The Letters of Joseph H. Trego, 1857-1864,  
Linn County Pioneer  
Edited by Edgar Langsdorf  
Part Three, 1863, 1864—Concluded  

Introduction

After recovering his health, Joseph H. Trego was employed as a civilian in the quartermaster's department for the remainder of the war. Much of the time he was stationed at Little Rock, Ark., and the following group of letters were exchanged by himself and Mrs. Trego in 1863 and 1864.

When the war ended Trego went back to Mound City, where he became an examiner and abstractor of land titles. Later he expanded this into a general real estate business, to which he eventually added a loan and collection agency. He served briefly as clerk of the school board in 1865-1866, as county treasurer from April to November, 1866, and as probate judge from October, 1878, to January, 1879. His practice of medicine was confined to serving his circle of friends.

The Tregos had nine children, all girls: Kate, Eleanor, Helen, Rebecca, Sophia, Louise, Sara, Octavia and Martha. Dr. and Mrs. Trego celebrated their golden wedding anniversary on August 22, 1900. Dr. Trego died on July 14, 1905, and Mrs. Trego on September 28, 1912.

The Letters of 1863, 1864

Maysville Ark. Nov 7th 1863

My Dear Wife

A messenger is about to start to Fort Scott and I will try to pen a few lines to let you know that we have got along all safe so far though, as you see by the date, very slowly. We have a lot of ox teams along which proves to be very much of a hindrance.26 I left Fort Scott the day after the snow storm which was a very pleasant day as has been every day since. Have had rain two nights but it

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26. Trego probably was traveling with a large supply train which was moving from Fort Scott to Fort Smith, Ark., under command of Gen. James G. Blunt. The train consisted of about 600 wagons and when in motion was five miles long. It left Fort Scott October 28 and reached Fort Smith November 13, 1863.—Leavenworth Daily Conservator, November 5, 10, 17, 18, 25, 29, 1863.

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was of no kind of inconvenience. For three days now it has been remarkably warm and pleasant. All the houses along our route so far are deserted except one, and in Missouri we saw the ruins of many that had been burned. Apples on the trees all spoilt by frost until within the last three days we find plenty that are not damaged. It seems that there has been no freezing here yet.

You are no doubt aware that Capt Haskell 27 has been ordered to report at St. Louis when relieved at Fort Smith. It will require about two months to turn over to his successor the vast amount of property now in his charge and to get his business properly adjusted before leaving for St. Louis. Don't know what changes may take place before that time but it is quite possible that I may return home about New Year. We have been receiving a mail from Fort Scott every few days and I hope to hear from you before many more days pass by. Q. Master [Capt. Chester] Thomas came up from the army, got in this morning. Was going on to Fort Scott, but meeting us I understand it is his intention to return with us. There is no probability that we shall so much as have a little brush before we get to Fort Smith.

Nothing of particular interest has occurred on our march and as the country is desolated there has been nothing of much interest to see on the route except its desolated appearance merely. We have a very good cook, a full supply of provisions, laid in at Ft Scott, and are living well enough. Altogether I am very well satisfied with everything but having to be away from wife and children. We have with us, that is, eating and lodging in our tent, a Mr. Atkinson, aged about fifty, who was formerly a slaveholding merchant in Fort Smith and was driven out two years and a half ago. He is now returning to his family who are yet at Fort Smith. His son whom he left in charge of his affairs has since gone into the confederate army.

I shall not have time to write you any more this time but may again before we reach our destination. Hoping you will not find the nights too very cold, and with ever so much love I must say good night

from your Husband

27. John C. Haskell of Lawrence, under whom Trego served while employed in the quartermaster's department, began his military service July 24, 1861, as first lieutenant and quartermaster of the Third Kansas regiment. He was transferred to the Tenth Kansas infantry on the date of consolidation, and on June 11, 1862, was promoted to captain and assistant quartermaster. U. S. Volunteers. He was mustered out as brevet major November 22, 1865.—Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kansas, 1861-63 (hereafter cited Thirteenth Biennial Report), p. 125; Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Kansas, 1861-63 (hereafter cited Adjutant General's Report), pp. 7, 347.
My Dear little Wife

You will see by this that we have arrived at the place of our destination, and all right. The time consumed in making the trip put the office business considerably behind hand, so much that we have been very closely confined to the office ever since. We have now been here ten days. Yesterday being Sunday I took a little stroll over the city. The river at this point runs nearly north and the streets, like the Garrison run n. e & s. w. and n. w & s. e.

The principal business street is composed of five, large brick store houses, a few of them very large. The other streets are largely composed of old tumble down frame shops, sheds, and some log cabins, with an occasional rich establishment displaying a great waste of material and a greater lack of good taste in its arrangements, pure southern.

In the northeastern suburbs, along the river bank, is extensively occupied with private residences. They are nearly all white frames, generally one story, covering over a good deal of ground, and with porticos on two or three sides. The negro quarters are neat and white, and all surrounded with a fence of paling or plank and white washed. There is an abundant growth of young oak trees about 30 or 40 feet in height wherever the occupants choose to let them grow. The streets in this locality are wide, sidewalks are raised, the ground is sufficiently sand to keep it from being muddy when wet, and, altogether it is a very pleasant and beautiful spot. I am unable to see what so many families depended upon for such high living as they seem to have indulged in. The officers quarters in the garrison are not very extensive, only eight suits of rooms, but they are very commodious, a long way ahead of those at Forts Scott and Leavenworth.

