Memoirs of Watson Stewart: 1855-1860

DONALD W. STEWART

I. INTRODUCTION

THE article which follows was written in his 76th year by my grandfather, Watson Stewart, who settled in Allen county nearly 100 years ago as a stockholder in the ill-fated Kansas Vegetarian Colony. This account is presented without editing as it appears in his personal memoirs, a record which continued his life story to 1904 and covered most of an active life of 83 years, prominently identified with the history of Kansas.

Watson Stewart was the son of Joseph and Mary (Coe) Stewart. He was born in Miami county, Ohio, in 1827, the eldest of four children. His mother died when he was about eight, and his father died when he was 13. At 16, Stewart set out to make his own way in the world. He learned to carve marble by serving for several years as an apprentice to monument makers. In the spring of 1849 he began work in the marble shop of a Mr. Clark in Lafayette, Ind. During the summer, a cholera epidemic took the lives of many of the town’s citizens, including Stewart’s employer, and also the owner of Lafayette’s other monument firm. That fall, Stewart and a friend named Grosvenor formed a marbleworks partnership. The firm prospered and two years later Stewart, then 25, married Elizabeth Tipton, aged 19. A daughter Cynthia was born to them in December, 1852; and in February, 1854, they had a son whom they named Frank. Also, in this latter year, Watson Stewart’s brother Samuel came to live with them. The brothers read about the new territory of Kansas which was formed in 1854, and talked of migrating there. Watson Stewart was particularly interested because he had for some time wanted to engage in farming.

The section from the memoirs, printed here, tells of the removal of the Stewarts to Kansas, and of their pioneer experiences in the territory during the years between 1855 and 1860.

The homestead referred to still exists in Cottage Grove township in southern Allen county. “Stewart Lake” still borders Highway 75.

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about four miles south of Humboldt; and the home Watson Stewart himself erected on that site still stands.

This pioneer Kansan was the father of 10 children. His seven sons survived him but his three daughters died in childhood, due in part to the rigors of pioneer life in Kansas. He served as a major in the Kansas territorial militia in the days of border warfare; and he was a member of the upper house of the Kansas territorial legislature when the territory became a state. He represented Allen county in the lower house of the legislature in 1865. He twice served as registrar of the federal land office at Humboldt, by appointments from Presidents Lincoln and Grant. When the Osage strip, extending through southern Kansas 200 miles east and west, by 50 miles north and south, was first opened to settlement, he was privileged to make homestead entry No. 1 by virtue of being the individual in that entire area of longest continuous residence. His brother, Samuel, made entry No. 2. Watson Stewart died in 1910. He is buried at Humboldt, and in that vicinity many of his relatives still live.

II. Watson Stewart's Memoirs: 1855-1860

During the summer of 1855 we learned of the formation of a company called the "Vegetarian Settlement Company", organized for the purpose of making a settlement in Kansas. Its officers were Charles H. De Wolf of Philadelphia, President; John McLaren, Treasurer; and Henry S. Clubb of New York, Secretary. The purpose and plan of operation of this company may be understood from the following extract from a circular issued by the officers, dated December 1, 1855, in connection with a few articles of their constitution:

Art. 2. The Company shall be conducted on the mutual joint-stock principle, for the equal benefit of all the members, and to protect each other from the impositions of speculators and monopolists, by raising sufficient funds to start with efficient machinery, implements and provisions.

Art. 4 Persons of good moral character, who shall be approved by the board of directors, whether male or female, who are not slaveholders, may become members of the company, on paying $1.00 entrance fee, and an installment of 10 cents per share, on not less than twenty shares. Each member may subsequently purchase additional shares; no member, however, shall be allowed to hold more than 240 shares at any one time. Each person, on becoming a member must agree to sign the following declaration upon entering the settlement:

1. For supplementary information on this colony, see Russell Hickman's article, "The Vegetarian and Octagon Settlement Companies," in The Kansas Historical Quarterly, v. 2, pp. 377-385.
“I do voluntarily agree to abstain from all intoxicating liquors as beverages, from tobacco in every form, and from the flesh of animals; promote social, moral and political freedom; to maintain the observance of all good and righteous laws, and to otherwise conform to the rules adopted by a majority of the Vegetarian Settlement Company.”

The capital stock of the Company consisted of shares of from $5.00 up, each equal in number to the acres of land located. The circular of December 1, 1855, referred to, says in part:

In September last, Dr. John McLauren, as one of the directors, proceeded to explore Kansas Territory, and after spending several weeks traveling along the Kansas, Osage and other rivers, he came to the conclusion that a fine site on the Neosho river, between latitude 38 degrees and the boundary line of the Osage Indian lands, and between 18 and 19 degrees longitude west from Washington, would be the best location for the Vegetarian Settlement. He, accordingly took possession of a claim, comprising excellent water privileges. The river, at this point is very rapid, and for ten months in the year, the water is sufficiently abundant to make it serviceable for mill power. It is free from any bad taste, and is very soft. There is sufficient amount of timber to serve the purposes of settlers, until additional timber can be grown. Coal, limestone and sandstone, suitable for grindstones, etc., and abundant springs of pure water are interspersed throughout a fine rolling prairie; and the land comprises an excellent vegetable mold, loam, etc., to a great depth, with a gravelly, and in some instances, rocky substratum. The scenery is beautiful, and the surface undulating like the waves of the ocean subsiding after a storm. The banks of the river are from 15 to 30 feet high, so that a milldam can be easily constructed without causing an overflow. Altogether, it does not appear that a more suitable site could be found for the purpose of the Company.

The aim of this company, and its plan of operations, as set forth, seemed feasible; and in accord with our views, and from what we learned of the promoters through the New York Tribune, and the "Phrenological Journal", my brother and I took stock in it, and at once began preparations to go with the company to Kansas.

In the early spring of 1856, I sold out my business to John W. Pampell. We had a wagon made to order, bought a team of fine young horses, and early in March my brother started overland with wagon, team and outfit for camping. It was his purpose to drive to St. Louis, and there meet with other members of the company, and together to proceed overland to Kansas. He was then to return to Jefferson City, Missouri, where myself and family (having journeyed thus far by public conveyance) would meet him and proceed by team to our destination.

Having arranged all matters for our departure, on April 17th my wife, her mother, our children and myself, took passage on a steamer to Terre Haute, having shipped our household goods to St. Louis.
We stayed over night in Terre Haute, and from there went by rail to Champaign, Illinois, in the vicinity of which we spent several days visiting with friends. Leaving there, we went via Springfield to St. Louis, stopping for a day and a night; and from there by rail to Jefferson City, at that time the western terminus of the only railroad in the state. We arrived there on the 27th or 28th of April, as agreed upon with my brother, and found him waiting for us.

The information he brought was very encouraging, as to the country, but he did not like the appearance of such of the company as he had seen, nor of the arrangements made on the company’s location for the comfort of its members. He had met our secretary, Mr. Clubb, and found that he was a man of no experience of Western life and a new country, and was, in his opinion, unfitted to manage the affairs of the company.

We had paid, I think, two ten cent assessments on our stock, and another due, but I have forgotten what amount of stock we then had. We concluded to withhold further payments until our arrival on the ground and decided as to our future action, after an examination of the conditions as we might find them.

