James A. and Louie Lord: Theatrical Team—
Their Personal Story, 1869-1889

JAMES C. MALIN

I. THE LOUIE LORD LEGEND

The memories of older people are curiously woven with fact and fancy, the relevant and the trite. Recalls from their past are peculiarly unpredictable, but are sometimes significant. In 1903 the Atchison public had an opportunity to see the famous temperance play “Ten Nights in a Bar Room.” The Daily Globe, October 27, commented:

No temperance lectures for Atchison people. There was scarcely a handful at the theatre last night, to see “Ten Nights in a Bar Room.” It is a very old play; so ancient that it is new to the present generation of theatre goers. Louie Lord used to do the drunkard’s wife in this play, in the days of old Corinthian Hall, and is mentioned in the poem by which Gene Field immortalized that play house.

Three points in this short paragraph were true. “Ten Nights” was an old play, so old it was new; Louie Lord did play the drunkard’s wife in Corinthian Hall; and Eugene Field did “immortalize” Atchison’s Corinthian Hall in a poem. Beyond that the paragraph bristles with questions. The poem appears in Eugene Field’s Second Book of Verse (Chicago, 1892) but neither Louie Lord nor “Ten Nights” is mentioned. If the allegations made by the Globe are true, they must have appeared in the original newspaper version of the poem and have been edited out for the book edition of the collected poems. The present author has not been able to locate the original version and place of publication in order to verify these points.

But what is more relevant to the present theme was the stimulus this Globe paragraph gave to the recall of memories by another oldster among Kansas journalists, Frank Montgomery, formerly of Hill City and several other places, but in 1903 with the Kansas City (Mo.) Journal. His long reminiscence was printed by his paper, October 30, 1903, with the title, “When Louie Lord Starred”:

The Atchison Globe bestirs the memory of ancient Kansans with a reference to Louie Lord, once a famous Kansas actress. Louie Lord, with her husband and company were to the small towns of Kansas what Henry Irving and Ellen

Dr. James C. Malin, associate editor of The Kansas Historical Quarterly, is professor of history at the University of Kansas, Lawrence.
Terry are to the British theater—the zenith and perfection of dramatic art. Before Louie Lord, however, there was Louise Sylvester, who played such towns as Leavenworth, Lawrence, Atchison and Topeka, seldom going to the small towns of the state, and failing, of course, to become a provincial idol, or to rival Louie Lord in the affections of the great common people.

This was only Montgomery’s opening paragraph, but it set the tone. Louie Lord was the particular star of his memories and all revolved around her: “Mrs. Lord was not a beautiful woman, but she had a glorious head of hair.” So remarkable was her golden halo that doubts were rife about its naturalness, but these were set at rest, he recounted, in Hays when a hotel fire drove all occupants out in their night attire and Mrs. Lord was seen descending a ladder, the great masses of hair hanging below her waist. . . . But the catastrophe which decided the hair question was also the source of considerable idol breaking among the youth of the town. . . . When her belongings were tumbled from her chamber, almost the first thing which came to view was a fat woolen sock, which she had been knitting for her rheumatic husband.

And Mr. Lord. He was the leading man with his talented wife. He reminded one of Bottom, for he could roar like a lion or roar like a sucking dove. There are Kansans with gray on their foreheads who would go all the way to New York if they could hear Mr. Lord once more in his Rip Van Winkle. The awakening scene where he cried, “O my ka-nee, my ka-nee,” was worth more than a trip to New York—It was worth a trip to Europe, and his performances with the Dutch dialect, being an Irishman himself, were something wonderful.

Touching upon the plays rendered and the acting ability of Louie Lord, Montgomery reminded his readers that:

The actors of thirty years ago in Kansas, were brave beyond conception. They would storm the heights of a Shakespeare play with the same intrepidity with which they skirmished in the fields of simple melodrama. Desdemona, Portia, Topsy, Lady of Lyons, were to Louie Lord such a small tax on her versatility that she passed from one to the other with no effort at all. To be sure, certain super-elegant people might complain that her Lady Macbeth was attended with too much of the gay abandonment of Topsy, but to the great common people this was only an additional source of pleasure, for they could be sure always that they were seeing the star.

In closing Montgomery made two points. First, “By the time they left the stage they were in comfortable circumstances, or rich for actors. For a long time, Mrs. Lord had a profitable cattle ranch down in Southwest Kansas. She had business sense as well as dramatic talent.” And the second conclusion, lest he had damned his heroine by faint praise asserted: “And if this brief review has conveyed the impression that she was not really an actress, such
is not the intention of the writer, for she played some parts with great ability. But probably there never was an actress on the American stage who essayed so many roles—going fearlessly at them whether they fitted her talent or not.”

Could it have been that Montgomery’s memories were still biased by a youthful jealousy of the husband of his heroine? A large part of his “facts” were wrong as well as much of his interpretation. The Lords were distinctly better than the average of the traveling theatrical troupes who played to Kansas audiences during the 1870’s and 1880’s. In fact, they ranked among the best of their kind. At least two other husband-wife theatrical teams were fully as good, if not better, the Plunketts, and the Kendalls. Both of these teams did more with Shakespeare than the Lords. But no one ever referred to Mrs. Plunkett by her first name, nor called Mrs. Kendall Julia. Montgomery missed badly the key to the Lord’s success over so long a period—that James and Louie Lord were complementary numbers. Neither was a success without the other. Montgomery missed another significant fact about early Kansas theatre—several individual young actors and actresses who played in the West during the same time rose in their profession to better things. And another point might be made in order to round out the perspective. Several dramatic stars of the first magnitude pieced out their careers, after their decline had set in, by playing to the smaller towns of the West, and bringing to these isolated audiences, unquestionably, a touch of the greatness that had once been theirs in Europe and in New York.

Some critical attention must be given to the legends that grew up around the name of Louie Lord, particularly those recounted by Montgomery. First, the Gibson House fire at Hays occurred Sunday night, January 12, 1879, not 1875, and the Lord troupe was present. None of the printed accounts mention the Louie Lord incident, but admittedly, that does not prove that it did not occur. However, the fire did give rise to a number of good stories. According to one writer, the blaze was started by a candle without a candlestick, the occupant of the room having gone to sleep reading. One young man, in helping to save clothes, carried out a bundle, “when lo! it contained a baby, left by its mother in her excitement.” The Stockton News editor, having had some experience with Hays hotel accommodations, was inspired to a wholly different kind of anxiety: “Only think of the untold suffering of bed-bugs in that old, time-honored (?) relic of antiquity.” Charles Chapin, a mem-
her of the Lord troupe, lost about $75 worth of his wardrobe in the fire, and a benefit performance was given in his honor.¹

Two of the Louie Lord legends have the southwestern Kansas cattle tradition as their locale: "At Caldwell . . . [she] played for two weeks [and when she left] a delegation of cattlemen followed her and brought her back for an additional week. [She had the same experience] in Dodge City, where she played three weeks [without a break]."² Also, on a different theme the same source alleged that: "She opened more opera houses in the kerosene circuit in Kansas than any other woman." Like most "good stories" that partake of the quality of folklore, none of these cases has yet been documented. Whatever kernel of fact there may have been in their origin, the increment of legend, as folksay, came to dominate.

The Caldwell story kernel of fact was a week's run at that place, February 12-17, 1883, which the town people liked so well that Lord was asked to return for the week beginning March 5, when the town would be host to a stockman's convention. This program was announced, apparently, before the Lords left Caldwell, and the object was to provide entertainment for the visiting stockmen. To be sure, the town liked Louie Lord, but it was Jennie Woltz who gained the sensational publicity when, literally, she stopped the show on the second night: her "rendition of the song 'When the Leaves Begin to Fade' was superb, and pleased the audience so much that the play had to stop until she favored them with 'The Last Rose of Summer.'" And as for Mrs. Lord and her stock ranch —"J. A. Lord, proprietor of the Louie Lord combination, has turned out to be a stockman. . . ."³ That comment referred to his Meade county activities, which is getting ahead of the story, but in any case, there is no evidence that Mrs. Lord ever visited Meade county, or ever took any interest in the livestock there.

Note should be made of the fact that all of these commentaries reflected the verdict of men. What was the reaction of women to Mrs. Lord—"woman's inhumanity towards a woman?" Thus far no record has been found. A teen-age girl's thrill is available. At the age of 78 or 79, Louie F. Jones (Mrs. H. Llewelyn Jones) of Meade, wrote: "I remember seeing Louie Lord and Mr. Lord in Wellington in 1879 or 1880. They put on what to me, a young girl

¹ Hays Sentinel, January 18, 25, 1879; Russell Record, January 23, 1879; Stockton News, January 16, 1879.
³ Caldwell Post, February 15, 22, 1883; Caldwell Commercial, February 15, 22, March 8, 1883.
of fifteen, shows, that were supreme. Their opera house was a court room,—bare dirty walls—their scenery crude and their stage a low platform curtained off with cheap curtains strung on a wire.” 4

A middle-aged woman whose husband was infatuated by Louie might not have been so genuinely enthusiastic.

