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The Connecticut Kansas Colony

LETTERS OF CHARLES B. LINES TO THE NEW HAVEN (CONN.) DAILY PALLADIUM

Compiled and Edited by ALBERTA PANTLE

I. INTRODUCTION

Notice is hereby given that a company is being formed for the purpose of emigrating to Kansas. Those, therefore, who desire to aid in establishing the Institutions of New England, and to secure for themselves and their families a good home in that delightful country, are requested to communicate with the subscriber as early as practicable. Men of all professions, and especially farmers are needed, but only such as will be able to contribute in some substantial manner to the building up of a flourishing community.

New Haven
C. B. Lines
Feb. 18, 1856.
No. 90 State Street.

THE above item in the New Haven (Conn.) Daily Palladium was the first public notice of one of the most famous Kansas immigrant companies, the “Beecher Bible and Rifle Colony.” How it got this name, how it was organized, how it traveled to Kansas, and how it settled there, are described in the letters which follow.

The C. B. Lines who signed the notice was Charles Burrill Lines,¹ the writer of the letters. He had announced, at a public meeting the night before, that he would organize a colony. The struggle between free and slave-state factions in the new territory of Kansas

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1. Charles Burrill Lines was born at New Haven, Conn., March 12, 1807, the son of C. B. and Laura (Frost) Lines and died at Wabaunsee, Kan., March 31, 1896. He was a cabinetmaker and undertaker in New Haven before coming to Kansas. He had been on the board of selectmen for the town of New Haven for five years and had served in the Connecticut legislature in 1853. After coming to Kansas he took a prominent part in public affairs, serving as a member of the last territorial legislature in 1861; receiver of the United States land offices at Lecompton and Topeka from March, 1861, to April, 1865, and from January, 1875, to April, 1877; state pension agent from October, 1865, to September, 1874; regent of the University of Kansas from 1864 to 1874. He was one of the founders of the Kansas State Horticultural Society and an active horticulturist during his entire life.

Mr. Lines was married on January 19, 1829, at New Haven, to Maria Wood. They had nine children, two of whom died in infancy. The other children were: Elford J., married Louisa M. Smith, died in October, 1869; Edward C. D., married Grace Thomas, died in the Civil War; Ellsworth, died at Wabaunsee, October 7, 1861; Libbie, married J. P. Evans who came from Connecticut after the colony was founded, Cornelia, married S. M. Thomas, a member of the colony, died June 11, 1879; Harriett, married Isaac H. Ishbell, who was one of the children who came to Wabaunsee with the colony, died May 1, 1933; Lulu, married George S. Burt, died November 29, 1927.—Mss. in Library, Kansas State Historical Society.
was already a matter of concern to all New Englanders. In the fall of 1855, Eli Thayer and Samuel Clarke Pomeroy of the New England Aid Company had spoken at a series of meetings in New Haven. They and other prominent antislavery men had done much to arouse the people of the community. Many felt, as Lines did, that “if Kansas was saved, it must be by friends of freedom moving there to live in sufficient numbers to outvote the slave propagandists.”

Following Lines’ announcement, meetings were held in Hartford, Meriden, Middletown, and other nearby towns. Within a short time 85 persons had signified their intention of joining the colony.

On March 7 a meeting was held in New Haven at which a “constitution or plan of agreement” was drafted and officers elected. Lines was made president; the other officers were Thomas C. P. Hyde, secretary; Walter Webb, treasurer; and Harry S. Hall, H. A. Wilcox, E. M. Woodford, J. P. Root, Benj. Street, and John J. Walter, directors.

At this meeting “Inquiries were had, in regard to the occupation, age & gifts of the members. It appeared that of those present a large proportion were mechanics with a considerable number of farmers, there were also professional men, surveyors, Teachers & merchants many of the number being professors of religion, and all range in their ages from 14 to 50.”

Definite plans regarding the buying of seeds, time of departure, tickets and freight arrangements were discussed at a meeting on March 11. March 26 was set as the tentative date of departure. It was learned that six wives expected to go along. A committee was appointed to explore certain portions of Kansas territory and select a suitable location for the settlement. It was voted “that the Directors make arrangements for a supply of provisions for two months.”

The following articles were approved: flour, beans, pork, meal, potatoes, smoked beef, rice, dried apples, smoked ham, crackers. It was also voted that the directors “provide a supply of Tent cloth,


3. H. A. Wilcox, a physician from Rhode Island, had come to Kansas in October, 1854, with the Fourth Emigrant Aid Party. He was a founder of Canton which was included in the organization of Manhattan in 1855.—See “The Emigrant Aid Company Parties of 1854,” by Louise Barry, in The Kansas Historical Quarterly, Topeka, v. 12 (May, 1943), p. 145.


