"Letters From Kanzas"

JULIA LOUISA LOVEJOY

I. Introduction

THE four letters here reprinted were published in the Independent Democrat, Concord, N. H., in 1855, under the heading "Letters From Kanzas." Julia Louisa (Hardy) Lovejoy was the wife of the Rev. Charles H. Lovejoy, a Methodist minister of Croydon, N. H. In a letter to Isaac T. Goodnow, January 13, 1855, Mr. Lovejoy wrote:

. . . I have been making my plans for a few months to go west in the spring . . . . I am a member of the New Hampshire Conference—have traveled in the regular work 21 years—have been an opponent of Slavery from my earliest recollections—have acted with the Abolitionists from the first—am possessed of good health—have a wife & three children—one, a boy 17 years, a girl 15 and another girl 6 in the spring—All in good health, & spirits . . . .

Mrs. Lovejoy’s letters continue the story—describing the journey of her family to Kansas territory; the pleasures, hardships and sorrows of pioneer life; incidents in the founding of Manhattan in which the Lovejoys had a part. The last two letters are of particular value for their first-hand information on the pioneer settlement which is today the city of Manhattan.

According to historical accounts, the Lovejoy’s son, Irving Roscoe, was the first white child born within the town limits. This birth occurred September 17, 1855. An older child, Juliette, born in New Hampshire, married Dr. Samuel Whitehorn, who settled in Manhattan in 1855.

The Rev. Charles H. Lovejoy was a member of both the Boston and Manhattan town companies, organized April 4 and June 4, 1855, respectively. He served as a traveling Methodist preacher, his circuit covering a large area around Manhattan. In 1856 he made a

1. Julia Louisa Hardy was born March 9, 1815, in Lebanon, N. H., daughter of Daniel Hardy. She married in 1833, or 1834, the Rev. Charles H. Lovejoy. Her death occurred February 6, 1888, in Douglas county.

2. Published in both the daily and weekly Independent Democrat, the dates given here are for the weekly edition: Letter No. 1, June 21; Letter No. 2, June 28; Letter No. 3, July 5; Letter No. 4, August 23, 1855.


5. Alumni Record of Baker University (Baldwin City, 1917), p. 69, gives the exact date.

6. An avenue in Manhattan is named Juliette, possibly for Juliette (Lovejoy) Whitehorn.

(29)
trip East to appeal for funds to build Methodist churches in Kan-
sas.7

Early in 1857 the Lovejoys moved to Douglas county. Subse-
quent events in their lives are not relevant to this series of letters.8

II. THE LETTERS

ON BOARD THE "KATE SWINNEY",

MISSOURI RIVER, March 13, 1855.

MR. EDITOR: By your permission, I will make use of your paper
as a medium through which to give our dear N. E. friends who have
said beseechingly, "write to me;" some idea of our journey to the
far-famed Kanzas, and a brief description of the country as far
as we have become personally acquainted with the Territory.

We took the cars, Monday the 5th inst., at White River Junction,
Vt., and via Springfield, Mass., reached Albany, N. Y., Tuesday
noon, and Wednesday morn., left with a large company from Massa-
chusetts and R. I., for the "land of promise."9 Arrived in Buffalo
about 8 o'clock in the evening, stopping three hours for rest, when
we were whirled rapidly away toward Toledo, O., which we reached
with jaded limbs and empty stomachs, about 3 P. M. Our ride was
all that we could desire, through a fine country, good accommoda-
tions in the cars, (bating a little about the dense crowd of human
beings closely packed from dire necessity in each "seat,"?) gentle-
manly conductors along the route, until we reached Toledo, when
we suffered some inconvenience in crossing the Maumee River, in a
miserably old crazy boat, where hundreds of human beings were
pushed through a narrow aperture for ingress and egress, hardly
sufficient to admit one at a time, of corpulent dimensions. There
were other boats in sight, externally inviting, but safely ensconced
in winter quarters. Our next stopping place was Chicago, where
we were glad to partake of a refreshing breakfast, Thursday morn-