Frank Montgomery had represented, however, that the Lords “made friends with the people. Every night was made a social affair, and often the townspeople invited them to dinner. Not infrequently the last night was made the occasion of speeches, and the star and her husband would be presented with some substantial token of the town’s appreciation.” While such wording as “every night” was obviously an exaggeration, certainly, on occasion, something of the sort did happen. At Clay Center: “After the performance of the historic and classic play, Damon and Pythias, . . . the members of the Order of Knights of Pythias called upon LOUIE LORD and made her a fine present as a slight token of their appreciation of her superior dramatic talent.” 5

On December 3, 1878, the Lord Company opened at Wamego for a week’s engagement, but on Saturday, Louie became ill and could not perform. On Tuesday, December 10, the announcement was made that the troupe would remain in town during the week and if Mrs. Lord recovered sufficiently a performance would be given. The illness was so severe that the company departed Sunday for Abilene, the local paper asserting again as earlier that “Louie Lord is certainly the queen of the Kansas stage.” And in bidding them farewell, the editor was evidently sincere in saying: “During their two weeks stay in our city they made many friends who wish them well in their Bohemian life; they seem almost like Wamego folks.” 6 Louie’s illness was reported by one source as lung fever, but another alleged that it was a result of excessive physical and emotional strain occasioned by her debut in the role of Lecretia Borgia at Junction City, November 23. S. S. Prouty, editor of the Junction City Union, insisted, prior to the performance, that: “It is a difficult role to assume, but Louie Lord, is equal to the task,” and after her long illness at Wamego, he admitted that the role taxed her too severely. Yet he believed that she would make a national reputation in the role and that: “The play brought out the best dramatic acting ever witnessed in Junction City.” 7

5. Abilene Gazette, December 13, 1878.
7. Junction City Union, November 16, 29, December 14, 1878; Manhattan Enterprise, December 13, 1878.
At Paola, December 18-23, 1876, the Lord troupe played for the week to increasing audiences: "Their plays have been well selected and of characters that contained much useful moral instruction, while contributing to the infinite amusement of those present. The chief attraction of this troupe is Louie Lord, who plays her parts so naturally that one almost forgets that he is witnessing a representation of life and manners, but fancies that it is all genuine reality." The suggestion was thrown out that an extra performance might be offered on Monday of the following week. That is what happened, "given for the benefit of the Paola Library . . . a complete success. There were between sixty-five and seventy-five dollars taken in at the door, fifty dollars of which were given to the theatrical company, leaving a handsome little profit for the Association." The play had been "Dora" an adaptation from the poem of Alfred Tennyson—"that prince of living poets." 8

Another form of tie between the Lord family and Kansas communities was recruitment from them of new members of the company. Among these were C. E. Chapin, of Junction City, Rose Ashmead, of Ellsworth county, Mr. and Mrs. William McCollister, and Clair Patee, of Manhattan. Also, Charles Taylor, while not technically a resident of Peabody prior to his association with Lord, became temporarily identified with that place through his friendship with the editor of the Peabody Gazette. The Hutchinson Herald commented that Lord was "a perfect master of his profession," having come up in theatre from the bottom, and "having sustained in his time nearly every famous artist that speaks the English language. He is a teacher and a most rigid disciplinarian, known to the profession as such. Each member of the company is a gentleman or lady with all that that implies." 9 His long record would appear to bear out substantially that fulsome praise.

In the Junction City Union, March 23, 1878, S. S. Prouty, the old Kansas Free-State radical, insisted that the stage could be made a powerful agent of reform and that Lord appreciated that fact. The Star-Sentinel, Hays, October 12, 1882, approved also the Lord theatrical policy:

The Lords are recognized in all the cities and hamlets of Kansas as essentially a Kansas institution, and for this reason are ever welcomed and always patronized. . . . Our citizens may confidentially look forward to a week of rational, enjoyable amusement, as it is well known that this Company rigidly

9. Junction City Union, November 23, 1878; Ellsworth Reporter, January 9, 1879; Hays Sentinel, January 18, 1879; Manhattan Enterprise, October 4, 11, 1878; Peabody Gazette, December 14, 1877, March 8, April 9, May 17, 1878, March 7, April 4, 1878; Hutchinson Herald, December 29, 1877.
exclude every low epithet or immoral idea from their histrionic work. They
have made friends and a reputation by it, that invites to their exhibitions
minister[s] and members of the church as well as the more secularly inclined.

The two decades under consideration, no matter how they are
viewed, were in a man's world. Women were essential, of course,
but their status in society was circumscribed. In a pioneer population
the younger males exceeded the statistically normal proportion,
and this excess, particularly the unattached part, afforded a number
of problems. Although statistical analysis of audiences is not possi-
ble, a conclusion seems justifiable that men provided the largest
contingent at the box office. The press agents for the better shows
were only too well aware of the general prejudice against the theatre
and gave special assurances to attract the patronage of women.
Also, Saturday afternoon matinee bills were frequently, if not
usually, selected to attract women and children and were so adver-
tised. The unusual efforts only underscore the central facts. Even
making the necessary allowances for exaggeration in publicity, the
impact of Mrs. Lord upon this man's world was something to be
reckoned with. To a large part of the people the theatrical profes-
sion was suspect in any case, but during her 20 years of dramatic per-
formance in Kansas, with its glowing tributes accorded her by men,
the record reveals no hint of personal scandal ever being linked
with Louie Lord's name.

II. THE INTRODUCTION OF THE LORDS TO KANSAS, AND AN OVERVIEW
OF THEIR THEATRICAL ACTIVITIES, 1869-1885

The winter of 1869-1870 marked the first invasion of Kansas by
the Lord dramatic team. Railroads made it possible. Prior to the
coming of railroads, water navigation provided communications and
the Mississippi valley, especially that part of it west of the river,
faced southward and the New Orleans gateway. The Missouri
valley depended upon St. Louis as the way station. Already prior
to the Civil War railroads making connections with the Atlantic
seaboard were challenging the New Orleans dominance. After the
war, Chicago as the great rail center of the North American land-
mass reoriented the whole outlook of the interior of the continent.
Chicago displaced St. Louis and New Orleans. This shift in orienta-
tion applied to the entertainment field as well as to commerce in
commodities. Eventually, through the same instrumentalities,
New York took over similarly and exercised a virtual theatre
monopoly. But in 1869, using Chicago as their base, the Lords
were following the railroads into the West. Under a water com-
munications regime, the river was closed by ice during the winter months; railroads were available to serve the traditional nine-months theatrical season, which included the winter.

In 1869, when the Lords first played in Kansas, the only railroads were between Atchison and Wyandotte, Leavenworth and Lawrence, and from Wyandotte west. The Lords entered Kansas from Chicago, playing along the route to St. Joseph, then they visited Atchison (6 days), Leavenworth (7 days), Lawrence (6 days), Topeka (10 days), and back to Lawrence (3 days). The following year they extended their territory west to Junction City, and used the new Santa Fe line from Topeka to Emporia. They were not in Kansas in 1871-1872, but in 1872-1873 the Missouri River, Fort Scott and Gulf railroad took them to Fort Scott in addition to the other cities. They missed the drouth-grasshopper year of 1874-1875, and the two seasons 1879-1881. The rail net was extended during the 1880's and the boom carried population into the western third of the state. As support appeared to justify routing, the towns farther west on the Union Pacific and the Santa Fe were included. The troupe might go west on one road, staging across, and returning east on the other. In the season of 1876-1877, after playing the eastern part of Kansas, they invaded Texas, following the Katy railroad across the vacant Indian territory to the Kansas founded town of Denison, Tex., and southward. This venture does not appear to have been repeated. In the season of 1884-1885 they invaded New Mexico, and it was there that Mr. Lord died, January 16, 1885.

The tours which carried the Lords westward from Chicago along northern railroads are not included here, and neither are their activities in Chicago, Philadelphia, New York, and elsewhere. A bare mention should be made, however, of the fact of those appearances, because they represent attempts to break into “Big Time.” A record of a few has been found. In May, 1874, J. A. Lord was stage manager of the Bowery Theatre in New York, having joined the company May 7, and for the week beginning June 1, Louie Lord was the star, playing “Lady Audley’s Secret,” “The Hidden Hand,” “Ireland as It Is,” and “Our Gal.” During the theatre season of 1879-1880 the Lord company was to have toured Kansas, but at the last minute leased the Lyceum (formerly the Globe) Theatre in Chicago, Louie Lord the star. The local press in Kansas said that Lord reported that Mrs. Lord was suddenly taken ill of typhoid

fever, but according to the Chicago *Daily Tribune*, September 7, she was playing “Divorced” at the Lyceum. A later report credited Lord with leasing the Folly Theatre, Chicago.\(^{11}\) In June, 1881, Louie Lord was reported playing again, a summer season, at the Lyceum Theatre in Chicago.\(^{12}\)

Another aspect of transition in both social organization and the nature of the theatre had a bearing on the fate and the adjustments of the Lords—a shift from emphasis upon the star to emphasis upon the play. In their first tour of Kansas, 1869-1870, the Lords presented at least 15 different plays, and on the second season, 1870-1871, some 20 additional titles, ranging from Shakespeare’s “Othello” to “The Funny Family,” a farce. In a ten-day run in Topeka, on the first tour, no play was repeated. The next season, in three series, they played in Topeka a total of 24 shows, and presented 21 different plays, the other three shows being repeat performances. By 1879 about 20 additional plays and farces had been added to the repertoire, while others had been dropped. By the early 1880’s the Lords met the specialized one-play company as a competitor, also theatre circuits, both of which contributed to their elimination from competition in the large cities. In small towns the one-play principle would have meant one-night stands and high transportation costs. The small places were not so sophisticated as not to accept the multiple-play company as satisfactory. Louie Lord could have the attention of an audience in “Othello,” “She Stoops to Conquer,” “Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” “Dora,” or “Lady Audley’s Secret.” But by the 1880’s, while maintaining a multiple-play status, Louie had to make concessions and specialize, limiting her offering to a few plays and giving emphasis to those especially written for her, or pieces of her own composition.

Copyright had not been a controlling issue at the opening of the 1870’s, but in the 1880’s the best protection was to own the copyright. Lord had settled one infringement suit for a reputed $1,000. He wrote two plays on which he held the copyrights, and two others were written by other hands but were copyrighted in his name. One of Louie Lord’s most noted plays was written by Scott Marble, “The Linwood Case,” and was copyrighted by Lord in 1883. Mrs. Lord’s own play “The Editor” apparently was not copyrighted.\(^{13}\)

\(^{11}\) Peabody *Gazette*, August 29, September 5, 1879; *The Dickinson County Chronicle*, Abilene, September 19, 1879.