The river is very low, not more than about two feet deep anywhere. I was very much surprised to find the water perfectly clear, as I had understood always that the Arkansas was muddy, like the Missouri. As Capt. Haskell was notified on his way down that he would be relieved of duty at this post, would not take up quarters, but went into camp and kept everything ready for picking up and marching on short notice, but Genl McNeil desires to keep him here and lately assigned him to duty as Depot Q. Master.

We expect to pull up stakes and move into quarters as soon as the Capt. can get a suit of rooms put in order. They were not very well cared for by the rebels and need overhauling. I shall be very glad
when we make the change because living in a tent with a stove in it does not agree with me at all. We cant regulate the heat, and it gets so full of tobacco smoke every evening as to affect my eyes seriously. I am very well suited with my place and in my state of health could do nothing better for me, taking it all around. Among the curiosities that I have met with is the 'Mistletoe' which can be seen every where through the timber now the leaves are off the trees, growing on oaks and elms chiefly.

About our march, we did not have one hour of disagreeable weather while we were on the move. We had two nights of rain, and one afternoon of showyery weather while we happened to be laying over a day waiting for the bull-train. Our scouts captured about a dozen bushwhacker[s] on the way down. Genl McNeil is keeping them here to have them ready to hang to telegraph poles when ever the wires may be cut, agreeably to his orders lately issued and which you have probably seen in the papers. Genl Blunt is here and likely to remain until he shall be reinstated in his command. I hear from those who have a right to know, that McNeil himself wishes Blunt reinstated. They are on very friendly terms and have had several big drinks at which McNeil got gloriously drunk. Haskell who never drinks nor is present at any of their carousals, and for which many of the drinking fraternity dislike him, says that Blunt never gets drunk, and has always been ready for duty, which he attends to very promptly though he does certainly imbibe largely. Capt Haskell shows himself a high toned gentleman who disspises vulgarilty, and also very practical and precise in his business requirements, which makes him unpopular with many of the officers here who I must say are generally a disgrace to our army. I therefore place much confidence in what he says in matters of fact or of opinion.

28. The following order was issued November 17, 1863, by Brig. Gen. John McNeil, commanding the District of the Frontier, with headquarters at Fort Smith: "The organized forces of the enemy having been driven out of the country in our rear and there being none on our lines of telegraphic and mail communication, except that common foe of mankind, the guerrilla and bushwhacker, and the cutting of telegraph wires being now the act of these men alone—men who have no claim to be treated as soldiers, and are entitled to none of the rights accorded by the laws of war to honorable belligerents—it is hereby ordered that hereafter in every instance the cutting of the telegraph wire shall be considered the deed of bushwhackers, and for every such act some bushwhacking prisoner shall have withdrawn from him that mercy which induced the holding of him as a prisoner, and shall be hung to the post where the wire is cut; and as many bushwhackers shall be hung as there are places where the wire has been cut. The nearest house to the place where the wire is cut, if the property of a disloyal man, and within ten miles, shall be burned."—Leavenworth Daily Conservatice, November 20, 1863.

29. By order of Maj. Gen. J. M. Schofield, commanding the Department of the Missouri, dated October 19, 1863, General McNeil had been sent to Fort Smith to relieve General Blunt as commander of the District of the Frontier. Blunt, reportedly guilty of "constant and continued violation of orders," and also suspected of being professedly caught off guard by Quantrill's raid on Baxter Springs on October 6, was ordered to Leavenworth City, where he was to report by letter to General Schofield.—Tri-Weekly Missouri Democrat, St. Louis, October 21, 1863; Leavenworth Daily Conservatice, October 30, 1863.
The Mound City Band. Photo courtesy TA
ek in 1878.

The Mound City Band. Photo courtesy TA
nek in 1878.
He says of Blunt, "he is a good officer, understanding and attending to the details of business, and equally competent as a Genl when a fight is on hand, but as a man he is grossly immoral." I can see for myself that the appointment of McNeil to this command has not bettered matters in any particular.

There have been misrepresentations with regard to Genl Blunt's operations, as we hear there have been with regard to Haskell's bringing a large stock of goods to this place on his own private account, of which there is not one word of truth.

Mr Atkinson invited all in our office to dine with him on roast turkey &c a few days since and we did. Mrs A. was very glad to see her husband again after two and a half years of absence, and so far is satisfied that federal's have possession of the post but her sympathies are with her southern friends. She has one son left, in the confed. army and two sons-in-law in the Union army—regulars who [were] formerly stationed here, one of them a surgeon, the other Genl Burns. With her husband a union man she is placed in a very uncertain and distracted position. The women left here are generally rebellious. Who cares? . . .

Now little wife good bye for a while.

As ever your affectionate Husband

St Louis Mo.
Jan. 14th 1864

MY DEAR WIFE

We arrived here yesterday. Left Fort Smith on the 31st ult. and crossed the river at Van Buren, five miles below. It commenced snowing the night previous, and continued that day until about one O'clock p.m. It was very cold and the river was full of snow and was also raising and, fearful that we would not be able to ford it the next day we started out in time to cross before dark. We would have got along with it very well but that one of the teamsters broke a wagon tongue when out in the stream where the water was deepest, just coming up to the wagon box. We tried till dark to get the wagon out but only succeeded in getting out a part of the loading. It was so cold that all engaged in the work had their fingers and ears nipped and the driver who had to get down into the water to loosen his mules had his toes badly frozen.

