A. L. Runyon's Letters From the Nineteenth Kansas Regiment

1. Introduction

During the summers of 1865 to 1869 western Kansas was the scene of warfare between the settlers and wild tribes of plains Indians: Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Kiowas, Comanches and Apaches. Indian raids were responsible for the deaths of many persons and the destruction of a great deal of property. In the summer of 1867 the Indians were especially active, and although the Seventh regiment of United States cavalry and the Eighteenth Kansas cavalry were constantly in the field, their forces were not sufficient to keep the Indians under control. Again in 1868 raids disastrous to white settlements occurred along the whole frontier. The peace commission which had been set up under a congressional act of July 20, 1867, to come to an agreement with the hostile tribes, was sufficiently influenced by these events to abandon many of its pacific theories, and at a meeting in Chicago in October, 1868, recommended that the Indians be dealt with by the War Department. Maj. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan, at Fort Hays, immediately began preparations for war. His plan was to concentrate the peaceful Indians south of the Arkansas river and to carry on intensive warfare with the others. In order to carry out this project more troops were needed to supplement the regular army, and therefore on October 9, 1868, Sheridan transmitted to Gov. Samuel J. Crawford of Kansas a request from Gen. William T. Sherman for a regiment of twelve companies of volunteer cavalry to serve for a period of six months. The governor consequently issued a proclamation on October 10 calling for the organization of the Nineteenth Kansas regiment.1

Recruiting offices were opened in many Kansas towns. In Manhattan the governor's proclamation was published in the Standard on October 17, although recruiting actually had begun earlier. One of the first volunteers at the Manhattan station was Alfred Lee Runyon, who joined for service on October 12 and was mustered in

October 29. He was assigned as clerk at the headquarters of Company M.8

Runyon was a young man who had been employed for several months in the office of the Manhattan Independent, and later in the office of the Manhattan Standard. The editor of the latter paper, expressing his regret at losing a capable helper, remarked that "Alfred was a steady and faithful boy while with us, and will make an efficient clerk for Capt. Moody. We regretted his determination to enlist, but are glad that his ability as a penman is being appreciated by his officers." The editor concluded: "He has promised to keep our readers posted as to the incidents and doings of the regiment. The first of his letters appears this week."4

Following its six months' tour of duty the Nineteenth was disbanded. Runyon himself was mustered out April 18, 1869, and returned to Manhattan where he again engaged in the printing trade.6 Little information of his movements during the next four years has been discovered, but on December 25, 1874, The Nationalist, of Manhattan, reported that "A. L. Runyan went to work on the J[unction]. C[ity]. Tribune, a few days ago." Some months later, Manhattan and Junction City newspapers recorded Runyon's marriage to Miss Libbie J. Damon in Abilene, March 11, 1876.7

The couple settled in Manhattan where Runyon, with C. M. Patee, established the Manhattan Enterprise, May 3, 1876. Runyon was editor, and following the withdrawal of Patee in January, 1877, was sole manager of the paper until its sale to G. A. Atwood on June 16, 1882. With Atwood's first issue, dated June 23, the paper was renamed the Republic.

Leaving Manhattan, Runyon formed a partnership with O. M. Pugh and J. P. Campbell and the three purchased The Times of Clay Center, in October, 1882. The duties of the new owners, as outlined in their announcement in The Times of October 19, were: "Mr. Pugh remains in charge of the local department. The world-

2. Annual Report of the Adjutant General ... 1870, p. 79. In this report, as in the letters to follow, the name is spelled "Runyan." "Runyon" is correct, however. Damon Runyon, well-known son of A. L., explains the discrepancy as follows: "The difference in the way he spelled Runyan and the way I spell it (Runyon) is due to the New York copy readers when I first hit New York. They kept putting in the 'o' so finally I left it that way. My father said that was the correct spelling, and that it got to be 'a' with him through error which, like myself, he did not trouble to correct." —Damon Runyon to N. H. Miller, Kansas State Historical Society, letter postmarked New York, September 10, 1939.
4. Ibid.
5. Annual Report of the Adjutant General ... 1870, p. 79.
7. The Nationalist, Manhattan, March 17, 1876; Junction City Tribune, March 16, 1876.
moving will be done with neatness and dispatch by Campbell and Runyan. If there is anything you don’t like, bounce Runyan.”

The beginning of the year 1884 found Clay Center newspapers under mixed management. Wirt W. Walton and D. A. Valentine, owners of The Dispatch, dissolved their partnership. Valentine purchased The Times from Campbell and Runyon. They, in turn, joined with Walton on The Dispatch. Runyon continued with The Dispatch until June 4, 1885, when he sold his interest to Walton.

On October 2 the Press Printing Company of Wellington received a charter from the secretary of state of Kansas.8 With a paid-up capital of $12,000 the corporation purchased the Daily and Weekly Press and the good will and subscription list of the Daily and Weekly Wellingtonian. All were consolidated under the head of the Wellington Daily Press and The Sumner County Press, Jacob Stotler, editor, and A. L. Runyon, business manager.9

On July 22, 1886, Runyon took over editorship of the papers from Stotler, who made another connection in Emporia. Approximately a year later, on June 4, 1887, the Daily Press was discontinued. “Reason: It does not pay,” wrote Runyon. Shortly afterward, his wife’s health prompted Runyon to seek a new location in Colorado. His name disappeared from the masthead of the weekly Press after October 20, and on November 3 the Press recorded that Runyon had gone to Pueblo.