5. This committee was commonly referred to as the “pioneer” committee. Members chosen at this time were: H. A. Wilcox, H. S. Hall, J. J. Walter, and Walter Webb, but there are conflicting accounts as to the men who actually came to Kansas with this group. Amos A. Cottrell and Harvey D. Rice were members of the pioneer committee while H. S. Hall seems to have come with the main group.
and such other articles as may seem necessary." 6 Wagons, they concluded, could best be bought at St. Louis and teams near the Missouri line.

On the following Thursday evening a meeting was held in North Church for the purpose of providing the colonists with arms. The church was filled. Many clergymen were in the audience, together with a large representation of the faculty of Yale.

The Rev. Henry Ward Beecher opened the meeting with an eloquent antislavery address. Lines spoke briefly on the necessity of providing sufficient arms for personal defense. Prof. Benjamin Silliman of Yale then rose and headed the subscription with the donation of a Sharps rifle.7 Others followed. Beecher promised that if 25 rifles were given at this meeting 25 more would be given by his Plymouth church in Brooklyn. In all, not counting Beecher's pledge, 27 weapons were subscribed. Within a week the promised rifles came from Brooklyn, together with 25 Bibles, the gift of a member of the same church. The incident gave the name “Beecher Bible and Rifle Colony” to the company and the name “Beecher Bible” to the Sharps rifle.

This meeting caused widespread comment in the press, criticism of the clergy for condoning the gift of weapons of warfare, and concern among Yale students, many of whom were from Southern states. Little or no criticism was aimed at the company, for it was recognized that any group then going into Kansas territory must be armed.

On the evening of March 31, a farewell meeting was held in New Haven. Every seat in the hall was taken and hundreds of persons were turned away. Speeches were made by prominent citizens and Lines gave a farewell address. "The Western Colonist's Song" dedicated to the colony by the Rev. H. Bingham, was sung. The New York Tribune, reporting the meeting, described the emigrants as follows:

A nobler looking body of men were never seen than our New-Haven Colony. They are mostly large, athletic men, with strong hands and strong

7. It has been estimated that arms costing more than $50,000 were given to Free-State settlers in Kansas in 1855 and 1856 by Eastern aid societies and individuals. A large proportion were Sharps rifles manufactured by the Sharps Rifle Manufacturing Company, at Hartford, Conn. "This breech-loading rifle was a new invention and extremely effective; in comparison, the Missourian was poorly armed, carrying either a squirrel-rifle, a heavy buffalo-gun, or a clumsy army musket." Sharps rifles became a byword for dispute and contention but they were, nevertheless, a decisive factor in the defeat of the Proslaverymen. —"The Sharps Rifle Episode in Kansas History," by W. H. Isley, in The American Historical Review, Lancaster, Pa., v. 13 (April, 1907), pp. 546-566. In 1883 Sherman A. Baldwin, a member of the colony, gave the Sharps rifle he had brought to Kansas to the Kansas State Historical Society. It is now in the museum of the Society. The Beecher Bible belonging to the Mitchell family was given to Washburn University by Mrs. William Mitchell, Jr., many years ago.
hearts, and some of them are the flower of this, the metropolis of Connecticut Yankeedom. Among the colony are two ex-members of the Legislature, one clergyman, one physician, one or two theological students; and quite a number of the members of the Colony have their diplomas from Old Yale. In point of education, talent and ability, the Colony stands unrivaled, and may well challenge competition.  

At ten o’clock that night the colony left the hall to take the boat for New York. They were preceded by a band and accompanied by the Elm City Guards, the Croton Engine Company No. 1, and four hundred friends. Buildings along the way were illuminated, and people assembled on balconies and in windows to cheer the procession and bid adieu. As the boat left the wharf, cheers were given for the New Haven colony and for the “Free State of Kansas.”

II. THE LETTERS, APRIL 7-MAY 22, 1856  

MISSOURI RIVER, APRIL 7, 1856.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—We arrived in St. Louis on Friday morning, after a tedious journey of four nights and three days, with no opportunity for a change of clothing, and no sleep except what is afforded in the jostle of a railroad car. Near Buffalo we passed through snow banks higher than the tops of the cars; but by the power of steam we soon reached the region of spring, and saw the farmers at their plough. The country through which we passed from Cleveland to Terre Haute, is certainly not very inviting, but the town of Terre Haute itself is a fine locality, and it must become a place of considerable importance. At this point we changed cars, and running nearly at right angles, proceeded to Vincennes. Arrived there in the dusk of the evening. Again changing cars, we pushed on slowly through the night to St. Louis. The shifting of baggage upon these different routes is a serious inconvenience and damage to passengers. Pains seems to be taken by the men who handle it, to tumble it about with as much violence as possible, by means of which several strong trunks were broken in pieces, carpet bags torn asunder, and many valuable articles utterly ruined. On arriving at St. Louis, we were very politely requested to sign a

