all seemed stupid.

Tuesday I had a shake. I had many chills—but never a shake, before. Then came the fever. So time dragged on, and not one word from Philip, and I was worried.

I was as glad as the children, when they came Wed. evening!

They had to go so far, before they found any buffalo, is what had kept them so long. I wanted to go home at once—but they said it was too late, and they were tired, would take me home in the morning. Thursday early—we saw smoke and thought the fire was coming over the divide towards us. so they rushed out to plow a fire guard beyond their hay stacks. The wind favored them, and the fire did not get on their side of the branch, but all between the branches—and beyond—way up this way, and on to the river.

Brother was alone, and had his hands full. He quick "back fired" when he saw the fire coming, then moved the ox there, after which he had to watch the dugout. Half our wood burned and a load of chips. The ground thrown out when they built the dug out, helped to save it. From Springers [Summers'] we could see the flames beyond the branch—when it burned the sunflowers on Mr. Smiths clame, It burned Elsworths hay stacks and some others, also Mr. Smiths stable and corn crib. He is away freighting.

I was so anxious about my brother—but could not go to him. J. R. was at Elsworths, and could not get to his claim or my dugout until the fire had burned down.

When he came up here, Philip had gone to the river to see his cabin, which fortunately escaped. . . .

When John got here, there was a skunk in the room or dug out, and what did he do but shoot it behind my trunk! In the meantime the Springer [Summers] men did not get back to the house, until 2 o'clock. Then we had dinner and the boy [Lish] brought me home. Mrs. S[ummers] gave me some buffalo meat and two preserving citrons. She offered to pay me for staying with the children, but I considered it an act of neighborliness, and told her so. The S[ummers] are not poor, but in loading up when they left, they in their hurry had taken the eatables along, and left us short. She is a vary capable woman.

Mrs. S[ummers] has very good beds, and nice bedding. Nice linen table cloths & towels ct. Sheets—the nicest lot I have seen since I left home. She [h]as a sewing machine too. She told me she had spun most of it during the war when they lived in Virginia. I suppose she was married just before the war. She is the second Mrs. Summers and much younger than he is. Truly a nice woman.

When the boy and I finally got started in the big waggon toward home, and when we rounded the branch we were on burned over ground. Down toward the Hall we could see where the fire had run through three acres of corn. The wind was so high, the fire burned the dry leaves and some of the husk, that many ears were half exposed, others that had fallen down, were still smouldering. The stalks were mostly standing.

Rounding the head of the other branch between the Hall and home, we saw three deer, running toward the sand hills. What a dreary sight it was—not a green thing in sight, except the trees at the river. I had expected to find things looking bad, but my imagination was short, far short of the fact. The prairie had burned black and even; but over the bottom where the grass grew rank, it left the blackened stalks standing. The ground was still hot, and a high wind blowing.

We were both glad to be together again, and I was so relieved to find him as well as he was.

Everything in the house was covered with burned grass—that blew in—and O the skunk smell, how it sickened us. Philip was angry at J. R. for shooting the skunk in the house—but that did not help matters any, after he had gone to the Hall,

Philip tried to clean up a little. Fresh wood ashes back of my trunk absorbed the scent to some extent.

He was baking sweet potatoes for supper. I soon laid down—after he told me of his fight with the fire, leaving the cleaning of the house for next day.

It was cloudy and windy coming from Springers [Summers'], and I got chilled through. After going to bed fever came on.

Some time later Brother called me. He said if I felt able, I should wrap up well, and come out and see the fire, that it was not likely I would ever see the like again.

The scene was grand beyond description. To the North *and within ½ mile* there was a sheet of flames extending east and west. To the west there was fire beyond fire. Acrost the river, a hay stack was burning. Jake had the logs for his house ready to put up, the fire got among them, and did much damage. I cant give a description of the wild fearful—yet facinating sight.

I went back to bed, thankful that we were safe. The first fire, the one that came over the divide early in the a. m. while it swept on, at a terrible speed, did not extend far in width. I cannot understand how so many fires in different directions, should be burning that night.