\(^{12}\) *Saline County Journal*, Salina, June 30, 1881.


A more detailed study of the plays and of the organization of traveling theatre is reserved for a separate article.
When the Lords first came to Kansas, in December, 1869, the organization was billed as the J. A. Lord Dramatic Company of Chicago, or some variant of that title. Mrs. Lord was the star, but Mr. Lord received a substantial recognition which assessed honors fairly evenly. The dramatic critic of the Leavenworth *Daily Commercial* was completely captivated, however, by Louie and went into ecstasies—"She is a beautiful blonde, possessing fine stage presence, a melodious and effective voice and unmistakable dramatic abilities of a high order"—"the 'fair one' with the golden locks, Louie Lord,"—"the display of blonde hair which she afforded in 'Jenny Lind' should be more frequently seen, as its beauty would greatly delight the boys and arouse the ire of the chignon headed ladies. It almost rivalled Godiva's 'ripped ringlets to her knee'"—"Last night the wealth of her golden hair was exhibited to the delighted audience"—"As Lady Audley, the bewildering blonde, unscrupulous as lovely—she surpassed herself." 14 This was the one and only time in Kansas that Mrs. Lord's golden hair received rave notices. How the dramatic critics were kept under control is not known, but her person was seldom the subject of comment in other papers in 1869 or later. The company publicity placed the emphasis upon dramatic artistry, the character and quality of the acting rather than personal intimacies or extraneous matters. At Topeka the verdict was that Mrs. Lord appeared "to the best advantage" in parts requiring "great physical and mental force; in portraying the stormier passions of the human heart. . . ." 15

During the season of 1873-1874 the Lords appeared as stars under the John Whitely Combination and in 1875-1876 the Olympic Troupe. In 1876-1877 the name Louie Lord Combination was used, but the next two years the original name, J. A. Lord Dramatic Company reappeared most of the time until January, 1879, when a combination was made with the W. P. Hall Superior Dramatic Company. From 1881-1885 the regular name was Louie Lord Dramatic Company. More and more, as time passed, adverse notices of Lord's acting became more frequent and outspoken, and February 14, 1884, the *Saline County Journal*, Salina, announced that J. A. Lord had retired from acting and would devote his whole time to management. One adverse critic insisted that he excelled "in nothing but Rip Van Winkle, and Col. Sellers." 16

16. *Ford County Globe*, Dodge City, June 4, 1878. The part of Colonel Sellers was in the dramatized version of Mark Twain's *Gilded Age*.
During the theatrical season of 1878-1879 Lord responded to the lure of the west Kansas plains and made plans for disbanding the company early and making his location. Because of friendship between the editor of the Peabody Gazette and C. W. Taylor, a member of Lord's company, that paper, March 7, outlined the spring plans—Wellington, Winfield, and then Wichita where the company would break up, and Lord would go west to take up land. This item was picked up by the Ford County Globe, Dodge City, March 11. The schedule did not turn out quite as stated but the disbanding of the company did take place at El Dorado. The Walnut Valley Times, March 28, of that place announced:

The company will close a season of eight months ... at this place, and Saturday morning depart for their several homes to enjoy a vacation of four months. Mr. Lord goes to locate a colony in Kansas, and locates a ranch of five thousand acres himself for stock raising. Louie Lord goes to her home in Chicago, where she pays taxes on $20,000 in real estate. How many traveling managers can show a record equal to that of Mr. Lord? Talent and good management tells the story.

None of the first stories explained where Lord was locating or why he chose Meade county, but by a peculiar coincidence that area received a sudden publicity because of the salt sink which occurred in March. The land he selected was then described in the press as within four miles of the salt sink. The announcement was made also that he would soon bring out from the east a large family to locate in Meade county, a colony of Canadians settling under his management.17 The several news items were in general terms and did not provide specific data. The facts, so far as they were accurate, provided the beginning, however, of the legend about his or Louie's large ranch in southwestern Kansas—some said near Larned, but that location was probably derived from the fact that the United States Land Office for southwestern Kansas was then located at Larned.

On February 11, 1882, the Junction City Union insisted that Mr. and Mrs. Lord were enthusiastic Kansans. The only place they travel, or play outside of the large cities, is in Kansas, and the inducement is not so much the quantity of shekels to be gathered here, as that they love our climate and scenery. They own a section of land in Meade county, on which they have a quantity of stock, in charge of some relations, located there in the same business. Mr. Lord thinks Meade county a perfect paradise. It is gratifying to know that in addition to being well-fixed otherwise, they have a "ranche" upon which to rusticate.

17. Dodge City Times, March 29, April 5, 12, May 10, 31, 1879; Ford County Globe, April 8, May 6, July 8, 1879.
In the spring of 1883, again Lord cut short the theatrical season, arriving in Dodge City the first week in April on his way to “his cattle ranch in Meade county, where he will put in several months of his leisure time.” It should be noted that in no case cited did Mrs. Lord spend the summer in Meade county.

On Christmas night, 1883, in Atchison, Mrs. Lord performed in “The Linwood Case” a Scott Marble play written especially for her. The Champion said, December 27, that the effectiveness of the play “could be safely inferred from the quiet of the balcony. . . .” The dramatic critic then, with substantial accuracy, indulged in a recapitulation of the Kansas career of the Lords, especially Mrs. Lord:

More interesting than the play were the Lords themselves, who are really historical personages in Kansas. It is at least fourteen years since they began to appear before Kansas audiences, and thirteen years ago they opened Corinthian Hall with “Dora, or the Farmer’s Will.” They have since played, we believe, in every Kansas town which contains a building sufficient for the purposes of a dramatic performance. Mrs. Lord, as she appeared on the stage last night as “Margery Dore,” did not look a day older than the “Dora” of 1870, and in all the years Kansas people have always found her the same careful, painstaking and accomplished artist, and vastly better than a dozen stars we could name who forage all over the United States. The Lords, however, seem content to stick to Kansas and their friends. They have invested a portion of their means in lands in Meade county, and may retire to their far western estate some day. They are making a tour now which will pretty much cover Kansas. . . . In a couple of months they will revisit Atchison and appear in a new play written by Mrs. Lord herself.

This was not intended as an obituary, but it summed up James A. Lord’s career appropriately and slightly more than a year before such an article was necessary. But unlike obituaries, this editorial was printed while the subject was still in a position to appreciate the tribute.

III. James A. Lord’s Death
AND THE SETTLEMENT OF HIS ESTATE

During the fall of 1884, after playing through Kansas—Abilene, Salina, Ellsworth, Larned, and Dodge City—the Lords went west into New Mexico. Concerning a five-night stand, playing to crowded houses, the Dodge City Cowboy, December 6, 1884, asserted that: “Mrs. Lord is one of the most popular actresses on the American stage, and Mr. Lord is one of the most successful dramatic managers on the road. He has a good company and good plays. He is one of the few theatrical men whose word can be depended

18. Ibid., April 10, 1883.
upon.” The record is not complete about the plays presented, but from those specified at other towns on the route, the Dodge City series must have included “A Member of Congress” and “Madcaps Peg” (Peg, the Witch of Ruby Farm), both credited in the papers to Louie’s own composition, with “Pygmalion and Galatea,” “The Damites,” and “Divorce.”

In Socorro, N. M., after playing on January 15, 1885, Lord was taken ill, and the next day was dead. Mrs. Lord disbanded the troupe and returned by way of the Santa Fe railroad to Chicago for the burial. The Dodge City papers got some of the details during the train stop there for division servicing, January 19. The Globe Livestock Journal, Dodge City, January 20, extended its sympathy to Mrs. Lord, Dodge City’s “favorite actress.” The Kansas Cowboy, January 24, through its editor, the veteran Kansan, S. S. Prouty, presented the following:

Mrs. Lord is one of the most popular actresses on the American stage. She received her dramatic training from her husband. She was a school mistress in Chicago when she first met her dramatic lord. She took a fancy to the stage and Lord. She was an apt pupil and scored a success from the start. Lord was a good theatrical man and knew all about the business. He could instruct, but on the stage he could not fascinate. He knew this. He was keenly aware of the fact that his wife was the brains and soul of the Lord dramatic company. He appreciated her worth and sang the praises of her merits whenever opportunity offered. Mrs. Lord is young and now that she is free, pretty and rich, the dramatic world is before her to conquer. We predict that she will be the acknowledged empress of the stage before she reposes.

The Abilene Reflector, January 29, had this to say: “We trust that he made a graceful exit from this world. He wasn’t much of an actor, but he was a square, genial sort of man and deserves a respectable place in the memories of our people.” The Junction City Union, January 31, added to its prior tribute:

Mr. Lord was one of the first theatrical managers to regularly visit Kansas with a company. Away back in ’65 and ’69, Mr. Lord and Louie played for a week at a time in old Brown’s Hall. . . . There is scarcely a town in Kansas large enough to patronize a theatrical entertainment where he did not visit. He was by birth a Canadian, but came to the United States when a very young man, and served in the Union army. He was an exemplary and honest man, greatly devoted to his wife, “Louie,” who always accompanied him. Some years ago he invested in lands in Meade county, though he made his home in Chicago. . . .

The only really unkind reference to Lord came from the Winfield Courier, November 4, 1886, upon the occasion of Mrs. Lord’s return to that town for the first time after her husband’s death: “Formerly she was menaced by a jealous husband who persisted in playing
lover always, whether adapted or not. He shook off the mortal coil a year ago, and it seems to have been a blessing for Louie's theatrical success.” 19

At Chicago one person more or less, made no difference. The Daily Tribune and the Daily Inter-Ocean, January 22, 1885, carried identical announcements of Lord’s death:

In Socorro, New Mexico, January 16, James A. Lord theatrical manager and actor aged 55 years.

