Public and Private Lives

Fannie B. and James C. Horton, 1874

by Katie H. Armitage

A very happy new year to all and may it be for us particularly. May no evil befall us. Received calls, all day-15 in number. A lovely day as ever was seen. Evening charming with most brilliant moon light. Had refreshments for guests but no wine. I think it a sin to offer wine to young men, January 1, 1874.

Diaries, as historical documents, provide a record of everyday activities and on occasion reveal patterns that offer unexpected insights into personal and community life. Such is the case with Fannie B. (Mrs. James C.) Horton's diary. In addition to recording mundane details of life in Lawrence, her daily, year-long account documents attitudes and values underlying reactions to dramatic private and public events of 1874. Because of their range of interests, James and Fannie Horton's activities permit a historical view of the interface between public and private life. Their experiences, as recorded in her diary and in news accounts of his career, provide a window through which to look at social and political life in Kansas twenty years after the birth of the territory.

Historian and educator Katie H. Armitage has worked for a variety of historical and humanities agencies in the past seventeen years. She currently operates "History Connections." This article is her third on Lawrence women for Kansas History.

The author would like to thank Professor David Katzman, University of Kansas, for his critical reading of the manuscript and valuable suggestions. Earlier drafts benefited from comments of Dr. Barbara Watkins and Nona Brown Thompson. Architectural historian David Benjamin, as well as archivists and librarians cited in the footnotes, provided helpful assistance.

1. Historian Carl Degler, At Odds, Women and the Family from the Revolution to the Present (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 29, found diaries to be sources of information about values and attitudes not often revealed in public records. Fannie (Mrs. James C.) Horton's original 1874 diary is in the Horace L. Moore Collection, Library and Archives Division, Kansas State Historical Society. According to her obituary, she kept a diary from 1868 to 1901, however, this 1874 account is the only one known to have survived, Lawrence Daily Journal, June 26, 1901.

For this article, punctuation has been added to quotations from Fannie's original diary, which has been transcribed into a sixty-five-page manuscript by the author of this article.
Fannie Horton’s 1874 diary intertwined the public and private lives of Fannie and her husband, James, documenting the attitudes and values underlying the year’s events.
In her initial entry (quoted on page 124), Fannie greeted the new year with good cheer, a certain fatalism, and an opinion on an issue of the day. Her private opposition to liquor assumed public form during the spring temperance crusade. This cause dominated one season, but throughout the year Fannie more typically pursued private musical, literary, and social interests. Other major themes in her diary included the trauma of a household crisis involving a domestic servant and the subsequent scandal injected into James’ unsuccessful campaign for the Republican gubernatorial nomination, and his fall election to the Kansas Senate.

Fannie’s diary also reveals a portrait of marriage and family relationships in a frontier state during the Victorian era. Evidence in the diary indicates that the seven-year-old childless union of James and Fannie Horton was happy and compatible. Fannie mentioned her husband, to whom she usually referred as “James” rather than “Mr. Horton,” two hundred times. On January 4, with James in Topeka, she wrote, “We do miss him so much. It seems not more than half living.” On his return on January 24, she was “so glad to see him,” and on January 31 she wrote, “it is very lonely without him.” James Horton left no comparable written expression, but by returning to his Lawrence home frequently, as legislative duties and business travel allowed, he demonstrated regard for wife and home.

Both private and public activities characterized the couples’ weekly routine: Fannie supervised domestic arrangements, and James attended to business. Her social life involved “calls” to the homes of friends, participation at meetings of her literary club, “Friends in Council,” and attendance at her Episcopal church circle, the “Ladies Sewing Society.” James dealt in county, township and school district bonds, supervised his railway express agency, attended Masonic lodge meetings and Republican caucuses, and during legislative sessions represented Douglas County’s Fifty-second District in Topeka. In church on Sundays, Fannie played the organ for the choir and James served as a vestryman. Both relished quiet evenings at home. Fannie wrote, “my home is so sweet to me,” and on another occasion stated, “James says he’d rather be at home than go anywhere. He likes it more than any place on earth.”

Although James and Fannie Horton generally operated within these socially acceptable male and female spheres of their historical era, their interests and activities overlapped more than the rigidly defined roles some historians have outlined. Historian Ruth Bordin, for example, generalized about these differences: “men functioned in the world of commerce; women presided over the spiritual world and physical maintenance of home and family.” For her part, Fannie expressed concern over political affairs, and James took extraordinary measures to preserve home and garden from the ravages of grasshoppers.

The Hortons had survived earlier struggles and losses typical of Kansas’ immigrant pioneers. Born in Ballston Spa, Saratoga County, New York, James C. Horton, as a young man of twenty in 1857, traveled west intending to settle in Sioux City, Iowa. At Leavenworth, for reasons unclear, Horton left the steamboat on which he was a passenger and walked the thirty-three miles to Lawrence. Speculating in land in the three-year-old city, he lost his three-hundred-dollar stake when the boom flattened out. He turned to hand-digging wells and cellars to support himself. By 1858, however, James had secured the position of assistant register of deeds for Douglas County, and in 1860 he was elected register of deeds. His brother Stephen, wounded in the Union army during Civil War service, replaced him in that office in 1866. During William C. Quantrill’s August 21, 1863, raid on Lawrence, James Horton resided at the Eldridge Hotel, which the raiders soon surrounded. By appealing to Quantrill’s vanity, James escaped a near certain death. Using his wits and holding to principle in the aftermath of that devastating event, he protested the lynching of a suspected Quantrill collaborator in Lawrence a few days after the raid.