9. Covered in this and the summer issue of The Kansas Historical Quarterly are the letters Lines wrote from April through August, 1856, for publication in the New Haven (Conn.) Daily Palladium. He wrote another series for the New York Sun, and a third for the Congregational Herald. The letters to the Palladium have been chosen for publication because they are of a more personal nature than the letters written to the other newspapers. New Haven and its vicinity was home to practically every member of the colony so the letters must have been of great interest to the relatives and friends who read the Palladium. Some of the letters are from the “Lines Scrapbook,” some from the “Webb Scrapbooks,” both in the library of the Kansas State Historical Society, and the remainder are from the files of the New Haven Daily Palladium in the collection of the Yale University Library at New Haven, Conn.
testimonial, certifying our decided pleasure and satisfaction in traveling over that route, and especially returning thanks for the great care with which our baggage had been handled. We replied that in New England we were taught to say only what we believed, and respectfully declined,—promising, on the contrary, to inform our Eastern friends of the real facts in the case. If some enterprising Yankee could get the control of the entire line of one of these routes to the West, and make it a special object to signalize the route for extraordinary carefulness in the handling of baggage, and so adjust his time table as to make his arrivals and departures with a good degree of regularity, that route would soon be adopted by the great body of travelers West.

After leaving Buffalo, some of our young men were sure they had discovered three real "Border Ruffians." Their movements had been watched with great care, and the fact fully settled. One was said to be a ferocious looking fellow, who examined our baggage very closely, and was heard to say some very significant things. Another was "half seas over," and talked loud about abolitionists; and the other was a big whiskered, rough looking fellow, with a large cane, pretending to be a friend of Gen. Pomeroy, while he was occasionally seen in conversation with the first named ruffian. The imagination of some of the boys was so much stirred, that a few of the old members took occasion to make the acquaintance of the gentlemen referred to; whereupon the first proved to be a transient passenger, from one of the towns in Ohio to another. The second was an Indiana farmer, who apologized for being "tight" the night before,—said he had a fine farm near by, and invited us to call upon him. The other was a citizen of Lawrence, on his way back, and he gave us the fullest proof that he was one of the Free State men elected as a member of the Territorial Legislature,—a very courteous and apparently Christian gentleman in a somewhat rough garb, and with a face long unused to the razor. After informing him of the suspicions that had been entertained, we had a hearty laugh, and became somewhat intimate friends afterwards.

The Levee at St. Louis is by far the busiest place I have ever seen. A large number of steamers are lying at the shore, and the drays are crowding each other, and can only with the utmost difficulty dispose of their loads. The freight is strewed in every direction upon the ground. Here a heap of half cured hams, or bacon, as they call it, with no protection from the dirt, and there a heap of hides—and near by, a multitude of bales of hemp and barrels of
whiskey, all of which seem to be the great articles of trade in this vicinity; wagons, ploughs, dry goods, groceries, and heaps of miscellaneous articles make up the assortment, and by their rapid transit to and from the steamers, give to St. Louis the aspect of a busy and thriving community. Just now they are very much excited with a pending city election to come off to-day. The parties are the Democrats and Americans. The latter, by their papers and handbills, assume to be the Southern or slavery party, accusing the democrats of being the "Black Republican" party, and it is quite evident, strange as it may seem, that the facts are somewhat so.

At St. Louis we purchased for the use of our company, a large quantity of groceries, provisions, tents, ploughs, stoves, farming utensils, seeds &c., &c., having appointed a settler to provide for us for two months, and "pulled in" the money at the rate of $15 each to furnish the required capital, and on Saturday left in the steamer Clara for "Kanzas City." Our accommodations upon the boat are not first rate, as we are very much crowded with freight and passengers. The table is quite ordinary, but good enough if it were not for the half made butter and muddy Missouri river water. The idea of drinking water from your mud puddles would be quite as agreeable to you as it is to us to quench our thirst with the dirty stuff we get, and it is the more aggravating, as we know a very little Yankee enterprise in the way of filtering would overcome the difficulty entirely, but the people here say it is all right, and better than it would be clear. We have on board several citizens of Lexington, and some who are regarded as decidedly unfriendly to us, exciting the apprehension of a few that we may have trouble before reaching Kanzas. Such fears appear to me groundless, and will not be entertained without much stronger indications than have yet appeared. Our company, with the exception of some slight sickness from over-weariness, change of diet, &c., are all in good spirits, and full of courage and hope, and were pronounced, by our friends in St. Louis, the most valuable and promising body of men that have as yet gone into Kanzas in one company. We very much regretted the apparent necessity of being on the river over Sunday, but could see no way to avoid it, and made the best of our circumstances by holding religious services in the cabin, where we had a good sermon, and fine singing from members of our company.—L. 10

10. New Haven (Conn.) Daily Palladium, April 14, 1856.
KANZAS CITY, April 11, 1856.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—Our company arrived here yesterday, after a somewhat tedious journey upon the Missouri river, of nearly five days. We were all sick on the way, most of us with diarrhoea, and all, without exception, with colds, and why should we not be? for the water is totally different in its qualities from what we use at home, thus having a decided tendency to "diarrhea," and so very muddy as to finish the work by physic most effectually all who partake of it freely for the first time. The people here, however, seem to regard it as very fine, and say that if they were compelled to live at the East, they should find it necessary to mix mud in their water before drinking it.