The people and hearers acrost the river did not expect the fire to cross, but it jumped the river, and caused much trouble. One heard of cattle and ponies stampeded—and some were burned. Another hearer lost \$700. Before morning a thunder storm put out all the fires.

OCT. 18TH—Have been too busy to write. Cleaned the house and wrote letters. Monday washed, baked and made brine for the meat. Yesterday finished the white clothes, dressed a prairie chicken, and wrote a letter.

It still smells of skunk. Had to turn the head of my bed, it prevented my sleeping. There have been three deer around, but too far away to shoot.

Philip took his ox to town and sold him for a cent a pound. He paid \$100 for the two, did a little breaking, then one died.

There was a man here this a. m. hunting a girl. His wife was sick and they needed help. They were from N. Y.

My first thought was, I must go and care for her, she is ill and so far from home. Then I knew I could not leave here— It was ten miles down the river, and I would not put that distance between brother and me, under present conditions.

He had two fine horses. One had a ladies side saddle on—seated in blue velvet.

[OCT.] 20TH—Baked four loaves of bread, Philip shot a coyote from the door way. We will dry the pelt for me to take home. He just came from the sand hills with a big wild turkey, I am drying some pieces of buffalo meat, that I will take home—

[OCT.] 21ST—This a. m. P[hilip] shot a rat at the foot of my bed. That is the third he has shot here. They call them wood rats. One day when crossing the upper branch among the scrub trees, I saw one fussing in the crotch of a tree with little sticks. Our cat is still down at the Hall. *We don't want him now, as Philip is going to put out poison for gray wolfs and coyotes.*

Baked pies this a. m. out of pie mellon. Mr. Rose [Ross] gave me the seed last spring. I dont care for them, and there are enough to supply the whole settlement. Our squashes are fine and good to bake. The fire scorched the garden badly.

[OCT.] 23D—Two letters from home. Yesterday I was not well, and P[hilip] got dinner, and a nice one it was. This a. m. my head was all right—so I washed. Flocks of wild geese along the river. The air is so still at times, one hears a long distance. Heard some one sing, but did not see the singer. It was pleasant to listen.

[OCT.] 25—Mr. Stafford came to plow, *I was so glad, we have to have a certain amount broke before we can prove up*, but his plow would not work, so he went home. His sister Mrs. L[ane] had come along to spend the day, and was cheated out of her visit. I got a pie baked before they left, and we enjoyed eating it together. Mr. Rose [Ross] came in time for pie. He was full of fun, and told many rediculous things that had happened since he came to the river. One new comer complained of his bad luck hunting. "You must wiggle your gun man. Wiggle your gun when you shoot." The poor innocent believed.

We drove down to the garden with them, and got four pie mellons & a watermellon for them.

[OCT.] 28TH—Quite forgot my journal yesterday. Baked and sewed. Philip shot a young turkey. Had a fry for breakfast, pot pie for dinner, and enough for dinner tomorrow.

[OCT.] 29TH—*We go to bed early and get up late.* Lizzie Rose [Ross] came over on their pony. She had three letters for us and a bundle of papers. In p. m. Mr. S[tafford] came with two more letters—and another bundle of papers. What a terrible fire they have had in Chicago.³²

The boys were to the river, and came back with two wild geese. Mr. Stafford stayed for supper. We had turkey, squash, stewed

32. The great Chicago fire that broke out on October 8, 1871.

peaches, pie, bread and coffee. He promised to do the plowing next week. It is very smoky. The wind from the North.

[OCT.] 31ST—The last of the month *and my time is up*. As soon as the plowing is done we will go to [the land office at] Augusta and prove up. It is cold and stormy. Yesterday it rained all day. The rain froze on the grass. I baked and had a slow time. The geese are fat, stewed one, it is very nice— *Had enough left for breakfast. . . . I will roast the other one for supper. The boys went down the river this morning* [so] I am alone to day, just had dinner— baked a little corn bread in the skillet. Am seated by the fire, writing on my lap.

Nov. 2—Busy all day, and accomplished little. P[hilip] shot a goose, it took so long to dress it. They are plowing to day.