Four children—three girls and one boy—were born in Kansas to the couple. Two girls are deceased.10 Damon Runyon, according to the Enterprise, was born in Manhattan October 3, 1880.11

The letters which follow were written by A. L. Runyon during his term of service in the Nineteenth cavalry and published in the Manhattan Standard in 1868 and 1869. They supplement the story of an already much-publicized regiment which, though it suffered many hardships, paradoxically enough never engaged in actual fighting, and which, although it was a cavalry unit, served part of its term as a dismounted troop, performing in this capacity so well that General Custer’s official report stated that the “Nineteenth put to the blush the best regular infantry.”12

Company M, to which Runyon was attached, possibly saw even fewer hostile “red-skins” than the rest of the command. Of the 189 days that Runyon served, 111 were spent with his company, de-

8. Secretary of state, “Corporations” copybooks, v. 19, p. 244.
9. The Sumner County Press, Wellington, October 8, 1885.
11. Manhattan Enterprise, October 8, 1880.
tached from the main body of the regiment, chiefly in escorting wagon trains moving between the various frontier forts and outposts. Nevertheless these letters present a fresh view of early-day Kansas and the Indian country. They are reproduced here for their general interest rather than as a source of new information regarding the Nineteenth Kansas cavalry. Occasional variations in spelling of proper nouns which appear in the original Standard text have been retained.

II. The Letters

Camp Crawford, 13
Topeka, November 2, 1868.

[Published, November 7, 1868.]

The Manhattan boys arrived in Topeka about noon, safe and sound, on Monday last. At Wamego we were joined by another party of recruits bound for the same destination.

We marched into Camp Crawford, and pitched our tents. The wind blew very hard, causing a great dust, which did not increase the good humor of the men.

On Monday evening a lot of horses stampeded from the corral, situated about half a mile from camp, and made a terrible clattering going over the bridge. They were recovered the next morning, except about eighty. The same evening there was a row in a house of ill fame in the city, during which one of the soldiers belonging to camp was badly wounded. On Tuesday evening a man named Williams, of Company “D” was shot in the side by an accidental discharge of a musket, in the hands of one of the guards. Luckily the shot glanced and inflicted only a slight flesh-wound.

Gen. Sheridan was in town Tuesday morning, but left in the afternoon.

All the companies are now mustered in, and the adjutant general says the regiment will move about next Wednesday. We expect to move south, towards the mouth of the Little Arkansas river.

It is not yet known in camp who is to be our colonel; but Crawford is the anticipated man. 14

13. Camp Crawford, named for the governor of Kansas, was established October 21, 1868, to care for the recruits coming into Topeka from various points in Kansas. It consisted of two farms in the bottom lands between the Kansas river and Shawannga creek, extending north and south approximately from Second to Fifth street. The headquarters tents were about 250 yards northeast of the first Santa Fe passenger station.—Hadley, loc. cit., p. 431.

14. Prior to the appointment of a permanent commander Horace L. Moore of Lawrence, a Civil War cavalry officer and former commander of the Eighteenth Kansas, assumed command with the rank of lieutenant-colonel. Samuel J. Crawford resigned as governor and became colonel of the regiment on November 4, 1868, serving until his resignation February 12, 1869. Moore was advanced to colonel March 23 and served until April 18, 1869, when the regiment was mustered out.—Hadley, loc. cit., p. 432; Annual Report of the Adjutant General , , 1870, p. 17; Daily Kansas State Record, Topeka, November 5, 1868.
Our company is Co. "M." We were mustered in Thursday evening. Our captain is Sargent Moody, of Manhattan. This makes his fourth trip as captain, and he has fairly and honorably earned his commission in the field. He exerts his utmost energies to promote the health and comfort of his men, who like him very much. James Graham and James Hurst are our first and second lieutenants, and promise to become very efficient officers.

The noncommissioned officers were elected on Thursday morning last, by acclamation. The Manhattan boys got a fair share. The men are all in the very best of health and spirits, partly, no doubt, owing to their having just drawn their clothing and blankets.

Yours, A. L. R.

In camp, WICHITA [Wichita], Nov. 12, '58 ['88].

[Published November 28, 1868.]

The 17th [19th] regiment left Topeka on last Thursday about noon, and took up its line of march southward. We marched about eighteen miles and camped on the Wakarusa. It was after dark when we got into camp, and the boys immediately scattered for wood for fires. It was so dark that a great many of them got bewildered and lost their way, and the woods resounded with cries of "Company F!" "Company C, Mess No. 5!" "Company A!" "Company M, Mess No. 4!" etc. There was great rushing to and fro for corn, hay, etc., till late in the night. The boys were all tired and sore from their first day's march, and all but the guards sought their blankets, with their saddles for pillows, as soon as possible.