As to colds, it would seem impossible to avoid them, for we were crowded into small state-rooms in some instances two in a bed, making ventilation indispensible, and yet so variable as to render colds almost inevitable. I think, ordinarily, with the best care, the temperature in these rooms alternates from ten to fifteen degrees several times every night, and unless some ventilation is attempted, the air becomes so close as to render respiration anything but free or agreeable, and besides the crowded state rooms, the floor and tables in the saloons are covered with robust specimens of the animal creation, to the number of from fifty to sixty men, throwing into the atmosphere of the area the noxious gases created by their conjoint respirations, thus making the material on which the denizens of the state-rooms were dependent for fresh air.

If any man, accustomed to sleep in a well ventilated room, sixteen feet square, upon a good spring-bed, can be subjected to such "accommodations" without caving in, he must have reached a point in the acclimating process where he is no longer influenced or controlled by the laws of health and life ordinarily recognized among men; and besides, the style of cooking and the quality of the food is by no means suited to the habits of New England people; but we are here, all of us, and one more, having "taken in" a gentleman from Maine, on the way. Our course up the river was not signalized by any remarkable events, and there is but little in the scenery or settlements to demand special attention. The magnificent views so frequent on the Mississippi, are altogether wanting here. The stream is broad, shallow, turbulent, muddy, and full of

11. John H. Gould was admitted as a member of the colony at a meeting aboard the steamship Clara on April 7, 1856.—"Minutes," April 7, 1856.
snags. Ducks and geese are abundant, and occasionally swans and pelicans are seen. We run a large part of the time by the lead, and frequently were jostled by the boat thumping on the bars.

Soon after leaving St. Louis, Mo., it was quite apparent that we had on board several Missourians, who looked upon us with suspicion and dislike; but we made their acquaintance as soon as practicable, and after appropriate preliminaries, discussed with them very freely the various interesting topics connected with our mission. Some of our company, however, were unnecessarily suspicious, and one person not connected with us, but who hailed from Massachusetts, was very much disposed to manufacture a blow up, if possible. We were assured that in all probability, we should be molested at some of the landings and have our baggage overhauled and the “Sharps’ Rifles” taken away, and so certain were some that on our arriving at “Lexington,” the Quarantine Committee would be after us, that we consented to be ready to defend our property, and we were so, but it all passed off with the most quiet,—and so far from being any way embarrassed, we secured the good will of all on board,—the dreaded border men we looked upon at the commencement of our trip, becoming agreeable companions before we separated, assuring us that they never met anywhere before, a body of seventy-five men with whom they were so well pleased. They were specially interested in the quiet, orderly and intelligent appearance of the entire company,—the absence of profanity or drinking,—for the bar was very little patronized except by a few very strong temperance men, at home, who really felt that a little ale, at ten cents a glass, would do them good. One instance of this kind would excite some surprise among the “Sons of Temperance,” and not a little amusement in other quarters. But the poor fellow was really sick and looked as sober as the grave, and honestly believed in the fitness of the remedy.

Several of these Missourians whose acquaintance we made, were men of influence, and they said to us distinctly, that when men came from the North with no other object than to become actual settlers in the Territory, and as such, do whatever they thought best to make “Kanzas” a free State, they had nothing to say; but it was the belief that many were sent by “aid societies” for no purpose but to vote and to disaffect their negroes,—that caused all the excitement and trouble. We assured them that our object was narrowed down to that point; that we came upon our own hook, and that while we believed the whole slave system to be bad, we did not purpose to
interfere with it in any manner inconsistent with the laws of the country and the rights of the States.

In order to show to what extent this good understanding existed, it is only necessary to state that, a few hours before our final landing from the boat, we convened a meeting of the company—when every member was present—and unanimously passed complimentary resolutions acknowledging our obligations to the Captain, Clerk, Steward, &c., and instructing the Board of Directors to make to the Clerk and Steward some testimonial of our regard, the result of which was the presentation to the Clerk, to whom we were much indebted for many acts of courtesy and kindness, of a "Sharps' Rifle," and some trifling gifts to others. This may strike our friends at home, as a somewhat singular use of the weapon, but we were satisfied it would do more to remove false impressions and prepare the way for a free and fearless emigration from the East, than any other use we could possibly make of a dozen of them. After the presentation, the Rifle was exhibited freely and carefully examined by the Missourians on board, and it was quite evident that we were not mistaken in our judgment in the case. One thing is now well settled in the mind of every man in our company, that no fear of molestation need deter any persons from coming here if they come as they ought, and that "Plows" and "Bibles" will be more useful than "Rifles" and "Revolvers,"—and yet it may be well for those who trust chiefly in weapons of defense when exposed to molestation, to bring them along,—but my own mind is, as it has always been, in favor of peace, and as a means of promoting peace, to have little to do or say about deadly weapons.