The funeral will take place from his late residence, 231 South Sangamon St., Friday, January 23 at 9:30 A.M. Services held at St. Patrick’s [Catholic] Church, thence by cars to Calvary Cemetery. Friends of the family and profession invited.

New York, Boston, Quebec, and Montreal papers please copy. 20

James A. Lord had made a will, dated Chicago, May 21, 1881, by which he left to his “beloved wife, Louisa M. Lord” and “to her alone and exclusively,”—“all I own and possess on Earth.” In order to settle the Kansas portion of the estate this will was probated in Meade county. 21 The story of the settlement involves a number of problems, a part of which cannot be explained fully from materials available. The first delay grew out of the rapidly changing political boundaries of western Kansas counties. In 1883 Meade county’s brief independent existence was canceled out, the area being divided between Ford and Seward counties. This is probably the explanation of part of the confusion in the Kansas press about the location of the Lords’ holdings, it sometimes being said that they were in Seward county. In 1885 Meade county was re-established with its present boundaries and much enlarged beyond the limits of the county as of 1875-1880. In the explanation of delays in probating the will, her lawyer, Arthur D. Rich, of Chicago, explained to the probate judge, in a letter of August 7, 1886, that Mrs. Lord had applied in June, 1885, at the office of the probate judge of Ford county at Dodge City, but had been advised to wait until the Meade county organization had been completed under the new law and then to probate the will there.

In the meantime other difficulties presented themselves. James A. Lord and Louisa M. Lord had no children, and none were named in the will, but a son of James A. Lord, by an earlier marriage, applied, May 28, 1886, to the probate judge, using the name of Edward

19. Other Kansas comments were by the Dodge City Democrat, January 24, 1885; Dodge City Times, January 22, 1885; Newton Kansas, February 9, 1885; Atchison Daily Champion, January 23, 1885; Atchison Daily Globe, January 31, 1885.

20. Acknowledgment is made here to Prof. Bessie Pierce, University of Chicago, for having her staff make researches for Chicago material on Mr. and Mrs. Lord.

21. Unless otherwise stated, all of the original documents relating to the settlement of the estate of James A. Lord are to be found in the office of the probate judge, Meade county. Case No. 12.
M. Colgan, to settle the estate of James A. Colgan, and an administrator had been appointed and proceedings begun. Then, in August, 1886, the probate judge received a letter from Edward M. Colgan, dated July 31, and another letter dated August 5, signed by two names in one hand, “Edward M. Colgan or Edward M. Lord.” In the first of these letters the writer referred to his earlier action under the name of Colgan, but now I find my father has always, that is for the past thirty (30) years, used his professional name Jas. A. Lord and discarded the family one of Colgan, naturalized and voted as Jas. A. Lord. His entry papers at the Land office are entered as Jas. A. Lord. Now there is a will made by him in favor of his wife Louisa M. to be presented for probate. Now Mrs. Lord is willing to give me a deed of the whole estate in Kansas as she does not care about it. The moment the will is approved by the court in Kansas, now in that case what shall I do. I want it settled with the very least trouble and expense. Can the papers I signed be changed to the name of Lord instead of Colgan. Mrs. Lord is perfectly willing that the claims against [it] by William Colgan be paid. . . .

The second letter, signed with the double signature explained: “. . . I have no objections whatever to the Probate of the Will. I am quite willing to trust Mrs. Lord to deal fairly and liberally with me.” 22

The son’s letter had referred to his father’s naturalization as a citizen of the United States. That legal transaction had been completed at Salina, November 29, 1881, and had been necessary to qualify him to complete the patent to his homestead entry at the General Land Office. The proceedings recited that he had been born in Canada, that he had produced in court his discharge papers from the United States army dated March 5, 1863, that he had given proof of residence in the United States more than five years, and in Kansas more than one year. 23

The exact nature of Lord’s residence in Kansas, of more than one year, as specified in the naturalization proceedings, is not clear. He had entered his homestead and a timber culture claim in 1879, and in 1880 was present when the United States census was taken, June 11-16. In the census he was listed as 41 years of age, married, and born in Canada of Irish born parents. He was credited with ownership of 320 acres of land, 40 acres of which were improved, and valued, together with improvements, at $720. The improve-

22. Both of these letters were dated at Chicago, 319-339 Street, near Wentworth Avenue. The capitalization and punctuation in these letters were quite individualistic.

23. Final Naturalization Records (1881-1903), Saline county, 1891, v. C, p. 9.—Fourteenth Judicial district of the state of Kansas. The fact that Lord had been naturalized in Salina was mentioned by the Salina Herald, February 21, 1884. The present writer wishes to thank Marion Klema, of Salina, for finding the naturalization record in the office of the district court and for making a copy for present purposes.
ments of 1879 were listed as worth $125, machinery at $50, and livestock at $200—two horses, three milk cows, two calves dropped, and two purchased, and 11 chickens. Although no agricultural production was returned, the editor of the census records inserted in red ink a nominal production of $12. Probably, almost certainly, Lord had spent only his summers in Meade county, devoting his time during the theatrical season to his profession, and leaving the care of his holdings in Meade county to his relatives. According to the United States census, the Colgan clan consisted of single young men, apparently all cousins, his nephews, and all like himself were born in Canada of Irish parents—John R., 25 years; John E., 27 years; John, 27 years; William, 18 years. Lord’s age as given in the census record did not agree with the obituary notice of 1885. Apparently, the census record was 10 years too young, with a birthday falling between January and June, 1829.

The long letter of Mrs. Lord’s Chicago lawyer, dated August 7, 1886, brought together the most complete statement of facts in one place about James A. Lord, the family, and the estate. He enclosed the original will, together with two photographic copies, the letter of Edward M. Colgan or Lord, dated August 5, stating that he had no objections to the probate of the will, and a brief résumé of Colgan-Lord family history:

Mr. Lord’s original family name was James A. Colgan. He was first married under that name and his only child Edward M. bears that name. His first wife died in 1861, & he married his 2d wife Oct. 18, 1864 under the name James A. Lord. It may be necessary to explain that he went into the theatrical business in Boston in 1855 and then for obvious reasons assumed the stage name of Lord & since that time has been known both on the stage and off only as James A. Lord. He enlisted in the army in 1861, was naturalized, and has always voted under the name of Lord. In all business transactions, in buying and selling property, he has used that name. He entered the homestead claim to land in yr. county and executed his will as you see by that name. In fact I am advised he has not used, or been known in business or otherwise by any other name since 1855. Under these circumstances I hardly think an alias will be necessary in the probate of the will.

These facts about Lord’s acting career beginning in 1855 would seem to confirm the probable date of his birth as the spring of 1829. Thus he would have been 51 in June, 1880, or 55 in January, 1885, or 56 if he had lived until June, 1885. According to this calendar, in 1855 he would have been 26 rather than 16 years of age upon entering the acting profession, and 32 rather than 22 when

24. United States Census, 1890.—Ms. agricultural schedules, and film copy of population schedules at Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.
his first wife died and he enlisted in the Union army. In October, 1864, when he married Louisa M. Simms, he would have been 35. Louie's age has not been determined, but as a Chicago school teacher in 1864, she may have been 10 to 15 years younger than her husband. Her family name has been established only tentatively by the fact that Willard E. Simms, comedian in the Lord Dramatic Company, was referred to as her brother.

But to return to the probate proceedings in Meade county, the probate judge permitted the substitution of names as requested, James A. Lord for James A. Colgan, and the continuation of the administrator already appointed under the former name. The inventory of the estate listed personal property (19 head of cattle) at $169, the homestead at $700, and the tree claim at $350. The homestead had been patented September 30, 1882, lots 3 and 4 and the east half of the southwest quarter of section 30, township 31 south, range 27 west of the Sixth principal meridian, a total of 153.67 acres. The tree claim, the northwest quarter of section 31, adjoining the homestead on the south, was not patented. But, according to the agreement between Mrs. Lord and Edward M. Lord, the estate relinquished rights to the latter and that fact was stated in the first annual report of the administrator. To complete the record, however, Edward Lord did not complete the tree claim title and no patent was ever issued to him. In fact, the relinquishment to him had no legal status under federal land laws. The patent to that quarter was eventually issued to Robert A. Brannan, October 12, 1900, on homestead entry. Eventually the Lord property was all sold and settlement made, Mrs. Lord receiving $241.45, for which she executed a receipt, February 1, 1890.

IV. LOUIE LORD, 1855-1889

After Mr. Lord's death, in January, 1885, Mrs. Lord appears to have retired from the stage, not only for the remainder of that season, but for the whole of the season of 1885-1886. In the fall of 1886, however, she was back on the road with a company of her own. Her advance agent was none other than her stepson, Edward M. Lord, and her manager, Clair M. Patee of Manhattan. The information about her activities in the interim of retirement is circumstantial except that her advance publicity stressed the point of

25. The affidavits of death of James A. Colgan or James A. Lord, were filed under both names, giving the death date as January 16, 1885. The affidavit of identity and substitution of names was approved by the probate court and filed December 6, 1887.
her return to the stage after some two years, and local commentary added its variations.\textsuperscript{27} The Beloit \textit{Gazette}, January 7, 1887, reported that “her return to the stage, after an absence of considerable time, is hailed with pleasure. . . . She is stronger . . . than ever. . . .” So favorable a verdict was evidently good advance publicity and was used in that fashion in \textit{The Dispatch}, Clay Center, January 12, 1887, to advertise the engagement there for January 14 and 15. It confirmed the opinion of the Ellsworth \textit{Democrat}, December 9, 1886, that: “Louie Lord is much improved this season, after her two years rest.”