Anxious to hasten on our journey, we set out on the same afternoon on our way to our Kansas home. Hitherto we had traveled by steamer on the river and by railroad, with all the comforts attending such travel. The spring season was on, all nature was smiling, wood and landscape were all in beautiful green, and we were starting out with joyous feelings. On each side of our road were well improved farms, with fine houses and surroundings. The day was bright and warm, and we hoped to get out into the country a short distance and find a good camping place, and stop there for the night. However, just a little before night, there suddenly came up a hard thunder storm, the rain falling in torrents, but our wagon cover was good and we did not get wet. On account of the rain, and as that was our first night out, we began to look for a place where we could get accommodations in some house, and take some more favorable time for our first camping. While it was yet raining, a gentleman on horseback caught up with us and entered into conversation, and as we neared his residence, he very politely invited us to go into his house and await the slackening of the rain, which offer we very gladly accepted.

He had a beautiful home, nicely set about with shrubbery and flowering plants. He was a Southerner, with some slaves. After a time, as it was nearing night and the rain had nearly ceased, we
suggested a desire to remain overnight, stating the fact that we were
not very well equipped for camping out. To this suggestion he very
politely informed us that he could not accommodate us, but that he
thought the rain would soon slack up, and that at a house a ways
beyond we could get in for the night. So, the rain ceasing for a
time, we resumed our journey, only to meet with like receptions,
until darkness began to shut down upon us. We were becoming
quite discouraged when we came to a rather indifferent looking
house, to which we had been sent by the man to whom we had last
supplied for entertainment, and had been refused. We found the
family were “renters”, with scant room for their own large family,
but on learning of our situation, they at once gave us a hearty wel-
come with such accommodations as they could offer, saying that they
were not prepared to properly care for us, but that they could not
turn women and children out in such a night as that. We learned
that they were not native Missourians, and we made the best of the
opportunity thankfully, and in the morning, it having cleared off,
we went on our way.

For the future, we provided ourselves with provisions, and as a
rule, when night came, went into camp. We had no tent, the wagon
cover was very good and would shed rain quite well. We had plenty
of bedding, and the wagon offered a lodging place for the women
and children, Samuel and I sleeping under the wagon, on the ground.

For about a week the weather was very unsettled, raining more or
less nearly every day or night. I think on the second night we
camped just at the bottom of a hill, near a small creek and where
the ground was dry. During the night, there came a hard, flooding
rainstorm. Samuel and I were lying under the wagon, where the
water soon came rushing down the hill and driving us out of our
sleeping place, and for the balance of that night we were camped in
front of the wagon, inside, but with no chance for sleep.

The heavy rains soon made some of the streams impassable, and
some times we pushed through swollen streams that were unsafe, but
we met with no serious mishaps. When we had been about a week on
the road we reached the vicinity of the Osage river at Pappinville.
There was a bridge across the river at this point, but the river had
overflowed the bottom land on the other side for about seven miles,
and finding that it would be impossible for us to proceed further, we
were fortunate in getting into a house with a family by the name of
Dewese, who gave us a room with the privilege of using their stove
for cooking. Here we put in eight days while waiting for the fall
of the water. Mr. Dewese was a Northern man and had no slaves, he owned a very good farm.

We were now nearing the Kansas line. There were but few slaves in this part of Missouri, most of the people having come from the North. Hitherto we had passed through parts where there were numerous slaves, but we never sought conversation with them, and if at any time we had occasion to speak with them, we were careful as to what was said. In our conversation with the slave-holders, we were equally careful not to give offense, yet we never represented ourselves as holding other than Anti-Slavery sentiments. This course on our part seemed judicious, for the reason that just then excitement ran very high, and by the Missourian, persons passing through the state from the North to Kansas were not generally looked upon with favor. We, however, never had reason to fear any trouble from an expression of our political opinions.

While waiting here we bought three yokes of oxen, finding that they were cheaper here than in Kansas, and knowing that we would need them for breaking the prairie.

It was about the 15th of May when the water had fallen so that we could cross the river and again proceed on our way. Our delay had put us about a week or ten days behind the time we had set for our arrival at our destination. When we crossed the river on the bridge, we found ourselves on a “bottom” road, on much of which the water was still from one to two feet deep and all very bad, making our progress very slow. In places the pulling was very hard and through mud and water, so that we had to attach one yoke of oxen with the horses in order to make any headway. As it was, we found ourselves still in the mud and water when darkness began to shut us in. The road was through timber, very muddy and crooked, and we began to fear that we would not get out that night. Looking forward, we could see the lights from a house just outside the timber, maybe half a mile distant. Samuel took out one of the horses and rode out to see if we could secure houseroom for the night. Finding we could, and as we were all tired and worn out and hungry, he arranged with the woman to have us some supper prepared against our arrival. On his return, we took two horses, Samuel getting on one and I on the other, each of us taking on a woman behind and a child before, and thus we made our way out of that veritable “slough of despond”. We turned the oxen loose, and started them ahead of us, expecting them to go to the prairie and graze on the grass, and that we would find them there in the morn-
ing. We had a regular backwoods supper, which we greatly relished and enjoyed a good night’s sleep, feeling that our travel troubles were over.

On getting up in the morning, we found two yoke of oxen on the prairie, but one yoke was nowhere to be seen. After a time we thought that we had found their tracks leading back on the way we had come, and following on that distance of six or seven miles, through that miserable road of mud and water, we came to the bridge, and there they were—quietly lying down. Having an aversion to going upon a bridge, they had laid down on dry ground of the approach. By the time we got them back and the wagon out upon dry ground, it was late in the afternoon, and we concluded to remain another night where we were. Here the woman of the house was kind enough to entertain our women with all kinds of stories of snakes, skunks, and wild-cats; filling their minds with great fear as to their future in the wild country.

The next morning was clear and warm, the sun shone brightly, and we started again upon our journey with high hopes of reaching the Kansas border during that day; the road was still muddy, so that our progress was slow, but in the afternoon we passed out of Missouri and into Kansas and camped for the night upon a small creek two or three miles northeast of Fort Scott. Here we remained for one day, Samuel going into town to secure necessary supplies.

We were now within about fifty miles of our destination, which we hoped to reach within a couple of days. Our next day’s travel was over a beautiful country, with here and there a settler along the streams, but with but little in the way of a road other than an Indian trail. That night we camped on the head of Elm Creek, a little timber along the same but no settler in sight. The night was beautiful, a clear balmy Kansas spring night with light of a full moon. After supper my wife and I were walking a little distance from the camp admiring the beauties of the scenery, when not far away in the timber we heard the sharp cry of a panther or a catamount. The cry is startling and sounds much like a human cry. We sought the camp without any unnecessary delay, and some of the more timid were more or less nervous during the remainder of the night, but we heard nothing further of its cry.

The next day we followed the course of Elm Creek, there being no wagon road. About noon we came to a new town called “Cofachiqui”, located near the Neosho river and about two miles south of where Iola was afterwards located. The place was occupied at
that time mostly by a company of Colonel Buford's men from Georgia, who had a few slaves, and coming with the avowed purpose of assisting to make Kansas a slave state. The legislature had designated the place as the County seat of Allen County, and at that time the settlers of the village and the surrounding country were nearly all "pro-slavery" in sentiment.

