DEAR FATHER

Yours of May 12 reed this week. I think we must have missed one letter; perhaps we will get it next week. You ask if anything has been done more as to the territorial Convention. Nothing that I am aware of. We have seen no territorial papers for two weeks. You also ask, if there is any hope for Kansas? Kansas is now governed partly by a military despotism, partly by an outside oligarchy, under the form of the most unlimited democracy. This government is carried on by a party whose national strength consists in their professions of devotion to the broad principle of the sovereignty of the actual settler. This unnatural state of things cannot exist long. What the exact solution will be no one can tell. But the principle of democratic rule or the government of a majority of the people will at last triumph. The glaring inconsistency between the principle and practice of our rulers is becoming too ridiculous and absurd, too annoying and humiliating to last long. This suggests the reason why no territorial taxes are collected. The collection would have to be forced in nine cases out of ten. That would be too odious too Austrian for any part of America. The Assessor was about here over a year ago. Scarce any one would give him the least information. They denied his authority and defied him. That was the last we have heard here of assessors or taxes. Perhaps they will try it again this summer. But it will [be] a very hazardous experiment for them. Any one who will hold any office here under the bogus legislature, is socially ostracized and despised as a traitor to the people. But we think more of crops now than politics. The spring has been so late that corn is very late in getting planted and work is backward. What corn is planted is not doing a great deal. Our corn was three weeks in coming up, and I heard of corn that was five and six weeks in coming up. Potatoes are doing well. There was not one-tenth planted that there would have been if seed had been plenty. Many planted none. We have got in about 8 bushels. We cut them and so planted nearly one acre and a half. A man
offered to contract with our next neighbor who has five or six acres of potatoes planted for all the potatoes he would deliver between August and November next at $1.00 a bushel. We bought our seed early at $1.25 cents. They have been worth now since so many came in four dollars, and very hard to get at that.

I wish you could get me some rutabaga seed and send them by mail. I want to sow an acre with rutabagas and turnips. I would like to get a ¼ pound of rutabaga seed, and about the same of White Stone Turnip. Warner and Ray used to keep such seed in ¼ lb. papers for 75 cts a pound. Such seed are frequently received here in the mail. They might be sewed in a little cotton sack. If you could get these without too much trouble I would be glad.

We have got up, potatoes and corn, mustard and melons, onions, beets, carrots, turnips, cabbage, kale, spinach, summer savory, parsley, sage, peas and beans. We have five currant slips growing of those you sent us last fall. We feel thankful to you every time we look at them. Currant bushes are a rarity here and in the neighboring counties of Missouri.

A man is here doing our “breaking” today, and we are busy planting corn. There is a great deal more doing this spring than last. Now we feel secure, then we were in the midst of war. All well & join in love. John

Osawatomie, June 3, 1857.

Dear Father

We failed in getting a letter from home this week. We shall get our field all plowed and mainly planted tomorrow. Our health continues excellent. The weather continues cold for the season, with occasional very light showers and heavy dews. Potatoes are growing finely. Rather too dry for garden seeds. We have 28 young year-old peach trees which are growing very thriftily. Corn backward. Your son

John

June 8, 1857.

Dear Father

The night after writing the accompanying note, it rained all night, raised the river, so we could not get it to mail. Yesterday we had a terrible storm of wind. Three of the best houses in town were blown down and utterly destroyed. A log house a half mile South of us not occupied was blown down. We had half a mile of fence blown down. We feared for our house and lives, but mercifully
were spared. Two houses on Middle Creek were leveled to the ground. All our neighbors have had their fences blown over, and a great deal of timber. We have not heard of any lives being lost. We have had two calves come the last week, one from a heifer of our own raising.

You probably will not hear regularly from us now for a few weeks, as what they call here "the June fresh" seems to have come, and the mails will consequently be uncertain.

Your son  John

Oswatamie June 23, 1857

Dear Mother,

We have got another boy. He was born last Saturday a little after noon. . . . Both mother and babe are doing very well, particularly the mother. She is getting along so far better than either time before. I think her general health a great deal better. She sits up some to day. Franky is very much pleased with his little baby. We are going to call him Robert Colegrove Everett. We feel to thank God that every thing is as well with us as it is, and that his hand has been stretched over us in mercy and not in affliction. We fortunately have obtained a very good woman to stay with us since Sarah has been sick, which is much better than we might have expected, as such help is scarce, often very poor, and sometimes impossible to get at all.

We received Father's of June 10th this morning. The Chenadwr we got last week, the sermon the week before. The bogus election, as far as we have heard was a very slim affair. In this county there were 64 votes polled— This in a voting population of 1000 or 1500 at least (now.) There were 400 and odd voters according to the incomplete bogus census in March and I have no doubt there are over three times as many now. You cannot shame a man more who voted then than by asking him if he was one of the noble 64. In Franklin County, joining us West a populous Free State County, no census was taken. In Anderson County, Southwest of us, 34 votes were polled. The Convention will be a farce if it ever meets.

I close now so as to be ready to send to the mail by the first chance. We are so busy now that I can hardly take time to go to town on purpose to carry a letter. Our crops are growing well, although it is getting pretty dry. With much love to all at home

Your son  John
Dear Father.

Yours of June 17 (with the turnip seed) and June 8 read this week. Thank you for getting the seed for me. This week we got a check from father Colegrove of $100 towards paying for our claim. A few weeks ago one of father Colegrove’s neighbors brought us $25 from him. Have little time to write. Sarah has got quite well again. The baby cats and sleeps most all the time. Our crops are looking well. We have got three heifer calves which we are raising, and now milk three cows.

Your son John.

Osawatomie July 3, 1857.

July 9 1857.

Dear Father

Yours received containing the rutabaga seed. We are prospering moderately and are in usual health. The weather is very warm and dry. Sarah is quite smart and the baby is well.

Your son John

July 24, 1857.

Dear Father

We received a letter from home this week. We are all well. I am digging a well. The weather continues very dry. In haste

Your son John

Longwood Aug 14, 1857

Dear Father—

John wanted me to write about four lines to tell you that we are well enough to work days and sleep nights and consequently have no time to write letters.

He is working about two miles from home on a well helping a man blast this week who helped him last week in our well. We have not come to water only a little in some seans in the rock, which supplies us with drinking water.

We have had some refreshing rains within the last two weeks which have brightened up the crops in this section and shortened the countenances of the settlers very considerably. We have no very special news— One of our neighbors—Friend Mendenhall told me as he called to leave our mail this week that he had just received the very agreeable news that there was a warrant for treason cut against him that had been issued at Lecompton—also warrants for two or three more.
Their offense was, taking part in a tax meeting so called, at which the people pledged themselves to resist payment of bogus taxes—At that meeting Mendenhall was asked if he would fight in case an attempt was made to enforce the payment of taxes and he replied that he didn’t expect to fight, but that he would suffer himself to be hanged before he would pay taxes. Such treason does not sound so particularly dangerous, unless to the one uttering it. I am sure that it need [not] be raked up fifteen or sixteen months afterward.—Any thing to keep bogus law makers busy——I doubt some if any officer be found courageous enough to serve a warrant in these parts.