7. T. C. Wells, "Letters of a Kansas Pioneer," in The Kansas Historical Quarterly, v. V.,
p. 172.
8. A brief sketch of the life of the Rev. Charles H. Lovejoy was published in The Kansas
Historical Collections, v. VII, p. 497. The obituary of Mrs. Lovejoy was printed in the Western
9. This company preceded by one week the first regular spring party of the New England
Emigrant Aid Company in 1855, sent out on March 13. Isaac T. Goodnow advertised in the
Herald and Journal (city of publication not identified) late in February that he had made
arrangements for friends and acquaintances of the Rev. J. Denison and himself to start from
Boston on March 6 ("Webb Scrap Books," v. III, p. 29.—Library, Kansas State Historical
Society). In Goodnow’s diary for 1855 (MSS. division, Kansas State Historical Society) under
date of March 6 is this entry: "Finished preparations for my departure with Mr. Lin-
coll, Rev. C. H. Lovejoy, Newell Truiston & others. Left Boston in the Express Train...
for Albany, 20 passengers for Kansas. 8 added at Framingham. 30 at Springfield & at
Albany 2. Buffalo." An item in the Boston Atlas of March 18, 1855 (quoted in "Webb Scrap
Books," v. III, p. 45), states: "The Kansas Party under the charge of Messrs. Lincoln and
Goodnow (numbering 75 individuals), which left this State on Tuesday, the 6th inst., reached
St. Louis safely, and thence took passage by steamer Kate Swinney for Kansas City. Mo., on
Saturday afternoon last."
ing, furnished to our company, at the low rate of 25 cts., through the kindness of L. P. Lincoln, Esq., our energetic Agent, who is un-tiring in his efforts to make our journey pleasant, and seems inter-ested in all that interests the emigrant. 10 We left Chicago about 9 A.M., and our noble steed bore us impetuously on over the far-famed prairies of Illinois, with almost lightning speed, allowing us only a moment to snatch a glance at the smooth, mirror-like surface, of one of the loveliest land-scapes our wandering eyes ever be-held,—accustomed, as we have been from earliest childhood, to N. E. scenery, diversified with hill and dale. O how did the wish, which we vainly endeavored to suppress, escape us, ever and anon, as some new eminence—crowned with thrifty fruit trees, affording a fine “rural seat” for some wealthy occupant, that we too had caught the fever of emigration, long years ago, and had found a home with the almost envied Hoosier.

Onward we were borne, in one continuous routine of “jar and whistle,” toward the sunny south, reaching Alton, the scene of the Lovejoy tragedy,11 about midnight, where we left the tilt of the cars for the less-fatiguing motion of a commodious steamboat, and so at last, we are on this great “father of waters,” this mighty ar-tery,—whose constant pulsations drain the heart of this vast con-tinent—the Mississippi River, whose course we have traced with the enthusiasm of childhood, on Morse’s old Atlas, little thinking when the hey-dey of youth was passed, we too, should find a tran-scient home on a vessel, whose prow should plough its turbid waters. The scenery along the Mississippi is as we supposed, low and mo-notonous; not dotted with thrifty looking villages or stately mansions, as in N. E., and we could not resist the impression we have everywhere felt in Missouri, that the blighting mildew of slavery, is evident on this productive soil, is seen on the dilapidated dwellings of the planters, and on all you come in contact with. O how often did we wish that energetic yankees, eking out a life of toil, on sterile, unproductive soil, could for a few years, occupy these rich lands, how greatly would the face of things be changed!

We entered the Missouri Hotel, St. Louis, about 3 o’clock Sat-urday morning, and found the first hour of undisturbed sleep since we left V[ernon]t. Here we found ample accommodations, a nice breakfast awaiting us, and were soon fortunate enough, under the

11. Mrs. Lovejoy refers to the murder of Abolitionist Elijah P. Lovejoy by a Proslavery mob at Alton, Ill., in 1837. He was a relative of the Rev. Charles H. Lovejoy.
guidance of friend Lincoln, to secure a passage on the "Kate Swin-
nexy," from St. Louis to Kanzas City, for the meagre charge of $10
each, and superb fare, that would pamper the most fastidious epic-
ure. Now Mr. Editor, if you can travel 500 miles for this "wee bit"
living in princely style, your every want anticipated by swift-
footed waiters, officers and crew, with clocklike regularity, moving
in their appointed sphere of action, eager to answer all your in-
quiries and show you every indulgence, why—in this matter—we
congratulate your good fortune!

We came on board about 8 o'clock, Saturday morning, and through
the kindness of Capt. Chouteau, were permitted to take an excurs-
ion to "Jefferson barracks," down the Mississippi River, which
took us about all day to perform, with no additional charge. Our
company consisted of upwards of 100 men, women and children,
from New England, New York and Pennsylvania, and a most happy
family we are. By the permission of Capt. Chouteau, we had public
religious service on board, Sabbath, A. M., commencing at the usual
hour, sermon by Mr. Lovejoy; and in the evening, by Rev. N.
Trafton of the "Biblical Institute" of your goodly city.

There are slaveholders on board—the Captain himself being one;
but as yet no conflicting sentiments have been advanced to cause
collision, though it is well-known that we are from Yankee land
and hate slavery to the death, with all its kindred evils. We have
one bright little slave girl on board, valued by her mistress at $500.