We did not like the appearance of these people, but passed on down the Neosho river that evening, reaching a point just a little south of where Humboldt now is, and near a settler by the name of Henry Bennett, where we camped for the night. Mr. Bennett was the only settler near there, and we passed only two or three during the day outside of those in the village of Cofachiqui. Mr. Bennett had come from Tennessee and was a strong "Free-State" man.

We were now within five miles of our destination, and on the next day, May 20th, we reached the "promised land". We were not so badly disappointed as some others of our company, from the fact that Samuel had informed us as to what we might expect. As voicing the general feeling of the members of our company on the ground before our arrival, I give the following from Mrs. Colt's book "Went to Kansas". She and her family arrived in the settlement about a week before our coming. Speaking of their arrival, she says:

We leave our wagons and make our way to a large camp fire. It is surrounded by men and women cooking their supper, while others are busy close by grinding their hominy in hand mills. Look about and see the grounds all around the camp fire are covered with tents in which the families are staying. Not a house is to be seen. The ladies tell us they are sorry to see us come to this place, which plainly shows us that all is not right. Can anyone imagine our disappointment on learning from this and that member, that no mills have been built; that the directors, after receiving our money to build mills, have not fulfilled the trust reposed in them, and that in consequence, some families have already left the settlement? For a moment let me contrast the two pictures; the one we had made provision for and had reason to believe would be presented to us, with the one that meets our eyes. We expected that a sawmill would be in operation, a grist mill building, and a temporary boarding house erected to receive families as they come into the settlement until their own houses could be built. As it is, we find the families, some living in tents of cloth, some of cloth and green bark just peeled from the trees, and some wholly of green bark, stuck upon the damp ground without floors or fires.

Only two stoves in the company. These intelligent, but too confiding families have come from the North, East, South and West to make pleasant homes; and now are determined to turn right-about and start again on a journey, some know not where. Others have
invested their all in the company; now come lost means and blighted hopes.

Sufficient to say that we found conditions in no manner improved; one log house 16 x 16 feet, without floor, had been built, and was called the "Center House." It was located on the east side of the creek named "Vegetarian Creek." In this the Colt family was living; Mr. Clubb occupied an old Indian wigwam covered with tenting cloth south of the Center House. A family named Adams lived in a log and bark shack a little north; the Broadbents were living in a cloth shack southwest near the river; and a Mr. Herriman and family were in a similar shack near Mr. Clubb. He and wife, with one child, had come from St. Louis in the wagon with Samuel, and while on the road, Mrs. Herriman gave birth to a child, only detaining them two days.

Others of the company were in a large tent, pitched on the high ground northeast of the old ford of the river. We availed ourselves, for the time being, of the shelter of this tent, in connection with the wagon cover.

One great difficulty with most of the members of the company was their inability to adapt themselves to conditions unavoidable in frontier life. Their expectations were too great as to the comforts and conveniences to be found under such conditions. They were mostly from the far East; mechanics, professional men, and men from offices and stores in the cities, and altogether unable to adjust themselves to a frontier life.

After spending one day in conversation with Mr. Clubb, our Secretary, and other members of the company on the ground, we became convinced that the company would prove a failure. We looked over the surrounding country for a few days, and were well pleased with the general appearance of the land, and resolved to remain. We bought a claimant out, who had selected a location just outside "Vegetarian Settlement", on the northwest, for which we paid him about $100 in a yoke of oxen. The site for the building, in a beautiful grove on high ground, we thought the most beautiful of any in all the country. But I will again quote from Mrs. Colt's book, "Went to Kansas":

"The Stewart's have located their claim west from here; and are building their cabin on a high prairie swell, where nature had planted the walnut and oak just sparsely enough for both beauty and shade. Just back, and south of the cabin, is a ledge of shelving rocks where many berry bushes have taken root in the vegetable mould in their crevices, and are clinging for support to their craggy sides; grapevines clamber over rock, shrub and tree. There is a
natural cut through the ledge, and an Indian trail leading down to a quiet little lake, sleeping among the tall grass, whose waters abound in fish and clams. The whole view is beautifully picturesque.

This site, we named "Cottage Grove", which name has been retained ever since. The Township in which it is situated, also bears the same name.

In reaching this period of my life, it now looks to me, as my life work. Hitherto I had led a fairly comfortable, even course in life; had, for a number of years been engaged in a business congenial and fairly profitable; was happy in my family life, with wife and two children, all of whom had always lived in a city surrounded with friends and most of the comforts of life. Here, we were on the frontier of civilization—indeed, just over the borderland; far away from a post office, and over 100 miles from any town of importance. The nearest being Kansas City. There was neither church nor school, and surrounded by strange, and for the most part, an uncongenial company of uncongenial spirits, united in a common effort to secure freedom for Kansas and build up a strong colony of intelligent, temperate, liberal minded, right-living people, who would at once, by their combined efforts, secure schools, churches, mills, post office and all the slow process usual in the settling of a new country.

We found a majority of the company entirely unfitted to cooperate in securing the desired results; too many came without means, expecting to get employment from the company; those who had some means were so disposed to withdraw from the company, not willing to entrust their money with persons whom they found to be impracticable in methods of business. Of the officers, only the Secretary, Mr. Clubb, was on the ground. He had brought a small supply of groceries for the use of the company, such as sugar, rice, beans, crackers, dried and canned fruits. Some of the people thought that he had misappropriated the funds entrusted to him. I did not have that opinion of him, but I believed that he did not have the practical ability to manage the affairs of the company successfully. He was wholly unacquainted with Western life; he was an Englishman, about thirty years of age, with a wife but no children; had been connected with the New York Tribune, I think as a reporter, and knew nothing outside of office work.

We, therefore, concluded to put nothing more into the company, but as we had "cut loose" from our Eastern relations, and had "burned the bridges" behind us, we would remain in the country; having literally followed the advice of Horace Greeley, so often read,
and "Gone West", we would now try to "grow up with the country."

It was now late in May and our first thought was to break up some prairie and get some things planted; corn, pumpkins, squashes, and melons, as well as some garden, for which we had brought an abundant supply of seeds. Here was a new experience for me—the driving of oxen. However, Samuel was an expert at that, having worked with oxen when breaking prairie in Illinois. We broke out a few acres north and east of the building site, where we planted a variety of things, and in the meanwhile we went to work building the cabin of round rough logs, 16 x 18 feet square. This, we built up to the square only, at the time, and added a shed on one side 8 or 10 feet wide for a kitchen. For a roof, we bought the large tent that had been used by the members of the company, who by this time had either gone to their own claims, or had left the country, and this we drew over the top of our building, until such time as we could complete the roof.

On the sixth of June, we removed our effects to this place, as our future home. We experienced much trouble in getting the logs for this cabin from the timber. The river had overflowed all the bottom land, and now in the timber the mosquitoes fairly swarmed. The weather was becoming hot, and while at work in the timber we were compelled to wear our coats and tie handkerchiefs around our necks and over our faces, to as far as possible escape the torture of these pests.