We stopped in Van Buren the next day. The murcury was down to sixteen degrees below zero that morning and the river was closed up. Got the balance of load out of the wagon and made all ready for an early start the next morning. In going out with an empty

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wagon a second time to bring off[f] the loading, the ice had got to
running so thick that the mules became unmanageable, one got
down under the water all over and was likely to drown but finally
released itself from the wagon and swam ashore at the landing
below the ford where the water was deep. No one knew where it
was or whether it got out at all until the next morning when it was
found where it had stood all night, covered all over with one glaze
of ice. A man had been left on the broken wagon to assist in un-
loading it when the empty wagon should return. He had to be
brought off and I rode in to do it. Got to the wagon well enough
but in trying to return I found the ice running so strong the horse
could not stand up before it and so had to take shelter below the
wagon. The wind was blowing a gale down the river and terribly
cold. Fortunately, while wondering what to be done about it,
the ice partially stopped coming down and we struck out in time to
get across the channel into shallow water before it came on again.
I had paid but little attention to the cold during the time I was in
the water but when out of the difficulty I found that three of my
fingers were slightly frozen. During the whole of our trip to
Springfield we had the coldest kind of weather and northerly winds
to face each day and comfortless nights.

From Springfield to Rolla, three days and a half we had pleasant
weather enough but on the eighth, the day we reached Springfield,
it seemed to be about as cold as it was on New Years’ day. Our
party consisted of six men on horse back, two negroes—servants—
and two six-mule-teams and drivers. We made the distance, four
hundred and five miles, in twelve days. Two hundred and ninety of
the distance, with the gov. wagons, was made in eleven and a half
days. I did not write you for some time before we left Fort Smith
for the reason that I was in almost daily expectation of starting.
Capt. H[askell] was finally ordered on duty at that post, by the
Q. M. here, and we went to work again expecting we were in for a
long job there certain, but in something less than forty eight hours it
was telegraphed that Genl Schofield had refused to recognize the
act of his Q. M. and that Capt. H. must repair to St Louis at once,
which he did for certain. Don’t know yet what we are to do or
what is to be done with the Capt. . . .

Hoping to see you soon and love to the girls, goodbye

From your devoted H
MY DEAR LITTLE WIFE

. . . We are not through with our work yet but hope that this week will finish up all that need be done for some weeks, except an inconsiderable amount at the end of next month. If we should have to go south again in the spring—which is not improbable—I will come home before starting I think, without doubt. I am glad to see that Genl Curtis is to have command in the, once more, dept. of Kansas, and Rosecrans in this.

We may now expect that there will be no more reigns of terror and standing guard of nights by citizens along the border. There is nothing new or strange that I have to communicate. Genl Blunt is here on his way to Washington and jubilant with expectation since Schofield has fallen. His only advantage is that he happens to be on the right side of the great question of the country. There has been numerous arrivals from Ft. Smith since we came. The cold weather seems to be over and the ice—if this weather continues only a few days longer—will soon disappear from the river, which will be very fortunate.

By way of amusement I have visited the St. L. theatre twice to see "Booth" in Richd III. He is said to be son of old Booth who used to play in Philada. Also to the Merchantile Library Hall to see the Lilliput Family Genl Tom and lady, Commodore Nutt, and Minnie Warren, Mrs. Thumb's sister. Every body expresses a desire to see Tom's heir that is to be. They may have to wait some time yet, before their curiosity can be gratified.

After I had been to their exhibition I changed my boarding from Barnum's to the Everett House where I had an opportunity of seeing them every day. Minnie is about the size of Sophy and Commodore is but little larger. He presented a very comical ap-

30. The Department of Kansas was recreated from the Department of Missouri on January 1, 1864, and on January 16 Maj. Gen. Samuel R. Curtis was appointed commanding general. W. S. Rosecrans was named commander of the Department of Missouri on January 90, succeeding Brig. Gen. J. M. Schofield, who had been in command of the department since May 24, 1863. Schofield's policies had been unpopular, and his nomination as major general by the President aroused much opposition. A protest against senatorial confirmation of the nomination, signed by Missouri's representatives in congress, said that his administration in Missouri "resulted in misrule, discord and confusion" and that he had done nothing to merit his rank of brigadier, much less promotion to major general.—Daily Missouri Democrat, St. Louis, January 22, 1864; Frederick H. Dyer, A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion (Des Moines, 1908), p. 255.

31. John Wilkes Booth, sometimes billed as "the eminent Tragedian," appeared at the St. Louis Theater from January 4 to 15, 1864, opening in Shakespeare's "Richard III." He was the son of Junius Brutus Booth, and brother of Edwin Booth, both noted Shakespearean actors. He himself was an actor of considerable promise, but is now remembered chiefly as the assassin of President Lincoln.

pearance one day when put into a chair in the barbers shop in the Hotel, and undergoing a shampooing. Very much the same as one of the larger sized dolls in a common sized rocking-chair. Have been several times to see dancing. Last night to see the Ravel family who have just arrived. There is always the elaborate display of extremities both upper and lower and the lower is displayed highly, but they “cant dance” like danseuses in Philada used to do. No Ellslers and Celestes. I have seen all I want to see until something new is put upon the boards.

To day I feel religiously inclined and think I will attend some church this afternoon where they have good music.

Capt. J. F. Broadhead and lady—don’t know who she was—stopping a day or so at our hotel but I happened to be unwell and did not go down there for my meals until they were gone, saw his name on the register in the morning when I was at breakfast but—of course—they want up then and the morning after, they left for Alton I suppose, whither the regiment had gone some days before.

Your ever loving H.

St. Louis Mo.
April 2d 1864

My Dear Wife

Just arrived, and find that Haskell has gone to Little Rock. He has provided transportation for me and as my pile is now small I go the first boat which starts now very soon, and I have only time to write a few lines. All right so far and I had just as soon go to Little Rock as any where.