This letter is written in the Hotel, that was threatened with destruction last season, because it was supposed to belong to the "Emigrant Aid Company," but all things here are now very quiet, and we understand the same is true in the Territory. We have purchased to-day about thirty yoke of oxen, with wagons, plows and other implements of husbandry; also a sufficient quantity of provisions to serve us for about two months, and intend to start to-morrow morning for our destination in the Territory. We hear all sorts of stories about the country, but forbear saying anything definite until we see it for ourselves. We pay here for potatoes, one dollar per bushel, but they are worth five in the interior; all other articles are

12. The American Hotel purchased by the Emigrant Aid Company in 1854 as a refuge for emigrants on route to Kansas. Built in 1849 this hotel, known at various times as the Gillis, Western, American and Union hotel, became of historical importance due to the border troubles. "Recollections of Early Days in Kansas," by Shaler Winchell Eldridge in Publications of the Kansas State Historical Society, v. 2 (1920), pp. 13, 14.
high, except apples, which can be bought for fifty cents the bushel. The great articles of trade here are whiskey and tobacco; 150 casks of the former are now lying upon the levee, and more than 400 boxes of tobacco, all of which, together with many similar facts, show clearly that here is work to be done by somebody.

It is now the 11th of April, and we know nothing of the result of the Connecticut election, but in order to show where we stand, a vote was taken from all the members of our company legally entitled to vote in our good old State this spring—each man being requested to vote as he would have done had he been at home. The following is the result:

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<th>59</th>
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<td>For the Republican Ticket</td>
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<tr>
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Attest: C. B. Lines, )

J. P. Root, )Tellers.

If, therefore, you should find any difficulty in figuring out a clean majority against the Nebraska Democracy, please add the foregoing where they belong.

Yours, &c.—L.13

LAWRENCE, K. T., April 14, 1856.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—A few of our party arrived in this renowned city on Saturday night, at half past eleven o'clock. The whole company left Kanzas City the same day,—some on foot, some in carts, and some in wagons, and moved on up the Territory, expecting in a day or two to meet our pioneers, and hasten on to the locations selected. We were not well pleased with Kanzas City. The object of everybody from hotel keeper down to the teamsters, appeared to be, personal gain, without much regard to means, and it is next to impossible to get an honest answer to any inquiry, where private or local interests are concerned. It is, therefore, very important to every person or company coming this way, to be well posted before leaving home.

The Hotel where we put up there, is kept by a Connecticut man by the name of Eldridge.14—He charged us $1.50 per day for very common entertainment. A few left, and found better fare for little

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more than half price. So with teamsters. After engaging one at a certain rate, another would offer to do the same service for very much less, all showing an utter want of regularity, and a uniform disposition to make the most possible out of us while we remained. I think, in coming again, if there is no boat on the Kanzas River, my preference would be to go up to Leavenworth, and from there into the Territory. But we are now free from all such embarrassments, and have our own teams, and may proceed on our journey as best we can.

In leaving Kanzas [City], we passed through the Shawnee Indian Reservation, lying between Lawrence and the southern line of the Territory, and were delighted with the country. There is upon it a good supply of wood, and the rolling prairie, in beauty and fertility, far surpassed the expectations of us all. The air is also clear and balmy as could possibly be desired. No swamps or marshes exist, such as we find in abundance in passing through Illinois and Ohio, and wherever the ground had been broken. The soil turned up black and rich, as any possible combination of fertilizing substances could make it. . . .

The road through the country is simply an Indian trail, meandering like the curves and bends of a river, which gives a deep interest to the ride, now ascending by a kind of serpentine way up the sides of a gentle swell of land, and now descending into a beautiful vale below, not unlike the deep heavy swell of the ocean in the calm, that often succeeds a storm. Some of our men, who in the morning from being unwell and wearied with the journey, were dejected, on seeing these fine prairies, were re-inspired with the Kanzas enterprise, and one of them, in his enthusiasm, suddenly exclaimed—"How our wives will enjoy riding over such a country in such an atmosphere, and with such an unbounded, magnificent landscape before them."

The same friend, in walking out in the evening twilight, and expatiating upon the balmy atmosphere in which for an hour we bathed our weary bodies, remarked that this would be a splendid country for "courting" interviews and promenades—that the inhalations of such pure ethereal air must be suited to the cultivation of the tender emotions; and walks over these gently sloping mounds would be more softening and social in their influences, than any we ever enjoyed in our eastern homes, even under the overshadowing arches of our own magnificent "elms." I am free to confess that our ideas were quite congenial in this particular.
Those of your readers who have seen prairie only as it lies flat in Illinois and other Western States, can have but a faint idea of what has ravished our eyes and delighted our hearts in this Kanzas region. But I must not indulge in these vain attempts to describe what can only be comprehended by actual vision.