The next morning we were aroused long before daylight, to roll call, and by sunrise we were on the march. We marched till about five o'clock in the afternoon, when we camped on Elm creek. The dust was almost intolerable, and many of the boys suffered from sore eyes in consequence. We passed through the thriving little town of Burlingame about noon.

All along the route some of the boys would call out, "Good-bye!" to some acquaintance they happened to meet, and then the whole regiment, from van to rear, would take up the cry—"Good-bye, Joe!" and the astounded man would stand and look as if he thought he had suddenly acquired a host of friends, and was to lose them as suddenly.

15. Companies D and G left Topeka on the night of November 4, 1868, on a special train bound for Fort Hays, where they were to take up escort duty between the fort and Camp Supply, Indian territory. The remaining ten troops of the regiment marched out of Topeka on November 5 to begin the overland journey to Camp Supply.—Hadley, loc. cit., p. 455; Daily Kansas State Record, Topeka, November 6.
On Friday [Saturday?] we got started about daylight. It commenced sprinkling about eight o'clock, and continued until about noon, which made it very disagreeable marching. We marched about a mile and a half from Emporia, on the Neosho river. Here we began to run short of rations, and the boys fared rather slim. The country over which we passed is very rolling, though there are many streams and more good timber than in middle Kansas.

Sunday morning brought with it a cold, drizzling rain. We were on the march early, and passing through Emporia, a thriving city of about the size of Manhattan, we bore to the southwest, and marched all day through a steady rain, and camped on Elm creek, sixteen miles from Emporia. Here we literally camped in the mud; and the boys having hardly anything to eat, and it being very cold, they were not in a very good situation to enjoy soldiering, and many fervently wished they were safe at home.

It rained almost all night, and early the next morning it commenced to sleet, and it froze our saddles very stiff and hard, and we had a very hard time generally saddling up. While we were standing in line, waiting for the command to mount, a driving snow storm set in, and continued till about ten o'clock in the forenoon, when it cleared off and the sun came out. A loud cheer burst from the regiment at the grateful appearance of old Sol.

We camped at Mercer Springs, about three o'clock in the afternoon, and the men built large fires and dried their blankets and clothes. We had no food issued to us except a little flour and meat, and we would not have had even that, if our captain and lieutenants had not bought some.

Early Tuesday morning we were on the march. It was a splendid day, though rather cold, and the boys were in good spirits, though ardently wishing for some hard-tack and "sow-belly." We camped on a branch of Cottonwood creek, right in the brush, though a part of the regiment was out in the open prairie. We passed through a splendid country, abounding in level prairies, and streams, and timber.

Wednesday morning opened clear and beautiful. We were on the march long before sunrise, and marched all day, over a beautiful, rolling prairie. We camped Wednesday night on Walnut creek, a fine stream and well timbered.

16. Hadley, p. 484, says that as the column passed through Emporia about nine o'clock in the morning of November 7, three men were standing in front of the office of the Emporia News, "the biggest crowd we saw." He also says that scarcity of wagons had limited the rations carried to five days between Topeka and Camp Beecher (Wichita). This would have been ample subsistence for seasoned soldiers, but the recruits nearly starved. The men bought food along the route.
Thursday we marched over a high prairie, in the face of a tremendous wind. We reached Wichata [Wichita] about three o’clock in the afternoon. Here we expect to stay a few days to recruit our horses. The boys are all in the best of spirits, and eager to have a brush with the “red skins.” The weather is very fine, though cool. We are camped near the mouth of the Little Arkansas river; about a quarter of a mile from Wichata, which is composed of a few log buildings, and a small fort and stockade, in which are stationed one company of the three months’ men, and one company of regulars. Some of the dwellings are built like Indian tepees, and some are built under ground, with a barrel for a chimney.

There have been no desertions from our company, but nearly every other company has lost more or less, one company being reported as having fifteen deserters. We will in all probability stay here four or five days, when it is supposed we will move about two hundred miles southwest.

We have so far lost no men or horses, though we have two or three of the former on the sick list.

Very respectfully, etc., A. L. R.

CAMP NORTH CANADIAN, IND. TER.
December 5, 1868.
[Published January 2, 1869.]

EDITOR STANDARD:—Instead of remaining at Wichata two or three weeks, as we supposed was our destiny, we were on the march early Friday morning, the 13th of November. We marched over a rolling country, very sandy, and towards night, camped on Standing Turkey creek, a small stream about fifteen miles south-west of Wichata. Here we saw our first buffalo in the distance, and one of our scouts, Apache Bill, killed two. The next day we saw buffalo in large herds, and numbers of them were killed. We camped, late in the afternoon, on the Nemesquaw [Ninnescah] river, quite a large stream, although almost entirely destitute of timber. Here our provisions run short, and to add to our discomfort it commenced to blow and rain very hard. In the night it froze hard, and some of our men suffered very severely from the cold, some of them being so stiff next morning that they could hardly sit on their horses. This day we saw great numbers of buffalo, and as our “hard-tack” had

18. Hadley, pp. 435, 436, says that at Camp Beecher Colonel Crawford was confronted with a serious difficulty. He could secure only five days' rations and three days' forage with which to carry 1,100 unseasoned soldiers and approximately the same number of horses some 160 miles across desert land in a most unpromising season. Therefore he was forced to lose no time in camp.
given out, we had to live entirely on buffalo meat, without salt or pepper. The boys were all eager to hunt buffalo, and every herd that came in range was sure to get a volley from them, at their risk of being dismounted and having to walk all day. In the evening, after we camped, Captain Moody went out with three men, on foot, and killed a buffalo, about four miles from camp, and carried the hind-quarters in on their backs. The first lieutenant also went out and killed one, and the company had plenty of buffalo meat.