With much love I am your affectionate

H

Little Rock, Ark.
April 11th 1864

My Dear Wife,

We arrived in this place all right last Friday afternoon. Had a very successful trip all the way through in making connections and thereby avoiding hotel bills, and were only one day behind the
other party which left St. Louis six days before we did. We had
some difficulty in finding a house and did not get moved in until
Saturday evening, nor our mess started until this morning. There
was need of hurrying the matter forward to save expenses at a
hotel though it was only three dollars per day. This place has never
been one for business and but few store houses are in it, but it is the
handsomest and pleasantest town I have ever yet seen to live in.
The lay of the ground is unexceptionable, blocks layed off in perfect
squares with broad streets and generally paved side walks though
where they are not the surface is sand and gravel so that they are
never muddy. There is an abundance of shade trees—native
growth—oaks that are beginning to look green and a large propor-
tion of pines and cedars. It has been the home of many a cotton
planter who formerly lived here in great luxury and splendor. The
residences are generally very large and expensive but not of the
yankee styles; they are massive and heavy looking in the finish and
the grounds around them in many instances extending over an en-
tire block, with gravelled walks and carriage roads, with plenty of
fine oaks and pines, of native growth and cedars, arborvitae, mag-
nolia, pommegranate, fig, palmetto &c. beside—to me—nameless
flowering shrubs, make up a grand and beautiful residence.

I came here not expecting to see much more than Ft. Smith and
am very agreeably disappointed. There are but few troops here
at present, the army having gone to Red river with Genl Steele, so
the place seems very nice and quiet just now. . . . The captain
employed Blodgett at once, but we are not fixed for doing much yet
so he and I are going down to Pine Bluff by next boat, to see the
boys of the 5th Kansas. I would like to be here too this week be-
cause the legislature meets this week; those elected under the free
state constitution, and I've no doubt there will be some interesting
debates. . . .

After we left St. Louis on the 2d we have had on the route cold,
raw weather and frequent rains, and now, though it is clear and
pleasant, the air is cold as though it came off of snow not very far
away. There has evidently been warm weather here because the
little prairie we crossed on the railroad from White river to this
place, is all over green, and cotton woods along the streams are
looking quite green. I've no doubt we shall have hot weather soon
enough, but our yard is well supplied with fine oaks and pines, but
it is a new place and no flowering shrubs have been set out. There
are seven of us now beside Buck and Hill in a house with three
large rooms, a hall, a portico in front and large piazza back, and a
smaller house separate and made for negroes, which will be convenient for us as kitchen and dining room.

The Arkansas river is very low yet and no boats can come up except very small craft such as is running between here and Pine Bluff, but it is on the rise and should it get up to a good boating stage so that shippers can load at St Louis and Cairo direct for this point we shall have plenty of every thing we need; at present the rail road is not sufficient to keeping up a supply, though even now our expenses for provisions, with rations are nothing compared with what they were in St. Louis— With a strong embrace and a very prolonged kiss and much love to the dear children I am as ever your devoted

Hd

LITTLE ROCK, Ark.
APRIL 30TH 1864

My Dear Wife

. . . There was considerable excitement last night and all day to-day in consequence of the near proximity of Pap [Gen. Sterling] Price, and his declaration that he would to-morrow morning, eat breakfast in Little Rock or in h—l but scouts returning this evening set all quiet again, by reporting Genl Steele close at hand, returning to this place in consequence of the capture below Pine Bluff, of his train that was to carry out supplies for his army. They had quite a big time all last night and to day, carting out cotton, with which they made temporary breastworks. It is not unusual to see breast works made of cotton, but these, made to-day are not intended to look inviting.

May 1 After writing so much I went to the state house to hear one of the numerous aspirants to a seat in the United States senate from this state, make a speech in which he was to give an account of himself. The legislature has, ever since it was organized, been besieged with reformed rebels who were formerly the politicians and office holders of the state, and they hit upon a very good way to dispose of them. The aspirants have been allowed the use of the assembly room several evening[s] each week to address the members of the legislature and show up their claims. The consequence has been that they have pitched into each other and told a

34. Maj. Gen. Frederick Steele was commander of the Department of Arkansas from January 30 to December 25, 1864. In April an expedition was undertaken against Camden, Ark., but it was unsuccessful. On April 18 a foraging expedition led by Col. James M. Williams was attacked at Poison Springs by a large Confederate force and after suffering severe losses was forced to abandon the wagon train. Steele's army retreated, the rebels following to within eight miles of Little Rock. His losses were said to be 3,000 men, nine pieces of artillery, 9,000 mules, and 700 wagons. See Trego's letter of May 8, 1864.—Dyer, op. cit., p. 572; Adjutant General's Report, Pt. II, "Military History of Kansas Regiments," pp. 221, 222; Leavenworth Daily Conservative, May 12, 1864.
great deal more about the mean and disloyal acts of all, than could have been found out in any other way. To-morrow the election of senators will be had and I have no doubt that it will be a highly interesting time. The weather was delightful this morning and I fixed up and went to an Episcopal church where they went through with the ceremonies with a good accompaniment of music. It had been so long since I had had an opportunity of the kind that I may say I was highly entertained and came out feeling better than when I went in. It cost nothing to get in though I paid a trifle to get out again. This afternoon, Blodgett and I took a stroll through the cemetery and there gathered a lot of red, white and yellow—not blue—roses which we fixed up on our mantle shelf, adding to them some honeysuckle, evergreens &c. The river has been so low since we came here as to put an end to navigation for a week or ten days except for the very smallest kind of craft, but now there is a fine stage of water and boats are running to Fort Smith. After all, I am getting tired and time goes slowly because I have scarce any acquaintances out side of our own party and I'm quite sure that I am not the kind of person likely to hunt them up.