A young man by the name of Buxton, who had come through with Samuel from St. Louis, had, since we selected our claim, been at work for us and made his home with us. Before moving into our cabin, we had sent him with the wagon and team of horses to Kansas City to get a lot of our goods which we had shipped to that point, and it was expected that it would take him about three weeks to make the trip.

I should have said, as to our house, that it had no floor, neither had we any table or bedsteads. We arranged our beds on one side of the house. About two feet from the ground we bored holes in one of the logs with a large augur, got poles about four feet long, sharpened one end and drove them into the holes, letting the other end rest upon a stake driven into the ground. Upon these we built a bottom, using poles, brush and grass, on which we placed our mattresses and bedding, thus forming a line of beds the entire length of the house. We used boxes in which we had brought our goods, for a table, and for chairs, we resorted to various devices. We, however, had two or three chairs for the use of the women. We had also brought with us a cook stove.
On the first night in our new home, there came up a flooding rain, with heavy thunder and lightning and a strong wind. For a time the storm threatened to dismantle our abode by carrying away our tent covering, and Samuel and I were compelled to get up and hold on to it to prevent its blowing away. As the sides of the house were quite open, the rain blew into it and quite thoroughly wet everything within. It was an unpleasant experience for our first night, but the morning came bright and clear, as is its wont in “Sunny Kansas” and we felt reconciled to our condition.

Of the company, probably eight or ten families and several young men remained, and were engaged in putting in some crops and improving the places which they still hoped to make homes for themselves, yet for the most part in a half-hearted way. It was very trying on the women of the party, most of whom had been accustomed to city life, or good society in an old settled community of the East.

Here, settlers were few, and outside of our own company were an uneducated, coarse class, mostly from Missouri and Arkansas, with more Indians than whites as visitors. Also, just at this time, in the North part of the Territory there was much trouble between the settlers from the North and the “Border Ruffians” from Missouri. We were not as yet troubled, but it was uncertain as to when the conflict might extend to us. The “Pro-Slavery” element was quite strong in our vicinity, and was probably in the majority of the County, at that time.

Our nearest post office was Fort Scott, a distance of fifty miles, and to us who had been accustomed to a daily mail, it was a great deprivation. We soon arranged to have some one go once a week for the mail. Samuel often went for it, taking three days to make the round trip. It was a great event each Saturday night, to get dozens of letters and papers by one mail, and we would sit up nearly all the night to read over letters from friends far away, also the papers, which were very full of accounts of the troubles in “Bleeding Kansas.”

We began to feel some concern about Mr. Buxton and our household goods, after he had been gone about three weeks, with no word from him. We could hear many reports of trouble about Lawrence, and of northern men being turned back on their way through Missouri to Kansas, and of raids from the vicinity of Kansas City and Westport. We began to fear that we would never see more of Buxton, team or goods, when one day we saw Buxton coming over the prairie afoot and alone. Indeed, he was as disconsolate a looking person as one could imagine. He was an Englishman of slender
build, with serious countenance ordinarily, but on that occasion his face was unusually elongated, and expression almost forlorn.

He had reached Westport, when a party of armed men stopped him on the principal street and informed him that they wanted the horses. They took off the harness, putting it into the wagon, which they pulled into an alley, and told Mr. Buxton that he could go his way. He could do nothing else than make his way on foot. It took him about ten or twelve days to return, much of the way without roads other than Indian trails, and the country being but sparsely settled, some times he had difficulty in getting either food or shelter.

We realized that we had indeed fallen upon troublous times. Our loss would be at least $500, and one not easily borne by us in our circumstances. In the hope that some part of our property might be recovered, Samuel took a pony we had brought with us from Indiana and started to Kansas City. On arriving there, he found the wagon where it had been left, with harness and boxes of goods intact. The box containing the bookcase had been opened, but finding books and not "Sharp's rifles", as they no doubt suspected, nothing was taken. The groceries and prairie plow were taken.

Samuel, with the friendly aid of a Mr. McGee, a pro-slavery man, secured one of the horses, it having been left in a stable on account of having become lame. Both horses had been used by the "Missouri Raiders" in making a foray into the territory, and the one was still out in the service. He got possession of the one horse, but not being able to get the other, he hitched up the pony with the horse recovered, and came home. His home-coming was a matter of much rejoicing for while our fine team was broken, we felt thankful that we had come out so well. We never saw more of the lost horse.

In the meantime, summer was upon us. The season was favorable to the growth of our garden stuff and other crops, and we began to have a few green things to eat. We found fine blackberries along the edge of the timber and especially an abundance of very fine ones along Big Creek, some eight miles south of our place. We had also bought a very good cow, and had plenty of milk and butter. The river, in the spring, had flooded the low lands, and now malaria began to affect many of our neighbors. Mosquitoes were also very troublesome; so persistent were they, that it became impossible to sleep in our cabin, which was too open to keep them out, and as a rule we were compelled to take out a couple of blankets and sleep on the ground on the open prairie, where the breeze would in a measure drive them away.
The dews were very heavy, and this may have contributed to the attacks of chills and fever. Whatever the cause, many of our people became ill, and our numbers were decreased by still further desertions.

By the middle of the summer we had put a roof on our cabin, chinked and daubed up the sides, and had secured some hewed-out boards which the company had made, to be used in the works of a contemplated mill. We used these to make a very substantial floor, and for a floor overhead, we had gone to an old deserted Indian village and got a lot of “punchoons” made by the squaws and used by them in the construction of their wigwams. These boards were about five feet long and from eighteen inches to four feet wide, dressed down to from one to two inches in thickness. It was a wonder how they could have dressed them out of large trees, in some cases as much as four feet in diameter.

In the building of a wigwam, they first took long poles, setting one end into the ground, in two parallel rows about 12 or 15 feet apart for a distance of 20 or 50 feet, bending the tops over so as to meet and forming an oval top, then they placed these boards or “punchoons” on end along the sides and ends, leaving an opening at one end for ingress and egress. From the tops of these boards, over the top of the wigwam, would be covered with a matting of skins, leaving an opening in the center for the smoke to pass out. A fire was built on the ground in the center of the wigwam, where the cooking was done, and around which the family sat by day and slept at night.

In a village, the wigwams were arranged in lines, fronting a street, often as many as thirty or forty. We found one of these deserted villages, several miles down the river, with wagon loads of these “punchoons” on the ground. It was a wonder to us why they should have left such quantities of boards, the making of which must have taken so much time and labor. The settlers hauled them away, using them in various ways about their places.

We noticed that when the Indians saw these boards they were talking together about our use of them, and we inferred that they were displeased that we had appropriated them as we had. Imagine our feelings when later we learned that a few years before this village had been scourged with an epidemic of small pox! This disease had swept away most of its inhabitants, and those who recovered had abandoned the place. Fortunately, any germs of the disease left behind had perished before we became possessed of the boards.

After we had got floors in our cabin, below and above, we were the
most comfortably fixed of all the families in the settlement, so that
when sickness became general among the members of our company,
our house became a sort of hospital for the sick, who could not as
well be cared for at their own homes. We sometimes had the house
quite full of such cases. We, having come from a malarious country,
did not so readily succumb to the disease here. My wife and her
mother seemed immune, as also did Samuel. The children and my-
self were, in the end, more or less victims of the disease. Mr. Buxton
had quite a siege of the chills and fever. We also had with us for
some time, Mr. Wheeler, a young man, Mrs. Barker, a widow from
New York City, and others who were sick. None of these persons
were very ill, and during the summer they all left the country.