Here may be seen a world in miniature.—On one hand sits the
industrious Bay State lady, plying her knitting needles, there an-
other putting the "finish" to a substantial pair of overalls, to make
comfortable that much loved husband, as he tills the soil of Kanzas.
In another corner a pleasure-loving group, at "chequers," or thumb-
ing over the keys of the piano-forte, or the guitar; and still another,
singing lustily, old-fashioned, soul-enlivening Methodist hymns.
Truly, Mr. Editor, notwithstanding our differences of opinion, we
are a model family, so far as harmony and love are concerned, and
as I gaze on this group of wives and mothers, who have torn them-
selves away from dear New England homes to follow the fortunes
of that loved husband, to become a light in his mud-walled cabin—
to wipe the sweat of toil from his care-worn brow—and like an
angel-watcher, to minister to his comfort in sickness and health—
and, prospectively, to brave hardships of no ordinary character—I

ask, "Who shall wipe the dew of death, that will ere long gather on her brow in yon stranger land? What soft hand will smoothe her pillow in death, or shed the sympathetic tear, with bereaved loved ones, as her "remains" shall be laid away in the dark, damp tomb, or who shield her orphaned ones, far from kin and childhood's home when she is no more? I pause: my heart is full, and tears unbidden well-up from the deep-fount of feeling. I list! A mournful echo, borne from the wilds of Kanzas answers "Who?"

We are at this hour at Murphesville, on the Missouri, 20 miles from Washington, St. Charles Co., where we have been for three hours, firmly imbedded in the sand, and though every effort has been made to extricate ourselves from this predicament, our noble vessel is so heavily laden, she sullenly refuses to move an inch. There are 112 officers and soldiers and 90 horses on board, belonging [to] the U. S. Army. These, with the Kanzas emigrants and their luggage, amounts to no small sum of freight. Flocks of wild geese, ducks, and beautiful white swans sailing gracefully over turbid waters, now meet the eye. But the wheel sluggishly moves, and we are onward bound. Adieu. You may hear from us again.

JULIA LOUISA LOVEJOY.

AMERICAN HOTEL, KANZAS CITY,
MO., April 13, 1855.

MR. EDITOR: We took leave of your readers, whilst we were sentimentally thinking of the song of the "dying swan," occasioned by "association of ideas" in seeing a group of "living ones" sporting on the "mad Missouri."

Our journey up the river was delightfully pleasant, though somewhat protracted on account of low water. We saw some places of interest, on the river, but "few and far between," and not one that looked home-like, or that would compare in tastefulness of Architecture with a New England cottage. Even Jefferson, the Capitol of the State, had nothing peculiarly attracting, save the green hills sloping down to the water's edge, covered in mid-March with verdure that was very welcome to us from the Granite State, who had just been sleigh-riding over snow-drifts six feet in depth!

The Capitol was a spacious building on a beautiful eminence overlooking the river, but we thought it would look very contemptible along-side of the one in the Green Mountain State. One thing seemed to us like neglect or indolence; the rusty appearance of the unpainted copper sheathing that covered the cupola of the structure, that by
heavy rains had soiled the exterior of the walls the entire height. Near this place we saw what called forth exclamations of disappropria-
tion and disgust from some of our warm-hearted anti-slavery New
Englanders, who had not been accustomed to such sights. A cart
drawn by mules, was being relieved from its “contents” of manure,
by a hoe in the hands of a colored woman, whilst her overseer stood
by with an air of content, giving directions that it should be properly
done, whilst he moved not a finger to assist the poor creature in her
masculine task! O slavery, thou unsexing demon, how art thou
cursed of God and humanity.

We reached Kanzas City Sabbath Morn, March 18th, in season to
attend divine worship; and Mr. Lovejoy, though a known minister
of the Northern M. E. Church, that is just now making such a stir
amongst the enraged Missourians, was called to officiate in the pul-
pit. The practice obtains, we think through their indolence through-
out the State, of one service in the day-time, and one in the evening.
There is but one Church edifice in the city, and this unpainted,
uncarpeted, and as filthy as any incorrigible tobacco chewer would
wish to have it; stove, benches, and other “fixtures” bearing un-
mistakable evidence that the delicious weed, had been thoroughly
masticated.

Our first impressions of this city were extremely unfavorable; and
boarding in this hotel as we have for weeks past, confirms us in the
belief, that though a great business place, on account of emigration
to Kanzas, yet the place itself, the inhabitants and the morals, are
of an indescribably repulsive and undesirable character. Indeed,
we know of but few places that we would not select for a permanent
residence, in preference to Kanzas City.