For several days we had splendid weather, and were not out of sight of buffalo. The whole country was covered with buffalo grass, a very short, wiry, tuffly kind, and very nutritious.

Our boys now began to feel the want of bread severely, and they had not always enough buffalo meat even.

At Medicine Lodge creek, we had a stampede and lost about 150 or 200 horses. We had to lay over here one day to hunt for them. All but about seventy-five were recovered.19

On Saturday night we camped on a small stream, destitute of water. Lieutenant [Mount A.] Gordon, with a detail of twenty-three men, started on a buffalo hunt. When about three miles from camp they ran on to a very large herd, and in about fifteen minutes killed nineteen buffalo. This is called the champion hunt, of the march. If they could have brought all the meat into camp it would have greatly relieved the sufferings of the men. As it was, however, they could bring in only a small part.

On Saturday night it commenced to snow, and continued all day Sunday. Early on Sunday morning [November 22] Capt. Billy [Allison J. Piley] started with a detail of the best men and horses, to try and find the wagon train which was to meet us somewhere in that part of the country.20

Our horses were now so weak for want of corn that we had to walk nearly all the time. The only food they got was by digging under nearly fourteen inches of snow; and as the men were also weak for want of proper food, we had to march very slow. We camped that night on Round Pond creek, a small stream, but with a great deal of timber on it. Here the men suffered more than at any other time; and as it snowed all that night and the next day,

19. The camp at which this incident occurred was located near the present town of Kiewa.—See Hadley, loc. cit., p. 436. Hadley reports Governor Crawford as saying that all but six of the missing horses were brought in later.

20. Captain Piley, A troop, and Lt. Jesse E. Parsons, C troop, with fifty of the best-mounted men in the regiment, were sent forward to find General Sheridan and cause supplies to be sent back to the men, according to the account of Horace L. Moore, then lieutenant-colonel of the regiment, loc. cit., p. 38. See, also, Hadley, loc. cit., pp. 438, 439.
it being also very cold, and the men nearly starved, a great many almost barefoot, they suffered almost beyond human endurance. Hundreds would have given anything they possessed for one good meal. I have seen five dollars offered for one small piece of buffalo meat, the size of a silver dollar. One man gave a good pair of buckskin gloves for one hard-tack. Many lay around the fires so nearly starved and frozen that they could scarcely move. Hunters went for buffalo, but most of them returned unsuccessful, as there were none to be seen. It was a terrible state of affairs. They were all exposed to the bitter fury of the storm, without tents, and some of them froze their almost naked feet very badly that night. The men began to talk of the good qualities of horse and mule meat. The officers of the regiment did all they could to alleviate the sufferings of the men. To my own knowledge, the officers of Co. "M" gave nearly all their scanty stock of provisions to the men, and went without themselves.

The next day, Monday, it cleared off late in the morning, and we moved out about noon. We struggled on through snow, ice and starvation, on foot, leading our horses, on a long, terrible march, to a small stream near the Salt fork of the Cimarron river. Here several buffalo were killed by a detachment under Lieut. Hunt,21 which temporarily relieved the sufferings of the men.

All along that march, word would come—from where no one knew—that "Grub was only twelve miles ahead," or that "Capt. Billy [Piley] had found the wagon train and had sent a scout back," and the hopes of the men would raise, only to fall into still greater despondency, by news from headquarters, that there had been nothing heard from the train.

Here we laid over nearly all the next day, when orders came to leave the wagons, all unserviceable horses and all sick or dismounted men.22 We started late in the afternoon, about 450 strong, with a very different appearance from that we made marching out of Topeka, 1,000 strong. Then we marched out gaily, four in rank, close up, with fine, spirited horses, in good order, arms and clothing bright and clean. Now we marched out, in single file, our line strung out about 5 miles, with broken down horses, hardly able to walk. Some of the men almost barefoot, with clothes burned nearly off

21. Lieutenent Hunt must remain unidentified. No officer of that name is included in the regimental roster.

22. Hadley, loc. cit., p. 430, says that in order to reduce the number of men to feed it was decided to divide the regiment, the strongest, with their horses, to proceed without food or camp equipment as best they could to Camp Supply, and the weaker to wait in camp until help reached them. Colonel Crawford and Maj. R. W. Jenkins remained at the camp, and Lieutenant-Colonel Moore led the others.
them, getting too near the fires on cold nights; and thus we left "Starvation Hollow," as some of the men called it. Several horses gave out before night, and most of their riders took the back track. We marched about ten miles, through deep gullies and canyons, with walls from ten to one hundred feet high on either side. We camped in a deep ravine, with plenty of timber, though with no water. It was very cold and disagreeable for the men to camp in the snow, and many froze their feet. We were on the march early next morning through a very rough country and deep snow, and at night encamped in a thick woods. In the evening several Indians were seen, for the first time, on the brow of a hill.