[Nov.] 4TH—Plowing with two yoke of oxen. P[hilip] is helping. It will take them five days next week, to finish. Lanes had their best horse stolen, what a pity they cant get the thief.

We are having pleasant weather. Mrs. Springer [Summers] spent the day here. She rode up— and brought the band she stiched for me on her machine. A letter from Reading to day. Game is plenty we have had three geese and a turkey within a week.

Sometimes a thousand geese and brance [brants] fly up and down the river, and fill the air with their gabbling. The coyotes often make the nights hideous with their howling. Have not had any ague for over two weeks—but take medacine every other day

[Nov.] 5TH—Here come the men with three turkeys, now I cant write— must help dress them. I am getting tired of game.

[Nov.] 7TH—Rainy and cold all day. Hope it will clear up and not hinder the plowing. Yesterday I baked and cut up the turkeys. Put some in a jar, and covered it with brine. George [McQuillan]³³ is helping plow. Came in yesterday with a chill. I told him of the salt cure. *He tried it and said his shake was not nearly as hard.*

[Nov.] 8TH—Just finished baking [ginger] snaps—we like them. It is nothing but cook turkey all the time, feel as if I did not care to see another for a year. It is fried for breakfast, potpie for dinner, roasted for supper—cold for breakfast ct. ct. Today is clear and the plowing going on. *Perhaps they will finish tomorrow. Then I wonder when we will get to the land office at Augusta.* Baked two squash pies. They are real good. Mrs. S[ummers] told me how to

33. George McQuillan was another young man who came West to grow up with the country. He was a son of Irish-born parents who had settled in Michigan. When George was turning 21 he located a claim one-half mile above Old Clearwater. His granddaughter, Ruth McQuillan Chambers, owns a portion of this claim which is astride the old Chisholm trail. Other families named on the map on p. 260 of the first installment of this article still having descendants living in the area include the Rosses, Macredies, and Murrays.

bake them when we have no milk or eggs. Had an early dinner. They came in before I was ready. I slept so well last night. Sometime I lay awaik for hours. We had pancakes for breakfast. I cant toss them over like P[hilip] can. Sometimes he sends them over the second time, to see them flap.

Heavy shower last night over east. We thought it might reach here. Sometimes the rain comes in at the sides— so I took my clothes down, put them on a stool, then under the table. We dont have any chairs, just stools, two are cushioned with robe. Some time a go P[hilip] raised his bed from the floor. When J. R. is here he sleeps on the floor. *I keep the bread in the tub, and washboard on top, and all under my bed.*

We have no broom. When I sweep, I take a turkey wing in each hand, sweep out a corner, then step there, and sweep a head of me, until the floor is all swept. Sweep every thing into the fire place. *Two small store boxes—resting on wooden pegs—serve for cupboards. I have them curtained, on one side are two boxes, one upon the other. In one I keep the groceries— in the other dried fruit. We have a shelf for papers and books. Two more shelves near the fire place, with cans, bottles ct. Another large box—on top of which is the flour sack, and inside the coaloil [kerosene] can ct. And a block on which we keep the water bucket. And two trunks—that I believe is all the furnature. I forgot the table—“cheap and handy. Varnished, and never gets soiled.”*

[Nov.] 11TH—This is a rainy Sunday. The stars were shining when I went to bed, but it is raining now. We expect to get to the land office this week. Friday eve the boys brought home two turkeys and a prairie chicken. Five turkeys in one week. P[hilip] is a good marksman. Sent Lanes some turkey. Prairie chicken we had barbecued for dinner. It was better than turkey. Will have turkey and sweet potatoes for dinner.

It still smells skunky. *I think some of calling this place Skunk Retreat.* The other day when the boys came from Jakes, they saw seven skunks along the branch—

I am drying the skin of a large gray wolf. If it gets dry, I will take it home with me.