Baby grows fast and cries a great deal. He weighs fifteen lbs. I can hardly get time to do my housework he keeps me so busy. Frank helps me considerably and takes a great deal of credit to himself on account of it. He often tells his Father when he comes to his meals that Mother wouldn’t have been able to have got one bit of supper if it hadn’t been for her good little helper boy—He wants me to stop and let him write a long letter to his Grandfather—He has learned those two verses his Grandmother sent to him, and repeats them very often.

Your children
John & Sarah

[Longwood, September 4, 1857.]

Dear Father

I have delayed writing, hoping to get time to write a full letter. But the time has not come. We are very anxious about Franky, though we still hope for the best.

The free state convention at Grasshopper Falls resolved to go in to the October Election. If the Missourians keep out we can carry every thing. If they attempt to control the polls there will be trouble. The governor has pledged himself to keep out all outsiders. But the people have lost confidence in Walker. With all his fair promises, he is playing into the hands of the Slave Democracy as far as he dares. His recent movement against Lawrence was without the least necessity. Indeed people at first believed his bombastic proclamation against that peaceful city to have been a hoax. But the movement was entirely and perfectly theatrical. The audience for whom he played was the fire-eaters of the South. Here the only effect was to give the people about Lawrence a market for their extra milk and butter. The people of Lawrence paid no atten-

47. Lawrence held a city election on July 13. Governor Walker issued a proclamation declaring the action rebellious and sent U. S. troops.
tion to Walker. They elected their municipal officers—those officers took the required oath—entered on their respective duties, and passed ordinances just as if he was not there. Gov. Walker stands much lower with the people on account of that absurd movement than he did.

I have not much heart nor time to write and I close, hoping we can soon send better news about little Franky.

Your son

John

Osawatomie Sept. 18, 1857.

Dear Father

I was in at the Constitutional Convention (the bogus affair) in LeCompton. They adjourned to the third Monday in October—two weeks after the election—without forming a Constitution. There were two parties in the Convention. Ultra proslavery and Conservative proslavery. The former party very decidedly in the majority. The Conservatives are in favor of submitting the Constitution to the people, while the other party are opposed. But they did not dare to frame a Constitution before the Election and not submit it to the people. So they adjourned till after Election. They were a very ordinary looking set of men—some regular types of the border ruffian. Meantime the free state men all over the territory are forming military companies, and preparing to defend the polls if invaded. Probably the resolute attitude of the free state men will go far to prevent invasion. The troops have been withdrawn from Lawrence, and are said to be ordered to Utah. Gov. Walker has gone to Jefferson City to tender his resignation unless he is to be supported by the troops. He has pledged his honor to keep out all outsiders at the Election. The grossest injustice was practiced in making out the apportionment for the Legislature. Thus 14 counties in the Southern part of the territory with almost half the population of the territory were only allowed 3 out of 39 members.48 The reason was that most of these counties were so entirely free state that no census was taken in them by the bogus authorities. But with this unjust and wicked apportionment, nothing but the most open fraud can prevent a complete free state triumph.

It is two years since I was in Lawrence before. The change is most marked. Then I travelled a whole day, without seeing but

48. The census ordered by the legislature (see Footnote No. 42) was taken in but fifteen out of thirty-four counties. The remaining nineteen were known as disfranchised counties. They were largely settled by Free-State men and were too remote from the border for convenient control of ballot boxes. Returns were made in every county bordering on Missouri and in every Proslavery county.
two or three settlers cabins. Now there is not one claim on the whole road on government land that is not taken, and a house on it. Lawrence is improving very fast, and seems full of business. Prairie City and Palmyra, two free state towns, have grown up out of nothing, while Benicia and Douglas, proslavery towns, have grown to nothing. The only proslavery town in Kansas that flourishes is Lecompton, and that is built up entirely by the patronage of Uncle Sam. The only business places besides one or two stores are lawyers' shops and grogshops—and the United States Land Office.— I have a chance to send this, and I close, with love

Your affectionate son        John

Monday night
Oct. 5, 1857.

Dear Sister Cynthia

I take a few moments to reply to yours of Sept 21, just received five minutes ago. I have taken a job of carrying the mail from Osawatomie to Neosho. Tomorrow is my day to go. It is nearly 60 miles. It takes me three days to go and return. I have been two weeks. It keeps me very busy as I have my own farm work to do besides, and, just now it is almost impossible to hire help. Franky has got pretty smart again. The baby had a bad spell of diarrhea for two or three weeks and lost some flesh. He has got well now.

Today was our election day. I was down to town about noon and voted. Up to that time none but free state votes had been offered. There was a general turn out. The election at this precinct was perfectly peaceable. There are three other precincts in Lykins county. It was not generally thought that there would be much if any Missouri border ruffian vote in this county. But we shall now hear in a few days. . . .

Crops are a great deal better than they promised two months ago. June and July were intensely dry and hot. August and September have been showery, good growing weather. We have had no frost yet.

With much love

In haste Your brother        John

In town Oct 6 1857.

Dear Father

Yesterday was Election day. In Osawatomie Precinct the free state vote was 240, not 1 Proslavery. In Stanton, 7 miles West 59 free state and one Proslavery
Osawatomie .................................................240
Stanton .................................................. 59
Miami ..................................................... 23
Paoli ....................................................... 30

Total Lykins county 40 ..........................382

The vote would have been twice as heavy and the free state proportion much greater if this summer’s emigration could have voted. For about all this season’s emigration is free state. I am starting to Neosho with the mail and must close. We are pretty well at home

John

Osawatomie Oct. 26 1857.

Dear Father

I am very sorry we have been obliged to neglect our weekly letters so much lately. My trips to the Neosho take up three days every week, and I am very busy the rest of the time. I have been now five times; tomorrow is my day to go out again.

We feel especially indebted to you at this time, now that I am cutting up the corn. We have no reason to complain of our crops. I have got the best sod corn that I have seen any where this year with the exception of one piece. A gentleman who stopped with us night before last said it was the best sod corn he had seen in the territory. He had been in the territory looking around about a month—from Tennessee, but opposed to slavery. For this we are indebted to you, for I could not have got the field in and got it plowed, if it had not been for the help I got from home. I think I shall have 200 bushels of potatoes when they are dug, and plenty of turnips, beets, pumpkins, squashes, &c. We have had a great abundance of melons for two months, and now many will rot we cannot use. We have had a very long, mild, beautiful fall, with moderate rains, making very [good] growing weather. The first of September there was scarcely any promise of potatoes—now one hill makes us two meals.