The next day, towards night, we struck [the North Fork of?] the Canadian river. This raised the spirits of the men greatly, as the scouts had said that we would find the train at the mouth of Beaver creek, which empties into the Canadian river, and as soon as we struck it we were sure we were not lost.

We commenced our march early on Saturday, the 28th. We followed the course of the river, and when we had marched about ten miles, the troops in the advance suddenly commenced cheering. Hardly knowing why, the whole regiment took up the cry and made the woods fairly ring. We then heard that scouts had come in with the inspiring news that Gen. Sheridan, with a train was only five miles ahead. It did not take us long to travel that five miles. We got into camp about sundown, and a great many of us got our tents pitched that night, and best of all, we had a good supper.

On Monday, the 7th Cavalry under Gen. Custer came in from having a fight with the Indians, south of here. They were on the march for three days and night[s] with hardly a thing to eat. One of the principal scouts, who was in the fight, told me that they killed the Indians’ picket about nine miles from their camp. They then surrounded the Cheyenne village, and about daylight made a charge, killing sixty Indians, capturing about 20 squaws and 30 papooses and killing about five hundred ponies after capture. The 7th, lost one captain and 19 men killed and about 15 wounded, Major Elliott and fifteen men missing. When last seen Major Elliott was

23. The camp, according to Hadley, *ibid.*, was officially named Camp Hackberry Point, but was called by the men Camp Starvation.

24. Moore, *loc. cit.*, p. 39, says the troop crossed Captain Piely’s trail at noon on November 27, and camped that night on the bank of the Canadian about twenty-five miles below the mouth of Beaver Creek.

25. Hadley, *loc. cit.*, pp. 440, 441, says: "This detachment of the Nineteenth made the march from Topin to Camp Supply in twenty-four days on nine days’ subsistence and seven days’ forage. In twenty-two days of actual marching it averaged over sixteen miles a day."
pursuing wounded Indians about four miles from the command. It is supposed he has "gone up." 26

On Tuesday the remainder of our regiment, which were left behind with the wagons, came up, supplies having been sent to them by Gen. Sheridan, as soon as Capt. Blily [Philey] arrived, which he did about 3 days before we did.

We made the march of about 300 miles in 25 days, 12 days of which we lived entirely on buffalo meat without pepper or salt, and very often not near enough of that, and got through without losing a man. After leaving the Wichita, we traveled over a country that probably no white man ever traveled before. It was almost a perfect desert. Our horses had to get grass, the only food they had, from under fourteen inches of snow. We followed no trail. Apache Bill is one of the best of guides, and he brought us straight through.

Our officers and men are all in good health and spirits; and not one of the Manhattan boys has been seriously ill or left behind. Our company is considered one of the best in the regiment, and we have the best horses.

Our camp presents a neat and picturesque appearance, and plenty reigns. We have good tents, and plenty of good wholesome food, which, after our recent starvation, makes the men feel happy and contented.

We have just received orders from headquarters that we will move Monday. It is supposed we will move southward to Fort Cobb.

The mails are very uncertain in this country, as the carriers from here to Fort Dodge are often killed by Indians.

Fort Dodge, Kas.,
Dec. 19th, 1868.

[Published January 2, 1869.]

On Sunday, Dec. 5th [6th], it stormed very hard and blew a perfect hurricane. That night we heard that our company was to be detailed to escort a train of about 400 wagons to Ft. Dodge and back.

The next morning was bright and fine. The 19th, and 7th regiments moved out early southward. Our company moved camp nearer to where the regulars were encamped. The next day we moved out about noon, our company in the rear. There was another company with us, some infantry regulars, and a lot of dismounted

26. This was the battle of the Washita, an account of which is given in ibid., pp. 441, 442, footnote.
men. We had the squaws which Gen. Custar captured. Before we left we reduced our company to 50 mounted men. The rest were dismounted, some went with us and some were left behind. We did not march more than five miles on Tuesday and camped on Beaver creek.

On Wednesday we started at about daylight, our company in the advance. We marched over a dreary, cold country, nothing to be seen but hill and plain. Camped about noon on Beaver creek again. We had a line of skirmishers in the advance all day.

Thursday, Dec. 10th, opened very cold and disagreeable. We marched soon after daylight, our company in the rear. About 8 o’clock it commenced to snow and continued at intervals almost all day, but not very fast. All along the route we have been shooting abandoned horses and mules. Uncle Sam must have lost several thousand dollars in horse and mule flesh alone, that day as there were between 20 and 30 killed. Indian hunting is a very expensive business, and we have not yet seen a hostile Indian.

We camped on a small stream near dark. It had not a stick of timber on it, but we had plenty of wood in the wagons, and as we had tents we were pretty comfortable for soldiers.

On Friday we started very early, our company in the advance. Most of the men rather expected to have a brush with the “Reds” but we saw none. We camped on Bear creek [tributary of the Cimarron] about 2 o’clock. Lieut. Graham went out and shot a buffalo, and brought in the hind quarters.