[Nov.] 15TH—The days go by and we have not been to Augusta yet. Were to have gone to day, now it is tomorrow. Yesterday I washed, baked bread and pies, was busy all day. The boys did not get home until an hour after sunset. They had a goose and prairie chicken. It took me all a.m. to dress them, do my work and get

dinner; then no one came to eat it. I am beginning to gather my possessions together, and pack.

Jammie the cat had been with Jake at the Hall for a long time. The other day they found him dead. They think a coyote or gray wolf killed him. The boys have come—and it is decided we go tomorrow.

[Nov.] 16TH—Up at 3 a. m. After breakfast we packed eatables, and started for Lanes. The team and waggon was brought up last night. It was cold, but we took a lot of blankets and my comfort to wrap around us, so we did not mind the cold. The three miles ride to Lanes was truly grand. The sun was not up, but the gaily colored clouds were georgeous. No one said "Morning red will bring down rain upon his head." Although some of us may have thought of it. We reached Lanes at sunrise. Mr. Stafford got in. It was his team, and he drove. The Ninnescah was low, and we had no trouble to fording it. So different from last April.

After we reached the trail it clouded over, and became very windy. The trail was good traveling, yet the 20 miles to Wichita, in a big waggon was a long ride. The wind was so strong, it blew the dried cow chips on edge, and they rolled along on the trail like wheels. Philip told me that hearers and travalers, when out of wood, gathered them and burned them. In Whichita we sat in the waggon and ate our dinner of roast goose, chicken and pie, that we had brought along. We had our drafts cashed, and about 3 p. m. we started toward Augusta.

Night came on. Not being in sight of timber, we camped by a hay stack. It was too windy to make fire, *as it might have set the grass on fire*, so we had a cold supper, after which they put the waggon cover on which was a shelter from the wind. I slept in the waggon, and the boys by the stack.

[Nov.] 20TH—We started early next morning, expecting to come to timber soon, and have a warm breakfast, but we were farther from Walnut Creek than they thought, and it was nearly noon when we stoped, and had a good warm meal of bacon, coffee, and the rest of what we brought along.

After leaving W[ichita] a few miles, there were almost no signs of settlers. The first settlers always choose clames near some stream where they can get wood for fuel. Most of the way there was no road—just went acrost the prairie in the direction of where they expected to find Augusta.

After eating we drove on into Augusta. While Mr. Stafford cared for the team, we went direct to the Land Office. I waited in an ad-

joining room, while brother went in. They were very busy. Brother knew one of the clerks, and we were waited on, sooner than we otherwise would have been; which was fortunate for us. Philip had attended to all the preliminary parts, before I was called in. I had little to do, beside sign my name and pay \$1.25 an acre or \$200—, and some office fees, after which we received a certificate. The pattend will be made out in Washington, D. C., and sent to us. Now I am the owner of 160 acres of land. Were my nice smooth land in Pa. it would be worth a little fortune.

We left Augusta before 4 p. m. and had reached Four Mile Creek when it began to rain very hard. There was a frame house near the timber, Philip went there and asked if I could stay all night. They said I could, and the boys went and camped among the trees.

I had a good nights rest— a good supper and breakfast.

I wanted to pay Mrs. Long but she would not let me.

I should write her a letter when I go home, that would be all the pay she wanted. I certainly shall write to her.³⁴

One of their daughters was home. I spent a very pleasant evening. She asked me about my Summer—and my home in the East, and told me of their many moves— They were comfortably settled now, but her husband was getting restless, talked of moving to Medacine Lodge.

In the morning it was colder, and the rain had turned to snow. The most dessolate and disagreeable day I ever knew. The snow soon covered the tracks we were trying to follow, and at times they did not know which way to go. The waggon cover protected us some, but the snow blew, and we could only see a little way ahead, and it was so cold.

We expected to strike the Arkansas river at a place they called El Paso.³⁵ We missed the road, and came to the river ten miles below El Paso. Two men who had charge of the ferry there, said the ferry was out of order, that they would fix it in the morning, and take us over.³⁶ We had expected to reach Lanes that evening— but had to camp there by the river. They made fire and stretched a blanket between trees, to shelter me, while I tried to warm myself.