But “Kanzas Ho!” is the watch-word for our party, and lo! all
with one consent, begin to make a move in that direction. Teams
being purchased, and all due preparation made the “pioneer party”
with a noble span of horses and covered wagon, loaded to its utmost
capacity with tents, mattresses, provisions, &c., for an exploring
tour, started ahead, leaving the “ox team” to follow in due time.\(^{14}\)
The company, some of whom were clergymen, presented a very
unique and ludicrous appearance when fully equipped for their

\(^{14}\) Isaac T. Goodnow in his “Reminiscences,” loc. cit., p. 248, says a committee of seven
was chosen to explore and select a site where the company was to settle. He names only six:
Isaac T. Goodnow, Luke P. Lincoln, Charles H. Lovejoy, N. R. Wright, C. N. Wilson and
Joseph Wintermute. In his diary for 1855, loc. cit., entry of March 20 reads: “Several of the
party bought oxen & horses. 7 of us started with a two horse team, leaving 12 to come on with
the oxen.” They reached the junction of the Kansas and Blue rivers on March 24, 1855.
Others of the party remained in Kansas City for a time. A. Browning was the seventh mem-
ber of the locating party according to a secondary source.—Portrait and Biographical Album
journey. Some with oil-cloth hats and overcoats, and long boots drawn over their pants, to protect them from the mud, each armed with his rifle or revolver, for game, not for fear of the Indians or Missourians; the oxen, some without horns, and others less fortunate, minus in a certain appendage, very necessary in mosquito-times; the drivers armed with a stick a number of feet in length, to which was appended a lash of enormous length, which dexterously used by one accustomed to it, makes “all ring again.”

The party went in various directions, until by unanimous consent, a location was agreed upon at the junction of the Big Blue, and Kansas Rivers. There for the present we will leave them, busily selecting their “claims,” and erecting their cabins to shelter them and their families, who are to follow, whilst we return to “matters and things” in Kansas [City]. It would seem almost incredible to all, save an eye witness of the fact, of the hosts whose name is “legion” that have been emptied from the boats on to the shores of Kansas during our stay here, and still they come! Thousands upon thousands, from almost every State in the Union, arrive here, and many go to Westport and Parkville, without stopping here. Some return in a week or two homeward bound, venting their curses against the “Aid Company” that has “humbugged them,” in misrepresenting the country, (but these, almost invariably, are found not to possess the most necessary elements of frontier life, courage and endurance,) whilst thousands brave hardships, and are determined to “rough it” for a season, that they may enjoy the fruit of their labors.

A number of instances of a painful character have come under my observation, where almost, and in some instances quite, the last dollar has been expended in travelling “to and fro” in the Territory, and, like Noah’s dove, finding no rest, turn their faces Eastward, sick of every thing they have seen in Eden’s imaginary garden. Others, after being absent a few weeks, have stuck their stake, built their cabins, made their gardens, and return in triumph to New England, (or take the boats here for that purpose,) for their dear ones left behind. This class usually are extravagant in their praises of the country, and, like the Eastern Queen, declare the one half of its beauties have not been told them, and their portfolios or “common place” books exhibit the “Olive leaf” in the shape of beautiful prairie flowers, plucked in their wanderings, and sacredly preserved to carry to their Eastern friends, that they may see the “blossoms of Eden.”

I have seen more of human suffering since I came to this place than I have ever seen lifelong before; and this is not to be wondered
at, so many coming such an immense distance, each bringing in his veins the seeds of disease, pertaining to his own peculiar climate, and when he arrives, worn out with fatigue and exposure, he is ripe for sickness and death. An affection of the lungs, called here "pneumonia, and winter fever," has prevailed amongst the emigrants and citizens to an alarming extent, and swept many to the tomb. At one time in this hotel, five men in one room were sick with lung fever, and one in another, Rev. J. Dennisan,15 of the N. E. Conference, sick with the same disease, and lost his youngest child by it. Scarcely an emigrant but has had a touch of it until they get away from the air of this river into the territory, where the air is purer, when their lungs are soon healed. I have seen the emigrant pay almost his last dollar for board at this house, said to be built expressly for his benefit, and published to the world "three and four dollars per week for board," when in every instance during our stay it has been one dollar per day, for those under the protection of the "Aid Company," and all others $1.50. Though as far as we are personally concerned, the needle has supplied all our demands for "board and lodging" hitherto. The table-fare we will leave for abler pens to describe. The hotel is very commodious, built of brick, four stories high, and an addition for an airy dining-room now being erected.