Our driver over this route was a Yankee, by the name of Bronson, from Southford, in Connecticut, and from him we learned interesting facts in reference to the country. He pointed out the residence of the Southern Methodist missionary, "Johnson," who has made himself so notorious by his pro-slavery operations, and rich by his management in getting possession of a large amount of this splendid Indian country. He also designated several large and valuable farms of 1200 acres, each cultivated by white men, and when we inquired how they became possessed of it, replied, by marrying a squaw, as every Indian female has the right to 200 acres for herself and for each child born to her; and some of these Yankees had not only acquired a fine tract of land, but a first rate wife, also, in this way.

When within ten miles of Lawrence, we stopped for tea at an Indian Hotel, kept in a log cabin, where everything was exceedingly primitive and yet quite comfortable. We left this place late in the evening, and while speaking of the balmy nature of the atmosphere, our driver remarked that he had often witnessed a different state of things, and when we were out in some snow storms in winter, or thunder showers in summer, we should call it anything else but balmy. But as to the snow, the last winter's experience is undoubtedly an exception to the general rule, and in regard to the other, we replied, that even thunder and lightning, when properly contemplated, could be made sublimely and awfully interesting, just in proportion to its grandeur.

On arriving at Lawrence, our driver conducted us to what he called a hotel, but what is in fact a boarding house kept in a building with four rooms and a shanty for a kitchen, with another building near by for lodgers when the hotel "runs over." After the

15. This was probably Alvin B. Bronson who was a driver of the mail-coach between Kansas City and Topeka during this period.—Report of the Special Committee Appointed to Investigate the Troubles in Kansas (Washington, D. C., 1856), 34 Cong., 1 Sess., House Report No. 200, p. 1094.

16. The Rev. Thomas Johnson was sent to the territory of Kansas in 1820 by the Missouri Conference of the Methodist Church. He established the Shawnee Manual Labor School and was connected with the mission from 1830-1841 and from 1847-1862. The travelers evidently passed near the Shawnee Methodist mission still to be seen (1936) in northeast Johnson county.

17. This Indian hotel was undoubtedly the one known as the "Fish House." It was owned by Paschal Fish, a Shawnee Indian who was an active sympathizer with the Free-State cause.—A. T. Andreas and W. G. Cutler, History of the State of Kansas (Chicago, 1883), p. 308.
lady of the house was aroused—for the establishment is kept by a maiden lady who has been a missionary and an editor, and by the way made a prodigious mistake in adopting her present business—we were ushered into the reception room, the furniture of which consists of three bedsteads, one work stand and one small oval table; the bedsteads being made by nailing four strips of boards on to four upright sticks of wood and slats laid across. One of the beds had just been vacated by the landlady and the other two were occupied by two other ladies, who entertained us by their conversation while the proprietress was contriving to crowd us in somewhere.

In due time we were informed that five of our number could be accommodated in the other building, and that she had half of two beds up stairs and a vacant single bed that belonged to a boarder, and might be wanted before morning. We asked if she could not arrange to put the two half beds into one, which after a while was accomplished, and we were significantly informed that the mattress was a “very nice one,” and—after a little hesitation—“that sometimes three persons had slept upon it,” but this suggestion was not responded to by us, and we therefore were permitted to occupy the boarders’s bed as he was said to be quite disposed to accommodate in an emergency, and so it proved, for no sooner were we in the room than he came in with a little bed-ticking, sewed together and stuffed with something—a blanket and a pillow, and bunked down upon the floor, making in all nine men in a room 14 feet square, and such beds, made after the fashion above recited—and mattresses—so called—harder if possible than the soft side of a pine plank, were quite a new thing to us, but still very comfortable under the circumstances. In the morning as we awoke and looked out we saw within a few rods of the house, the mud forts erected during the “border war” last winter, and were informed that this house was the only “quarters” where the “army” partook of their “rations.” But it is late, and for a more particular account of our first impressions of Lawrence you must wait for a more favorable opportunity, a better pen, and a less sleepy bodily condition.—L.**

LAWRENCE, April 15, 1856.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—The impressions we had in regard to many things in Lawrence before leaving home, have been confirmed

18. Mud forts were built by the men of Lawrence in December, 1855, to protect the town during the “Wakarusa war.”—See “The Wakarusa War,” by Mrs. Sara T. D. Robinson, in Kansas Historical Collections, v. 10 (1897-1908), pp. 457-471.
since arriving here, in some particulars, and in others we have been disappointed. We had supposed that a fine Hotel was in actual operation, but we find that it is still in an unfinished state; and that the "Cincinnati House," heretofore partially described as our present habitation, is the best and only public house in the city, kept, as before stated, by a lady who while she is evidently a very excellent woman is not adapted to her present business. The house derives its name from the fact that it was built in Cincinnati and brought here. The inmates of the establishment cannot be at this time less than forty men, and all the furniture in the house, including beds, bedding, kitchen utensils, and every thing else, would not sell at auction in New Haven for $30.