34. This might have been the home of George W. Long and his wife, Martha. Long was born in Indiana in 1844 and came to Kansas in 1857. Ten years later he settled on the banks of Four Mile creek south of Augusta.—Andreas-Cutler, *History of Kansas*, p. 1451.

35. El Paso was the original name of Derby, now just a few miles south and east of Wichita. The name was changed July, 1881.—“Dead Town List,” manuscript division, KSHS.

36. On February 25, 1871, David Richards opened the first ferry in Sumner county across the Arkansas opposite Belle Plaine. This may have been the ferry Abbie refers to.—Andreas-Cutler, *History of Kansas*, p. 1495.

I asked Philip if I could not go to the dugout and get warm. He said "no it is too dirty a place for you."

We were out of bread. So the boys had the men bake us some biscuits for supper, after which Philip fixed the waggon— and I went and laid down. He charged me "If you take off your shoes, keep them near you, or they will freeze, and you cant get them on in the morning." It was cold, however I had plenty of blankets and my comfort, and I slept a little.

Philip slept under the waggon with Mr. S[tafford] and J. R. by the fire. Every where it was so wet and snowy. I think they got little sleep. They called the storm a "Northener." I would never have believed it could get so cold in sunny Kansas. The men baked more biscuit for our breakfast, and we had bacon, coffee and gravy to go with the biscuits. The ferry was out of order, and the boys worked hard to get it fixed. Then when they tried to use it, it stuck fast on a sand bar, and was no good.

Too provoking, we had lost the whole morning.

When they found they could not use the ferry, and get paid for taking us acrost, they told of a place a mile down the river where we could ford. We drove down and crossed without much trouble, except the ice bothered the horses.

We reached Bell Plain³⁷ about 2 p.m. I went into a house to warm while they fed the horses. They bought a sack of crackers—but could get no bread. I had been dull and stupid, and a chill followed by fever came on. Philip was worried, and tried to make it as comfortable in the waggon as he could. I do not remember about the rest of the trip, until some one said "Now we are acrost the Ninnescah." Then I roused up for I knew we would soon be to Lanes. We stayed here all night. I was so tired, I thought I might as well stay and visit her now as I would soon be starting East.

[Nov.] 20TH—Philip went to the dugout and moved some things down to his cabin by the river, thinking it would be warmer. J. R. has his trunk at Jakes and is patiently or impatiently, waiting for a chance to go to Wichita. Too far, and too bad walking to go to Springers [Summers']. So I finish this then write a letter.

[Nov.] 21st—Another chill and fever. Philip was down, he will bring my medacine tomorrow. Four hunters out from W[ichita] to day. They shot 31 prairie chickens, saw four deer and some turkeys.

37. Belle Plaine, on the Ninnescah's right bank in Sumner county, was a new town barely half a year old when Abbie visited there. From Belle Plaine the party must have traveled up the river's north side for they apparently crossed at Clearwater or Summers ford.

[Nov.] 22ND—Philip brought my medacine. I helped Mrs. Lane make butter out of pie mellon from my garden. Expect to go to Wichita Sunday, so I must go up tomorrow and pack my trunk.

[Nov.] 23D—It was nearly noon when I left Lanes on old Bill— It was cold, When I passed the Hall there was no one there but J. R. He went along to the dugout. I packed some things, gathered others together, then rode to the cabin. No one there, then I thought I would go and see Roses [Rosses], but I could not get old Bill to ford the river. Then I stayed at the cabin, and J. R. took the horse back to Lanes.

I had covered the coals, so I soon had a good fire. Being hungry, I made coffee and boiled mush—which I ate with much molasses, and considerable relish, having had no dinner. Hunger is a good cook. Philip did not come for some time. He had been hunting. Had shot a turkey which he took to Lanes, was surprised not to find me there. Then he went to the dugout and brought more things down. He wished he had not moved as it made it so inconvenient for me.