The next day we saw probably millions of buffalo. The whole country was black with them. Numbers of them were killed. We camped this night on the Arkansas river.

In the morning we marched about 9 miles to Ft. Dodge and crossed the river. It took nearly all day to cross the wagons.

The next day we moved across the river again, and camped. We will move for “Camp on North Canadian” tomorrow morning Dec. 18th [15th?]. Capt. Moody is in command of the detachment. He had enough men to make about four companies, coming up. He will have about three going back. This is considered the most perilous part of our campaign, as we have so much valuable property and the Indians are expected to make a dash at any time.

We have had very fine weather during our stay here, and the officers and men are in the best of spirits.

Yours &c., A. L. R.
[Published January 16, 1869.]

EDITOR STANDARD:—We had a very pleasant trip to camp on North Canadian, or Fort Beecher, as it is now called. The first day out we camped on Mulberry creek. In crossing the train over the creek, two mule teams became tangle draws, and one of the drivers was knocked down and run over, the wagon passing over his breast. He was taken up and sent back to Fort Dodge. He was severely, if not fatally, injured. We did not see many buffalo on our trip down.

We lay over [one?] day at Fort Beecher, and then started back with the empty train. While here we learned that Gen. Sheridan had the Indians surrounding somewhere in the Wachita mountains. The boys we left here when we went up the other time, were all well.

One man, belonging to Co. "E," was frozen to death, about three weeks ago. He went after a bucket of water to the river, one cold, stormy night, and never returned. He was found, a week afterward, about a mile from camp, half eaten by the wolves. He must have suffered fearfully, wandering around over the prairie. 27

[The remainder of this article is missing from the file.]

Ft. DODGE, KAN., Feb. 10, 1869.

[Published March 6, 1869.]

EDITOR STANDARD:—I received your welcome letter this evening. We start for Camp Supply at 4 o'clock tomorrow morning. All the train, and two companies of the 19th—M and G—have moved across the river, and camped on the other side.

Since my last letter there has nothing of importance occurred. In the latter part of December, we made a trip to Fort Larned, where our company gained considerable credit for saving some government horses, out of a military stable. Here four of our men deserted, the first deserters we have had since we marched from Topeka. They took with them three of the best horses in the company.

Our company has been paid off, and the boys all feel rich; consequently some of them condescend to patronize the sutler very liberally, by paying five or five prices for "rot-gut" whisky and

27. "Since the letter from our regular correspondent with the 19th regiment was put into type, we have received, from a special correspondent, the following under date of January 8:

"The regiment is now at Fort Dodge, where it has been for the past four days, the longest it has remained at any one place since it left Topeka. Their principal business seems to be escorting trains from post to post.

"The regiment left Fort Larned on the 2d. On the morning of the same day a fire broke out in one of the stables, at that post, and our Manhattan boys got considerable praise for their prompt action in rescuing from the flames so many of the horses and other valuable property. The fire was first discovered by Frank Burleigh. He immediately reported it to Capt. Moody, who ordered his whole command to the rescue. Alfred Runyan, Angus Holloway and Frank Burleigh were the first to get into the stable, and they deserve great credit.

"The building was three hundred feet in length, and contained sixty-four horses, twenty-five of which were saved by Capt. Moody's company. The balance were destroyed, also thirty tons of hay, five hundred bushels of grain, forty saddles, and six thousand rounds of cartridges."—Manhattan Standard, January 16, 1869.
red-eye. Some of the men, however, took care of their money and sent it home.

We made a trip to Fort Hays about two weeks ago, and while there, Capt. Moody took a trip down home.28 While he was gone we had a tremendous snow storm, which effectually blocked up the railroad, so that he had to go across the country from Harker. The train which our company were escorting, got snowed in at Big Timber creek, one day’s march from Hays, and did not get into Dodge for eight days.

We have heard little or no news from the regiment; but it is supposed to be still lying at Fort Cobb. It is rumored that Cobb is also our destination.

The weather, lately, has been very stormy, and the snow is very deep, in places, between Fort Dodge and Fort Hays, and is consequently very hard on trains, and many a poor mule and broken wagon is “turned over,” as it is termed, by being abandoned.

Our men are all in good spirits, and our horses in pretty good condition. Our company is all together again, with the exception of a few left in Fort Dodge and Camp Supply.

Yours, etc.,

A. L. R.

CAMP SUPPLY, Feb. 18, 1869.

[Published March 20, 1869.]