Good bye for the present.

From your devoted

H

J H. Trego
Box 234 Little Rock
Arkansas

MOUND CITY, MAY 2ND /64

MY DEAR HUSBAND

... The following Friday after you left Col Moonlight and one Co of the 11th Kansas arrived at this place. The Col has been promised, that he can stay here all Summer.

I suppose you heard before you left, that there was word sent them, that they should be accommodated here. Well, I thought I would have a good excuse, not to take any of them, my husband being gone. They all went to Mr Wheelers, when they first came, stayed two days then left & came here, thought they had not been

35. Thomas Moonlight of Leavenworth county had served in the regular army during the Seminole war and in the campaign against the Mormons. When the Civil War broke out he raised a battery of light artillery and was commissioned a captain. April 14, 1862, he was commissioned a captain in the adjutant general's department, resigning September 20 to become lieutenant colonel of the Eleventh Kansas cavalry. In the spring of 1864 he was assigned to command the Second brigade, District of South Kansas, and established his headquarters at Mound City on April 2. On April 25 he was promoted to colonel of the regiment, on February 13, 1865, was brevetted brigadier general, and was mustered out on July 17, 1865. He served one term as secretary of state, 1869-1871, and from 1884 to 1898 was United States minister to Bolivia.—Adjudant General's Report, pp. 6, 7, 382; Frank W. Blackman, Kansas, A Cyclopaedia of State History... (Chicago, 1912), v. 2, pp. 309, 310; Mound City Border Sentinel, April 15, 1864.
treated rightly and had nearly concluded they were not wanted here. It being Court week, the Hotel was full, well I thought I would keep them until Mother came. I expected by that time I should be tired of them, but they are the best set that I have seen for a long time, they are refined and neat not one of them Chew Tobacco, or spit on the floor.

The first day of April, the Adj J. E. Greer First & Second Lieut (Tabor, Parrot) came; on Sunday, the Surgeon; on Wednesday, the Chaplain; stayed a week, then the Surgeon was taken sick with Typhoid Fever, was very sick, on the 14th Mother and Decie came: in a few days after Dr sent for his wife, so you see I have not had much time to be lonesome: then besides all that I have had to go to the Society, and attend to the building. Since you left Mrs. [D. P.] Lowe joined our Society [the Ladies’ Enterprise Association] and I wish she had stayed out, for there has been a perfect turmoil ever since. Last Thursday Fannie and myself and some half a dozen others came very near saying that we would withdraw our names, and I will yet if she don’t cool down.

I forgot to tell you my boarders are all married men and the Col has dined with us once, and taken tea twice. On Sunday we went for a ride in the country, the Col Adjt and Lieuts; Cadie, & Decie, Mrs. [J. F.] Broadhead & self. it was a beautiful day, the first of May. I shall not forget it very soon; one reason we enjoyed ourselves very much, and another that I feel as tho’ I had been pounded. Now I hope you will not get jealous, still you may hear something that would not be pleasant; I hope not I have not been out with any of them alone, and shall guard against suspicion. But it seems to me, if they would say anything about Mr Gardner, just coming to the house, there will be something said now. I think there is some jealousy already existing, and I can’t tell why. The Adjt is a

36. James E. Greer of Topeka began his military service August 19, 1862, as a private in Company H, Eleventh Kansas cavalry. On the same date he was promoted to the grade of sergeant, and on January 31, 1863, was made sergeant-major of the regiment. On November 2 he was commissioned as regimental adjutant, and on August 20, 1864, was promoted to captain of Company I. He was mustered out with the company September 26, 1865.

Ira I. Tabor of Holton was mustered in as a private in Company B on August 16, 1862, was promoted to first sergeant on August 30, to second lieutenant on June 19, 1863, and to first lieutenant December 8. He was made regimental adjutant October 12, 1864, and was mustered out August 19, 1865.

John B. Parrott of Holton also was mustered in as a private in Company B on August 16, 1862, promoted to sergeant on August 30, to first sergeant January 19, 1863, to second lieutenant December 9, to first lieutenant December 15, 1864, and was mustered out with the company on August 31, 1865.

James S. Cline of Tecumseh was chaplain of the regiment, serving from October 11, 1862, to July 7, 1865.

Richard M. Ainsworth of Kansas City, Mo., was assistant surgeon of the regiment from September 20, 1862, to June 23, 1863. On that date he was promoted to surgeon, and served until July 21, 1865.—Adjutant General’s Report, pp. 382, 385, 388, 405, 407, 408.
very nice young man, aristocratic and a man of education & refinement. He is about Decie’s age, and they seem to like each other very well, but he is a man of to good a principle to be more than courteous.

We have gone to two parties, all of us together; I expect through Mrs Blodget and myself you will get the news. Jim Snoddy sent your paper to Little Rock.

Three weeks ago yesterday, I went down to John Garrets to look at the Melodion. Mrs Capt Broadhead went with me, as she had just come from the East, I thot she would be a judge of an instrument. she thot I could not [get] a new one for $75 and then the expence would be considerable getting it here. So I concluded to take it at $50, and was offered the same for it, in three days after I got it, and every body thinks I got a bargain, and Katie is perfectly delighted, practices frequently.