In the meantime, we were cultivating our little crop, and making
such improvements as we could on our claim. Yet, we were not
greatly encouraged. The unsettled condition of affairs in the terri-
tory prevented immigration. There was much sickness among our
people, and quite general discouragement, so that many were leaving
while none were coming to take their places. Our number was de-
creasing, rather than increasing. We also learned that we might
have trouble as to our lands. It was unsurveyed, we knew, when
making the settlement, but now it was understood that we were
on Indian lands, from which we were liable to be removed at any
time.

Our Secretary, Mr. Clubb, took down with the chills and fever,
and as he saw the members of his company leaving one by one, and
those remaining were only awaiting an opportunity to leave, he also
became discouraged. So about the middle of August, Samuel started
with him and his wife to Kansas City. At Kansas City they found
the people were not permitted to pass into the Territory. Samuel
found that he could not return home without trouble, and he sought
the aid of his former friend, McGee, but the feeling was so intense
that he could not get permission to return to Kansas. After waiting
two or three days with no better success, he adopted a plan by which
he got out of the city.

He took down the bows and cover of the wagon, bought a broad
brimmed straw hat, and having oxen hitched to his wagon, he as-
sumed the role of a countyman, started out into Missouri, and thus
got out of the City into the country. After going a few miles, he
turned in a southern course through the state until near Fort Scott,
when he succeeded in crossing the line into Kansas. He, however,
had much trouble in passing through Missouri, having been stopped
on two or three occasions.
In the early part of September the family of Colt's left the settlement, W. H. Colt, wife and two children, one of our best families. They were from New York and were well educated and highly refined. Mr. Colt and both children had been, for several weeks, sick with the chills and fever. Mr. Colt's father, mother and sister remained. The family started in a wagon for some railroad point in Missouri, with a view of taking passage for their former home, but on reaching Boonville, Mr. Colt became too ill to travel further; and here both he and the boy died. The widow and daughter proceeding on their way until friends were reached in Michigan.

Thus, one after another of our company left us, and very few of those remaining had any intention of making permanent homes in Kansas. They waited only for opportunities to get away. Two brothers, named Broadbent, from Tennessee, stalwart Scotchmen in full vigor of manhood, were living alone in a tent about a mile east of our place, and were for some time ailing, but I had no thought that they were dangerously sick; when through a neighbor I learned that one of them was dead and the other very low. Both were dead within two days.

While many had been sick with chills and fever, no one of our company had, hitherto, died. They had died without medical attention, and with but scant help from anyone. A nearby neighbor had called on them daily, and had given them fresh water and such help as seemed called for, but as for a doctor, there was none within fifty miles.

Now—as to their burial! There was no undertaker and no lumber with which to make a coffin, nearer than Fort Scott, fifty miles away—What should we do? We selected as fair boards of the Indian “puncheons”, mentioned before, as we could and formed very rude boxes from them into which we placed the bodies, burying them on a slope of the prairie a little distance from the tent in which they had died. Samuel and I, with another neighbor, dug the graves just over a swell of the prairie and out of sight of our cabin, so that the women there might not see, and thus learn that death had come so near to us.

Some little time after, we were called upon to perform a like service for a ... an elderly man named Curtis [i.e., Colt], who had come from Connecticut and refused to leave with his son a few weeks before. Of this event Mrs. Colt, in her book “Went to Kansas”, says:

Kind neighbors came in and dressed the cold form of the departed for the grave. They nailed together some of the rough “puncheons” which they had
taken from the wigwam ruins, for a coffin, wrapped him in winding sheet and Indian blanket and laid him therein; then bore him away without prayer, requiem or knell, and laid him in his narrow home beneath the rich soil of the prairie, on whose bosom were still blossoming many a richly tinted flower.

Thus, four of our members were dead, and nearly all the living ones had left us. One of these four in question was old Mr. Colt, to whom the foregoing excerpt refers. The situation was anything but encouraging. The unsettled condition generally over the Territory was not improving; large bodies of Pro-slavery men from Missouri and Arkansas were invading the Territory; “Free-State” parties from the East were stopped in Missouri at different points and turned back. Many “Free-State” settlers in our part of the Territory were becoming discouraged and leaving, while settlers from the South, not being so liable to malarial troubles and inured to the privations and hardships of frontier life, were remaining.

As to our success in raising crops, we could not, in the nature of things, expect much; the land all being new and nothing planted before June. We raised some garden stuff, plenty of pumpkins, squashes and melons, but very little corn. I had learned to handle oxen, so that I could yoke up and drive them fairly well.

While we cultivated friendship with the Indians and were not fearful of any violence on their part, we were constantly subject to their thieving propensities. They would steal green corn, potatoes or melons under our very eyes, and I never thought of leaving the family alone, either by day or by night. We, however, gained the friendship of some of the leading members of the Tribe, which I think, stood in good stead on occasion. We often had them with us at dinner or other meals, and many times some of them would remain with us over night, in which case, if the night was cold, they would lie down on the floor in front of the fire, sometimes as many as half a dozen at a time.

As the winter approached, we built a stone fire place and chimney, and as I was a stonemason, we made us a neatly cut stone fire place with dressed stone chimney throughout. Our cabin was a very rough log building, but when finished up for the winter it was very comfortable, and was superior to any other house in that country at the time. The cold winter seemed to have destroyed the fever germs; we all regained a good degree of health, and thus were in better spirits.

During the winter we got out much fencing material. I was no hand to either chop the timber or to make rails, but I could drive the
oxen and haul the rails out of the timber. We hired two men from the north part of the county to come and make several thousand rails and posts. These were all hauled onto our claim, where we intended making fences in the spring; all in readiness for making extensive improvements in the way of farming more land.

In the Territory, 1857 opened up under more favorable conditions for the “Free State” men of the Territory. The laws passed by the Legislature of 1855, commonly called the “bogus laws” had been wholly ignored by the Free-State men of the territory. The Topeka Constitution had been adopted by the Free-State voters, and under it a Legislature had been elected. Our part of the Territory had enjoyed quiet during the winter; we had some Free-State families come into the neighborhood in the spring, among them my uncle, F. W. Stewart and family; also the family of Dr. I. N. Phillips from Illinois, and a number of German families.

However, the Topeka Constitution and the Legislature under it, were not recognized by the General government, and on its meeting in Topeka in January, the presiding officers of both houses were arrested with several of the members and taken to Tecumseh, before Judge Cato, and bound over to the U. S. Court. The Legislature, being without a quorum, took a recess till June. The second session of the Territorial Legislature met in Lecompton in January, John W. Geary being the Governor. He and the legislature did not agree, and later he resigned.

The Free-State men had, hitherto, refrained from voting, but during the summer a feeling grew that by taking part in the elections they could elect a “Free-State” Legislature, and get control of the Territorial government. Later, in September, when Governor Walker issued an address assuring the people that the October election should be fairly conducted, the “Free-State” men were disposed to take him at his word. A Free-State convention was held at Grasshopper Falls, of which my brother was a member, and they resolved to take part in the fall elections. As a result of that election, Samuel became a member of the House of Representatives. He was also elected a member of the Legislature under the Topeka Constitution.