EDITOR STANDARD.—We had a very pleasant journey from Fort Dodge here, with the exception of one night, when it seemed as if the elements were trying which could out-do the other. It rained, snowed, blew, and hailed tremendously. The fourth day out, three scouts came into camp, on their way to Fort Lyon, with dispatches from the regiment. One of them was Ed. Geary, the famous scout and interpreter. He brought news that the 19th was all dismounted, and that the tribes, with the exception of the Cheyennes and Kiowas, are gathered around Fort Cobb drawing rations, and that Gen. Sheridan has expressed his determination of “going for” all Indians caught away from there. He thinks that the war with the Cheyennes

28. "Capt. S. Moody, of Co. M, 19th Kan. Vol. cavalry, was in the city last Sabbath. He came over from Fort Dodge to Fort Hays in command of a detail of thirty men to escort a supply train to the regiment at Fort Dodge, and obtained permission of the commander at Fort Hays to visit his family in this city. The captain came in on Saturday and returned Monday. He is looking well, and reports the boys as well and in good spirits. His company has 94 men for duty and 69 horses. He has lost but one killed (accidentally), and four by desertion. His company, in this respect, though constantly on duty, has fared well. Very few have been sick, and all bore the privations of the long and perilous march from the Canadian river to the Washita mountains with fortitude rarely equaled. They were reduced to the last stage of suffering, and had selected a horse to kill for beef when they reached camp of supply. Our correspondent with the regiment has, however, given a graphic description of this march heretofore. The regiment is now at and near Fort Dodge, and, with the regular troops in the field, are acting simply as guard at the fort and over supplies in the vicinity."—Manhattan Standard, February 6, 1869.
is good for all next summer. He says that they number about three thousand effective warriors.

Buffalo are getting scarce. We only saw a few coming down. They have almost all moved south and west. Antelope, however, are very numerous in the sand hills between here and Fort Dodge.

We are laying here waiting for orders from below. Various rumors are afloat. Some are, that we will be dismounted, and others that we will be kept on escort duty as before. It is generally supposed, however, that we will join the regiment. The officers and men of the detachment are in good spirits and expect to have a crack at the "reds," yet, before their discharge.

Yours, &c.,

A. L. R.

Camp North Fork Wachita,
March 13, 1869.

[Published April 10, 1869.]

Editor Standard:—We left Camp Supply March 3d and marched southward. Company "Q" started north at the same time escorting empty wagons, while our company were escorting loaded ones south to the North Fork of the Washita river to meet Gen. Custar, and the 19th.

We camped the first day on the Fork of the Canadian river, about fifteen miles south of Supply. Here we laid over all next day, as it was very stormy, the day Grant was to be inaugurated.

March 5th, we marched about twenty miles over a rough, sandy country, and camped where there was scarcely any water or wood. On the next night we camped on a small stream with plenty of wood and water. Plenty of turkeys were seen and several were killed. All along our route (which is the one Custar took on his march to attack the Indians) we saw indications of recent occupation by the Indians and they must have been in great numbers. The next night we crossed the South Fork of the Canadian and camped on the south bank. The country around is very hilly and in some places nearly mountainous. In some places the formations of earth are so strange that it seems as if nature tried to see how many different shapes she could form.

On the 8th we reached our destination and camped about five miles from the battle field of Gen. Custar. The Nineteenth had not yet arrived, so we camped and prepared to make ourselves as comfortable as possible. The next day a party struck out to visit the battle field. Almost everything was burned. From appearances it
looked as if there had been between forty and fifty lodges. Later accounts of the battle from eye witnesses, say that the 7th were very glad to get out of there, and that there were more of the cavalry than Indians killed. All the advantage they gained was in the first charge on the north side of the creek, where a few lodges were located. The cavalry had much difficulty in crossing a creek between them and the main part of the lodges, so that the warriors got a good position in the woods from which it was impossible to drive them. This was the “Glorious” victory of the 7th. The next day a portion of the 7th cavalry and 19th came in from Medicine Bluff creek. The 19th were all dismounted. About four hundred of them, with the remainder of the 7th are with Gen. Custar on another Indian raid. They are expected in every day.

There is no news of any importance from below. There is a post being built at Medicine Bluff creek by the 10th regular cavalry. Around Fort Cobb thousands of Indians have congregated who desire to keep peace. It is said they are mostly old men, women and children, and that most of the young warriors are out yet. None of the Cheyennes have come in yet. The chief bugler of the 19th was accidentally killed by a glancing shot on their way up.

As soon as Custar comes in we will march to Fort Hays and be mustered out, as our time will be about up.

A. L. R.

Fort Hays, April 8, 1869.
[Published April 17, 1869.]

EDITOR STANDARD:—My last letter was dated at Washita river, Indian territory. On the 24th of March we started north, Major Inman leaving two days rations to await Gen. Custar. We camped that night on Hackberry creek. Here a scout came in from Gen. Custar, who had come to the Washita the same morning just after we left, with orders to send back 25 wagons and escort. Early the next morning Lt. [James] Graham with five men started on a buffalo hunt. While out it commenced to rain. We succeeded in killing three buffalo and then returned to camp, which we found deserted, the command having moved while we were out. After dining on “buffalo straight,” we started to overtake the command. We had not gone far when it turned from rain into a severe snow storm with a high wind, and, as we had no overcoats, we suffered severely. After going about ten miles we overtook Capt. Moody and party, who were also on a buffalo hunt. His party all had overcoats and pouches, so that they were comfortable when compared with us. We
overtook the train about four o’clock in the afternoon, having rode, altogether, nearly sixty miles. We camped that night on Wolf creek, and the next day went into Camp Supply. Major Inman started very early next morning for Fort Dodge with an escort of Indian scouts.