2. For information on James Horton’s business dealings, see advertisement for J.C. Horton Bond Company, specializing in investments of widows and orphans funds, Kansas Tribune (Lawrence), September 10, 1873; Kansas Farm Mortgages (Lawrence: J.C. Horton and Co., 1874); In the Beginning: Centennial History and Roster, Lawrence Lodge No. 6, September 24, 1855 to September 24, 1955 (n.p., n.d.). 68.


Massachusetts Street in downtown Lawrence (left) as it appeared during Fannie and James’ residence there in the 1860s and 1870s. Bullene’s dry goods store, where Fannie shopped, is seen in the center of the block.

The Hortons were very dedicated to church affairs. At the Trinity Episcopal Church (below) Fannie played the organ for the choir and James served as a vestryman.
Fannie Blish was born in Hallowell, Maine, and removed to Manhattan, Kansas, also in 1857, with her then husband, Dr. J. W. Robinson. A Union army surgeon in the Second Kansas Calvary, Robinson died at Fort Smith, Arkansas, on December 10, 1863. Soon Fannie and her mother, Isabel Weld, moved to Lawrence where the latter ran a boardinghouse and Fannie taught music. During the housing shortage that followed Quantrill’s raid, Mrs. Weld’s home sheltered prominent boarders including ex-Governor Charles Robinson and his wife, Sara, among the nine paying guests in 1865. In the next year, James Horton roomed there with Francis Snow and David Robinson, two young professors of the recently opened university.6

James married his landlady’s widowed daughter, Fannie Blish Robinson, on April 22, 1867. James’ brother Stephen witnessed the marriage, and for a while he lived in the household James and Fannie thereafter established.6 In the months following her marriage, Fannie engaged in political activity during the 1867 campaign for the referendum to strike the word “male” from the state constitution’s suffrage clause. Fannie was one of thirty prominent women on the executive committee of the local Women’s Impartial Suffrage Association which issued an address declaring “WE WANT TO VOTE.” Despite these and other efforts, this first state contest for female suffrage failed.7

By 1874 the Horton’s Lawrence household included James, age thirty-seven, Fannie, age thirty-six, Fannie’s mother, age sixty-four, and a Swedish-born domestic servant, Martha Johnson, age nineteen. The Hortons employed other household helpers during the year, and in June Fannie’s seventeen-year-old niece, Clara Blish, came to live in the Horton home that stood at Pinckney (Sixth) and Louisiana Streets. Stephen Horton lived nearby.8

James Horton had accumulated real estate worth twelve thousand dollars and a personal estate of three thousand dollars. As a successful eastern Kansas businessman, his life was secure and comfortable despite the national financial panic. The twenty-year-old city of Lawrence had a population of eight thousand. Rail service connected the city and Douglas County to other areas within and beyond Kansas. In Lawrence the Street Railway Company provided horse-drawn public transportation, and four newspapers published regularly. The University of Kansas, opened in 1866, had graduated its first class in 1873 when four students completed preparatory and university courses.

After James left for the convening of the state legislature on January 12, 1874, Fannie kept abreast of events in Topeka and continued her usual daily schedule; sewing, practicing the piano, reading to her mother, and calling on friends. Tuesday afternoons were devoted to studying Italian painters with Friends in Council. Special evening outings included a musical concert enjoyed in company with brother-in-law Stephen and lectures by university professors. She praised Professor Kellogg’s benefit lecture (for which she earlier had noted an expenditure of thirty-five cents in her January household accounts) in her diary entry of January 16.9 Recording the day’s events, she ended with an expression of happiness at her husband’s return: “I think Prof. Kellogg’s lecture last eve one of the finest efforts I ever listened to—it was magnificent. Went out to Mrs. McMillan to dine she came for me—In the evening went to Mr. Dunns’ to a church social. Had a very pleasant time. James came home today. It was very unexpected, but extremely agreeable and pleasant to us.”

If D. O. Kellogg, professor of history, English language and literature, delighted Fannie Horton, she found Byron Caldwell Smith, professor of Greek, disturbing. His freethinking views challenged her religious tenets. She reflected on Smith’s lecture, “culture of an oracle,” in her diary of January 27: “The lecture was very Rhetorical and also seductive, but aside from a moral life there was nothing...”

6. Kansas State Census, 1865, Douglas County, Lawrence. James is placed with the two young professors at 933 Kentucky Street in Martha Snow Brown, ed., Letters of Francis Snow (typescript), Francis Snow Papers, University Archives, University of Kansas, Lawrence.
7. “An Address by the Women’s Impartial Suffrage Association of Lawrence, Kansas,” Lawrence, September 24, 1867.
8. Kansas State Census, 1875, Douglas County, Lawrence, First Ward; L. Stanhope and W.A. Sanders, Stanhope & Sanders’ Lawrence City Directory, 1875-6 (Lawrence: 1875), 77.
10. Republican Daily Journal (Lawrence), January 16, 1874, noted Kellogg’s lecture “Enchanted Wealth.”
more. I dislike such ideas, advanced. No God in it! What a life without that element in it?" The rest of this entry dealt with less abstract matters: "Day lovely. Was not well so did not go out for all day. The news from Topeka is quite exciting at this time. I feel anxious to hear the result of the vote for Senator!"