Early that spring a post office was established at Cofachiqui, but no mail service was put on, and the settlers arranged with someone to carry the mail from Fort Scott weekly, as had been done before.

A son was born on April 8th, we named him Fred. The following letter written to our afflicted friend, Mrs. Colt, will fairly express my feelings at this time:
Dear Mrs. Colt:

Yours of March 30 was but recently received. We had thought and spoken of you very often, and in every mail had hoped to hear from you, but did not, until a short time before receiving your letter, hear of your great bereavement. Mr. Voorhees then wrote us of it.

Be assured, Mrs. Colt, you have our tenderest sympathies in this, your great affliction. Bitter indeed, has been your cup. What a destruction of family in one short year! How soon our fondest hopes may all be crushed—crushed!

To us, the past year has been one of many hardships and troubles, but our lives have been spared; and since about the time you left, we have enjoyed good health. We have got things fixed up around, so that we now live quite comfortably.

Samuel, our brother, who went to take Clubb to Kansas City, got home the evening after you left, in good health. He had some narrow escapes, and to get home, was obliged to go round through Missouri, 100 miles out of his way.

Mr. Adams went, shortly after you left, to Maysville, Arkansas. We had a letter from them in the winter, their health had improved. The Broadbents both died, shortly after old Mr. Colt.

Mr. Hobbs went back to Ohio. Mrs. Barker remained with us until late in the fall, then went to Kansas City with the intention of going home. Buxton is still in the neighborhood. Blackburn went to Tennessee, home to his family.

Immigration is coming in very fast, and we are getting many new neighbors. There is a town laid off up the river five miles, and a steam mill is to be put up there this summer. Altogether, the prospects for us in the future are encouraging.

Mrs. Stewart has a son, born April 8th. She is very well. The past winter has been quite mild; Spring is backward. We would be gratified to have you write soon again. Receive our best wishes for your future.

Respectfully,

WATSON AND ELIZABETH STEWART.

The town of Humboldt was laid out that spring by a company from Lawrence, composed largely of Germans. The first house built was one of logs for J. A. Coffey, by my uncle, F. W. Stewart. It was built on contract for $25.00. Early in the summer a steam sawmill was put up by Orin Thurston. It was considered a great acquisition, as there was no other mill within 50 miles. We felt greatly encouraged to see a town starting up within five miles of us, where we could purchase some of the necessaries and could get lumber.

We extended our cultivated land by breaking out and fencing in quite a large field east of our house, putting it into sod corn, melons and pumpkins. Others of our relatives came out from Illinois during that summer, Uncle Daniel Stewart and family, and cousins David Stewart with family and his brother John. These accessions to our immediate neighborhood were very gratifying.
At the fall election the Free-State party elected a large majority of the members of both branches of the Territorial Legislature, and in our own county the Free-State party obtained complete control. I think it was at the election in the spring of 1858 that I was elected one of the Justices of the Peace for Allen County, and it so happened that I was the only one to qualify. The result was that all business of that kind in the county came before me, and I was kept quite busy, some rather important cases coming before me.

We had cherished the thought of some time building us a residence with concrete walls, and to test the practicability of the matter, we built a small house in this way, about ten by sixteen feet, one story, with cellar. We built a large log-heap in the timber, on which we piled limestone and then fired the logs, which in burning reduces the stone to lime and thus we secured the lime for the walls. The lime, we mixed with sand and rough stone, and this mixture we put into boxes formed by boards about a foot wide, set apart the width of the thickness of the wall, and we had a very useful building, which we used for various purposes; one of which was as an office for holding my court. Later, we laid in a small stock of such goods as were desired by the Indians, and opened up quite a profitable trade with them.

They had mostly buffalo robes and ponies for trade. We could get the robes for about $4.00 each, and ponies at from $10.00 to $20.00 each. We gave them flour, sugar, coffee and tobacco, also goods for the squaw’s dresses and blankets.

As there was considerable immigration to our part of the Territory, this year, there was much trouble as to claims. The settlers had formed a sort of Protective League, in which was recognized the right of each settler to hold a claim, independent of the one on which he resided. All of which had no support under the U. S. laws, but the settlers set up a “Higher law”, and for a time enforced it. Speculation in claims became quite a business. Persons leaving the country would sell their claims for such prices as they could get, and the purchaser would hold and sell to the newcomer for, sometimes two or three times the amount paid.

This practice was finally broken up, when one A. W. J. Brown, living in the north part of the county sold one such claim to a Mr. Rhodes for about $2,000, receiving, I think, $600 in cash and taking a note for the balance. This note, when due, Rhodes refused to pay, and suit was brought in the U. S. Court for its collection, where the action, of course, failed.
As to the claim of a prairie and timber tract of 320 acres, it having no warrant in law, as settlers came in and began to contest such claims, they were abandoned, each settler being restricted to 160 acres.

While in our part of the Territory we were enjoying peace and quiet, there was much political agitation over the rest of the Territory. The LeCompton Constitution had been formed without being submitted to the people for adoption or rejection. The Territorial Legislature had ordered an election for a vote on the Constitution, at which time it was almost unanimously rejected, the Pro-Slavery party generally not voting. This vote was on January 4th. The same month, the Legislature under the Topeka Constitution, met but did little business. In the meantime a Constitutional Convention, of which my brother was a delegate, met in March at Maneola [Minneola] and adjourned to Leavenworth, where a Constitution was formed, known as the “Leavenworth Constitution.”

There was much disturbance along the Kansas border in Lynn and Bourbon counties. At one point in Lynn County a band of men from Missouri crossed the line and arrested nine “Free-State” men, and taking them near the Missouri line stood them in line and fired on them. Every one fell, all shot to death or wounded. One of the wounded men was afterwards shot dead; six were killed and the other three feigned death and thus escaped.2 One, Asa Hairgrove, I became acquainted with in Montgomery County many years afterwards.

These disturbances did not extend to our section of the Territory, in fact the settlers in Allen County, of all parties agreed in Convention, that they would resist any invasion of our County by any armed force of whatever party. In the fall of this year, the post office was established at Humboldt, and a weekly service from Lawrence was put on. Albert Irwin was the first Postmaster; and thus we had a post office within five miles and regular mail once a week. In the meantime Humboldt had become quite a village. W. C. O’Brien had put up a steam saw and grist mill.

The year of 1858 was not noted in our part of the Territory for any unusual occurrence. The County received a large acquisition of northern settlers, and many of the Pro-Slavery settlers sold their claims and left the country, so that the County had a good majority of Free-State men, and the government of the County was in their

2. This was the Marais des Cygnes massacre of May 19, 1858. Five men were killed, five were wounded and one escaped by feigning death.
hands. As to the Territory, there was no longer any doubt as to the Free-State element controlling it, and in the end establishing a state government under a constitution excluding slavery.

There was still more or less trouble along the eastern border in Lynn and Bourbon Counties. Gangs from Missouri made occasional raids over the line, attempting to drive out Free-State settlers, killing them and burning their houses. The settlers on this side, under such men as John Brown and James Montgomery, organized for their own protection, and no doubt excesses were committed on both sides.