On March 28, 1869, we started at noon with a loaded train south to meet Custar. We camped on Wolf creek, and the next afternoon about 3 o’clock we met Custar, and turned around and retraced our steps to a pool of water about 10 miles back.

The 19th and 7th looked “hard.” In fact they had seen hard service. The 18th [19th] were dismounted at Fort Cobb, and Custar took a tour through the Washita mountains, marching between 25 and 35 miles a day, which nearly used them up. Custar overtook the Indians and after nearly surrounding them demanded the white women which were captured on the Solomon and Republican rivers last autumn. After parling some time he succeeded in getting them, but not until nearly all the Indians had left. He got three chiefs which he captured by enticing them into camp upon pretence of making peace. He then commenced making preparations to hang them, which brought in the white women, and Gen. Custar then kept both Indians and women. Gen. Custar gives the 19th great praise and says they wore the 7th horses out and then the men. They were always in camp at night an hour before any of the 7th would make their appearance. It is related of the 7th that after the In-

20. Another brief account of the rescue was published in the Standard, April 16, 1869: “Most of our readers remember the case of Mrs. Morgan and Miss White, who were captured by the Indians, on the Solomon river, last October. We find the following account of their sufferings in the Leavenworth Commercial: “Captain Payne reports that Mrs. Morgan and Miss White, the former of whom was captured by the Sioux and traded to the Cheyennes, and the latter who was taken by the Cheyennes about seven months since, were rescued by the command and restored to their friends. Their captivity has been an unremitting scene of cruelty, torture and degradation. Both of these unfortunate women are pregnant, having been compelled by torture to submit to the brutality of their captors. Mrs. Morgan who was a bride of a month expresses a hope, however, that her offspring may be white, and not of that fiendish race that glories in the murder of women and children. They were compelled to do the drudgery of the lodge, to bring the wood, herd the ponies, etc. Twenty-five back loads of wood, which had to be brought from a long distance, was the daily task of each. They were scarcely clothed at all, and were suffering from intense cold. They attempted to warm their hands at the fire, when the Indians would scold them, and hold their hands over the flames until blistered.”

‘The recital of the many brutalities to which these poor women were subjected should inspire every one with a desire for the condign punishment of the savages, and nothing less than death is at all appropriate or adequate to their deserts.”

“The rescue was effected by threats to hang three Cheyenne chiefs, who were prisoners in our camp. The savages resorted to subterfuges to delay in the matter, but when Custar ordered the chiefs hung forthwith, and had the ropes adjusted for that purpose, the women were brought in immediately. Their only clothing consisted of an old flour sack each, tied around their waists, and, as will be imagined, they were in a most pitiful and suffering condition.”

For more detailed accounts of this rescue see Hadley, loc. cit., pp. 450-453; Gen. George A. Custer, Wild Life on the Plains (Sun Publishing Co., 1888), and “Reminiscences of the Life of Mrs. F. O. [Sarah White] Brooks—Telling of Her Capture by Indians in Early Days,” The Kansas Optimist, Hays, January 16, 1933, Miss White returned to Kansas, and taught a term of school near Clyde. In 1869 she was married to E. O. Brooks and lived in Cloud county until her death at the age of 88, on May 11, 1939. —The Kansas Optimist, May 18, 1939.
dians' camp had been destroyed, they pursued a blind squaw, which had been left, with their best horses, but she, knowing the country, made her escape.

At Camp Supply Co. M was dismounted, and we had to "hoof it" to Fort Dodge, at the rate of from 25 to 35 miles per day, which was the utmost cruelty on the men, almost all with blistered feet. Custar may gain a name for making long marches in short periods, but he wears out men and animals in doing so. He has few friends among the privates of the 7th and 19th.

The second day out we met Co. G which had been to Dodge and was returning with a loaded train. The train went on to Supply and Co. G retraced their steps with the command to Fort Dodge where they also were dismounted.

At Fort Dodge we found the 10th Colored cavalry, also dismounted. We lay over here, on the south side of the river until next day about noon when the two regiments moved across the river towards Fort Hays, at which place we arrived this morning.

It is generally understood that as soon as the necessary papers are made out, the regiment will be discharged. This is good news, as we have had a very hard campaign, so it will not be long before you will see us around Manhattan.

A. L. R.

MANHATTAN, April 22, 1869.
[Published April 24, 1869.]

EDITOR STANDARD.—On the 18th the 1st battalion of our regiment was mustered out. They went down in the afternoon on a special train which had been provided for them. The next day we were mustered out. Our company was nearly the last. From some cause or other there was no train yet furnished for us. About 12 o'clock in the night a train with only one coach attached came along. Everybody that could find standing room climbed on. Most of the men however had to remain behind.

There were several serious affrays in the city before we left. Several men were killed. Shots were fired at every minute of the night.

At about eleven o'clock the next morning the train started with the remainder of the troops. The men gave three cheers as the train moved out, glad to get away from such a place.

All along the road, at every town or house, and even at every woman that they saw, the soldiers would give three cheers, thus manifesting their joy at arriving at civilization once more. We are all glad to be at home again.

A. L. R.