Now about the election. There never has been any doubt but that the free state men polled a large majority of votes. But the pro-slavery party tried to get the majority in the Legislature by false and manufactured returns. Douglas and Johnson Counties were joined in one District, to elect three members of the Council and eight of the house. Douglas County contains Lawrence and is over-

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40. The official count for Lykins county gave a total of 407 votes cast, of which 348 were Free State and 59 Democrat.
whelmingly free state. Even Lecompton, the capital of the territory and the focus of proslavery influence, gave a majority of 190 for freedom. The free state vote in that county was 1683; the proslavery 187. It so happened, as the entire Council consists of 13, and the House of 39, that the vote of this district would turn the scale in the Legislature. It was known the same night how Douglas County had gone, so they opened the polls the second day at a little precinct called Oxford City in Johnson County under the pretense that all had not voted, and added about 1500 names to the return. When this return began to be first talked of it was laughed at as a joke, but when the 45 feet of names came to the Secretary's Office at Lecompton, with a certificate that these votes had been veritably cast, it caused intense excitement and indignation, that the rights of the entire people should thus be wiped out by a mere scribbling of the pen. But the returns were so plainly fraudulent, that Secretary Stanton and Governor Walker determined to investigate their truth. So they went in search of this great Oxford City which professedly contained a population nearly equal to the whole of Douglas County, and found a little village of six houses. This place is separated from the Missouri village of Little Santa Fe only by a street, and they found the people there as much astonished as any one at the magnitude of the return and treated the whole affair with derision or indignation. So the governor and Secretary issued a proclamation detailing the circumstances, and declaring that these returns would be thrown out. This is greatly to their honor, for although it was no more than their duty still it is something in these degenerate times for men to do their duty. The notorious Sheriff Jones50 was one of the candidates who expected to be benefitted by this mean and wicked piece of trickery, and went to Secretary Stanton demanding his certificate of election, and upon Stanton's refusing it, drew his bowie knife on him. It is said that Stanton now goes armed for his own protection. When this affair had been thus disposed of, and it was thought all was smooth sailing, came another return from McGee County of 1202 pro-slavery and 24 free state. This County is on Cherokee Indian land in the extreme South East of the territory and contains a white population of perhaps fifty or a hundred. It was a remarkable circumstance, showing the effrontery of the tricksters, that these returns were in the same hand writing as the fraudulent Oxford returns, were tied up with the same

50. Samuel J. Jones, Proslavery adherent, was the first sheriff of Douglas County and leader of the armed Proslavery force that practically destroyed Lawrence on May 21, 1856.
kind of red ribbon, and when some curious person put the ends of these pieces of ribbon together it was found that they just matched, showing them to have been cut from the same piece. Of course on the principles of Walker's proclamation these returns must be thrown out.

I have not time to write about the Missourians voting in Leavenworth County—the soldiers voting at Kickapoo &c, but if we get a majority holding certificates in the Legislature the minor frauds can be looked into, and the people have their rights. If all illegal votes were thrown out the proslavery party would be in a very small minority, if there would be any of them left in the Legislature.

Sarah is having a light attack of chills. We hope it will not be serious. The rest of us are well. . . .

With love to all John.

Tues. Evening Oct. 27 [1857]

Dear Cynthia

If the baby will remain quiet long enough I will answer the questions in your last letter—

. . . John got back from Lecompton Tuesday, as we may have written in some previous letter. We both came through the trial unscathed by either the "winds or the wolves." And now what do you think of me, I have to stay alone two nights every week, and not only that but have three cows to milk besides pigs to feed and chickens to take care of and crying babies to look after. And just now as if all these were too little, the chills have set in, so with all the rest of my duties I am compelled to shake every other day— Tomorrow is my day to be sick and I am preparing for it to day—getting in from the field and boiling sufficient pumpkin to last the pigs—keeping the cows up so that I may be able to milk early before my chills come on fixing food for Franky to help himself to &c. Baby will have the hardest time and I dont know just how he can be managed— Hope this state of things wont last a great while.

We have no very dangerous wild beasts that I know of. Prairie wolves are not dangerous and those are the ones that howl around our lone cabins. We are not so very far from neighbors only ½ a mile and we have far more companions among tame beasts than wild ones—and as to hardships Kansas has less of them than many older countries— That however depends in a great measure on the way we look at things— Things that would have been to me una-

durable hardships in Steuben are only a little disagreeable here simply because I like Kansas and didn’t like Steuben and I am sure you would find few hardships were you to come here also—but if mother can’t bear to hear you speak of coming she would suffer grave hardships for you should you once get here. I suppose the ague is a great lion in the way, in all your feelings and it is indescribable when you are getting acclimated but then you are sure to enjoy far better health, after it, and its future visits are not so bad as your Steuben colds are. Then another thing this climate affords permanent relief to dyspeptics, and consumptives when not too far gone. Do you suppose that John could have ever had more enjoyment in Steuben continually dyspeptic as he was there than he has been here with less luxuries and a healthy stomach? . . . Love to all— I must get to bed Yours sleepily

Sarah

Longwood Nov. 23, 1857.

Dear Father and Mother

I take a few moments this morning to let you know that we are all well. Yours of Nov 5th we received day before yesterday. . . . I get about $100 a quarter for carrying the mail. I am back every week in three days. I expect to have to be gone 4 days some times in the winter. We have meetings every other Sabbath in a private house a mile from here. Quite a good neighborhood gathering. Mr. Adair, congregational, and a missionary of the American Missionary Association preaches. He is very much respected as a good man and a good citizen.

You have seen that the bogus Constitution is not to be submitted to the people. Gov. Walker by pledges many times repeated is pledged to join the people in opposing it. There is to be a free state delegate Convention Dec 2nd to take action concerning it. It is thought that Gov. W. will call an extra session of the Legislature just chosen, and that they will order an election, so that the people may have an opportunity of expressing an opinion upon this Constitution. The Gov. has done a good deal to redeem his character among free state men by his rejection of the Oxford & McGee Co. returns. It is said that the Oxford list was taken bodily from an old Cincinnati directory in alphabetical order! The free state men are united in their indignation and determined opposition to this last attempt to force a slave Constitution upon them. There is a difference of opinion about the most effectual way of opposing it, but
whatever course is recommended by the Convention of Dec. 2nd will have a united support. That Constitution can never be peaceably submitted to by the people of Kansas. If enforced upon us at all, it will be as the bogus laws have been at the point of the bayonet and by dragoon law.

We have had a very cold November so far. Today the wind blows cold from the North. There was only a little over two weeks after the first killing frost before we had a cold storm followed by frost that froze the ground up. Consequently a great many potatoes are frozen. We have a great many bushels yet in the ground.

Franky has got quite smart. His mother is very proud of little Bobby. He is a great fat healthy-looking good natured child—the admiration and wonder (for is he not brought up on a bottle?) of all who like babies. He gives us very little trouble nights. Could you send us two or three more mouth pieces? He uses up nearly one a month, and we are now using the last one. We took little Robert to meeting with us yesterday. He was awake all meeting time, and did not cry at all. He paid some attention to the minister, but looked around more than would be becoming in a larger boy. He was in ecstasies at the singing. I have bought a second hand wagon for $25. So all the family rode up to meeting yesterday. Mother used to ride horseback on old Polly, with Frank behind and Bobby before, and father trudging along by the side! We find the wagon an improvement. I must close with love to all

Your affectionate son

John

P. S. My ink has frozen.

Longwood Dec. 14, 1857

Dear Cynthia,

We are all well but have no time to say much else—The weather here this month is delightful the mercury ranging from 48° to 60° in the day time, and from 32° to 40 in the night—But it can’t un-freeze our potatoes—The people in the Territory as you see by the eastern prints are undergoing another political crisis—as soon as anything of importance is known to us John will find time to tell you—“Bleeding Kansas” will free herself from her persecutors now or “die in the last ditch.” There will be no more holding on to the skirts of the north or of Congress—no more waiting to see “what will turn up”—but some decisive action will be taken here that will at
once and forever settle the vexed question within her harassed borders— And this is as it should be— Murder and arson and Tyranny have stalked over this wronged and outraged people till forbearance on the part of their victims is no longer a virtue, but a crime, and now with one mind and heart the people are determined to rise up in their might and break the jaws of the wicked and strike from their midst the foe of oppression— God speed them in their righteous purpose.