Another aspect of publicity was the emphasis upon Mrs. Lord’s past record as a favorite actress of the several towns in which she was billed to play. The Washington \textit{Republican}, December 31, 1886, remarked: “Probably of all the ladies who have played in Kansas hers alone is the only name that would guarantee a house without additional advertising.”\textsuperscript{28} The Abilene \textit{Chronicle}, December 3, 1886, said that: “It is only necessary to announce their arrival here to secure an old time crowd to welcome them.”

The Louie Lord Dramatic Company played during November and December, 1886, and early January, 1887, in Caldwell, Winfield, El Dorado, Salina, Brookville, Ellsworth, Russell, Abilene, Manhattan, Washington, Concordia, Beloit, Minneapolis, Junction City, and Clay Center. Their reception was uniformly favorable and largely enthusiastic. The plays featured were: “The Linwood Case,” “A Modern Godiva,” “A Member of Congress,” “Maddock Peg,” “The Banker’s Daughter,” and “Forget-Me-Not.” The first four of these were represented as written expressly for or by Mrs. Lord, and had been in her repertoire before. At Winfield, November 12, the company celebrated Mrs. Lord’s birthday anniversary, but, as the \textit{Daily Courier} of that date put it neatly: “Of course the modesty of girlhood demands that we stop here—without figures.”

A feature of the season that was unusual to the Lord tradition of emphasis upon acting only, was special exploitation of Mrs. Lord’s wardrobe. At Salina, the \textit{Republican}, November 27, stated that in preparation for her coming the stage was getting a new carpet “so she can wear her handsome wardrobe.” The Abilene \textit{Daily Gazette}, December 17, concluded that: “The wardrobe is undoubtedly the finest that has been displayed on a stage in this city,” and the

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{27} Washington \textit{Republican}, December 31, 1886, said, erroneously, “after a retirement of several years.”

\textsuperscript{28} Variants of this are found in the Abilene \textit{Chronicle}, December 3; Ellsworth \textit{Reporter}, December 9; Russell Record, December 10, 1886.
\end{flushright}
Mercury, Manhattan, December 22, rendered the verdict that her costumes "... are alone worth the price of admission." 29

The press notices of the performances of the company as a whole, and of Mrs. Lord in particular, were never more glowing. Such an exception as the Daily Gazette, December 19, after the Abilene performance, was only relative, but possibly significant: "Louie Lord leaves us, with not so favorable an impression as on former occasions." Although Abilene audiences were small, the Reflector, December 23, made an issue of the quality of the acting: "Especially we desire to speak of 'Forget-Me-Not.' Miss Lord could not have more powerfully presented this title role had the same been written for her. She was simply perfect. The audience was spell bound from beginning to end." The eulogy included Mr. Simms, and closed: "Our citizens are seldom treated to genuine acting, but in Louie Lord and Mr. Simms they will see nothing better from any talent that makes Abilene a stopping place."

At the close of the highly successful, four-day engagement, of the Louie Lord Company at Salina, the Saline County Journal, December 9, 1886, announced that the troupe would return in March next. But within the next few days a peculiar series of rumors came into circulation that confused the whole scene. First, the Clay Center Daily Times, December 11, printed the following: "The news just reaches us that Louie Lord, the greatest of all great emotional actresses, has again married and is now Mrs. Carter. Her liege 'Lord' this time is her leading man and is something like fifteen years her junior. Glory Hallelujah! $75,000 do work wonders." No confirmation of this marriage story has been found. On the contrary, the probability of its validity is virtually eliminated. Her leading man was Lincoln J. Carter, and his youthful appearance had been the subject of unfavorable comment on the ground that one role required an older man.

Carter (1865-1926) was indeed a young man—just a few months less than 22 years, but with one play in production in Chicago already to his credit. According to his approved biographical sketch, his first marriage occurred in 1899. He was a prolific playwright of the melodramatic or sensational type of play, and after purchasing the Criterion Theatre in Chicago, in 1900, he was also a producer. 30

29. At Hays, on October 19, 1882, the Star-Sentinel commented about Louie "making five changes of elegant dresses; but, she always dresses well and neatly." This emphasis of 1883 was unusual.

Soon another report was in circulation that J. A. Simon had purchased a half interest in the company. This was definitely not true. The Junction City Union, January 8, 1887, announced "with pleasure" the coming of "the celebrated actress and lady, Louie Lord" on January 13: "All should attend, as this will be the last chance, she being about to retire from the stage, to see this talented and gifted actress."

Mrs. Lord herself dispelled a part of the confusion by a letter to the Abilene Daily Gazette, which was summarized in that paper January 14, "on next Saturday [January 15] she will cease to be a member of the company under the management of C. M. Pattee, who continues on the road with Miss Lord's brother, W. E. Simms, as the star of the company. Miss Lord will go to Chicago, where she will organize a new company, and secure dates (over the old route) to produce a number of new plays."

The relations of the Lords with Pattee were of several years' duration. Almost by coincidence he might appear to have been their evil genius. Clair M. Pattee (1858-1930) was born in Kansas, or Missouri, March 6, 1858, his father Dr. Elephalet L. Pattee settled in Manhattan, where this elder son became a printer. With A. L. Runyon, father of Damon Runyon, he established the Manhattan Enterprise in 1876, but left it January 24, 1877. In 1884 he and J. J. Davis founded the Manhattan Mercury, Pattee leaving it February 11, 1885, to join the staff of the Topeka State Journal. Between these ventures he worked at various jobs mostly connected with printing. In 1878 he made what appears to have been his first contract with the entertainment world—during the illness of the advance agent of the Andrews Bell Ringers, a period of two or three weeks, he served in that capacity.

But before relating the first contact between Pattee and the Lord Dramatic Company, a slight diversion is necessary. During the early months of 1878, the troupe suffered internal dissention which gained unpleasant publicity. The discontented man-and-wife team, Harry C. and May Seymour, insisted Mr. Lord wrote the publicity, including the critiques of the performances for the local press, for

31. Kansas Blade, Concordia, January 7, 28, 1887.
32. History of Kansas Newspapers (Topeka, 1916), p. 275, and files of the Enterprise and the Mercury; Enterprise, September 26, 1877, March 20, April 3, 10, May 1, 1878; "Kansas State Census, 1875." Riley county, Manhattan, p. 74, gave his birth place as Missouri; Lawrence Journal-World, July 11, 1930, gave his birthplace as Kansas, and his birthday as March 6, 1858. The 1873 census listed Pattee as 18 which would make the year of his birth 1856 or 1857 instead of 1858.
the glorification of Mrs. Lord. An episode at Dodge City illustrated
the point. The play was "Divorce" which the Times, February 2,
1878, praised: "Mrs. Lord performed the leading part, and though
in poor health, gave great satisfaction. She goes into the spirit and
soul of the character, and the swelled optics and the occasional drops
of overflowed emotion that coursed down many a fair and harder
cheek, was an evidence of the work the actress had done. . . ."
But the Times apologized for the amount of detail about the per-
formance, and turned to a satire on Mr. Lord's conduct:

It was Mr. Lord's speech, and not a dissertation on the show, we had in-
tended giving. But we will be pardoned for making serio-dramatic entertainment
for the edification of those who heard Mr. Lord's great speech of thanks, deliv-
ered before the performance of the last act in Divorce. Mr. Lord had much to be
thankful for, though the illness of Mrs. Lord detracted from the performances
of four nights of the engagement, yet he heartily thanked the people of Dodge
City for their liberal patronage, notwithstanding Mrs. Lord's indisposition.
He was profuse in his thanks to many of our citizens, who had aided him in
his wife's severe though not serious affliction, and to the urbane Sheriff and
County Board he was grateful for the use of the hall, and though the omission
of the star for four nights, he was especially thankful to Mr. Conner, who had
been unremitting in his efforts as ticket agent, which is the more pleasing as
the people were deprived of Louie Lord's presence four nights of the engage-
ment. The gentlemanly Mayor and town Council had his hearty thanks, and
could they have had the undivided pleasure of witnessing the leading char-
acter on the stage, whose four nights absence was sincerely to be regretted.
Notwithstanding he hoped the people of Dodge City would continue to live
on cattle, but he begged pardon he meant cattle trade, and on the return of
spring, when May flowers are in bloom, and the hectic flush on the cheek of
the star disappeared, he would spread the boards again. Mr. Phillips had
taken deep interest in the show and many thought he was the proprietor of
the troupe, but he was thankful to him and to the proprietors of the Dodge
City House for their uniform attention to the troupe and the star thereof, and
during her four days illness from which the people of Dodge, whom he hoped
would go to heaven, were deprived of the pleasure of her performances.

During October, 1878, the Seymours left the Lords and organized
their own company, with Clair M. Patee as advance agent. Before
the end of November, however, the company collapsed, the Sey-
mours leaving Salina and unpaid bills between two days to escape
process servers. Patee took a job as foreman of the Saline County
Journal's press room.23 It was just after the reorganization of the
Lord company that Mrs. Lord was ill in Wamego, the attending
physician being Dr. Patee of Manhattan. A few weeks later, Clair
Patee was traveling as advance agent of the Lord Dramatic Com-

23. Salina Herald, October 26, November 23, 1878; Saline County Journal, Salina, November 14, 21, 1878; Weekly Democrat, Salina, November 14, 21, 1878; Dickinson County Chronicle, Abilene, November 8, 1878; Abilene Gazette, November 22, 1878.
pany. He was with the Lords during the season of 1883-1884, and now was again with Mrs. Lord in 1886-1887.

Between 1884 and 1886 Patee had met and married Vivian Allen, of Lawrence, a newspaper woman, who, in 1886, turned actress in minor parts. This is the same man-and-wife team who, in 1903, in Lawrence established the first western moving picture theatre—but that is another story.