[Nov.] 24TH—Last night in the cabin. Up early. Breakfast of mush, molasses, sweet potato and coffee. I bid the cabin good bye, and went to the dug out to pack. Met Mr. Rose [Ross] in a big waggon. He wanted me to go home with him, but I could not— I had to pack. I made a big fire, and went to work. So many things to pack I scarcely knew where to begin; what to take and what to leave—Dried buffalo meat, turkey fans, wolf and coyota pelts ct. I put on enough petticoats to make me look like a barrel, but it was so cold, I needed them.

Philip had said if I left any clothing I should "give it to the I[n]gmires they have children." There were many things I did not pack, and later he can give them away.

When done packing, I made a can of chocolate, and ate some ginger snaps. There I sat by the fire, and went over the days I had spent in the dugout. I never got to Roses [Ross'] after we left the cabin. The slow way of baking took so much time, then reading and writing—trying to make Philip comfortable, and having the ague so often filled up my days. Trying days when Philip was sick. Exciting days when brother H[iram], and cousin Tom came, and we went on a buffalo hunt. Dreary days when it stormed. Light hearted days when I could go to the garden and plant, or bring up good fresh things to cook, and now a sad day of leaving. I dont want to leave brother here— he is not well, and has only half promised to go East for the winter.

Finally I looked at the little home, the well, the garden and the surroundings, then started on my long walk to Lanes. *I felt real sorry to leave. As I stood alone by the dugout—no one in sight, no visible sign of civilization—except the roof of Igmyer's [Ingmire's] dugout across the river, (the trees along the River shut out Ross' buildings) I felt depressed. I was so glad to be with Philip for over seven months. Now I was leaving. When would I see him again?*

The snow was melting, and my feet got wet. We were both invited for dinner, to help eat the turkey Philip had shot, and we were both late getting there.

[Nov.] 25TH—Have been helping Mrs. Lane all day. It is decided we go to Wichita tomorrow. Someone shot a deer—so we have deer stake.

[Nov.] 26TH—Cloudy, windy, exceedingly unpleasant all day. I did not see the Roses [Rosses] or Springers [Summers] to give them good bye— Will have to write to them. The boys got my trunk last night, but it was after nine when they came this morning, so we got a late start. I have a poor place to write, so it is impossible to give the particulars of our leaving.

The Ninnescah was easily forded. The Cowskin was bad. The driver Mr. Stafford feared we could not cross the Arkansas, but two teams ahead of us crossed, and the ice was broken, so we had no trouble. We stopped at the Harris House. It has changed in every respect, since I was here last Spring.³⁸

It is now a three dollar a day house. We had a good supper which did me much good, after our cold ride of twenty miles.

[Nov.] 27TH—Slept well, and felt rested. Philip got roap and roaped my trunk. Then I went down town and bought shoes.

Called at the Southern Hotel³⁹ to see Mrs. McLain [McLean]. When I left the Hotel, I met Philip, who had been over town hunting Indian curiosities for me to take home. All he found was a pair of moccasins. We went to Woodenings store,⁴⁰ where he bought lunch for me to take along. The Lanes and Mr. Smith came in, and we talked until it was time for them to start home. Then I gave them all good bye. Philip too. *He went back with Lanes.* He said he would likely go East before long, which made me feel better. *I wonder if it was lonely at the Cabin and if he missed me.*

38. See Footnote 10. The Harris House was now operated by E. J. Blood.

39. The Southern Hotel had been opened since Abbie came West. L. D. Gun, the proprietor, advertised that "this house is furnished with the best beds, and sets the best table of any house in the city."—*Wichita Tribune*, October 26, 1871.

40. Probably the store of W. C. Woodman who carried a complete line of dry goods, boots, shoes, groceries, provisions, wood and stoneware, queensware, and dealt in the buying and selling of gold, silver and eastern exchange. Woodman would also lend money "in large and small amounts."—*Ibid.*

I do not like changes. I went to the street and watched the waggon as it moved out of sight, then back to the Hotel.