In our room occupied by nine men there is one "ewer and basin," one looking glass 4 inches wide by 6 long—and one-half of a chair. We have one pitcher of water for our ablution purposes in the morning. Our butter looks precisely like hog's lard, and does not taste like any thing in particular. Milk we only see occasionally, and potatoes are few and far between; dried peaches are very common, but the cooking of everything is bad. I would be glad to compromise my entire rations daily for one meal from home. Candlesticks are very much out of fashion, except blocks of wood. But for a new country it is very doubtful whether there has ever been an instance of such wonderful progress in building up a town as in this instance of Lawrence, and perhaps some other cities in Kanzas.

There are now in this city about 150 houses, a few of them very comfortable, several good stores, three churches begun or provided for, two weekly papers, a very fine Hotel 20 nearly finished, &c., all accomplished in less than two years. The village, or city as it is called, is beautifully located on one of the rolling prairie swells, and the landscape in every direction as fine as could be desired. The soil is perfect, not only rich beyond description, but so formed and underlaid by mineral substances of a decidedly fertilizing character, as to render it next to impossible to exhaust it. From the few experiments made here in gardening, the success from all accounts we have received has been of the most gratifying character. We have astonishing and reliable accounts of melons, squashes, to-

20. This was the Free-State hotel under construction by the Emigrant Aid Company. The hotel was destroyed by Proslavery forces on May 21, 1856, several days before it was scheduled to be opened to the public. The site was purchased later by Shaler W. Eldridge and his brothers and a second hotel, the Eldridge House, was constructed at a cost of $50,000. It was burned on August 31, 1863, during the Quantrill raid on Lawrence.—Andreas and Cutler, op. cit., p. 351.
matoes, cucumbers, &c.,—water melons weighing over 90 lbs. and pumpkins over 100. We are also well satisfied that stock can be raised and fattened here with great facility. Corn is raised with great success. One farmer informed me that he had stalks in his garden as large as a man’s wrist and 21 feet high. Wheat has not yet been fully tested, but it is supposed that it will do well.

The winds here are very heavy at this season, often sweeping over the prairie like a young tornado, and this circumstance is spoken of by some of our men as constituting the most serious objection to the country, while others regard it as far more tolerable than our long, drizzling, chilly, northeasters, when the sun is sometimes hid for a week. Here the storms are severe but short. We have already witnessed some of them with thunder and lightning accompanied, but the specimens have not been of the first class. A lady remarked to us to-day that the thunder and lightning was very much more terrific here than at the east, but no more destructive. Very little damage is done by it. We have found several springs of water that are very good, and the lady before referred to says that some of them furnish excellent soft water, suitable for washing. The people of Lawrence are dependent for timber chiefly upon the Delaware Indians, whose “Reserve” is on the opposite side of the river, and is finely wooded. There is great need here of mechanics and laborers.

Lawrence has no livery stable, furniture store, machine shop, foundry, and but very few stone masons, while many are wanted, as most of the best buildings will undoubtedly be constructed of stone. I find it quite difficult to procure the necessary facilities for writing, my last letter having been written on the greasy side of the kitchen table at our “Hotel,” and I am now availing myself of the kindness of Mr. Hutchinson,21 who visited us in New Haven last winter, and using his “fixings” in his law office.

There are of course many objects of interest here. Yesterday, (Sunday morning,) Mr. Branson, the man of whose rescue from the Missouri Sheriff we have all heard, was pointed out to me passing along the street with his Sharp’s Rifle in hand, feeling as he

21. John Hutchinson, a lawyer in Lawrence and prominent in Free-State affairs, had been sent by the executive committee of Kansas to the New England states and Washington during the winter of 1855-1856 for the purpose of advocating the admission of Kansas into the Union. He was elected to the first territorial legislature, March 30, 1855, and again elected to the first state legislature under the Topeka constitution. He served as secretary of Dakota territory under President Lincoln and was appointed United States consul at Leghorn, Italy, shortly before Lincoln died. John Hutchinson died December 12, 1887, in Chicago, where he had a law practice.—“John Hutchinson—in Memoriam,” by Henry B. Whipple, in Kansas Historical Collections, v. 7 (1901-1902), pp. 500, 501.
still does, unsafe without it, as he lives some distance from the city.\textsuperscript{22} A few moments after one of the rescuers was introduced to us. The war has created quite a little revolutionary history for the place which will be treasured up and related for years to come with great interest by those familiar with the facts, and especially the few who participated in them. We spent our Sabbath yesterday with great satisfaction in company with the Church of Rev. Mr. Lum, the Congregational clergyman who was among the first settlers of the place, but the details of our first Sabbath in “Kanzas” must be reserved for another occasion. Our company are beginning to arrive in fine spirits, and camping out in the vicinity, and we hope very soon to drive our stakes and plant our standard upon a permanent locality. With us as yet, all is well. May a kind Providence grant that our friends and loved ones at home may be prosperous and happy.—L.\textsuperscript{23}