On February 2 Fannie exclaimed: "Gov. Harvey was elected Senator today having 82 votes!" James Horton and Harvey both lived at Tefft House while in Topeka and were probably personal as well a political friends. Other political news was not as pleasing. On January 21 Stephen brought Fannie the Lawrence Standard, a Democratic newspaper, that contained an article on James that she deemed "entirely spiteful." Her concluding words disclosed her concern for her husband and his political career: "I hope that it will not worry James as it does not me. I consider the county honored in having him as its member." The Lawrence Daily Kansas Tribune, however, praised James, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee: "Jim is a genuine reformer," and it noted his sponsorship of several bills in the house "which will give greater security to the funds in the hands of all public treasurers." His other legislative initiatives supported regulations for standard weights and measurements, and he presented petitions from Douglas County citizens in favor of a "prohibitory liquor law," which were referred to a special committee established to deal with this question. Despite debate in the legislature on prohibition and the temperance "agitation" in Lawrence and other Kansas locations, saloons continued to operate legally in 1874.

By spring Fannie and James Horton were active in the temperance crusade that began in February when the local Methodist minister invited ladies of his congregation to engage in a movement similar to that "agitating portions of Illinois, Ohio and Indiana." Fannie's diary was silent on the subject until March 22 when she wrote of attending evening church services where "Mr. Dunn [gave] a very fine essay on temperance." The next day she was at a temperance meeting in company with "75 Ladies at the Methodist Lecture room." Temperance had taken hold in Lawrence. Her March 24 club meeting at "Miss Leonard's" was sparsely attended, "few lady's present owing to the Temperance agitation." On March 25-26, the Ladies' Temperance Association met at Bartholow's Hall, and "Mrs. J.C. Horton" was listed among the 115 members.

Lawrence, as the center of the antislavery cause in Kansas, provided a hospitable environment for reform movements. Richard Cordley, long-time Congregational minister and the first Lawrence historian, observed, "Nearly all the leading men were earnest advocates of temperance." Long before Carry Nation's notoriety, Lawrence women in 1857 took hatchets in hand, went downtown and attacked whiskey casks. Seventeen years later churchwomen played primary roles in the temperance crusade. As historian Catherine Clinton stated, "The female temperance movement was during its heyday one of the largest reform movements of the century.

Fannie Horton joined in this popular movement that combined opposition to liquor with concern for women and their rights. On March 28 she wrote, "Mr. Cordley called to ask James to speak tomorrow night in the Congregational church." James addressed the mass meeting, and Fannie expressed her satisfaction in her diary of Sunday, March 29: "James' address was very fine indeed. I was very proud of him. I had no idea he would do so well. It was the speech of the evening; I was much pleased indeed." Others agreed with Fannie's assessment. The Kansas Tribune's article of April 2 on "The Second Phase of the Woman's War" at the "Great Mass Meeting at Plymouth Church" reported James' remarks. The meetings opened with songs, prayers, and appeals by local women leaders who commented that it was a "strange thing" for women to be on the church plat-

11. United States senators at this time were elected by state legislatures. After serving two full terms as governor, 1869-1873, James Madison Harvey was the first Kansas governor to serve in the United States Senate. Topeka's Tefft House was at Seventh and Kansas. Homer E. Socolofsky, Kansas Governors (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1960), 96. Fannie's diary entry of January 12 stated, "James went to Topeka this morning. . . . Took his Trunk has a room at Tefft House." The Kansas Tribune, February 5, 1874, listed James C. Horton among the votes for Harvey. No copies of the Lawrence Standard for 1874 are known to have survived. An earlier incarnation of this newspaper, the Democratic Standard, 64 Massachusetts Street, was published by the Kansas Democratic Publishing Company, Lawrence City Directory for 1871 (Lawrence: J.T. Atkinson, 1871), 147.

12. Daily Kansas Tribune (Lawrence), March 5, 1874; Kansas House Journal, 1874 (Topeka: State Printing Works, 1874), 277, 484.
14. Ibid., March 27, 1874.
form. James, not Fannie, however, stood up to deliver the main address of the evening.

James testified to having "traveled on the liquor road" at one time, and he "thanked God" that he no longer did. His core remarks, however, were pragmatic and not personal. Drawing on his knowledge as chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, James argued for temperance as a pocketbook issue. He compared Kansas's taxable wealth of $125,000,000 with its debt of $13,000,000, and he declared that an end to liquor consumption could eliminate state debt: "We complain of the burden of debt, but if the people of Kansas would let liquor alone for about a year and a half the debt could be discharged. Go through the counties of the State and you will find it is liquor that creates the taxes under which the people groan." Connecting liquor to crime and the expense of public trials, James advocated temperance as both a practical and moral reform. He supported bringing women into public life: "We need an expansion of morality more than of currency, an inflation of decency more than of greenbacks.... He declared that in his opinion the cause would never thoroughly triumph until the vote is given to women." 17 James' call for votes for women was an advanced, although not unprecedented, position for a public man to take.

In the first few months of Lawrence settlement in 1854, feminist Clara Nichols addressed the immigrants on women's rights, and prominent free-state leaders such as Charles Robinson supported female suffrage.

Temperance, not suffrage, concerned Fannie in 1874, as she expressed her support in words and deeds. Despite the inclement weather of late March and early April, she actively canvassed "on the Temperance Question with pledge and petition." On Monday, April 6, Fannie turned in her report of the canvass she and her neighbor Mrs. Denman made to persuade saloon owners to stop selling alcohol. Her diary, however, did not note any success for this effort.