At Clay Center on January 14, 15, 1887 (Friday and Saturday), the Louie Lord Dramatic Company under Patee's management made its last appearance, and a new organization, the Clair Patee Comedy Company, was announced. The Evening Times, January 17, gave praise to both. The final play of the old group was "Forget-Me-Not":

It is a wonderful play, and in the hands of the leading artists of this company was made to partake of a reality almost painful in its intensity at times. Miss Lord appeared at her best and right along with her and dividing the honors was pretty little Edith Arnold as Alice Curney. It is a very hard character to sustain, but Miss Arnold never weakened in the least from the first to last. It is safe to foretell for her a brilliant future for she certainly has talent, youth, beauty, strength and ambition to commence the struggle. Mr. Carter, the "leading man," as Sir George Colby played very artistically at times, but still throughout with an air of abstraction and inattention hardly polite to actors or audience. There was a bare suspicion in his tired and oft repeated movements that his collar band was frayed about the edges and was sawing its way into his dorsal vertebra. Mrs. Patee made a faithful and amusing Mrs. Follensbee and showed herself competent for much better parts. The company dissolves here, Louie Lord going to Chicago where she will organize another company and star the larger cities of the east. Mr. Carter also resigned and started for Kansas City Sunday, the balance of the company with the addition of J. W. Carner as commedian, went to Belleville and from there will make the principal towns north and west.

A second article was devoted to the new organization, although much of the substance was repetition:

The company is almost as strong in every respect as was the old, and in some particulars very much better. J. W. Carner is a comedian second to none who travel in this part of the state and with the brilliant young Simms, who is Mrs. Lord's brother, will make a team hard to beat. They can force people to laugh whether they want to or not. Miss Edith Arnold is to be the "leading lady" and with her charming face and figure, and unmistakable ability, will completely fill the vacancy left by Mrs. Lord. She is young, pretty, vivacious, active, unmarried, and will soon be as much of a favorite and in the same direction as was Louie Lord years and years ago.

In the first article Louie Lord had received her praise. In the last mentioned, Edith Arnold received her praise. Whether or not

34. Manhattan Enterprise, December 13, 1878; Peabody Gazette, February 28, 1879; Salina Herald, March 1, 1879; Sumner County Press, Wellington, March 6, 1879.
intentional, in being enthusiastic about both, the contrast cut deep as brought out in the phrase “as was Louie Lord years and years ago.” The ruthlessness of youth in their climb to the top of the heap! In effect, even their kindness was unkind—no cruelty is more merciless than that inflicted inadvertently by kind friends.

Most of the stories of other papers followed the main outline of these communiqués as printed in the Clay Center Times, but the detail varied in accuracy. With few exceptions, all ignored Carter, possibly because he was virtually unknown in Kansas, while most of the other members were old friends to theatre goers.35 On the business end, Edward M. Lord, Mrs. Lord’s stepson, continued with Patee as advance agent.35 Much of the publicity for the Patee Company emphasized that it was the reorganized Louie Lord troupe, with practically the same cast. The Salina Herald, January 20, 1887, was explicit: “The company remains practically the same as when last here with the exception that Mr. Carner is added and Mrs. Lord left out.” 37

On the surface, at least, there was no indication of friction involved in the break up and reorganization of the components into two new companies. Still, the departure of Mrs. Lord and her leading man Carter to head a new company may have concealed fundamental differences either personal or policy-wise. The Patee organization emphasized two comedians, but the plays were for the most part out of the Lord repertoire. Louie Lord had made her reputation as an emotional actress. The separation of brother and sister, Willard Simms and Louie Lord, may have been intended to allow broader scope to both. The only unfavorable implication associated with the dissolution publicity was the derogatory comment about Carter’s final performance at Clay Center. At any rate, Carter did become Mrs. Lord’s manager.

In 1886-1887 Kansas and the West as far as the Pacific Ocean were experiencing the most fantastic phase of the Great Boom of the late 1880’s. In spite of a bad crop year in 1886, optimism ran wild. Nearly every town of any importance was projecting new manufacturing plants, boring for oil, or gas, or coal, or some mineral,

35. The Dispatch, Clay Center, January 19, 1887; Abilene Reflector, January 20, 1887; Salina Herald, January 20, 1887. 36. Concordia Kansas Blade, January 21, 1887; The Dispatch, Clay Center, January 19, 1887.

37. Beloit Gazette, January 21, 1887; Saline County Journal, January 27, 1887; Salina Republican, January 29, February 5, 1887. Patee continued to operate a theatrical company over the next two seasons, adding, in 1888-1889, such attractions as a female band, and the raffling of jewelry to ticket holders. His road show was brought to a sudden close at St. Joseph, in April, 1889, when he lost everything in a theatre fire.—Junction City Union, February 23, 1889; The Mercury, Manhattan, March 10, 20, 1889; Saline County Journal, February 28, March 7, April 11, 1889.
promoting new public utilities—electric light plants, street railways, gas plants, water plants, street paving, telephone systems, opera houses (by which was not meant music, but halls for theatrical and other entertainments, and public meetings). But the Great Boom was already, although unrecognized by most, in an advanced stage of deflation, with complete collapse in the offing. And the weather was co-operating in the oncoming disaster by short crops or complete failures over most of the years of the decade 1886-1895. Possibly the split-up at midseason into two companies by Louie and Willard was an aspect of this Great Boom psychology, or if other and strictly personal reasons were at the bottom of the division, this boom spirit may have encouraged both to go their separate ways before differences produced an explosion that would be bad for business. If the boom influence entered in any degree, however, it was an instance of bad business judgment.

Louie Lord, Supported by
The L. J. Carter Dramatic Company, Spring, 1887.

Mrs. Lord must have arrived in Chicago sometime Monday, January 17, 1887, following her last performance at Clay Center on Saturday night. How long she was occupied in assembling the new company and where they first played together is not established, but Louie Lord appeared in Wichita on February 9 at the Crawford Opera House for a four-day run, which was extended to six days. At the moment Wichita was enjoying the peak of her boom—she boasted unashamedly of being the "Athens of America" with three universities, two colleges, and two academies. Subscription papers were being circulated to raise funds for a season of opera music with well-known singers. That part or most of these boasts were only prospective did not bother Wichita, where, supposedly, all things were possible and to be projected meant to be assured as though already in being.

The publicity for Louie Lord was badly managed. Apparently the Crawford Opera House and the Beacon were engaged in mutual boycotting, the break coming only in March which did not help Mrs. Lord. Her presence in Wichita was not mentioned in the Beacon. The Eagle did only slightly better, and she was given limited attention in the amusement column. A short biographical sketch of Mrs. Lord’s career was presented: “Miss Lord's first appearance on the stage began in the old school of the legitimate, appearing as a member of the stock company of the Indianapolis theatre. Afterwards she made a very successful starring tour
through the large eastern cities and opened the present season with a new play and the company which last night appeared at the Crawford." Certainly part of this, at least, was misleading. In the critique of the performance of "Forget-Me-Not," the Eagle considered that: "Miss Lord gave a most successful representation...; she has a splendid physique, makes a fine stage appearance, her voice is good and she has a magnificent wardrobe." Mr. Carter, her leading man "was a finished actor and was several times greeted with applause." On the last night "Miss Lord and her leading man, Mr. Carter, were at the end of the third act recalled before the curtain." 38

An engagement at Winfield, February 18, 19, 1887, afforded much of interest to the personal story of Mrs. Lord. The advertisement announced: "Louie Lord, the accomplished and favorite artist supported by an entirely new and carefully selected support, with new and elegant costumes and the latest and most popular plays adapted to the company." Elsewhere the support was referred to as the L. J. Carter Dramatic Company. Whatever the form, however, it was Louie Lord's show. The first play was "A Member of Congress" which the Daily Courier said was presented to "a fair house," but:

Miss Lord is out of place in "star" parts. She might make a fairly acceptable soubrette in a fourth class variety show. She is not original in any particular and last evening especially in the last act she imitated or attempted to imitate Mrs. W. J. Florence, her costume being almost precisely the same as used by Mrs. Florence as the English widow in "Our Governor." Louie's support is good, in fact above the average. The Arndt of L. J. Carter was a neat piece of work and well carried. Mr. Carter will yet achieve a higher position in his chosen profession. The Califo of Mr. Dunscombe was fair, but he sadly needs training. He is on the school-boy exhibition order. The Captain Honeywood of Mr. Ashton was clever and he makes a very acceptable dude. The other male parts were fairly well taken. The Mrs. Monstrress of Miss Nevada and the Betsy of Miss Bradbury were exceedingly poor, in fact simply sticks. "American Born" tonight.

Quite different was the verdict of the dramatic critic of the Daily Visitor:

Last night the opera house was well filled with an audience of our best people.

... Nothing can be said of the performance except the same old story: it was perfect. Louie Lord as Cecelia Dunscombe was the same finished actress that we have always seen her. In her part last night she simply carried the audience by storm. There is no actress visits our city who so universally pleases all classes as she does. Her support is very good and we are glad to see that she has a better company than when here last. Mr. Carter, Mr. Colton Covert, Ashton and Pringle all played their parts well. Miss Bradbury and Miss Nevada

38. Wichita Daily Eagle, February 6, 9, 13, 16, 1887.
are fair, although the latter does not dress her part in “Member of Congress” as elaborately as it should be.

Likewise the *Daily Visitor* considered the second night’s play “American Born” “a strong one and the whole company was perfect in their interpretation of the piece.” The *Daily Visitor* printed a letter from L. J. Carter, manager for Louie Lord, commenting on the *Courier* article. When shown to her, “Mrs. Lord only smiled.” But Carter wished “every person in the state of Kansas could see that article as it would show what judgment the poor boy who wrote it has.” After all, the leading papers of the west recognized Mrs. Lord as “an actress, and acknowledged artist,”—“But the people are the judges, the people who flock to see her in every city and town in Kansas. From the capital down, they recognize her as an artist and pay their money to see her.” He then presented the figures on the advance reserved seat sale at Winfield; for the first night 48 tickets, but for the second “(mind you, after what the Courier says was a vile performance) the sale amounted to 127 reserved seats.” Carter revealed himself as not quite tactful even if such a public letter be admitted as desirable. A better defense and with more propriety came from elsewhere.