The coach left soon after noon for Newton, 25 miles away, and now the end of the R. R.⁴¹ Here I stay until 4 a. m. when the train leaves.⁴²

[Nov.] 28—*Stoped at a hotel in Newton.* Left Newton at 4 a. m. Stoped at Florance for breakfast.⁴³

The ground was frozen and rough. Going to a restaurant for breakfast—one of my new shoes split from the lacing to the toe. When I got back to the cars, I was glad to put on my old shoes. Philip had planned a trip down to Indian Territory. Owing to our having ague so often he gave it up, and was disappointed that I did not see more of the Indians.

When I was leaving he told me about the Potawamies at St. Marys,⁴⁴ and wanted me to go there if only for a day. I did not promise, but as we neared Topeka, I decided I would, knowing it would please him. Left my trunk at Topeka— got a ticket for Harrisburg for \$38.50—with lay over priviledges.

Then a ticket for St. Marys 25 miles west. On the train I sat by a lady agent— She said they had been burned out in the great Chicago fire, and she had to do something to help her family. There is no hotel here—but we were directed to a private home where they sometimes took boarders— In the p. m. we visited one of the big Catholic Schools. There is some controversy now about the government withdrawing the help it gave the schools. We were only taken through halls—and to one empty class room, so were disappointed in not seeing and hearing a recitation. We walked around town, and saw many squaws and papoos.

[Nov.] 29TH—This morning I went up town before train time. Stoped at a shop and bought some curos [two arrows and a piece of petrified wood]. The shop keeper told me much about Indians there. Many of them are farming ct. He called my attention to

41. The first Santa Fe passenger train had entered Newton on July 17, 1871. While work on the extension from Topeka to Atchison went on, end of track remained at Newton until 1872.—Joseph W. Snell and Don W. Wilson, *The Birth of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad* (Topeka, 1968), pp. 38-45.

42. The published timetable of the Santa Fe, which had been in effect since July 17, advertised a passenger train leaving Newton at 5:05 A. M. and arriving in Topeka at 12:25 P. M.—*Wichita Tribune*, October 26, 1871.

43. Florence was another of the Santa Fe's towns along the right of way. It was named for Florence Crawford, daughter of Samuel J. Crawford, former governor of Kansas and president of the Florence Town Company. Miss Crawford later became the wife of Kansas publisher-politician Arthur Capper.—Andreas-Cutler, *History of Kansas*, p. 1264.

44. St. Mary's had been established as a Catholic mission to the Pottawatomie Indians on September 9, 1848. A manual labor school was conducted at the mission until 1871. St. Mary's College, chartered in 1869, developed from the school. In 1931 the college became a Jesuit seminary which was transferred to St. Louis in 1967. The future status of the campus is indefinite.—Louise Barry, "Kansas Before 1854: A Revised Annals," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, v. 31, p. 180.

one who was passing, who he said was Chief Big Foot. He had on many coats and the out side one was a linen duster. As the ground was covered with snow, he was a sight.

I have wondered since—if the shop keeper knew I was a “tender-foot,” and was stuffing me. When I reached Topeka, I had my trunk rechecked. Tomorrow is Thanksgiving.

[DEC.] 4TH—Once more at Red Oak Shelter. How pleasant and comfortable to be here. The children have grown, and are full of fun. Little O[akley] comes to me and says “you may have a kiss.” Dear child. Katura [Rhoda] cheerful and lively, and such a good cook.

[DEC.] 20TH—The days slip past so fast. Philip came last week. He will soon grow stronger here, and to me, such a relief to know he is here. What a varied fifteen months it has been for me. Thanks be to Providence no calamity befel me.

Tomorrow brother H[iram] takes me to W[illiamsport] and I will be home in time for Christmas.

IV. EPILOGUE

On June 24, 1873, Abbie Bright married William M. Achenbach, who had taught mathematics at Keystone State Normal. They moved to Gladbrook, Iowa, where Abbie died on May 6, 1926.

Philip Bright moved on to Prescott, Arizona territory, and was there murdered for his money by unknown parties in June, 1873. Abbie apparently inherited Philip's Kansas land which she rented for the next 30 years or so. Her own Kansas land had been disposed of soon after her return east.

Since Abbie and Philip Bright left in late 1871, no member of their family has lived in Kansas.