Turning to private matters, on April 11 Fannie and James Horton were in Leavenworth where Fannie bought a bedstead, bureau washstand, towel rack, and jet necklace. In beautiful spring weather they enjoyed "a very delightful day." The next day, Sunday, Fannie played at church "as usual" and attended a temperance mass meeting. James spoke in North Lawrence then left on business trips to Lincoln County, Kansas, and Columbia, Missouri.

During this spring of activism Fannie did not neglect her home. She selected new hall wallpaper and carpeted her mother's room. Judging from Fannie's grocery purchases at Laidlaw's store, her table was well supplied, and she delighted in rhubarb and early garden vegetables, "1st Pie Plant & Radishes of season" and "first garden lettuce." Entertaining at home, she continued her policy of no alcoholic beverages. Her May Day diary entry noted that she made a cake and served lemonade to "delightful company" in the evening.

She was, however, skeptical of applying this kind of private hospitality to the public. As a member of the committee to organize a "Temperance Saloon," Fannie confided to her diary of May 8, "I think it will not be a success as so few are agreed—everyone seems to have a different plan." Perhaps discouraged, Fannie's diary notations on these activities ceased, although the women's temperance movement continued in Lawrence. She did not attend any more mass meetings or personally participate in the work after May 1874. Private concerns within her own household and with their public impact on James' career absorbed her attention.

During the temperance crusade, Fannie and James maintained a comfortable separation between private and public life. In the most unexpected revelation in this diary, however, an intimate household matter dominated private life in the winter months and publicly surfaced in the press during James' summer campaign for the Republican gubernatorial nomination. The first hint of trouble appeared in Fannie's diary in early February when she noted that servant Martha Johnson became so ill that Dr. Anderson was summoned twice. 18 Using the servant's familiar name, Mary, Fannie's diary of February 14 reported "Mary in great distress." On the sixteenth, when Dr. Anderson came again, Fannie learned the nature of Mary's "illness"—a pregnancy, apparently the result of an intimate relationship with Stephen Horton when he lived with the household. In a diary generally devoid of exaggerated emotions Fannie exclaimed, "my heart is overwhelmed." With James in Topeka, she "knew not where my duty lies." Depressed and sleepless, Fannie concluded her diary entry of February 17, "what a Skeleton is hid in this house." The nature of the "skeleton" was not spelled out due to

17. Kansas Tribune, April 2, 1874.

18. Probably Dr. S.B. Anderson, homeopathist, 99 Massachusetts Street. Stenhouse and Sanders, Lawrence City Directory, 49.
As part of her cultural enrichment, Fannie attended lectures by university professors, including one by Byron Caldwell Smith (right), professor of Greek, which disturbed her and challenged her religious tenets.

As a member of the Lawrence Friends in Council (below), Fannie also attended their discussions and befriended women in the group.
the customary silence of the time about pregnancy even in a private diary. As mistress of the household, Fannie felt a sense of responsibility for her unwed servant and a concern about reactions of friends and neighbors as Mary’s condition became apparent.

The scandalous nature of such a situation in this time period was compounded by a general reticence during the nineteenth century on subjects dealing with sex. According to historian David Katzman, sexual exploitation of servants, and on occasion a lonely girl’s willing participation, were not unusual events. "Working within a private home and having intimate contact with the men of the household, a servant had opportunities for sexual play with them as well as for mutual sharing of love."

Fannie Horton, who adhered to the conventions of the time, found the shame of the situation almost unbearable. On February 18 she recorded, "the load on my heart... Oh, the skeleton in this house!" When James arrived home on February 21, Fannie was "able to pour out to him my sorrow and perplexity." In her role as moral guardian of the house, Fannie apparently influenced her brother-in-law to "do the right thing" by Mary. Fannie inscribed the following on February 22: "Snow & cold, Went to Church; James felt too tired & unwell to go so he stayed with Mother. I went and had a talk with Stephen. We are in great perplexity—I know not what to do!!" The next day Fannie recorded these events and emotions: "What a history has been crowded into this day! and I shall never forget. A marriage consummated in our house under such circumstances. It seems a frightful night more!! James went to Topeka at 11 o' clock nearly broken hearted and so are we all. May God sustain & help us."

Stephen S. Horton’s marriage to Martha Johnson on February 23, 1874, was performed by Probate Judge John G. A. Norton. Faye Dudden’s study of domestics noted several cases in which such marriages occurred, but this outcome was highly unusual. Katzman’s study of domestic work found that "given the sharp social, ethnic, religious, and racial divisions between servants and their employer families, U.S. domestics rarely married a member of the employer’s family."

Indeed these differences may have rendered Stephen Horton’s position in Lawrence untenable, for soon after the marriage, Fannie noted his departure. While no condemnation of Stephen appeared in Fannie’s diary, his name virtually disappeared. Her language also revealed disapproval as she wrote of the marriage "under such circumstances."

James left no such statement but, as the older brother who had been spared service in the war, he had demonstrated responsibility for Stephen whom he had sheltered in his household even after his marriage to Fannie. For an elected representative, especially one with ambitions for higher office, any hint of scandal involving household and kin could have adverse consequences.

In late April, when the records were made public, Fannie wrote, "our secret is ours no longer." She continued, "James and I did not go out in evening... as we felt so mortified we could not see anyone." On April 24 Fannie accompanied Mary to Leavenworth to the Kansas Home for Friendless Women where Mary would stay for the next three months. Fannie confided to her diary, "a sad day for this is a wicked world."