The *Saturday Evening Tribune* took its contemporary to task and on high grounds that went beyond the level of personalities or of mere entertainment:

The *Courier*’s unkind criticism of the Louie Lord Company was uncalled for, to say the least. Louie Lord is a great favorite with the play going people of Winfield, as has been evidenced at every appearance here of her company, by the good attendance given; and the *Courier* insults those people who attend repeatedly, when it makes such a severe criticism as was that of her appearance here last week. We know not the motive that prompted the criticism, but predict that it was not altogether because of a thought of its being merited. Possibly Louie Lord’s plays have too much of a lauding of the good and noble traits and qualities of man and woman. Her plays may not have enough sensation and low vulgarity in them to please the *Courier*. We think the Harper Sentinel perhaps hits the key note to the *Courier*’s distaste for Louie Lord and her plays.

The Harper Sentinel’s defense was more explicit and besides defending Mrs. Lord as an actress, entered into a defense of her theatrical philosophy and policy as well as providing an interpretation of its own of the role of theatre in the history of human culture:

It has been one of the great misfortunes of the theatrical profession that it has furnished a field wherein unprincipled persons could obtain a livelihood, and by their disgraceful conduct have injured not only one of the greatest arts of mankind, but many worthy and deserving people. The stage, when in the hands of legitimate and conscientious artists, is a most powerful educator; it is
the art gallery of humanity; each character is but a painting representing the righteous instincts, the evil traits and the pure motives we find in the world. The entire forming a picture pleasing to look upon, yet impressing the observer with its teachings, enabling him to better judge the characters he meets in the great drama of life. In saying this we refer only to the pure and legitimate drama, where a wild story of right and wrong is portrayed, and not to the sensational trash, presenting only the triumphs of a fugitive from justice over morality and law abiding humanity. . . . In her negotiations with authors for new dramas she has been positive in her rule not to accept a play which contains a single syllable or sentence which could offend the most fastidious or depend upon sensational climaxes for its success. Prominent managers have said, "Mis. Lord, the people want sensation, and you are making a mistake in refusing to comply with their wishes." The lady's answer has invariably been "The public want amusement, and the more interesting, pure and elevating you can make it, the greater good you will do, and your endeavors will be sustained by society and an appreciative and admiring public." Whether the lady is right or not is evidenced by her exceptional prosperity, and her ability to aid benevolent institutions and worthy causes with financial assistance.

There would seem to be no room for doubt of the Sentinel's sincerity in the foregoing editorial and after events did not detract from it. Mrs. Lord played in Harper immediately after the Winfield engagement and the Sentinel editor commented on the play "A Wonderful Woman," the slim audience and admitted: "The play was not very enthusiastically received—in short the accomplished actress did not appear at her best in either of the plays presented here. There is no doubt as to her ability and many were highly pleased with her acting, but she did not please the theatre going public generally as well as usual we think."39

Six different plays were mentioned in the reports on the Louie Lord tour of the spring of 1887: "Fedora," "American Born," "A Wonderful Woman," "A Member of Congress," "A Modern Godiva," and "Forget-Me-Not." The first three named were new to Louie's list of plays so far as the present record goes.

THE SEASON OF 1887-1888

The record of the season of 1887-1888 in Kansas is sketchy. During October, 1887, Louie Lord played in Manhattan and Junction City, and during January, 1888, in Concordia and Belleville. The reports in the press were so brief that only two plays were men-

39. Winfield Daily Courier, February 15, 17-19, 1887; Weekly Courier, February 17, 24, 1887; Winfield Daily Visitor, 16, 18-20, 1887; Winfield Saturday Evening Tribune (weekly), February 26, 1887; Harper Sentinel (weekly), February 28, 1887. The Harper Sentinel editorial in defense of the theatre was quoted in the Tribune from the Harper Daily Sentinel, but that issue is missing from the Sentinel files, thus the only copy available is this reprint.

Louie Lord's tour extended to north central Kansas and included Beloit, Washington, and Concordia. The weekly papers of those places, the Gazette, Republican, and Register for April, 1887, reported only briefly, and little beyond the advance publicity.
tioned by title: "Forget-Me-Not" and "Circus Queen." The Junction City Union reported satisfaction: "All of her plays are of the highly emotional order, and are well written and presented. Her company is the finest seen here this season; are splendidly costumed, and her scenery, special by Hoyt, New York, completely fits every situation." The emphasis upon scenery by Hoyt was a far cry from the Wellington setup—"their scenery crude and their stage a low platform curtained off with cheap curtains strung on a wire." Not only had Louie Lord grown older, but Kansas had changed and its demands were greater and its tastes more critical even in the face of the Great Depression that was closing in with devastating thoroughness.

The winter of 1887-1888 was the second during which a large part of the grassland was swept by destructive blizzards and bitter cold. Scheduled to play at Concordia, January 14, the company failed to arrive in time for the performance because of disrupted train schedules. The engagement was postponed accordingly to January 26, "provided trains run or the walking is not too bad." The play was "Circus Queen."

Only a fair audience breathed the intensely cold wind, but they should [have] hugged the fire and escaped the agony. The piece is a new one, the production of the manager of the company, L. J. Carter. It will probably never be the equal of "Idonia." 40 In the first act the audience is left expecting something startling to develop in the second, but which falls very flat. The third as well be left out of the play as the hashed up mess of stuff in the scene from the circus is sickening. Mr. Simms makes the most of his character as do the rest of the company, but the dialogue is neither witty nor heavy. We would advise Miss Lord to strike the "Circus Queen" from her role.

The foregoing criticism was from friends, and the plea to Louie to drop the "Circus Queen" was made out of concern for an admired heroine. The paragraph revealed also that brother and sister were together again. Apparently Simms had only completed the preceding season with Patee. The extraordinary severity of the winter had added its bit to the effects of drought and depression. That attendance was not up to expectations was no unfavorable reflection on Mrs. Lord and her company. Clay Center had built its opera house as a part of its boom climax, and at the end of the first season, 1887-1888, admitted that it had been poorly patronized.41

40. "Idonia" was L. J. Carter's successful play, first produced in Chicago at the Academy of Music in 1886.
41. The Mercury, Manhattan, October 19, 1887; Junction City Union, October 22, 1887; Kansas Blade, Concordia, January 13, 20, 27, 1888; Belleville Telescope, January 5, 1888; The Dispatch, Clay Center, April 25, 1888.
The Season of 1888-1889

During the season of 1888-1889, Mrs. Lord was back in Kansas, as the publicity put it: "supported by Carters Superb Company." They had been at Belleville for three days in January and were back for two days in December, 1888—"one of Belleville's favorites." Next she was in Concordia for two performances—"Louie's reputation is sufficient guarantee that she gave satisfaction. Her manager Mr. Carter is a thorough gentleman and added another long list of friends to the many he already had." The plays were "This Man's Wife," and "Wonderful Woman." The Concordia Empire, December 20, 1888, provided something more in the way of comment than the usual formalities: "The audiences at Louie Lord's plays last week were the smallest she ever had in Concordia. It is not that Louie is less popular, but opera money is not very abundant, and a circus or a show of a grosser order is required to bring out the crowd." This verdict is important and significant of the less tangible damage done by the prolonged depression of that period. As was intended, it was more than a comment on Mrs. Lord. If it were a single, isolated rationalization, it might be ignored, but statements of this general character were cumulative. They carried with them, however, a peculiar undertone of tragedy for a star whose light was fading and her long record of resistance to demands for "grosser order" of theatre. But the Minneapolis Messenger, after Christmas, noted that: "The Louie Lord Dramatic Company is again in Kansas, and giving entertainments." Regardless of the official title of the Carter Superb Company, to seasoned Kansans, interested in the traveling theatre, the old name stuck.42

In February, 1889, Mrs. Lord was in southern Kansas. At Garnett, February 5, she was billed to present the "Wonderful Woman," but the after comment mentioned only "The Editor," and the company was referred to as "The Louie Lord Musical Comedy Company." The record is incomplete, but circumstantially there would appear to have been a reorganization. Certainly, there was a change of program. At Eureka, El Dorado, and Halstead, only "The Editor" was mentioned in the press, and apparently the company was operating on a one-night stand basis, which imposed extra-heavy overhead costs.

The advance publicity at Eureka had this to say of the play:

"The Editor, or fun in a Country Newspaper Office," written by Mrs. Lord herself, and [is?] said to be one of the most humorous pieces ever put upon

42. Belleville Telescope, December 6, 1888; Kansas Blade, Concordia, December 14, 21, 1888; Concordia Empire, December 6, 18, 20, 1888; Minneapolis Messenger, December 27, 1888.
the stage. There will be plenty of funny situations, music, dancing, special scenery, pretty faces and gorgeous costumes. The latest songs and dances introduced throughout the entire comedy. On the occasion of her appearance here six years ago, Mrs. Lord gave the most complete satisfaction, and we have no hesitancy in assuring the public that the performance to-morrow night will be a highly pleasing one.

Afterward, the Messenger was more than pleased:

Louie Lord is a wonderful actress and her company is the best all through that has visited Eureka for five years. Mrs. Lord’s genius is sufficient to make a straight backed chair as hard as the rock of Gibraltar seem soft as a silk plush divan, and under the influence of her magic the importunities of the pop corn vender resemble the soft wooings of an houri. People forget to clamor for better Opera House facilities when under the influence of her entrancing power, and we hope she may come often to Eureka.