John’s route is 60 miles and back making near 120 miles— He and Polly both go it in three days and come back very little if any “worse for the wear”— We have a man here now helping about the farm work so I am not left alone— Little Bobby grows and flourishes like a green bay-tree. We all rode to town in the new wagon last Friday. I stepped on to the scales with Bobby and found he increased my weight 24 lbs.! Can you come that in Steuben? He is the best natured baby I ever saw—some days he sits in the rocking chair all day and is not tended so much as a half hour except at meal time when he comes to the table and eats potato and turnip and pumpkin pie like the rest of us. He is very playful, and will talk and laugh with his bottle or toes or fingers for any length of time when nothing more sociable presents itself— That is all I have got time to say now— Supposing you see if you cant say a little more soon and enclose it to your sister & Brother

John & Sarah

Osawatomie, Feb 16 1858.

Dear Father

I do not know when I wrote home last. Am afraid it is a good many weeks since. We all continue well. The people of Kansas are a good deal excited now at the prospect of the Lecompton Constitution passing Congress. I would not be surprised if terrible vengeance will be taken on some traitors to the people, if this Lecompton scheme succeeds in Congress. Perhaps this will be the culminating point of the Democratic party. They have gone here the farthest possible from the Democratic principle.

Little Robert continues very healthy and good. Will try not to be so long again without writing

Your son

John
Dear Father and Mother

Yours of Feb. 25 we received last Tuesday morning.

You inquire about my journeys to the Neosho. I have had very few unpleasant trips. We have had no very severe weather this winter such as we had last winter and the winter before. The rain and snow generally come, if there is any, when I am at home. We have had only 4 inches of snow at any time. The ground is entirely bare now, and has been for weeks, and very little frost in the ground, and none in the streams. I do not know whether I mentioned that I have a prairie of 20 miles to cross without a house. There was a poor cabin about half way with a family in it in the fall. I expect they will return soon, and I will again make a stopping place there, avoiding the fatigue of my last days travel, which is now about fifty miles. I believe I have told you that I have been selling milk in town this winter three times a week. I have sold about $30 worth in seven weeks, from three cows. I expect to give it up in a week or two longer as new milk cows come in. We have now three cows, one two year old heifer, and three yearling heifers. I wish very much every spring I could manage to get a few more cows. There is immense waste of the raw material of milk, butter, and cheese around me here every year. Thousands of tons of hay (uncut) are burnt right under our nose, as you may say, every year. All that is wanting to make this valuable is cows to eat it and turn it into milk. Thomas D. Lewis of Utica wrote to me a week or two ago, in respect of investing a few hundred dollars in Kansas in real estate, or lending it on landed security on good interest. I wish that I could borrow two or three hundred dollars to get cows with. If I could give Cousin Thomas the required security I should try to get it of him. But I have not yet pre-empted my claim. Would you like to try to get this amount for me or some one else and join with me in a note for it? Say for three to five years at ten or twelve percent. Or I could repay $200 in one year at twenty percent. I have nearly $200 coming to me yet of mail money, one half in May, and the rest in August. I have another horse on trial, which I think I will buy, and drive two horses when emigration begins to come in, and carry passengers. Butter has been selling this winter from 30 to 35 cts; cheese 25 cts a pound; milk 30 cts a gallon. So you see dairy products keep a good price yet.

[John R. Everett]
Dear Father

... We have read with much interest the accounts of the revival in the East in your letters as well as in the papers. There is no special interest here. One great hindrance to the cause of religion here is that the most prominent of those who profess religion are hardly as much esteemed for probity and character as some who make no profession. Rev Mr. Adair the Congregational minister is a very good man, and universally esteemed as a man and Christian. But his prominent church members are very poor stuff—intelligent and able, but tricky and mean in every day life. It is a great mortification to have to feel so about men who should be the light of the world—the practical expounders and verifiers of what religion is. Mr. Adair continues to hold meetings near us every other week. The meetings are very well attended.

But this is not what I sat down to write. I am getting in a new field of between 50 and 60 acres this spring. I intended it for a pasture this summer, and had some hopes that I should some way be able to stock it. The custom here is to let calves suck the cows all summer, to get the cows to come up. Hardly any have pastures. In the day time the cows run and graze on the prairies and in the timber patches, and the calves are yared up. In the night the cows are yared up and the calves are turned out to graze. It is not as profitable as if one had a pasture and could wean the calves. Which would be the most profitable, and which would be considered the most economical and thrifty, if a man had 160 acres of land in Steuben, all paid for except $200, and only three or four cows, to burn his grass every year, and wait till the natural increase from his few cows should stock the farm or boldly run in debt for enough to stock his place? I think there is a wide difference between running in debt for the means of living or for speculating in real estate (there is a great deal of that in the West) and running in debt for stock which will be immediately paying for itself. There are no cattle to be sold here on credit. You don’t see auction notices here closing with "Terms.—Nine months credit, with good approved notes on interest." The great want here is capital to do business with. A man say in Steuben buys 50 acres of land for $2000 dollars. He pays $1500 down. He is in debt $500 for his land. Does he think of letting his farm lie idle till he can earn money enough by day labor to stock it? No, he goes and buys cows at nine to 12 months time. He can’t afford to do otherwise. If I had not lost so much health and strength in the printing office I should
not be forced now to borrow money to carry on my farm with. But cows are as good an investment here as in Steuben. What I want to borrow is credit to get them.

But there is another matter that presses harder now. The land sales in this district commence the 5th of July. All land that is not paid for before that time is forfeited. This announcement took the settlers perfectly by surprise. We had been led by the President’s message to think that the land sales would be put off till the land was all in the hands of actual settlers. This is another part of the Lecompton scheme. It is the hardest blow struck at the people of Kansas yet. The object undoubtedly is to punish the people for wishing to make their own laws. The great majority cannot pay now without ruinous sacrifices or more ruinous interest. We are just feeling the effect of the money crisis. It is harder times for money than it has been since we have been in the territory. Money on mortgage will be worth here from 50 to 100 per cent between now and July. Can you borrow money for me at a less rate than that on the security of my land? The improvements on my claim are worth from $250 to $300. The land will be worth at a low valuation from $800 to $1000 when preempted. It cannot be mortgaged till it is paid for. I shall want $200 to pay for my claim. I had $100 last fall that should have gone towards my land, but I could not get the other hundred, so I put that into my business. I have something to show for every dollar of it, but nothing that I can now turn into money. I am you know within two miles of Osawatomie (the town has grown towards us), a place that seems now to be very thriving about 80 or 100 houses with three or four new houses going up every week. I have between 65 and 75 acres enclosed—about 14 broke. Please let me know immediately whether you can help me, so that if not I may throw myself into the hands of the land sharks before they get gorged. There can not be the least doubt about the security—after I have pre-empted.

We are all well Your affectionate son

John

Longwood, May 4, 1858.