Established in 1868 as a temporary women’s shelter, by 1874 the Home for the Friendless (as it was commonly called) took in "those who came to be cared for through woman’s hour of great trial." The board of managers also arranged adoptions of children born to residents. Although the home received a limited amount of state and City of Leavenworth funds, most support came from private donations. In 1874 the board published a fundraising cookbook of "Recipes Contributed by Ladies of Leavenworth and Other Cities and Towns." Four recipes in The Kansas Home Cook-Book were attributed to "Mrs. J.C. Horton."

On May 12 Fannie again visited Leavenworth to attend the anniversary evening at the Home for the Friendless. Staying overnight with Leavenworth friends, the next day Fannie again visited the home. While Mary was in Leavenworth, Fannie noted on April 25, "We are doing our own work.

21. Stephen was age thirty-three, Martha Johnson was age nineteen. Marriage Record, Book 4, 169, Douglas County Courthouse.
22. Katzman, Seven Days a Week, 147; Faye Dudden, Sering Women, Household Service in Nineteenth-Century America (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press), 214.
23. Home Record (official organ of the Kansas Home for Friendless Women), January 1874. Fannie’s recipes were: Yeast, Yeast Cakes, Snow Pudding, and Almond Cake. Mrs. C.H. Cushing and Mrs. B. Gray, comps., The Kansas Home Cook-Book, 5th ed. (Leavenworth: Board of Managers, Home for the Friendless, 1886), 62, 181, 237. A Home for the Friendless was established in Rochester, New York, as early as the 1840s. Dudden, Sering Women, 169.

19. Clinton, The Other Civil War, 175.
In 1874 the Kansas Home for Friendless Women in Leavenworth raised funds by publishing The Kansas Home Cook-Book (left) containing "Recipes Contributed by Ladies of Leavenworth and Other Cities and Towns." Four recipes in the book were attributed to "Mrs. J.C. Horton," including her almond cake recipe (below).

**Cakes.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soda</th>
<th>2 teaspoons cream tartar, a little grated lemon.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ALMOND CAKE.</strong></td>
<td>Mrs. J.C. Horton, Lawrence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>One cup butter, two cups sugar, one cup milk, four cups flour, whites of ten eggs, one teaspoon soda, two of cream tartar, almond extract to flavor it.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>UNION CAKE.</strong></td>
<td>Mrs. Sterling, Chatham, Canada.</td>
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<tr>
<td>One cup butter, two cups pulverized sugar, one cup sweet milk, three cups flour, one half cup corn starch, one-half teaspoon of soda, one teaspoon cream tartar, four eggs, two teaspoons lemon extract.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ONE-EGG CAKE—Good.</strong></td>
<td>Mrs. M.S. Beers, Rossville.</td>
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<tr>
<td>One cup butter, one and a half cups sugar, three cups flour, one egg, one cup of sour milk, one teaspoon soda, one cup of raisins chopped fine.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>JENNY LIND CAKE—Splendid.</strong></td>
<td>Mrs. M.S. Beers, Rossville.</td>
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| Two cups of sugar, one of butter, one of sweet milk, four of flour, three teaspoons of Ask your Grocer for Peerless Baking Powder. It is the best.
Went out in afternoon to do marketing and shopping." After June 28 Fannie had the company of her niece Clara whom she described as "a very sweet girl." With James on the road much of the summer in his attempt to wrest the nomination for governor from incumbent Governor Thomas A. Osborn, Fannie and Clara joined in a Fourth of July picnic and entertained at home with the new game of croquet.

Fannie recorded her only other mention of Stephen Horton on July 16 when she wrote, "went over to Stephen's house... it is a lovely house; too beautiful to go to ruin." She most certainly was reminded of Stephen and Mary on July 27 when she wrote, "James learned of a base slander that appeared in the Chicago Times written from Lawrence and signed 'S.'" James immediately took the train to Chicago to seek the identity of "S."

The issue of the Chicago Times in question, July 25, 1874, included extensive political news including a column and a half on "Kansas Politics" by a "Special Correspondence." Under the subheading "A Little Into Detail" on the contest and the "reform-within-the-party republicans, which is led by the Hon. J.C. Horton," the columnist characterized the intra-party conflict as "bitter." The writer gleefully noted that James' opponents had "just worked up 'A Tremendous Scandal' against Mr. Horton which will be brought out in a few days." The columnist publicized this version of events that were confirmed by the marriage license and paralleled Fannie's diary account: "It appears that his brother, a wild, good-natured, but reckless fellow, whispered love to a refined and pretty servant girl in the family of Hon. J.C. Horton, in this city and ruined her... the poor girl clamored for marriage. It appears that the girl was appealed by a marriage, but Steve Horton suddenly disappeared, and the girl was quietly packed off to the Woman's home in Leavenworth." The writer of the article then veered into innuendo and smear: "It now turns out that the neglected girl makes affidavit that Hon. J. C. Horton had more to do with her child than a virtuous husband should have had. In short, she swears that Hon. J. C. Horton is the father of her offspring. Few people in Lawrence will believe this turn of the story, for Mr. Horton is a member of the Episcopal church, and his moral character has never been suspected before. But this shows the bitterness of the fight in the republicans own household." On July 27, the day Fannie and James learned of the article, Fannie concluded her diary entry: "I went to Leavenworth to see if any papers had been signed there had been none—found Mary able to travel and took her home with me." The Chicago Times referred to an affidavit signed by Martha (Mary) Horton. Finding no such papers, Fannie returned Mary to her Lawrence home.