Provisions are very high in this city, flour per hundred, $5.75, corn meal, $1.50 and $1.75, butter, 30 cents, ham 11 and 12, smoked sides of hogs, much eaten here, 9 and 10, dried apple 12 1-2 per pound, molasses 75 per gallon, sugar 8 and 9. The freight from St. Louis to Kansas is enormously high, water is so low at this time.

We are anxiously looking for rain, as a drought almost unparalleled in the history of the State, has long prevailed.

A party have just arrived from Indiana, and among the number is a man one hundred and four years old. His second wife is along with him, aged 77. This old man has traveled over 1000 miles on the water, to get here with his son, who takes care of him. My heart ached for him when I thought of what he must unavoidably meet. Indeed, I have wept almost every day with some poor emigrant in trouble, and have named this "reception room" the "bridge of sighs," that all must pass over to find the promised land. Wives parting from their husbands, children from their parents, or friends weeping for friends left behind, some sick and disheartened, some

15. The Rev. Joseph Dennisan, later a founder and first president of the Kansas State Agricultural College, Manhattan.
spent all their money, others hom[e]sick, and still others burying their children or friends, and I have found a daily work for weeks, to console the emigrant, and sympathize with the afflicted.

JULIA LOUISA LOVEJOY.

MOUTH OF THE BIG BLUE RIVER,
K. T., May 22d, 1855.

Mr. Editor:—With sad and grief-stricken hearts we resume our communications for your paper—and O, how can we narrate the heart-crushing events of a few past weeks? The sorrows of a life of forty years, have been as nothing, compared with what our poor hearts have felt in a few brief days. Ah me! the insatiate Archer has selected another victim—our little circle has been broken—the lamb of the flock taken, and our sweet Edith,\textsuperscript{16} a child of many prayers and hopes, laid low in death! For five short summers she has gladdened our hearts, and been a light in our dwelling, and within four days of her sixth birthday, the spirit took its heavenward flight, and we laid her precious dust away on a beautiful prairie, near Lawrence, Kanzas Territory. Sleep on, my angel child—though thy mother's heart is breaking with untold anguish—death's icy grasp will ere long be broken, and then my eyes un-dimmed by burning tears, will behold thee, a seraph, with the "shining band."— Lung fever, that has swept like a pestilence through Missouri, seized all of our family who remained in Kanzas, and measles setting in, our little one was soon numbered with the dead.

We arrived at our intended home about two weeks ago, and, notwithstanding the vacant spot in the home circle, and our own desolate hearts, we must pronounce this the most charming country our eyes ever beheld! I wish to write to our New England friends, things as we view them in this Territory, and \textit{only as far as we do know them!} It seems to us impossible that any spot on earth, un-cultivated by art, can be more inviting in appearance than this country. Beautiful rolling prairie, undulating like the waves of the sea, high limestone cliffs with immense bottom-lands, stretching into thousands of acres as rich as it is possible for it to be, high table-lands, with a soil a number of feet in depth. The only thing we have noticed as being lacking to make this country all that could be desired, is a scarcity of good building timber, such as spruce and

\textsuperscript{16} Edith Urania, the Lovejoy's younger daughter, died May 5, 1855, of measles and exposure. This event occurred the day after the family arrived in Lawrence. Her grave is said to have been the third made by pioneers on Mount Oread.—\textit{United States Biographical Dictionary, Kansas Volume} (Chicago, S. Lewis & Co., 1879), p. 289.
pine.— There is a sufficiency of wood for many years to come, and limestone in plenty for fencing here, and for building purposes. There are living springs of pure sweet water on most of the claims in this vicinity; and wells are dug on the open prairie, where water is found of excellent quality but a few feet below the surface.

Our company consists of men of the "right stamp," mostly from Massachusetts and Rhode Island, including a number of clergymen, and men of liberal education, who have been successfully engaged for years as teachers in our distinguished seminaries of learning at the East, and are henceforth to devote their energies for the benefit of this new Territory.— They have pitched on a beautiful site for a city, at the junction of the Big Blue and Kanzas Rivers, and today surveyors are busy in staking out the streets on an immense scale, a number of miles in circumference; frames and cabins are going up all around to secure this city property, whilst for miles around farm claims have been taken, and five, ten, and so on acres planted, and everything is growing rapidly.¹⁷

Our present abode is a floorless cabin, built of logs, the crevices filled with sticks and mud, the roof covered with "shakes" split from logs, resembling your Eastern clapboards, in a rough state. These answer a good purpose in a fair day, but woe to the beds and everything else when the rain falls heavily. Mr. Lovejoy has a stone house going up on his "claim," just beyond the city limits. This claim is in the "Great bend" of the Big Blue, three quarters of a mile from its mouth, where thousands of acres of as rich bottomlands as can possibly be found, lie in a body. The whole can be easily enclosed by a fence across the neck, of perhaps [omission] in length. In sight, is the great government road¹⁸ to Fort Riley, 18 miles, on the Kanzas River above this intended city, and the government bridge¹⁹ across the Blue, costing an immense sum. A bluff of limestone rises abruptly, at the base of which our house is in process of erection. He [Mr. Lovejoy] has four acres ploughed and nearly planted, besides his garden, which is in a flourishing condition, vegetables growing far more rapidly than in the East.