Dear Sarah—

I have but a few minutes to write and perhaps it is as good for my purpose as a longer time—as I have nothing in the wide world to say—My teeth are aching and have been all night— It’s a damp dark cold dismal time, come on I should judge on purpose, to give folks the toothache and ague, and to rot corn in the hill, and give children the
Croup— If my judgment is right it accomplishes its purposes much better than we poor mortals seem to carry out our plans—for in our case as I stated before I've got the toothache, Mr. Snow who is stopping with us has got the ague and Frank has got the croup.

John is gone to day with the mail—and Robert is clinging on to my dress crying— We have not planted any thing yet but potatoes which will do well enough this weather but those who have put in corn will I'm afraid have to replant it. Last week I took out the mail so as to give John a chance to work at home fearing our crop would come out rather late by the three days delay, but this week it is not weather to plow drag or plant so he goes with it himself. I shall probably have to go again next week—

I have hardly got rested from my last trip— I had to do a large washing and some ironing—some cleaning, and cooking enough for him at home and myself, the day before I started—then the 40 miles a day on horseback for three days—then that night about midnight after I got home some emigrants got in that stopped with us and for whom supper and two beds on the floor had to be prepared—which broke up that nights rest and the next day it was afternoon before they got started on so that I had my hands full till quite night getting cleared out after them.

The first night on my way out to Neosho I traveled till nearly midnight— It was very cold part of the time I was gone especially that night, and unusually windy all the time except the last afternoon— On the high prairie I had great difficulty in keeping from being blown off from my horse, an inexperienced horse woman must inevitably have been borne off by the wind— But I believe I may well boast a little of my skill in riding. I have rode down and up ravines steeper than your house roof bare backed with Frank in my lap when the banks were so slippery that the horse didn't pretend in going down 20 or 30 ft. to raise her feet more than once or twice and when in going up she would have to jump and plunge in the most violent manner to keep from slipping down again into the water— Such lessons were learned in the days of Ruffian notoriety when it was necessary to know the latest tidings and when 'twas safer for a woman to be seen out than a man— But in our part such lessons no longer have to be studied, though murders and outrages are rife only a few miles from us on the Little Osage towards Fort Scott.

I think though that the arms of vengeance will be raised ere long in that unhappy neighborhood and ruffianism be driven out from the only corner in which it has any resting place.
I had an opportunity to take a school in Leroy while I was out, but the day I started John had sent out to a man about 15 miles from here who owns 50 cows to see if we could hire 20 of them for the summer— But they were such a poor lot of animals—been so badly wintered—old and never milked except by the calves—so wild too—that our messenger thought they were not worth taking as a gift—So hoping that we might go to dairying I made no effort to secure the school as I should otherwise have done—

I have sent by John this week to see if he can get the school for me. We want and will at some rate or other, stock our farm—Green cheese not 3 weeks out of the press sells here for 20 cents a lb. Any man could afford to pay 50 per cent on money to buy cows with here. A cow will twice pay for herself here during the summer in cheese, and since we have failed to get a few this spring I shall get a school if I can this summer and raise the money to get them in that way. The baby I can get taken care of by Mrs Sears our nearest neighbor and Frank can board with me— I am afraid I shall miss of getting the school as it is getting late in the season and they were anxious to have their school commence— I do not know of any other vacant school now— It is getting to be dinner time and I must stop. I have strung my letter out to an unconscionable length after all and havent said a word yet or even thought till now of that little new baby, but if you saw as many babies as I see you wouldn’t hardly think to tell of it— Babies are as thick here as blossoms in a clover field— Well I am glad its them and not us that have got to be kept awake with it— Very willing they should have all the babies in future Yours as ever Sarah

[John R. Everett to Jane and Anna Everett, Galesburg, Ill.]

May 20, 1858.

Dear Sisters

I can write but few lines now. . . . In relation to the expense of coming out here. From Chicago to St. Louis, the fare used to be $8.00. On the Missouri River from St. Louis to Kansas City, (where you would have to land) the fare varies from $7.00 to $12.00 and sometimes higher, depending somewhat on the stage of water in the river—when the water is high the fares are low and vice versa. From Kansas City to Osawatomie the traveling is by stage—fare $5.00. There is another route—take the Pacific Railroad at St. Louis to a place called California, about 25 miles West of Jefferson City, Mo., and from there by stage
(Moore & Walker's line) to Osawatomie via Pleasant Hill. The stage fare from California to Osawatomie is $10—through in two days. They run a daily line to Pleasant Hill and triweekly from there to Osawatomie; but I learn that in a week or two, they will run daily through to Osawatomie. So you see the expense from Chicago will not come much short of $20 to $25.00, and might be a little over including detentions and expenses in St. Louis & Kansas City. We would be very glad to see you out here, although the expense seems pretty formidable, if you should both come. We have seen a good deal of hard times since we have been here and have learned to be pretty stingy of money. The administration have ordered the land sales in two of the three districts in Kansas to come off in July—Since the passage of the Lecompton contrivance,51 the settlers are told by the land officers that if they vote for the Lecompton Constitution, and pass it, the land sales will be put off. This is a very tempting bribe, as thousands can not now pay up without ruinous sacrifices, and some not at all. But I have no doubt the people will vote Lecompton down. You have no idea how that instrument is detested by the people. If Buchanan should offer to give every settler 160 acres of land if they would endorse his hated pet, even then I really think he would be doomed to a mortifying defeat.

Our little Robert is nearly 11 months old, and is a very hearty and strong child, creeps all over, and walks by chairs &c. Frank is nearly five years, makes little yokes to yoke up his cob oxen, generally has two yoke of oxen about, goes to Kansas City and back frequently for a load of provisions; has got a little wagon that he is all the time tinkering with, making new axles, trees, or something, and on the whole is a very busy child—has no idea of reading or books, but can fetch up the cows or go a mile on an errand, as a Kansas boy should.

I must go to work. Write soon. Let us know if you conclude to come and I can write you more particulars about the journey.

Your affectionate brother

John R. Everett.

We have not yet paid for our land. Have written to father to see if he can help us. This land sale is purposely to annoy the settlers,

51. The English bill, passed by congress April 30 and signed by the President May 4, providing for the submission of the Lecompton constitution to the vote of the people of the territory. As an inducement for votes in favor of the constitution, the bill provided for large land grants to be set apart to the future state.—See Frank Heywood Hodder, "Some Aspects of the English Bill for the Admission of Kansas," Kansas Historical Collections, v. X, pp. 224-223.
in keeping with all Buchanan's acts to us. It is directly contrary to his implied pledges in his message. And no doubt now if we would surrender to Buchanan, and go for a slave state all would be reversed, and the land sales be put off indefinitely.

Osawatomie, May 28, 1858.