When James learned that the source of the Chicago column was John C. Shea of the Lawrence Standard, the Democratic newspaper that opposed him in February, Fannie expressed in her diary her disdain for this man: "may he sink into public contempt & oblivion henceforth." After this column appeared, several Kansas newspapers responded with support for James. The Kansas Tribune editorialized on "The Slough of Kansas Politics."

It has well been said that Kansas politics is but another name for low bred villainy, deviltry and cowardice. Every trick or device known to political warfare has been employed to drag down and defeat one of the candidates for Governor on the Republican side, and the crowning act of border ruffianism has just been made apparent, in a cowardly attempt to fasten upon J. C. Horton, of this city, the perpetration of a crime which if true would blast, not only his political prospects, but his good name and that of his family.

It came from his enemies, and the question now is—for whom?

Nothing in Fannie's diary or subsequent events supported the insinuation of James Horton's complicity in Mary's pregnancy. Fannie was comforted by "a splendid sermon" that Mr. Dunn preached on August 2 "on the duties of Christians, the exercise of Charity & the character of slander."

Despite this political and religious support for James, the controversy that reached Chicago must have made it more difficult for him to wrest the nomination from an incumbent. Although

25. Births were not officially registered in Kansas until 1911. Nothing in Fannie's diary nor in Martha Horton's divorce petition of 1875 indicated that a child survived. It seems likely that Mary's pregnancy of only seven months, January to July, resulted in the premature delivery of a stillborn baby. The divorce petition, Martha Horton, plaintiff, against Stephen S. Horton, March 13, 1875, cited "abandonment" and lack of "support." Douglas County Civil Court, case no. 3380, March 13, 1875, Kansas Collection.
26. John C. Shea was the superintendent of the Lawrence Standard. Stenhouse and Sanders, Lawrence City Directory, 38.
27. Kansas Tribune, July 30, 1874.
Fannie rejoiced on August 9 that "James had a victory last night over the Whiskey ring in electing his delegates" and on August 22 "James heard cheering news from some of the Districts," these successes were short-lived. With his political efforts on her mind she wrote on August 24, "have thought about James all day & prayed for his success." However, on the day of the decision she was reconciled to the outcome. Her diary of August 26 revealed her appreciation of private life: "Today is the convention! I judge by the papers it is not very hopeful for James—I have thought of him all day & hope he might succeed. If he does not, I shall be just as happy. I enjoy our lovely domestic life which we could not have if he were a public man—A few drops of rain." Apparently the part-time office of state representative did not qualify as "public" in Fannie's mind as did the full-time job as governor. In any event, Governor Osborn was renominated on the second ballot. Fannie was reconciled when she expressed her thoughts on August 28: "Well! the convention is over & James was defeated! I think it is all for the best!!! Political life is a very unsatisfactory one."

James Horton did not immediately retreat from public life, and he and Fannie continued to shelter and care for Mary who experienced continuing health problems after resuming her duties in the Horton household. On September 9 Fannie noted, "Mary went to bed sick." She was seen by Dr. Francena Porter who gave "special attention to obstetrics and diseases of women."²⁸ In diary "Memoranda" Fannie wrote, "had Mrs. Dr. Porter; Paid Mrs. Porter $3.00." This family situation was unusual. Mary, by her "shotgun" wedding to Stephen in February, was a member of the family; yet Stephen had abandoned her, and she continued to work as a servant.

The next spring, March 1875, Martha Horton, still living at the Horton home, sued Stephen for divorce. She and James Horton both provided depositions. Martha (Mary) stated, "I have never seen him [Stephen] since the day of our marriage—never since our marriage has the defendant [sic] contributed toward my support or clothing." James confirmed the facts of the marriage and that both Martha and Stephen had lived in his home. He also stipulated: "Plaintiff has been living in my family home & has supported herself by her own labor." Stephen S. Horton, then living in Georgetown, Colorado Territory, signed the papers when the court summons was served and signed that "the action within mentioned is hereby admitted."²⁹

Fannie recorded Mary's departure: "Mary left here Apr 24 1875 Left $75.00 for James to invest or keep for her til she needed it." That Mary left money with James Horton indicated her trust. Fannie "paid her all up to date $123.00 cl's wages, $50.00 for expenses while at the Home." Where Mary went after the divorce was final is unknown. In Georgetown, Stephen ran for public office and remarried.³⁰

Fannie and James' marriage survived the strains of the summer scandal. Fannie's private regard for her husband appeared in her diary entry of September 9: "we miss him so much when he is away." Their private lives continued their regular patterns.

Not only had political attacks and embarrassing revelations about their household buffeted James and Fannie psychologically, but the extreme summer heat and the grasshopper invasion caused physical discomfort. In the latter instance James took vigorous action to protect the beauty of his home. According to a lengthy anecdote reported at the time of his death, Horton fought the grasshoppers that were eating everything in sight. He fastened a string of boards close to the ground on the outside of his fence and dug a series of holes which were filled with gallons of water and coal oil:

He and his helpers had these holes all in readiness for the entrapping of the approaching enemy. The earth seemed to be alive with the moving mass. As it came on it was met by men with brooms which were used to sweep it into the pits... The coal oil was soon boiling with the struggling hosts. Bushels of them were drowned, shoveled out into wheelbarrows and carted away to the ravine that ran across Indiana Street... The beauty of Mr. Horton's garden was not marred."³¹

Fannie's poetic description of the pests appeared in her diary of August 13: "grasshoppers came to-

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²⁸ Advertisement for Dr. Porter, Republican Daily Journal, September 11, 1873.
²⁹ Petition, Martha Horton, plaintiff, March 13, 1875, Douglas County Civil Court, case no. 3588.
day full force-like an army with banners.”