Well our Meeting house is nearly finished, with a belfry. We, the Ladies got up an Oyster supper, the tickets were $1 each. Then we had a ring cake, with a $2 ring in it, and sold enough pieces, at 25 cts a piece, to amount to $8.

Edna Lowe painted a picture, which brought $13 clear of expences, that was her donation. Then we finished off with a dance, at 75 cts a ticket, and it all amounted to $125 clear of expence. Then once since there has been another party, and cleared $50 more.

It is reported around the country that there is to be dancing in the Meeting house. Mr Marr [Rev. J. R. Marr] told Fanny yesterday, thought it would be better if we knew it. Now the intention is to have an article written, and sign our names to it.37 The long talked of exhibition is to come off about the first of June. The Officers are to take a part. Since we have got some to help, that understand how such things should be done, we expect to have something of a show. Will say good buy,

Your loving Wife A

37. In 1863 the United Brethren congregation at Mound City began construction of a church. Lack of finances forced them to discontinue the work when only the frame was completed, and they sold the building to the Ladies' Enterprise Association. The ladies were able to raise enough money to finish it, and the building was thereafter used as a free church and schoolhouse, and also as a courthouse whenever the county seat was located at Mound City.—Andreas-Cutler, History of the State of Kansas (Chicago, 1883), p. 1108.

In reply to the charge that dances were to be held in the meeting house, the Mound City Border Sentinel on June 3, 1864, published a communication signed by the president and the secretary of the association, Mrs. A. H. Baird and Miss C. A. Baird, announcing that the Free Meeting house was to be what its name implied: free not only to all Christian denominations, but to all "spiritualists, infidels, atheists, or any other of the numerous 'ists' or 'isms'" and that it would be open "for all public meetings and for all innocent amusements."
My Dear Little Wife

I hope that numerous letters are on the way here for me and that
I shall ultimately get them, but as yet I have heard nothing from
home or any where else.

The Kansas troops that were here—came back with Genl. Steele—
crossed the river yesterday and will return to Ft. Smith by that
route, the road on this side being considered too dangerous since
Steele's defeat. The expedition of Steele's south was,—according to
the statement of all the Kansas men except Capt. Miserez—a most
outrageous affair, a truly McClellan manœuvre. About eight
hundred wagons with harness, and all camp and garrison equipage,
Medical stores, officers clothing & regimental and company papers
were burned, and lots of wounded left on the ground without an
effort to bring them away. What fighting they did do was done
without Steele's orders. There is sufficient ground for suspecting
that he didn't care much if the Kansas troops were annihilated if it
would not endanger his personal safety.

He had retained his rooms here, evidently not expecting to take
and occupy that country and his greatest desire seems to have been
to get back here safe to his comfortable quarters and plenty of wine.
The troops were coming in for three days themselves and animals
almost starved out, many of the men without shoes, some with
blankets but not a tent to a regiment. The Kansas regiments in
that "Bull run" expedition have about as much love for Steele now
as the 5th Kansas had in '62 at Helena. It is quite bad enough to
know that this war has corrupted the morals of nearly all our
officers but when cowardice or treachery is added the disgust be-
comes sickening. The prominent officers here have not obtained
such an unenviable reputation as Blunt and his ambitious imitators,
Anderson, Loring, Moonlight and others, but they are very much
given to boasting of their numerous conquests, and I believe that
no decent man can believe that they have done a half of what they
boast of without feeling ashamed that his mother was a woman.
Yet it is a general weakness of both man and woman, as my expe-
rience has taught me, to give ear to that side, and if a lady is on speak-
ing acquaintance merely with an officer of notorious character it is
sufficient cause for scandal, but if she has the hardihood to ride out
with him her character is compromised surer.

38. Peter J. Miserez of Mound City was mustered September 30, 1862, as first lieu-
tenant of Company K, Twelfth Kansas infantry, was promoted to captain of the company
on May 26, 1864, and was mustered out with the regiment on June 30, 1865.—Adjutant
General's Report, p. 442.
We have not had much to do since we have been here, but will begin tomorrow on what promises to be a heavy job from this time out as long as we may stay here. I hope I shall feel more contented when we have full business on hand.

So far it has been hard to reconcile staying away from you for the matter of pay, but necessity seems to compel it that we may have the means to properly educate our girls. Twenty five dollars per month has been added to my salary since the first of April, and my expenses for board and washing will be from twelve to fifteen dollars per month. We have now a pretty large bachelor’s hall out-fit...

When we came here the army had already left on the late expedition, and we found the place very quiet indeed but now the streets are full of soldiers, numerous brass bands play at stated periods, with an occasional serenade—which is much the best because then all else is quiet—and a surfeit of drums, fifes and bugles, sounding the various calls for their respective regiments and companies...

From your devoted Hd.

[June 1864]

[My Dear Husband]

... Yesterday Moonlight received a dispatch ordering him immediately to Aubry, Jonstson County Mo. About five hundred rebels were there, had taken a train. There had been one Co of the 11th Kansas at Potosi, and the one here, all left for the line [of] Jonston Co Kan except 14 here to guard camp, and some sick. They left tents, and everything just as it was, expect to be back in ten days, but I should not be surprised if they do not come back at all.

The Malitia were all ordered out last night I wish you could have seen them, they looked more like secesh than anything else.

Adgt says they would be of no use, they dont think of obeying orders. It was thot yesterday that the Malitia would be turned over to the Adgts care. He says he wish they would, he would see if they did not obey orders.