Dear Mother, Brothers & Sisters

I received father's letter of May 14 last evening. Feel glad and grateful to hear that he succeeded in borrowing $100 for me and that there was some prospect of getting the other $100. The approaching land sales are being used as a screw to force the poor settlers to vote for the Lecompton Constitution. We are told if we vote for that pet measure of the President, the land sales will be postponed two or three years to enable the state to select the lands to which it will be entitled. But if we vote against the President's desire, the settlers deserve no favors from the President, and the land sales will go on, and those who cannot pay will lose their lands, their improvements; their hardships and sacrifices for the past year or years in pioneering in a new country will go for nothing. This is the hardest time for money we have seen in the territory—the hard times did not get here till this spring. There is not the least doubt that the land sales were ordered for the express purpose of being able to exert the power of the creditor which the President possesses to force the poor debtor to vote according to his will. A new illustration of popular sovereignty truly! But I have little fear that the people can be bribed or driven. They will lose their lands before they will sacrifice their independence. The feeling of opposition to Lecompton is deeply rooted and defiant. I have not seen or heard of one free state man in three counties in which my travel lies who can be bought or driven to vote for Lecompton. The people hate it with a personal hatred. And yet in these three counties not one third probably have paid for their lands.— I suppose you have heard of the renewed troubles South of us. A party of Missourians, one day last week, went to a little town called Choteau's Trading Post, or Montgomery, forty or fifty miles, I think South of us, near the Missouri line, and in the day time went around to the houses, and took twelve unoffending unarmed free state men, took them out on the prairie, and deliberately shot them.52 Five were killed, six wounded and one escaped by pretending to be killed. One of the murdered had a sister living in Osawatomie, the wife of one of our merchants. This has of course occasioned a great

52. Choteau's Trading Post was actually about twenty miles southeast of Osawatomie. The episode referred to is known as the Marais des Cygnes massacre.
deal of excitement, and will give rise to a great many absurd rumors in the papers. There are men on the border who would like to get up another general invasion of the territory, but they can not compass it. Such cowardly assassinations will not help their cause, and will surely not go unpunished. We are from 35 to 50 miles from the scene of strife here; when I go with the mail, I am going farther and farther from it.

There was a report in the papers that the land sales were put off, but it is probably not true.

We are all well. The baby gets up alone in the middle of the floor, and stands alone quite a little time, but does not walk except by chairs.

Must close now with love. Please write some of you.

John.

June 22. [1858]

Dear Father and Mother

. . . The land sales have been put off till November 1st, which is very lucky for us, as well as thousands of others in the territory, for I do not know where I should raise the other $100. We are all well. Robert was a year old, day before yesterday. He can walk across the room. Our crops are looking well. We have had plenty of rain. I have the contract for a short mail route, 15 miles and back, both ways the same day, for next year, at $99 a year.

Must close with love

John R Everett

P. S. No disturbances here. We are too thickly settled for such small bodies of Missourians as can now be mustered to attempt to do anything. But there is a sad state of things South and South East of us. It is over 60 miles from here to Fort Scott, and on my mail trips I am going from the disturbances. If you read in the papers that 300 or 200 men are coming into the territory to commit outrages, you may generally safely divide that number by 4 or from that to 10.

Oswatonic Aug. 12, '58.

Dear Father and Mother

It is a long time since we have heard from home. Every time I go to the post office I am expecting a letter from home, and come away disappointed. It is very hard times here for money now. Nothing is to be had at the stores except for money. At the same time if one has any thing to spare to neighbors it is a chance if he
gets money for it. It seems as if all the money had gone to the land office. It is impossible to borrow money except at ruinous rates. I do not know any chance of borrowing money on bond and mortgage at less than 5 per cent per month and at that rate you would be obliged to let it run for a year. On other security money has been loaned in Lawrence as high as 15 & 20 percent per month. There is $187.50 due me for carrying the mail the 6 months ending with July 1st. Mine was a sub-contract from a man in Pike Co. Missouri. The first quarter of this was due about three months ago. But as the government was very backward in paying other contractors around here, I did not feel uneasy till they were paid, which was about three weeks ago. We cannot hear from the man from whom our money is to come or get any answer from letters. I am afraid he is going to try to cheat us out of it. Have you any correspondent in Pike Co, Mo. His name is James M Gatewood & Co. Bowling Green Pike Co. This Co. is on the Mississippi river, 2 or 3 counties North of St Louis. This failure puts us in great distress, as I counted undoubtedly on getting the first half long ere this. I have not pre-empted. Have been hoping to get my money. Although I owe a part of it for a horse and for work, still I would have had enough to have carried me through. But now if I sue for that money I could not get it in season to do me any good. There is no resource for me but to try to borrow. Would it be possible for you to borrow for me $100 or $120? I have some $300 worth of improvement on my claim—a house, well, stable, nearly two miles of fence, besides my breaking. The bare claim without the improvements is worth at least $500, being within 2½ miles of perhaps the most flourishing town in Southern Kansas. All this would be lost if I cannot raise enough money to finish pre-empting.

I have a mail contract this year direct from government, which will bring me about $100. It takes me one day from home. Crops look remarkably well. I have about 14 acres planted, which promises as well as anybody’s.

Our health is tolerable. The baby is teething. I have not felt quite as well as common for two or three weeks—had a little fever for a week and have not felt as well since. There is a good deal of sickness about, especially among new-comers...

Our election was a week last Monday. In Osawatomie the vote was 226 against Lecompton junior to 3 for. In Anderson County
where I carry the mail there were only three votes for the proposition in the entire county—one of these was by a P. M. another by his clerk, and the third was cast by mistake. Excuse the looks of this sheet, as I got up, restless, in the night, and wrote it. Good bye now.

Your son
John R Everett.

Osawatomie, Aug. 19, 1858.

Dear Father

Can you send the accompanying letter to Thaddeus Hyatt Esq. formerly President of the National Kansas Aid Committee. I want to be sure it gets to him, and not knowing his address thought you could send it through some of your friends in New York, who would take the trouble to look him up through the directory or otherwise. We are in distress for money owing to my not getting my mail money, and the extreme stringency of the times. I think Mr Hyatt lives on Morton Street. Jane's letter, with the price of rennet we got yesterday. We are much obliged to her. The baby has been sick with fever, but is getting better now we hope. My health is not very good now for a few weeks, but so that I am around all the time, and think I am mending. The successful laying of the Atlantic Tel. wires (if indeed the success is complete) is wonderful.

Your son
John.

Osawatomie Jan. 29 1859.

Dear Father and Mother

I write you a few lines to let you know that we are all well. Robert and Frank are much obliged to their Grandfather and Grandmother for their little nice gold presents. Frank has got a slate and is going to have a knife and hat from his. Frank got his “Child's Papers” last week, that you sent him. We do not get it so it was very acceptable to him.

The accounts we get from the seat of the troubles in the South of Kansas are generally so distorted and so little reliable that I have not written much to you about them. We have frequently during the summer and fall been excited by hearing of families who were obliged to flee from their homes for safety, from the Missourians.

53. The official count of the board of election commissioners gave Anderson county 4 votes for and 918 against the Lecompton constitution.
54. See Kansas Historical Collections, v. VII, p. 407, for a brief statement of the relief activities of Thaddeus Hyatt in Kansas during the territorial period.
We are in hopes that the fire there is nearly burnt out. The free state party is completely in the ascendant. The violent proslavery men are all driven out, except perhaps a very few in Fort Scott who promise to be peaceable. All the trouble now is from invasions and counter invasions over the border. We hear that the new marshall has patched up another treaty. We look for more quiet times down there now. But for myself I think the sooner all the responsibility of government is thrown upon the people of Kansas, the sooner we will have settled quiet. The last trouble there arose from attempted arrests of free state men for acts committed while in arms for self defense—which they are not willing to be tried for before proslavery judges. Affectionately
John R Everett

... Has Jane got those 150 rennets saved? Sarah thinks she is going to want them this summer.