After the tempests of summer, Fannie retreated happily into private pursuits in the fall. On September 4 she and “Cara” (Clara Blish) attended the opera in Kansas City “enjoying it very much indeed.” In Lawrence, Fannie oversaw Clara’s fall and winter wardrobe preparations, while James attended the Episcopal Convention in Topeka.

Fannie’s social visits resumed. In addition to regular visits to “Mrs. Snow” in September, she “called on Mrs. Woodward and Mrs. Faxon.” The latter contacts foreshadowed business partnerships James would develop with these women’s husbands. Often visiting outside the neighborhood by carriage, Fannie noted with exasperation on September 25 that “some rogue carried off our carriage step & tore down fence.” The step was found or replaced because on September 28 Fannie wrote, “A perfect day. Sewed all morning—afternoon went to ride with James over to Governor Robinson—Mrs. R had been 2 weeks in Mass.”

James traveled east to visit family in October as Fannie recorded on the fifth, “Another perfect day James intended to go to N. York . . . I went down town. I bought slippers for him. In morning packed his trunk & Lunch box.” Remaining in Lawrence probably to look after her ailing mother, Fannie reported on October 9 Mrs. Weld was “better.”

Despite an active social life, Fannie missed her husband very much, noting in her diary on October 21, “he is having a splendid fling in New York.” She added “I wish I could be with him.” Fannie recorded James’ telegrams, postcards, and letters during his weeks in New York. Still absent at the time of the November election, James, who had been nominated for the Kansas Senate after his defeat in the gubernatorial race, won this seat. Fannie recorded his activities and thoughts as she observed voting on November 3: “Worked about & sewed—had Bay window pointed up. Election Day carriages very many for voters. Do not care how it goes—for I am selfish I want James at home with me— Went to ‘Friends in Council’ at Mrs. Simpson—had a very pleasant afternoon. Mrs. Snow read Scotts Ballad very finely.”

Apparently reconciled to James’ continuing in political life, Fannie seemed pleased with the election results. In her diary entry of the next day she received congratulations for her husband upon his election to the state senate. Shortly after on November 7, Fannie wrote, “James came home, much to our joy.” He returned with presents: hats for Fannie and Clara, neckties, books, tablecloth, and napkins.

If James and Fannie functioned in traditional spheres during much of the year, Fannie was much more financially independent than most women of her time. For example, in her diary of October 10 she recorded, “Still beautiful; went to market; paid Bullen’s bill. Drew $25.00 of my money—$25.00 of James Money.” In “Memoranda” at the end of her diary, Fannie recorded transactions in her own separate bank account. She noted, “Received $210 (two hundred & ten dollars) on May 10th put on deposit at McMillan Bank.” As a remarried widow who had been a music teacher, Fannie enjoyed a far greater degree of financial independence than most married women of the period.

Late November brought expanded private social activities to the Horton household. After hosting a new club at a party that lasted until midnight, Fannie wrote that the event “seemed a success about 25 present danced, played cards had music little singing.” Although many in the temperance movement disapproved of diversions such as cards and dancing, the Hortons did not forego these pleasures. Fannie’s religious attitudes, following a trend of the period, were somewhat liberal. In her diary entry dated November 1, she rebutted a Sunday sermon: “Dr. Canfield of Brooklyn preached from the text ‘Thou son of man came to save that which was lost.’ Perhaps I am right, but I do not believe in total depravity or that God created any soul to be lost. I think we all have a Divine spark within. May I be led to live aright.”

On Thanksgiving Day, November 26, they “went to church—had rehearsal before church—Caddic sung—Mr. Dunn remarks were very good indeed.” After a quiet dinner, which includ-

32. F.A. Faxon worked for the B.W. Woodward Company, a Lawrence drugstore that expanded into a drug manufacturing concern in Kansas City. Both families lived near the Horton home in Lawrence. Stehhouse and Sanders, Lawrence City Directory, 66, 119.

33. “Oakridge,” the Robinson’s home, was four miles northeast of Lawrence.

34. Isabel Weld died on June 20, 1876.

35. Mrs. Francis Snow and Mrs. S. M. Simpson were members of the Friends in Council and Fannie’s friends whom she often visited.

36. At L. Bullen and Company, 89 Massachusetts Street, Fannie Horton kept a running charge account for dry goods. Stehhouse and Sanders, Lawrence City Directory, 56.

Four years after the eventful year of 1874, the Hortons left Lawrence when James joined B.W. Woodward and Frank A. Faxon in establishing a wholesale drug company in Kansas City, Missouri. In 1906 James retired from Faxon, Horton & Gallagher (above).