You will see by the paper that we got up a soldiers dinner, and it was as satisfactory as all other public dinners have been heretofore. Nothing for the second table! But still they are going to try it again on the forth.39

39. "The Banquet.—Last Friday was a gala day for our citizens. The military stationed at this place were the recipients of a munificent banquet, of which they were well worthy. The proceedings commenced by the military forming in procession at Headquarters, and marching in their usual splendid order, preceded by the Eleventh Kansas Band, to the scene of the pleasant ceremonies. Lieut. Taber, assisted by Lieut. Parrott, performed the duties of Marshal in admirable style. When the military arrived upon the ground, a happy crowd of citizens had gathered to receive the boys. The exercises were opened by a prayer by Chaplain Kline. Hon. D. P. Lowe tendered to the military, in a well made
I was one of the committee of arrangements and was so tired I
could not eat any dinner.

Judge Lowe, and Col Moonlight made a speech, and the Regi-
mental band was here for the occasion. The Col and first Lieut are
good singers. Lieut has been instructing the people here in singing
for the last three weeks preparatory to the dinner. But there were
few sang. The Ladies were Mrs Blodget, Mrs Rowson and Car-
penter—Snoddy Dennison Moonlight Taber, two Sargents, Is-
belle and Barns, and two of the Band, constituted the Choir. In
the evening there was a party, and seven of the band played. . . .

Your Affectionate Wife

MOUND CITY, JUNE 23RD, 1864

MY DEAR HUSBAND

. . . The Col. [Moonlight] returned on Tuesday and the Com-
pany Wednesday noon, after being over the Shy hill 41 after the
rebels, but did not find any.

Instead of our loosing a train, it was only one Wagon, the Col says
he knows there are plenty of rebels around in those parts, and were
told so by a family living near where they were. Col Brown or-
dered the Kansas troops back to Kansas. Moonlight had orders to
 go in there from Gen McKane [McKean]. I think Moonlight took
eight companies with him, sent a dispatch to Col Hoyt, to meet him
at Pleasant Hill with part of his command and some Colorado com-
mander with his men, to surround the place where it was reported
the rebels were. But for some reason, Gen Brown ordered them
back. Moonlight says Brown had a fight with them, and got
whipped, and was afraid Mo[on]light would do a good thing, or
rather looked as if he would be jealous, if they accomplished any
thing. 42

address, the banquet prepared by our citizens; to which Col. Moonlight replied in a hand-
some speech. After music by the Band, and songs by the Glee Club, the feast was served
up. Everybody seemed to enjoy themselves, and every one went away satisfied.”—Border
Sentinel, Mound City, June 17, 1864.

40. Isaac H. Isbell of Wabaunsee, the sergeant-major, and James H. Barnes of Man-
hattan, the saddler sergeant, both of the regimental noncommissioned staff.—Adjutant
General’s Report, p. 382.

41. Probably Snl hill, Jackson county, Missouri, in the area drained by Snlbar creek.

42. Brig. Gen. Thomas J. McKean was in command of the District of Southern Kansas
from June 25 to September 1, 1864.—Dyer, op. cit., p. 578.

George H. Hoyt of Boston, Mass., was mustered November 11, 1861, as second lie-
tenant of Company K, Seventh Kansas cavalry, was promoted to captain May 27, 1862,
and resigned because of disability on the following September 3. He re-entered the
service October 17, 1863, as lieutenant colonel of the Fifteenth Kansas cavalry, was made
brevet brigadier general on March 13, 1865, and resigned his commission July 19.—
Adjutant General’s Report, pp. 6, 252, 500.

Brig. Gen. E. B. Brown commanded the District of Central Missouri from June 9,
1863, to July 24, 1864.—Dyer op. cit., p. 548.

The Leavenworth Daily Conservator, June 21, 1864, printed a report of a fight on
June 19 between a large body of bushwhackers led by Quantrill and a detachment of the
Second Colorado cavalry under Col. J. H. Ford. The action occurred in the Snl Hills.
We all rejoiced when the Com returned for we all felt afraid when they were gone. The Malitia I dont think would be any protection if the rebels should come. the night before the com came back, the Picket went to sleep, some one went out there took their Guns and one horse without disturbing them. . . .

Your Affectionate Wife
Orlando Morse and Prue Swin[g]ley, and Lieut [Capt. William H.] Boyd and Hellen [Swingley] were married last evening

MOUND CITY JULY 28TH [1864]

MY DEAR HUSBAND
. . . Day before yesterday, Gen McKane ordered the companies from Potosi and here to Paola, and we have had to depend on malitia for guard.

This morning there is a report that the troops are coming back. They went up as there was a report of another raid into Kansas, that the rebles were in force on the Big Blue, and left the Line unprotected from here to Paola.

There is a report that Jennison is going to have command of Southern Kansas. I have been over town this morning, and heard several say that they would about as soon the bushwhackers would come at once, as for them to come. I saw quite a number swinging their hats, at the news of the company coming back, and others that they had already swung theirs, at least they said so. . . .

[August 1.] This morning the Adgt took his farewell leave of us. The Com[pany] did not return as expected, are to remain at Paola.

There was a report yesterday that three hundred bushwhackers were at Barnesvil, but found out it was a false report. There were about a dozen of the Malitia over in town last night. the men positively refuse to leave their farms and crops in the field unprotected. A company of the fifteenth staid in town last night on their way to Potosi. . . . From Your ever loving Wife

A. M. Trego

Early the following morning the Eldridge House at Wyandotte was set on fire by two men believed to be acting with the guerrillas, and soon afterward an attack was made on the outer pickets at Kansas City.