[March 16, 1859]

Dear Jennie

I wrote to you a few days ago and have only a word to say now—Father said in his last letter that there could be plenty of wet rennets procured of Uncle Henry but how to send them that is the question.

If you could get a dozen or so of good calf's rennets that have not been washed till they are spoiled, and salt them inside and outside thoroughly, and dry them (by stretching on a crotched or bent branch) and send them by mail I will remit to you the price of the rennets and the postage. Perhaps you can send them with only newspaper postage. If you can so much the better, if not I can better afford to pay 96 cts a lb postage than not to have them. It's very mortifying to be always bothering one's friends so much as we have been obliged to do but if you can bear with us a little longer we hope he able to do better— Indeed our condition looks more hopeful this spring than ever before.

If we succeed in our dairying this summer as we are pretty likely to do if we can only get the rennets and do not get down sick, we shall be getting in a way not only to pay our debts but to live more comfortably than heretofore— Spring is breathing on us again awaking with her soft whispers the buds and blossoms.

55. At this time, Bourbon county militia companies were acting with the marshal as a posse in arresting offenders and enforcing the law. In February, 1859, an amnesty act was passed by the legislature and the border troubles gradually came to an end.
“Our man” is out ploughing in the garden which should have been done a fortnight sooner but for the rains which have kept it too wet.

[S. M. C. E.]

Osawatomie April 5, 1859.

Dear Father

I am sorry I have only time to write a few lines. The Cenhadwr came to Osawatomie the 11th. But there had been a flood which hindered the mails getting in for about a week. I got my Missouri money $182.00 a few days ago. I have just borrowed $200.00 of cousin Thos D. Lewis for 10 per cent. This is very low interest for this country. I now intend to finish preempting, buy seven or eight cows, and go to making cheese this summer, if we can get the rennets. We do not want to kill calves if we can help it. But Sarah has written about that. Two Genesee Farmers, The Rural Annual, and some children’s papers for Frank, we have to thank you for since I wrote last.

I think of buying a few acres of timber as there is no rail timber or good saw logs on mine. Good timber is worth $15.00 per acre.

We hope soon to be in condition to begin to pay our debts, at least the interest on them. The last speck of war apparently has died out. Freedom is triumphant everywhere in Kansas and we hope to go on now as a truly free state should. The Gold seekers are beginning to come up the river. Accounts from the mines are encouraging and continue so. But there is no doubt while some may make fortunes the majority would have been wiser if they had stayed at home.

In haste Your affectionate son

John.

Osawatomie April 5, 1859.

Tues.

Dear Father

We received your letter of March 21 Sat. evening. John returned that day from Lecompton having been up to pre-empt— It was a cold windy time and he was unwell with a cold when he started, and though he appeared better when he got home than when he went away—yet the next day he was attacked with the Pleurisy— I did not know what ailed him but I succeeded in reducing the pain in his side considerably with fomentations, but as he continued to suffer
a good deal I sent up in the afternoon to Friend Mendenhall to come
down and see him and tell me what ailed him. Mr. Mendenhall (one
of our most worthy Quaker neighbors) is not a practicing physician
but is conversant with disease, and keeps always a stock of simple
medicines on hand.— He said what I had done was the best thing
possible and recommended water treatment to be applied according
as his symptoms should indicate— John is better to day and will I
think soon be up again. This cannot be a severe attack of
pleurisy, as that disease commonly works, and has not as yet re-
duced him very much. The rest of us have got colds but are not sick
with them only a little dull.

This winter has been sickly beyond any other time that I ever
knew. It leaves almost every one worse than it found them, and
yet we have escaped with but very little sickness, and our little
Robbie that last summer I hardly thought would live till winter,
has come up again stout and bright as ever.

We hope to hear from you now very often              S. M. C. E.

Osawatomie Apr. 9, 1859.

Dear Father—

. . . I had written and sent to the P. O. a letter the same day
that yours was received telling you of John's sickness. His disease
proves to be the Lung-Fever, which is I have learned accompanied
by the Pleurisy or has been in these parts this winter.

. . . He is much better now his disease seeming to culminate
on Thursday, since then he has been gaining and will I hope continue
to do so. . . .

It is very warm here today— But we have just had a cold spell
that I suppose has killed all the peaches in this vicinity. We have
about a dozen 3 yr old peach trees in blossom. If it had not been
for a few cold stormy days the first of this month we should have
had a good many peaches this summer. We have over fifty peach
trees that will all be old enough to bear next year. We have put out
36 apple trees this spring and 2 cherries—some currants—Pie plants
—Gooseberries—Raspberries black-berrys & wild plums.

. . . I shall write again in a few days unless John gets able to
write for himself                      S. M. C. Everett
Dear Father and Mother

I am glad to be able to take my pen in hand to tell you I am getting better. I had quite a severe attack of lung fever, but owing to the not unskilful use of water remedies, and the very faithful nursing of my dear wife, I think I have come out exceedingly well. This disease has been very fatal around here this winter, and I feel reason to be thankful to God that it has been with me no worse. I feel considerable weak as I have not been able to eat scarcely any till within a day or two. My appetite is gaining now. . . . Excuse errors as I am tired. Your affectionate son

John

Osawatomie, April 18, 1859.

Dear Father and Mother

Having an opportunity to send to mail I drop you a few lines. I do not seem to be improving very fast. My cough is quite loose. I have a little fever every day which seems to keep me back. The baby is sick with a cold and Frank has quite a hard cold. I send a couple of dollars in this. I would like some of you to see if you can get some rennets, and send them in letter form and put on stamps enough to pay the postage. Very few calves are killed in this country, as pasture costs nothing and everybody is anxious to increase their stock. I suppose last years rennets would be drier and weigh less if they could be obtained. If some of you at home will attend to this soon you will do us a great favor. We are intending to milk 15 to 18 cows and heifers this summer. Butter has been worth 30 cts in town all winter. But we can’t pack down butter and keep it here as you can there. I would like if you would send a copy of a note to Mr Jones for that money I borrowed last spring (the 14th of May, I believe.) Or else make that note right I sent last summer. Does he want that money this summer? I will try to send at least the interest in due time. My sickness will put me back a good deal coming just in seed time. But I hope the Lord will order it to our good. I have saved having any doctor’s bills. They (the doctors) are generally worldly, harsh in their remedies, unreliable, and make very heavy bills. There is some emigration to Pike’s Peak from these parts but not nearly as much gold fever as there was in the winter. Those who go from here go generally in companies of four, with a team of from two to four yoke of cattle and provisions for six months. [John R. Everett]
Dear Father and Mother