(Right) On June 24, 1901, Fannie Horton died at the age of sixty-two. Her will directed that her assets be left to her “beloved” husband, James.
ed mince pies, Fannie noted that they "had no company; the first Thanksgiving we ever passed in our lives without company." On Christmas Eve, Fannie "spent morning at home. Afternoon went to Church. Had Choir Rehearsal." Her Christmas decorating took place in the evening as she "trimmed up home for Christmas. Had presents on Piano." On Christmas day, the Hortons attended church followed by dinner at home. With Stephen Horton gone from the family circle, they invited five friends whom they entertained with dancing, cards, and presents. On New Year's Eve, the Hortons entertained friends including "Prof. and Mrs. Snow." Fannie ended her 1874 diary with modest words: "I hope this year has not been an unprofitable one to me and those I have been with."

Four years after the eventful year of 1874, the Hortons left Lawrence when James joined B.W. Woodward and Frank A. Faxon in establishing a wholesale drug company in Kansas City, Missouri. The company prospered under several names and in several Kansas City locations. (It was bought out by McKesson & Robbins Drug Company in the 1930s.)

Although they entered prominently into Kansas City life, the Hortons maintained their Lawrence friendships especially with the Francis Snow family. In 1905, Snow recorded in his diary that J.C. Horton visited twice, once to attend the Old Settlers meeting. Transportation between the two cities was convenient via several daily passenger trains. James Horton, who had survived Quantrill's 1863 raid, served on the local committee that dedicated a monument to victims of the raid in Oak Hill Cemetery in 1895."

Not far from this monument both Fannie and James Horton are buried. Fannie died at age sixty-two on June 24, 1901, of "Pelvic Abcess," leaving an estate valued at twenty thousand dollars. Fannie's will directed that her assets be left to her "beloved" husband, James. Her obituary mentioned her musical and literary tastes, charter membership in the Kansas City Friends in Council, and leadership in the Grace Episcopal church ladies society. These activities, with the exception of the temperance crusade and involvement with the Home for the Friendless, were virtually the same as those she pursued in 1874. James Horton died on the eve of his seventieth birthday on May 14, 1907, following an operation. From an estate of almost a quarter of a million dollars, he left one thousand dollars to the city of Lawrence for the cemetery. Among individuals remembered in his will were three daughters of Chancelor Snow. Beneficiaries included James' nieces, two sisters, and sister-in-law Mary S. Horton, "widow of S. S. Horton" of Denver. No mention was made of Martha Johnson. James Horton's will left gifts to other servants and several company employees.

Obituaries extolled his personal character as honest and moral, and accounts of his life praised his dedication to the Episcopal church, the Republican Party, and civic and charitable causes. The Kansas City Star eulogized, "No man was better or more favorably known, and no one man was more highly esteemed, beloved, trusted and appreciated than James C. Horton."

Evidence from Fannie's diary and published accounts of James' career indicated that the eventful year of 1874 was probably pivotal in their lives. The household skeleton of which Fannie wrote became a scandal in the public press. The serenity of the Horton's home life was tested by these developments and the subsequent article in the Chicago Times casting doubt on James' character. These events, during the rough and tumble of an election year in Kansas, broke the delicate balance between private and public life and exposed the Horton household to public view.

Fannie's private misgiving about public life expressed in the last quarter of the year ("I dislike politics") and James' failure to gain the Republican gubernatorial nomination may have influenced his later decision to forego political ambitions. Completing his term in the state senate, he never again held public office, even though fellow Republicans urged him to do so. Occasional forays into reform activities, however, indicate that his political instincts remained intact in later life.


40. Douglas County Genealogical Society, "C.W. Smith, Lawrence, Kansas, Undertaker & Embalmer, 1890-1907," The Pioneer 7 (Summer 1983): 4; Mrs. J.C. Horton, obituary, Lawrence Daily Journal, June 26, 1901; Mrs. J.C. Horton, will, Probate Division, Jackson County Circuit Court, Kansas City, Mo.

41. James C. Horton obituaries, Kansas City Journal, May 15, 1907, Daily Gazette (Lawrence), May 15, 1907, Kansas City Journal, May 21, 1907, James C. Horton, probated will, May 20, 1907, Probate Division, Jackson County Circuit Court.

42. Kansas City Star, May 15, 1907.

43. Ibid.
Neither Fannie nor James moved far beyond the accepted roles for men and women of the time. Fannie managed the home and set the moral tone; James pursued business and political success. Fannie's financial independence, musical and intellectual pursuits, and interest in temperance and female suffrage, however, were evidence of changes in roles of women with leisure time. James' efforts to save his garden, his advocacy of temperance and female suffrage, and his support of Martha's divorce petition demonstrated values in advance of those in the traditional male sphere.

Although James and Fannie Horton—affluent, childless, and connected socially and politically to leaders of early Kansas—were not representative of most Kansas couples of the time, their enthusiasm for temperance, devotion to house and home, and support of the institutional church and charities were widely shared. They remained steadfastly loyal to Martha (Mary) Johnson (Horton) and to each other. Their well-furnished house and beautiful garden were cherished by both, an attainment to which many Kansans aspired in this period of rising expectations. The variety and richness of their cultural and social lives and their frequent opportunities for travel demonstrated that the Spartan frontier era was a historical memory for those in eastern Kansas who had prospered in the twenty years of settlement.

In 1874 the intertwined public and private lives of James and Fannie Horton exemplified remarkably consistent values. Publicly advocating temperance, they did not serve liquor in private. As important as this and other public issues had been to both James and Fannie in 1874, however, they ended the year in pursuit of private satisfactions, a pattern they followed for the remainder of their lives.