43. Charles R. Jennison, then colonel commanding the Fifteenth Kansas cavalry, assumed command of the First Sub-District of South Kansas, with headquarters at Mound City, on August 2, 1864. On July 28 he had arrived in town, "looking hale and hearty . . . on a reconnoitering expedition—trying to discover where his old enemies, the Border-Ruffians, do congregate 'mostly,' and there he proposes to station the Fifteenth. He goes to Fort Scott to-day [July 29]; thence to Humboldt; and wherever danger is thickest, along the southern or eastern line of Kansas, there he intends to establish his headquarters. Success attend the 'Little Jayhawker!'"—Border Sentinel, July 29 and August 5, 1864.
MY DEAR WIFE

Nothing has occurred since I wrote you last. We have heard from Pine Bluff since. The Post Qr. Master was up yesterday and says that Genl Price is close upon them, with probably twelve thousand men. The pickets of the two armies are almost constantly in sight of each other. Our forces there are not strong enough to leave their fortifications to attack Price and the rebs. seem to be afraid to make another attack upon the place, no doubt remembering full well their great failure and disappointment last October. Our cavalry has been very active for some days, but those at Memphis, whose business it is to keep this army supplied with forage, are very negligent of their duty, and it is fear[ed] just now that much trouble will be felt in consequence, and not unlikely that a great amount of stock will perish.

The river is very low and no communication can be had by land without sending a large force, which don't seem to be required now, that is, there don't seem to be anything that will justify the sending out of a large force in that direction. The 5th Kansas is waiting to be paid, the Paymaster went down on boat last evening and Qr. Master [Edwin D.] Hillyer thinks they will be ready to start home by the last of this week. I hope they will for they are very anxious to be on the way. Capt. [Orlin C.] Morse thinks he will get off with them. Clayton was desirous of keeping him there on duty as Provost Marshal.

I see by the papers that there is much trouble in Northern Mo. with "bushwhackers" and that trouble was apprehended on the borders of Southern Kansas. You did not mention the subject so I conclude you feel safe as usual at Mound City, which is not saying very much either.

Now good night.

As ever, your affectionate Husband.

LITTLE ROCK, ARK.
SUNDAY P. M. AUG 28TH 1864

MY DEAR LITTLE WIFE

One day last week, a portion of Shelby's returning force, took possession for a few hours, of a station on the R. R. burnt a lot of hay and tried to damage the track but did not effect much as they had no effective tools to work with so the damage they did do was soon repaired. The troops under Steele's command are doing
nothing but lay in camp letting their horses starve while rebels are burning hay which they need here so much and in the very place where our cavalry, or a portion of it, should be encamped, because there the horses could have an abundance of grass while the presence of troops there would protect the hay-makers. Here the horses get almost nothing, the men being idle, spend their wages for liquor, get drunk, raise a row and get into the guard house. I have heard no reasons assigned for such mismanagement except that the officers of the different regiments prefer remaining in the city and Steele dont like to incur their displeasure by ordering them away. . . .

Our mess arrangement is about to be broken up and each of the party will have to hunt up boarding for themselves. Charley Haskell expects to move his family into the house we are now occupying. Blodgett and I have begun in time, have succeeded in finding a place and expect to move to it to-morrow. Don't know yet what kind of a place it will prove to be, but think it will be a comfortable place. They will have no boarders but ourselves. . . . I hope we may find it pleasanter there than we have had it for six weeks past. It done very well for awhile but we got to[o] thick to thrive well and having nobody to look after sleeping arrangements the b-d b-gs began to intrude and have finally taken possession of our bunks and can drive us out whenever they please. It is astonishing how quickly they over powered us after they first got a start. It is scarcely two weeks since we first knew that there was one in the house and then I could find none about my bed. One week after it was over run with them. I dont think they could have wasted time to perform marriage ceremonies or they could not have multiplied so rapidly. It shows that men can't keep house—right—though they may manage very well in the eating line, and to be civilized they must be taken care of by the women. . . .

I understand that you are favored with the company of Jennison again. Of course you will feel quite safe while he is there with much love I am as ever

your devoted H—d

Little Rock, Ark.
Sunday evening Oct. 30th 1864

My dear little Wife

. . . The St. Louis papers of the 24th give accounts of Price's march to the Kansas border near West Port and of a battle on the 23d in which he (Price) was routed and was retreating towards
Fort Scott. We expect to hear, by next mail, that the border counties have been desolated by his troops.

I am in a perfect fever of excitement to know the facts and if the next mail brings intelligence of an invasion of Kansas I shall start at once, unless I get other intelligence which can satisfy me that you are all safe. I don't hope for anything for Mound City if any portion of Price's army has been able to enter it. . . .

Hoping to hear something decisive by next mail I will bid you a most affectionate good night—

From your devoted H—

44. A Confederate army under Gen. Sterling Price began a march, in the latter part of September, from Arkansas through Missouri and into Kansas. The Union troops were few in number and widely scattered, and it seemed at first that Price would accomplish his objectives with little opposition. However, the defenders were rallied, the Kansas militia was called out, and after a number of holding actions and skirmishes during the first three weeks of October Price's troops were defeated at the Battle of the Big Blue on October 22. Next day the Battle of Westport resulted in the "precipitous retreat" of the rebels, and on October 24 they crossed the line into Kansas and camped that night at Trading Post, Linn county. They were closely pressed by the Union forces, and on the 25th the Battle of Mine Creek was fought near Mound City. Price's army was routed and driven back into Arkansas. This was the notorious "Price's Raid," which resulted in Kansas claims totaling several hundred thousand dollars for damages inflicted by the Confederates and for services rendered in the Union cause.