During the season we had broken out a small tract in the bottom west of the lake, in addition to the land cultivated east of the house on the high prairie. Our thought, on first settling, was that the bottom land would not be desirable for cultivation, on account of its liability to overflow, but we learned from the Indians and others, that the river did not flood these lands only once in several years. We, therefore, changed our claim lines so as to include the bottom land lying west and south of the lake, and we soon learned from the better crops yielded by these bottom lands, that we had chosen wisely.

We had secured a few fruit trees, and set them out on the slope north of the house, but were anxious for more of an orchard. I, therefore, took a lot of the buffalo robes that we had obtained from the Indians, and went over into southwest Missouri, to the Counties of Cedar and Polk, and traded them for apple trees, winter apples and some other articles of use to us. In the spring of 1859 we set out quite an orchard.

For us, the year 1859 was a fairly prosperous one as to crops, and the general condition of the country was encouraging. In May a convention was held at Osawatomie by the Free-State party, which was addressed by Horace Greeley. The convention adopted a platform, and organized as the Republican Party. Hitherto all those persons who favored the admission of Kansas as a “Free-State”, had united and acted together under the name of the “Free-State” party.

In June delegates were elected to form another Constitution. These delegates met in Wyandotte, July 5th, and formed the Constitution which on October 4th was adopted by a large majority of the voters, and under this Constitution the State was finally admitted.

Early in this year, our neighborhood was very much annoyed by a system of thievery that had grown up among quite a number of
settlers in our immediate neighborhood. The Indians would occasionally steal horses from the settlers, and by way of reprisal, a number of rather rough characters, mainly from Missouri, united in the business of running off Indian ponies to Missouri and selling them or trading them for horses or cattle, which they would bring back to the settlement.

The business had been carried on for several months, and the Indians were becoming very restless. There would be quite a herd of ponies missing, and at the same time some of the parties would also be gone, who after a week or two, would return with the proceeds of their trip. Soon these persons became well known to both Indians and whites as being engaged in this wholesale thievery. The Indians would miss a lot of ponies and would go from house to house, and finding that certain of these men were gone, would come to us with their complaints, seeming to think that we were leading men and could, in some manner, help them to recover their ponies or prevent our neighbors from stealing them. A few of the white settlers who were opposed to this business finally arranged with a few friendly Indians to go on a certain night and capture some of the most notorious characters, and give them a good scare,—indeed, such a scare as would compel them to leave the country.

In accordance with this plan, on a certain night the Indians went from house to house, gathering in four or five of these men. There were George Kelly, Ed Marble, two Galloway brothers, and I think, one other person. These, they carried off a distance of seven or eight miles to Godfrey’s trading post on Big Creek, where were two or three Indian chiefs and a number of other Indians. A council was held, after which ropes were put around the men’s necks and they were made to understand that they were to be hung. Of course they were informed as to the reason for such punishment. They promised to quit the business, and begged for their lives, but the Indians gave them no hope, however, on their earnest solicitation, the matter was held in abeyance until Dr. Phillips and my brother could be sent for.

On their arrival, and after a full consultation between the Doctor, Samuel and the Indians, it was agreed to spare their lives upon the following conditions, viz: The names of all persons connected with them in the “business” should be divulged, while each of the parties under arrest should submit to the shaving of one side of his head; that, at once upon being released, they should give notice to each of the parties implicated with them to leave the country within ten days; and that they would do the same, promising never to return,
under penalty of certain death if found in the country after ten days.

These conditions being accepted by them, the parties were set free, after the shaving of the one side of their heads. I was not personally concerned in these proceedings, but was in very hearty sympathy, and on the following day it did me good to see some of these men going about the neighborhood with shaved heads, making arrangements for a final leave of the country; which they were careful to do within the agreed time. The clearing out of these thieves was felt to be a great boon to the community in general, and the effect on the Indians was very beneficial in the establishing of a kindly feeling towards the whites remaining.

In the early autumn, at Fort Scott, a republican convention for the twelfth Council District honored me with the nomination as Councilman in the Territorial Legislature. The District was composed of the counties of Bourbon, Allen, McGee, Dorn, Woodson and Wilson. The Council was the upper house of the Legislature, and consisted of thirteen members. I was not at the convention and the nomination was wholly without solicitation on my part. After a time I learned that the Democratic party had placed in nomination one, N. S. Goss of Neosho Falls, Woodson County, a gentleman who had built a water-mill at that place, and of whom I had heard but with whom I was not personally acquainted. I felt quite certain of my election, as I understood the District was safely Republican, although in and about Fort Scott the Democratic element was dominant. Some two weeks before the election, while engaged in the bottom field across the lake in digging potatoes, (of which we had a very fine crop), Mr. Goss called upon me. He said that he had come down to Humboldt and learning where I lived had thought it well to call upon me and become acquainted. It was nearly noon and I invited him to go to the house and have dinner, which invitation he accepted.

I took him to the cabin, introduced him to my wife, and we were soon enjoying a good dinner together. I found him to be a very pleasant gentleman. He suggested that we make a canvass of the District together, however, I told him that I had not sought the nomination, that I was not a political speaker and had not intended to leave my home to make a canvass, but would rely upon my friends to say, by their votes, whether or not they wanted me to represent them. He finally concluded to adopt my policy, and returned home expressing his belief that I would be elected, and the hope that his interests would be well guarded by me in certain local Legislation.
From that meeting on, for many years in my intercourse with Mr. Goss, I found him a gentleman in the fullest sense of the word. The entire vote in the District was 1,192, of which I received 642, thereby winning the election by 92 votes.

Lincoln visited Kansas in December, making speeches in Leavenworth and Atchison.

My son, Joseph, was born October 30th. He came into the world without the aid of either doctor or midwife. We had expected to have Dr. Phillips, living within two miles of us, but it chanced that he was away from home. I went about a mile to get my Aunt Catherine Stewart, leaving my wife alone with her mother, and on my return found that the boy had been born. We named him for my father. All turned out well for both mother and child.

The Territorial Legislature met January 2, 1860. Some days earlier I had a chance to ride to Lawrence with Mr. Jordan Neal, who resided near that place, and who, with his wife, was visiting his cousin, Moses Neal in Humboldt. There was a stage line, but I gladly accepted the chance to go with Mr. Neal, wife and two children in his carriage. I arrived in Lawrence January 21st, where the members of the Legislature were in waiting, with a view of driving up to Lecompton the next morning. Lecompton, being the place designated for the meeting of the legislature, but because the place had been named as the Capital by the Pro-Slavery party, and was not very well provided for the accommodation of members, and the meeting of the Legislature, the former Legislature had adjourned to and held its session in Lawrence. I found the people of Lawrence making every possible effort to secure similar action on our part.

The City offered a hall for the meetings free of charge, and the hotels made very favorable rates to the members. The Republican members were generally in favor of meeting at Lecompton the next day, and immediately adjourning to Lawrence.