My health is getting quite good again, and I am getting strength fast. Frank had a slighter attack of the same disease as I had, and was quite sick a few days, but he is now well again. This disease, Lung Fever or Pneumonia, has been quite fatal around here this winter. In one family a mother and two children died in less than two weeks. I think there has been a great deal of bad doctoring. Calomel is a universal medicine with doctors here. One of our neighboring women was taken with child-bed fever, a doctor was sent for, he gave her immediately a heavy dose of blue pill and dover's powders, and of course she died. It is calomel or blue mass (as they call it) for every thing.— I sent into Missouri for cows while I was sick. They found cows pretty scarce and badly wintered, so that a great many had died from weakness, and rather higher than we expected, but got ten pretty good cows for about an average of $21.00 a piece. This makes us 16 cows. We have 13 calves we are raising with one more cow to come in. We have three two-year-old and one three-year-old heifer of our own raising with their first calf this spring. Butter sells readily for twenty-five cents in town now. We probably shall make butter as long as it continues so high, but will be likely to begin to make cheese in at least two or three weeks. We are very much obliged for the rennet you sent and hope (if it is not too much trouble) some of you can send us what we want this summer. We think calves too valuable to kill here, while the disproportion between pasture and stock is so great. Sarah says if Jane has this Spring's basque pattern she would be glad if she would send it to her. She would like to know what kind of trimmings are worn, and all about the latest fashions!!! The great emigration to Pike's Peak Gold Mines is the feature of Territorial news. None of it comes through Osawatomie, and so we hear of it only through the Newspapers. I think not one in four have gone from this section who made up their mind to go at first. The reports and letters outside of the newspapers have not been sufficiently favorable. . . . With much love,

Your aff. son  John.
Dear Jennie

I've been looking now every mail for five weeks for some of those tri-weekly billets, that were to come freighted with rennet, and good tidings and home gossip, and as none, no not one of them have ever arrived, I necessarily conclude that they have "gone up"— I have just one rennet left and that will make from sixteen to twenty-one cheeses, and possibly I can borrow enough to make a half dozen more, and by that time perhaps you can send me some more. Can you? Our cheese is getting old enough now to market according to the western notions. And it stands so far A. No. 1 which I know you will be glad to hear. We have sold five and a half at 12½ cts a lb. We took two to town over a week ago and the merchant that bought of us said afterwards that he had tried a great deal of Kansas cheese and had made up his mind that it didn't pay, but that was good and he would like more of it so we sent him another Sat. Morn. and in the evening Mr. Snow was in there and asked them if they had tried the cheese yet. "Yes cut it and its all gone" Mrs. Parrish said. Mr Snow came back and told me the people in town were great hogs they had eaten my cheese all up and cried for more. Now I have got my name up I shall have a ready home market.

I presume you think me very childish to feel so much elated simply because folks like my cheese, but you can't realize the reasons that make me feel so— Supposing you had been living on the plainest possible food for only a few years say jonny-cake & skimmed milk for weeks together. Supposing you had turned your clothes inside out and bottom side up and then been obliged to wear tatters at that— Suppose your toes had touched the floor till the 27. of Dec. and your crops had been shortened by drought and cut off by frost, and you had even with all the economy you could muster kept not only continually sinking in debt but taxing also the charity of your friends. Supposing all this and a great deal more too tedious to enumerate I say—don't you think you would grow a little childish over the first faint gleamings of a better time coming?

Another thing which makes our success more gratifying is the fact that failure has been so deeply ingrained on the minds of all our friends. To be sure they haven't told us "Oh nonsense! What's the use?" . . . But they have always tried to dissuade us in very kind tones from making any such effort. They would help us along so we shouldn't starve, and any farther than that they were
sure would be a damage. . . . And so on and so on. I know you would like me to stop that and so I will. Don't forget to tell me about the fashions when you write for I begin to think just now of having at least a new every day dress so I shall not be put to so much haste and inconvenience when I wash the one I have.

It's quite late in the evening and I am tired. It's John's night away and I had to milk six cows. He has only one more night to spend out on mail business and then his mail carrying will be done for all time I hope. It's too hard for him. I don't think he's quite strong yet from the effects of his spring's sickness. He expects to get in thirty acres of winter wheat this fall then we will have fairly commenced farming. No more from your weary sleepy

Sister S. M. C. E.

[Sarah M. C. Everett to Jennie Everett]

July 12 [1859]

. . . We received yours of July 2 with some pieces of rennet. Osawatomie celebrated the 4th, with a sham fight representing the terrible 30. of Aug. 1856, in the fore noon; and in the afternoon a select picnic. The party was the pleasantest I have ever been at in Osawatomie. The fore noon exercises seemed to me surprisingly inappropriate for the day.—

. . . I must tell you how to make cheese without a hoop when you have only a little curd. Mrs. Mendenhall and I have frequently done so, and had good cheese. Fold a piece of thin cloth like the enclosed paper and sew a seam so as to make a pointed bag, then prepare your curd as for the hoop and put it in the bag crowding it in as hard as you can, then confine it by tying it down tightly with a strong cord, and hang it in a cool shady place to drip. In a few days you have a tolerable fair specimen of new cheese. You will need a new cloth for every cheese, until your first cheeses become sufficiently cured to take out, which will be a week or more. Is Mother an old cheese maker? That is did she use to make cheese in Wales? I think there are a great many things I intended to write but have forgotten them— The Breakers are running two plows in our pasture cutting broad furrows 70 rods long, and my imagination already pictures the waving grain, and the click of the reaper. I believe I wrote you before that we wished or intended to put in 30 acres of wheat, but getting disappointed in having the ground broke as at first agreed on, we will only be able to get 20 acres prepared in season. We had 1 acre of spring wheat which our
folks stacked Sat. and today they are sowing the ground with Buckwheat. We have a trade for 4 more extra cows under consultatation. Don't know yet whether we shall succeed in getting them or not. We have sold about fifty dollars worth of butter and cheese from our cows and have on hand about $60 worth of cheese which we can sell as fast as it gets old enough. We have made up to this time about $2.25 worth of cheese per day on the average, but the milk is on the decrease now.

Longwood Aug 8, 1859

Dear Jennie

We received your letter with the rennet from Mrs. Griffiths on Tues. (the 2nd) and commenced using it this morn. After I have soaked out all the strength I can I dry the rennets and soak them over again. In this way I have got along sometimes when I should other wise have had to suspend my cheesemaking for three or four days. I shall save this years rennets for next year although I suppose 3 or 4 will be worth no more than one that had not been used. I am much obliged to you for the trouble of sending fashion news. Shall be very glad to get a cape pattern.

You inquired what ailed Frank. I dont know hardly, he is a very nervous "young'un" and his body gets all worn out with his excitability which keeps him for the most part as poor as a herring.

I wish I could send him out to his Grandfathers for a year or two and see if they couldn't fat him up and quiet his nerves a little. We had men here breaking for us and he must needs go down into the field and learn how, and he couldn't learn unless he could just take hold of the plow and go around the field once. The consequence was a short run of fever after it. Robbie has been sick a few days since we wrote before but he and Franky are both as well as any one can be this hot weather. John and Mr Snow are both pretty near sick. Yesterday I had a chill come on just at dinner time, which laid me up the rest of the day and this morning I am very weak. Probably I shall not have any more. John has bought two cows which makes only 14 that we milk now. Two of the cows he drove in from Missouri I may or may not have told you lost their bags with garget, another soon dried up—that is, as quick as we weaned her calf—and now another that will come in this fall has dried up so that we cant seem to get only just so many after all. One of those that lost her bag he has traded off towards a wagon the other we shall beef for our
own eating this winter and the one that dried up after weaning her
calf we shall sell for beef to the butcher likely.

I have not time to write any more as I must go to my cheese,

S. M. C. E.

(To be concluded in the November Quarterly)