At El Dorado the advance publicity emphasized that: “The musical selections introduced in Louie Lord’s new play ‘The Editor’ are pronounced gems,” also that: “Louie Lord has never played to a poor house in El Dorado and from the present indications she will keep up the record.” The play to be presented by the “favorite actress” was represented as an entirely new Musical Comedy. . . . In producing this play Mrs. Lord has surrounded herself with a capable company and intends making this the effort of her life. The play was written expressly for Mrs. Lord and in presenting it neither time nor expense has been spared. The production deals with the trials and tribulations of the average newspaper man, and might be termed fun in a newspaper office. Incidental to the play are a number of choice musical selections from the late operatic successes, including Erminni [Ermani], Yoeman of the Guard, Said Pasha, etc.

During the week the El Dorado Republican was burned out so the same editor could not comment after the performance, but the rival Walnut Valley Times agreed that Louie Lord “fully sustained the expectations of our people. Carter as the ‘Country Editor’ was immense. Miss Lord as ‘Mildred’ more than sustained her reputation with the people of El Dorado. In fact the whole company was good and left nothing to be desired in their rendering of ‘The Editor.’”

But the Times had other comments that struck in several directions and were more revealing than he could possibly have anticipated:

Louie Lord played “The Editor” to a full house last night. And “Lord” what an editor Louie’s editor is! There’s nothing deep in it any more than there is in a game of backgammon, which a chatter-box may play as well as the most taciturn individual. It ought to take well in the backwoods districts. In writing “The Editor,” however, Louie Lord wrote herself out as a star. Her
“editor” is the twinkler and he is such a dazzling individual that one loses sight of all the rest of the company in watching him. Yet after all he is only the thread on which is strung a rich, fond and foolish husband and his country girl wife. The play is all fun and this scribe is ready for the hospital from laughing at its giddy players. Louie Lord’s admirers were surprised at her preservedness. She is actually younger, plumper and prettier than our people have ever seen her. She is growing younger as she grows older.43

Comment upon this editorial is in order. From the beginning the Lords had used some music, more in their earlier career than later. Louie herself had sung, but music was subordinated to spoken parts. Jennie Woltz had been a singing member of their troupe for several seasons. On October 19, 1882, the Hays Star-Sentinel was so impressed with Jennie Woltz that it asked: “can’t we have one night of Opera, say ‘Daughter of the Regiment’? Think of this Mr. Lord.” The next issue of the paper recorded that: “The ‘Daughter of the Regiment’ with Jennie Woltz in the leading role of Josephine, was rendered in a creditable style by the Lord Company, Tuesday evening.” Apparently the use of this musical show during that season was the exception that emphasized the rule. But in “The Editor” well-worn popular hit tunes were apparently a major ingredient of a spoken production. If these descriptions of the play and the performances are to be taken literally, Louie had gone over to pure amusement. Her specialty had been emotional drama. The local scribe insisted, however, that in “The Editor”: “Louie Lord wrote herself out as a star.” The “Editor,” L. J. Carter in this case, became the star. The contrast becomes clearer by pointing to the two plays used during the early part of the season in north central Kansas: “This Man’s Wife” and “Wonderful Woman.” In both obviously the woman starred. But in making a comedy star out of Carter, what had become of her brother Willard Simms? He was not mentioned. The point has been made that in “The Editor” Mrs. Lord had turned from emotional drama to pure entertainment. The word “pure” may be used in a double sense. The purpose was not moral, it was not to teach—merely to amuse. In the process, however, the entertainment did not resort to the exploitation of filth in the guise of humor—it was clean fun—“The play is all fun and this scribe is ready for the hospital from laughing at its giddy players.”

A sour note must be recorded at this point, and it came from the Saline County Journal, February 21, 1889;

How hath the mighty fallen. When Louie Lord was at her best she was performing in Salina and other metropolitan cities. She night after night held

43. Garnett Journal, February 1, 8, 1889; Eureka Democratic Messenger, February 8, 15, 1889; El Dorado Republican, February 8, 1889; Walnut Valley Times, El Dorado, February 15, 1889; Halstead Independent, February 8, 1889.
audiences spellbound and rapt with wonder at her gifts in Salina's first temple of play (now the laundry establishment at Iron Avenue bridge). In those days "Athletic Hall" was to Salina what the Old Bowery in ancient days was to New York. Now Louie Lord is entertaining the village audiences with a burlesque on "The Editor"—the poor, impetuous editor. She never performs any more where she won her pristine glory, her performances being confined chiefly to the "arid region" west of the sixth principal meridian described by Frank Wilkeson, and in cities of the third-class, or no class.

So far as evidence goes there was no particular occasion for this outburst, but it cannot be ignored. Without any identifiable provocation it came with a particularly bad grace from Salina where the Lords had long been favorites. At one time Louie had opened their new opera house, and on the last visit, just a few weeks before Lord's death, she had played a benefit for the Salina Cadet Band which netted them $35. And in the winter of 1884-1885 that sum would buy something. Also the Journal's ridicule of Louie Lord contained a sneer at the towns in which she had been playing during the current winter season. Those listed in this narrative, by coincidence were all on or east of the Journal's magic line—the Sixth Principal Meridian. Salina had yet to learn that its prosperity depended to a great extent upon the county west of that line, which was the particular object of its derogatory remarks. From any point of view, the Journal's derisive comments were in bad taste, and as they applied to Louie Lord that phrase is too mild. Obviously, there were some of her old youthful roles that she could no longer play, yet the enthusiasm with which she was still received by some audiences even in Salina only a short time before, would seem to indicate that she still possessed much of her magic skill. The blanket gibe of the Journal made no qualifications, and it was a paper of some influence whose acid verdict could not but have had some corrosive effects.

V. Conclusion

This is the end of the continuous story, but not the end of Louie Lord. She may have played from time to time in Kansas over the next decade, but the trail has been lost. During October and November, 1897, a troupe played Nebraska and northern Kansas under the name of "Carlton and Lord Comedians." The star was Jennie Califf, and Louie Lord was not mentioned. In response to the northern Kansas publicity, Kansas editors identified the Lord of this combination with James A. and Louie Lord. Thus the Belleville Republic County Freeman, November 11, 1897, recalled: "Mr.
Lord has always brought to Belleville first-class companies. The Louis Lord Co., and The Clair Patee Co. will be remembered as a very strong organization. . . ." The Western Advocate, Mankato, November 12, 1897, also harked back to the old days: "The old residents will remember the Lord company in years gone by, as a first-class troupe, and Mr. Lord promises to bring just as good a company as ever." Could this Mr. Lord be the son, Edward M. Lord? Or, had the old editor mistaken identities altogether? On November 24, 1897, the Jewell County Monitor and Review, Mankato, said: "The Lord & Carlton show company is reported to have gone to pieces at Smith Center. It was too good a show to deserve such a fate." The Smith County Journal, Smith Center, December 2, 1897, insisted it disbanded at Phillipsburg and could not resist the opportunity to take a pot shot at its neighboring town: "a whole week in that burg was a little more than they could [take?] and survive the shock." 44

But in Oberlin, the papers announced that: "Louie Lord, the noted actress, will be with the people of Oberlin the week commencing Dec. 6. Louie is a great favorite with the Oberlin people and is supported in the Carlton-Lord combination by a repertoire company of creditable ability." The papers did not explain whether this was the advance advertisement of the company prior to the disbandment at Phillipsburg, or whether it was a new organization formed by Louie out of a part of that group. If the former, it was the only instance found for the season where Louie Lord was even mentioned as an active member of the company. Neither did the papers report about whether the engagement was filled. In any case, these advertisements featured her as of old—for Oberlin, the show was still Louie Lord. 45 But already, the woman had been transfigured into a legend—a folk heroine, therefore ageless.

Are conclusions to this essay necessary? It is a section out of life, with the accent upon Kansas, and without absolute beginning or end. It is a segment out of the personal story of two individuals and not biography. Time took its toll of the human persons who are the center of interest. As biological organisms they passed through the life cycle of youth, maturity, and old age. Society, which is the medium in which they operated, is not an organism,
but is subject to several forms of continuous renewal. James A. Lord and Louie Lord made adjustments to social change in the United States and in Kansas when the tempo of its reconstruction under the influence of mechanization had reached a new order of magnitude; to comparable transformation in the theatre; and to the vicissitudes of the process of human aging.

In comparison with the theatrical personalities of the road show group, they were undoubtedly among the most successful in meeting these demands of change without sacrificing what appeared to be basic principles. They made concessions in detail, but they did not surrender. At least, not while they worked as a team. Whether Louie alone was able to continue so successfully the reasoned and reasonable equilibrium or steady state of adjustment between principle and prevailing practice may be somewhat open to question. Still, judgment is dangerous. Her problems were ever so much more complex. The difficulties confronting a woman, whose only hold on her manager was a business contract, were not enviable. Whatever James A. Lord's deficiencies, there was never any doubt about his intense loyalty to Louie and to her career. Even when he was indiscreet in his methods of promoting her interests, it was done out of the intensity of a short-sighted devotion. The Dodge City Times, February 2, 1878, had been quite accurate in its characterization of his role in the play "Divorce" as well as in real life: "Mr. Lord is an accomplished performer, and pleased the audience in the difficult (though it is played to perfection off the stage) character of the proud, obstinate but kindly hearted husband." After his death, except for her brother, Willard Simms, she could have no one of comparable loyalty and experience, but apparently Simms was not an executive.

Those after years were in the nature of an uncertain postscript to James A. and Louie Lord's successful years together. If the newspaper stories reflect their financial status at all accurately, the Lords did well. But, although a certain degree of business success was essential to their continuing in their profession on a basis which made their independence and defense of their principles possible, beyond that it was not a measure of success. In their profession there was no security; each season was a new uncertainty. The truer measure of their careers lay in their ability to keep their shows on the road over a period of two decades of change and to keep the stage respectable whether according to their concept of teaching ideals through emotional drama, or of merely providing the public with clean fun. And they were successful in that.