A fairer, more genial climate, we think, cannot be found on earth, though early in the spring we are told "high winds" and clouds of

¹⁷. At a meeting on April 4, 1855, a city organization was effected—a consolidation with the settlers of 1854, whose townsite Polska (or Poleska) and Canton were encompassed by the new town named Boston. There were thirty-four or thirty-five members of the town company.—A. T. Andreas and W. G. Cutler, History of Kansas (Chicago, 1883), p. 1306; letter, Isaac T. Goodnow to his brother William, April 9, 1855, in MSS. division, Kansas State Historical Society.

¹⁸. The Fort Leavenworth-Fort Riley military road.

¹⁹. The government bridge, built at a cost of about $10,000, was destroyed by ice on January 26, 1856.—Mrs. Chester R. Allen, "Sketches and Journals," entry of January 26, 1856, in MSS. division, Kansas State Historical Society.
dust were a great annoyance. The air is so pure and clear that objects six and eight miles distant can be distinctly seen, as those in the East at one quarter of a mile, strange as it may seem. It is hard for us to become habituated to it, and it seems a constant phenomenon to us—so healthy too, that one can lie in the open air and realize no inconvenience from it. An instance occurs nightly in sight of our cabin. A gentleman from Maine,20 a graduate of Waterville, and for years past teacher in the Charlestown Academy, who was, to all appearance in the last stages of consumption, given over by his physicians to die, as a last resort came to Kanzas, has lived here through the winter, and now is so well he labors constantly, and at night wraps a buffalo robe about him, and throws himself on the open prairie, with no covering but the canopy of heaven.

There has been no sickness in the Territory here as we have learned, only as it was brought here. There has been a drought which has made things later than usual, but for two weeks past the heavens have literally poured their contents upon the earth. The grass in some places is nearly knee-high—thousands of acres that I wish might be covered with grazing flocks and herds. Hardworking cattle with nothing but this grass to eat, are fit for beef in a few weeks. But O our thunder-storms, Mr. Editor, you have need to witness them before you can conceive of their awful sublimity. On a sudden the heavens are overspread with black angry clouds, and seem for hours to be wrapped in a sheet of flame, heavy thunder, as if the whole artillery of heaven was at once discharged, when the rain not only falls in drops but in copious streams, deluging the earth, but soon disappears, and we see no chance for stagnant water, the land is so rolling.

Our present cabin is near the centre of the city site, and is literally in the centre of a garden of flowers of varied form and hue, surrounded with acres of rose bushes, which, when in blossom must perfume the air for miles around. In the cool of the day we love to sit at the door of our cabin and inhale the sweet perfume of flowers, and snuff the bracing air. Were it not for the vacuum made in our "trio band" by death's ruthless hand, we should feel happier than in any other spot we ever found on earth, though we greatly desire our dear friends in New England to come and live in this inviting land.

Provisions are scarce and high, having to be brought from Kanzas City by teams though a steamboat is hourly expected laden with

20. E. M. Thurston, an 1854 settler from Maine, and member of the group locating the Canton townsite. A street in Manhattan is named Thurston.
freight for the Territory. A landing and temporary warehouse has been prepared. Quite an excitement is being felt to-day among the members of the "City Association" as a number of men are busy jumping claims within the city limits, and they had not previously taken the precaution to have them all secured by erecting cabins within suitable distances of each other, but more about this matter in my next.

Mr. Park,21 of immense wealth, who has lately had his printing press destroyed in the Missouri River, at Parkville, Mo., by hundreds of armed ruffians, and his own life threatened, has taken seventy-five shares in our "city" stock, and given a handsome bonus to a "squatter Missourian to get rid of him." Great things are expected of him here in pecuniary matters. Game is very plenty about the Blue. Wild geese, turkeys, ducks, prairie hens, and deer; but they don't always stop long enough for a ball to hit them. The rivers are full of fish of the finest flavor I ever tasted, similar to the Eastern trout, but a richer treat for the table. They are called catfish, and some of them weigh over 50 lbs., and sometimes twice that amount, and the flesh when dressed, looks as large as a fat calf. A man just above us, on the Blue River, one night last week with a "seine" caught 1,500 lbs. and carried them the next day to Fort Riley to market.