I was stopping at the Eldridge House, the principal hotel, a very fine one for these times. It was, in fact, a house built to replace the "Free-State Hotel" which had been destroyed during the Missouri Invasion of 1856. During the evening I met the notorious James H. Lane, a man of whom much had been said for and against, a man who had come to Kansas a Democrat, but who, on seeing the methods adopted by the Democratic party to fasten slavery upon the Territory, had espoused the "Free-State" cause and was now a leader of the radical wing of the Republican party.

Unfortunately, in a claim difficulty, he had shot the contestant,
Gaius Jenkins, and had lost the respect of many of the party’s friends; so much so, that the party had become divided into Lane and anti-Lane factions, and the feeling was becoming very bitter. Whatever the merits in the case may have been, I at the time, had made up my mind that I would act with the anti-Lane party. However, I met the man; he found that I was from Indiana, and offered me a seat in his buggy on the next morning. With him I rode to Lecompton, much of my prejudice having worn away in the meantime. I found that Lane had friends enough in the Legislature to organize it in his interest. The body was composed of thirteen members of the Council, and thirty-nine members of the House. We organized the Council by the election of W. W. Updegraff as President, and John J. Ingalls as Secretary. There were eight members returned as Republicans and five as Democrats. The seat of one Democrat was contested and the Republican member seated, thus giving nine Republicans and four Democrats.

On the second day of the session, we passed a joint resolution adjourning to meet in Lawrence on the seventh. Samuel Medary was Governor, and he promptly vetoed the resolution, which was as promptly passed over his veto, and hied away to Lawrence. The citizens of Lawrence furnished transportation for the members and Legislative supplies, records, etc. free of charge; halls for the meetings without cost, also very low rates for the members at the hotels. At that time there was no railroad, and everything had to be transported by wagon. I was furnished a nice room in connection with two other members, warmed and lighted, with board, at three dollars per week, at the Eldridge House, the best one in the place.

We were much better located, as to our own comfort and convenience in Lawrence than we could have been at Lecompton, but the action of the Legislature in the removal was one of the sentiment rather than of necessity. Lecompton had been designated as the Capital of the Territory by the general government at the behest of the Slavery interests, and the Free-State people had built up Lawrence. The Government had spent $50,000 towards the erection of a Capitol building, which had been spent in laying the foundation and beginning the walls of the building which the Free-State party had determined should never be utilized for the purposes intended.

We met in Lawrence as per adjournment, but the Governor refused to recognize us, remaining himself at Lecompton. We continued our sessions until the 18th, when we adjourned. It was, however, understood that the Governor would immediately call us
together again in extra session at Lecompton, this he did. We met on the 19th, and at once adjourned to meet in Lawrence on the 21st. The Governor went with us, and the work of the session began.

We did not enact many laws of general interest; the Wyandotte Constitution had been voted on and adopted at the fall election, and State officers and members of the Legislature were elected. We were only awaiting the action of Congress to become a sovereign State.

A large number of local bills were passed, such as the incorporation of town companies, etc. At that time, also there was a great demand for Legislative action in the dissolving of the marriage relation and many divorces were granted, which action, I with a few other members, in every case opposed. We found that Slavery existed under the laws of the Territory and passed a bill abolishing it. Every Republican in both Houses voted for it, and every Democrat voted against it. The Governor vetoed the bill, and we passed it over the veto. Mr. Beebe, a Democrat of the Council, in a minority report from the Committee, said: "We have found that there is now invested in this Territory, between one-fourth and one-half million dollars worth of property in slaves, and believing that the immediate prohibition of an existing right of property in any given article is beyond either the Legislative power of the States or Territories, as contravening the letter and the spirit of Articles Four and Five of the Amendments to the Federal Constitution; recommend to your honorable body the indefinite postponement of the said bill."

The Democratic Territorial Convention met at Atchison in March, and also denounced the action of the Legislature in passing this bill for the abolishing of slavery. We adjourned on the 27th of February.

My recollections of this winter, spent as a Legislator, are very pleasant. Our body of only thirteen members seemed like an orderly debating club; some of the members were quite able in debate. Four were Democrats and nine Republicans. The minority had a decided advantage as to ability in debate. W. G. Mathias of Leavenworth was a Democrat and a lawyer, he had been a member of the first Territorial Legislature of 1855, commonly known as the "bogus Legislature." George M. Beebe was a Democrat from Doniphan, also a lawyer of good speaking ability. He was afterwards appointed Territorial Secretary, and during the absence of the Governor for a short time, he was the acting Governor. He was so acting at the time of the admission of Kansas as a State. He re-
moved to New York and was a member of Congress there for one term at least.

On the Republican side, our best debaters were W. W. Updegraff and P. P. Elder. Mr. Elder, in 1861, was appointed Osage Indian Agent; in 1870 he was elected Lieutenant Governor, and later he went off with the Populist movement and was, for several years, prominent in their Councils. Our Secretary, John J. Ingalls, was a bright young lawyer of Sumner, Atchison County. He was a young man of fine ability, and was a member of the State Senate in 1862, filled many places of trust in after years, and was in the U. S. Senate for eighteen years, succeeding S. C. Pomeroy in 1873. In the U. S. Senate he was recognized as one of its most brilliant members in debate.

The year 1860 was noted for the great drouth in Kansas. There was a very general failure of crops over the entire Territory, while in the southern part the failure was complete. The previous fall and winter were very dry and during the spring and summer but very little rain fell. The summer was very hot and vegetation and crops planted, having moisture enough to bring them through the ground, withered and died. Our lake dried up, and on our farm we did not raise a bushel of corn and but little garden stuff. We had got a start in stock, but what hogs we had we sold to a party who drove them to Missouri where feed could be had, we got $1.25 per 100 pounds. For our cattle, we depended upon the timber grass for their winter feed.

Many of the settlers, having friends in the East, received aid from them; others left the country; many were unable to leave, and without aid from abroad, must suffer. Our part of the Territory, being new laid, had but little left over from last year's crop upon which to subsist, consequently all of our supplies must be hauled in from Kansas City or Southwest Missouri. My brother, in the fall, in behalf of the settlers of Allen County, made a trip to Illinois, Indiana and Ohio, where he was acquainted, soliciting and receiving a very liberal donation for our aid. Thadeus Hyatt of New York, with W. F. M. Arny and S. C. Pomeroy of Kansas, visited the County to ascertain the condition of the people, and at a meeting at Humboldt they informed the settlers that provisions, clothing, etc., would be sent from the East to be distributed to those in need, through Mr. Pomeroy at Atchison, and I was designated as an agent for Cottage Grove township, to receive and distribute such aid. In furtherance of that plan, I went to Atchison with a number of set-
tlers with teams to procure such aid as our township was entitled to receive. I think we had about twenty teams, and we made the trip in December, taking, I think, seventeen days to do it. We had rather cold disagreeable weather, some snow, and we camped out every night. On reaching Atchison we found the demand was very great, while the supply was but scant. We, however, think its entire value would not have been equal to a dollar a day for each person and team in the company. Still, it helped us out and we were very glad to get it indeed, but for the help sent us from the East there would have been much suffering in Kansas.

Earlier in the fall I had made two trips to Missouri and Arkansas, bringing out supplies of corn meal, flour and apples, mostly the proceeds of the Buffalo robes which we had received in our trade with the Indians; and in this way we were able to get through that winter with a minimum of discomfort.