A neighbor a few days since took an excursion up the valley of the Blue, and he says the country in his opinion, in some respects is preferable to this near the mouth, but we hardly think it possible. He informed us that 200 families from Ohio were on the way to settle there, and 20 more families are now making a settlement just above us on the Blue, from the Buck-eye State. Towns are starting up as by magic all along the valley of the Kanz[a]s. Ashland, Manhattan and Pawnee, between this place and Fort Riley. But more anon.

Yours respectfully,

JULIA LOUISA LOVEJOY.

MANHATTAN CITY, MOUTH OF BIG BLUE RIVER, K. T., Aug. 1, 1855.

Mr. Editor: Monday is a "busy day" in this far-off land, as well as in New Hampshire: but "suds" and "scrubbing" are all postponed as a matter of course, for this eventful day. For lol the mail has arrived, bringing "lots" of papers and letters from the East (which have been delayed on the way long enough to have crossed

21. George Shepard Park, publisher of the Parkville (Mo.) Luminary, whose press was destroyed by a Proslavery mob April 14, 1855.
the Atlantic twice) and among them we find three numbers of your paper, that we loved so much to read in our Eastern home, now doubly dear separated by a stretch so vast, as now intervenes between us, and our dear New England friends—from our “heart of hearts,” we thank thee, Mr. Editor for this delicious morsel, though we expect they will be so eagerly sought, and be read, and re-read by so many, that before one week they will be completely “thumbed” to pieces, and used up. Since the date of our last letter, a great and important change has occurred in business matters here,—a steamboat, the “Financier” was then on her way up the Kansas River—she arrived at the Mouth of the Blue, the 29th of May—a short distance in the rear followed the “Hartford,” a splendid boat, owned by a company of wealthy capitalists from Cincinnati, Ohio, who had sent on their agent ahead, selected a location for a town, about two miles from Fort Riley—had it surveyed and regularly laid into “lots,” and named it “Manhattan”—this boat was bringing out the “settlers” with their families, heavily freighted with ready-made houses, all prepared for immediate erection. When they came in sight of our beautiful locality almost encircled as it is by these two rivers, they were so charmed with the spot, and concluding, wisely too, that the Mouth of the Blue, must be eventually at the head of navigation, they made proposals to our “Boston Association,” on certain stipulated conditions, to abandon the project of founding a city, as first intended, and expend their capital here. This offer was cordially accepted and in return our “Association” made them a present of one-half our “City-site,” or one side of “Main Street,” that runs through the centre, and the privilege of changing the name from “Boston,” first given it, to “Manhattan.” Things now look quite city-like, and the sound of the hammer is heard on every hand. Nine of their houses, are already erected, 25 or more “habitations” of one kind or another, are now dotting this “broad area,” known as “City limits,” and for miles around, the “claims” are mostly taken up. We have purchased, and moved into one of these Cincinnati houses, furnished (in these “ends of the earth” as our friends at home, are pleased to term it) with better furniture, than it has been our fortune heretofore to possess. You could hardly credit what a rush there is for “claims” here now, and one that has been considered of but little consequence, has been purchased within a week, for

22. On the Hartford were some seventy-five settlers, members of the Cincinnati and Kansas Land Company.

23. Isaac T. Goodnow in his diary for 1855, loc. cit., under date of June 2, wrote: “. . . Met representatives of the Manhattan Comp. Cincinnati”; and under June 4 made this entry: “Meeting of our Association. Passed a resolution giving to the Manhattan Coy. of Cincinnati 1/4 of our city site on condition of making certain improvements. . . .”
$200, and we are told today the owner has been offered thrice that sum. Vegetation is of a luxuriant growth. Mr. L. went into a heavily eared cornfield, a few days since, and with a long hoe, endeavored to reach the top, but found it impossible; neither could he reach a part of the ears, with his hands, without the aid of stilts! One of our neighbors, who came here last summer, has forty acres that bid fair to yield 50 bushels of shelled corn to the acre, and also a fine field of wheat. We had green corn to eat the first of July, not as early as some others. Grapes of a fine flavor, have been ripe a number of weeks—they are very abundant, and our good housekeepers are busy in making their jellies, which are very nice preserves and a variety of little “et cetera,” that answers the purpose of other plumbs, and berries, they have been accustomed to use in New England. Paw-paws, that now resemble (as they hang on the tree) a large rich pear, grow here, but the fruit, this year, is not plenty—also large blue plumbs, like New England garden plumbs, mulberries also, very fine, that grow on tall, slender trees and look almost precisely like an unripe blackberry—gooseberries, black raspberries, &c., but not a strawberry—in this part of the territory. We have understood they are farther south, but here the annual fires sweeping over the prairies, prevent their growing—we design this fall to get a supply, and not to suffer the “devouring element” to harm them, or anything else that grows within the limits of “our claim” if we can possibly prevent it. With regard to climate, I doubt whether any other can be found equal to it. Our hottest days in July, would not compare with New England; for when the thermometer stood at 90° the heat was counteracted by a constant cooling breeze, so refreshing, and delightful, when not too strong, as is sometimes the case. And it would occasion surprise, to hear any one exclaim, “Ah me, I have taken cold!”—men (and even ladies too) I’ll whisper this parenthesis, can ford (wade) creeks, rivers, sleep in the open air, on the prairies, in the ox-wagons, or wherever night overtakes them, and suffer no inconvenience. I mean delicate ladies, who have been bred to effeminacy and accustomed to the luxuries of a home, where wealth abounded. Provisions are falling rapidly, so that the greatest trouble in this part of the Territory, now is about our Missourian neighbors, whose “hearts are set on mischief.” We were apprehending trouble if not “hard fighting” in our quiet community at the opening of the Legislature, in Pawnee, a few miles above here, as some of the “viler sort,” had threatened to “exterminate every abolitionist here, and demolish their houses”; and I can
assure you, every man, not excepting our good peace-loving minister, WAS PREPARED FOR THEM! The people in this Territory have suffered until "forbearance is no longer a virtue" and now if help is afforded from no other source, they are resolved individually to defend their "rights" and their homes. Mr. L. was present at Pawnee, at the opening of our Guasi legislature, and notwithstanding the blustering and threats of the half-drunk pro-slavery party, not one solitary revolver was fired at any free-soil man or one bowie-knife aimed at one defenseless head. Though a more reckless set, stirred up to deeds of daring by the fumes of the brandy bottle, never probably met for like purposes; and Stringfellow, when elected speaker of the House of Representatives, invited his "cronies" to a certain Hotel, "to discuss together the merits of a bottle of champagne." They made a mere cypher of Gov. Reeder, taking every thing out of his hands, and finally adjourned to the "Shawnee Mission," more than a hundred miles south [east]—a miserable pro-slavery "sink," leaving the Governor "alone in his glory" to follow, or remain behind, as he should choose. He and Judge Johnson came leisurely along a few days afterward, stopping for the night, with our next door neighbor—the Governor looking unscathed, notwithstanding the fiery ordeal he had just passed thro'. True, he retained a few slight scratches on his face, the effects of being unceremoniously knocked down by the notorious Stringfellow, editor of the "Squatter Sovereign," one of the vilest pro-slavery sheets that ever disgraced the American press! Ah! Mr. Editor: scenes have been enacted in this Territory, within a few months past, and lawless ruffianism, perpetrated on peaceable, unoffending citizens, sufficient to rouse the spirit of '76, in the breast of every freeman; and it is aroused. Military companies are forming, and though we may be accounted feeble in regard to numerical strength, compared with the hordes that may flock here from Missouri, the "battle is not always to the strong," and truth and justice, will eventually triumph. "Kanzas must be free" though blood is shed, and hundreds fall victims to the bloody moloch of slavery. Jehovah is on the side of the oppressed, and He will yet arise in His strength, and His enemies will be scattered.

There is work enough for every minister, or free-soil man that can be spared from the old Granite State, or any part of New England.

24. Guasi-legislature. The opening meeting was held July 2, 1856.
25. Dr. John H. Stringfellow, a founder of Atchison and editor of the Proslavery Squatter Sovereign, Atchison newspaper.
Mr. L. has preached every Sabbath since he left the East, and in June entered on his duties as a missionary, on “Fort Riley Mission,” officially appointed. His field of labor extends from Pottawatomie Mission, 30 miles on the South[east], to 70 or 80 miles West from here beyond the Fort, and finds 12 places where they need constant Sabbath preaching. Drones that cannot work hard or live on coarse fare, or sleep in cabins, with or without a bed, or on the open prairie need not come here—they are not wanted, for they will be going back the second week, telling a doleful story of “Kanzas fare.” But those who can endure and be willing to “rough” it for the sake of doing good in the cause of liberty and religion, let them come, and God speed them in their glorious work! A great work is to be done, and Kanzas is the great battlefield where a mighty conflict is to be waged with the monster slavery, and he will be routed and slain. Amen and Amen.

Julia Louisa Lovejoy.