\textbf{CENTROPOLIS, K. T., April 16, 1856.}

\textbf{Messrs. Editors:—The place from which this letter is written, is what they call out here, a “one horse town,”—that is, a section of land surveyed and laid out into city lots, parks, &c., with a design of making it in the future a place of importance. This locality is situated about eighteen miles south of Lawrence, and is fifty miles from “Kanzas City.” It is in the midst of a delightful country, is very well wooded, and the water as good as we have at home. There are now but two or three cabins, a rustic blacksmith shop, and a store. About twenty persons are interested in the city speculation, and underlying the whole enterprise is a purpose to make the city the State Capital. The principal parties engaged in the scheme are influential members of the Legislature, who, it is supposed, intend to make fortunes out of the movement. We are informed that such plans are quite common in the West. It appears, also, that members of the “bogus” Territorial Legislature have laid out another site,\textsuperscript{24} within two miles of this, and they are bound to}

\textsuperscript{22} Jacob Branson, Charles Dow and Franklin Coleman lived at Hickory Point, ten miles south of Lawrence. Dow, who lived with the Bransons, was killed by Coleman in a claim dispute on November 21, 1855. Branson’s efforts to avenge his friend’s death led to his arrest by a group of Free-State men. This incident was the beginning of the Wakarusa war. —Allon Crainson, \textit{Free State Fortress, the First Ten Years of the History of Lawrence, Kansas} (Lawrence, 1854), p. 58.

\textsuperscript{23} New Haven \textit{Daily Palladium}, April 26, 1856.

\textsuperscript{24} On February 10, 1858, the legislature, sitting at Lawrence, passed a bill making Minnola, one mile east of Centropolis, the territorial capital. The bill was vetoed by Governor Denver but an appeal was taken to the attorney general of the United States. The city was projected by prominent Free-State citizens as a means of removing the seat of government from the Proslavery town of Lecompton. Its development was rapid. Several buildings, including a governor’s mansion, were erected and promotional maps of the period make the town appear as a grand railroad center. Minnola had a population of several hundred people by November 20, 1858, when the attorney general decided the bill was in violation of the organic act, and therefore void. —“Some of the Lost Towns of Kansas,” \textit{Kansas Historical Collections}, v. 12 (1911-1912), pp. 433, 494.
have the Capital go there. It is quite apparent that there is altogether too much of this scheming for great speculations, on the part of the leading men of "Kanzas," and it would not be strange if "the people" should interpose and upset some of their deep-laid plans.

I am writing in the store. It is very well stocked with some kinds of goods, especially such as are called for by the Indians. The store is situated only half a mile from three important Indian tribes,—the Sacs and Foxes, Ottowas and Chippewas,—from whom they derive their principal trade, amounting to not less than $15,000 per annum. The store has been filled with them to-day. Among the number, we noticed one fine looking young Chief, decked with all sorts of gewgaws and brass ornaments. There is something sad in moving among these remnants of the powerful tribes of other days, and witnessing their despondency as the pale faces are gradually crowding them from place to place, and so circumscribing their privileges and hemming them within narrow boundaries as to crush out the free spirit of their nature, and make them feel that between the deprivations of those natural rights which gave to their fathers the whole scope of the continent, and the impracticability of effecting a satisfactory "fusion" with their white masters, there is nothing left for them but to waste away and die.

We came here upon an exploring tour, seeking a location for our company. We have two other parties in other sections, and to-morrow we meet in Lawrence to decide where to plant our standard and make our homes. On our ride to this place, we passed through an exceedingly fertile and attractive country, chiefly prairie, on which there is unoccupied land enough for thousands of settlers, but it is being taken up very rapidly.

By my side, at this moment, one of the proprietors of the store is reading. He informs me that "Dow," one of the Free State men, was his neighbor, and from another source I learn that this gentleman offered $300 for the body of his murderer, "Coleman," dead or alive. He is evidently a very quiet, orderly citizen; but the deeds of murder, insult and oppression, that were perpetrated during the "border war," took deep hold of the feelings and the hearts of most of the actual settlers here. You would be surprised to see how universally the people of both sexes sympathize with the Free State men who are actual settlers; but those from the West are jealous of those who come in from the East, until they are satisfied they come purely in good faith and on their own hook.
We have just been entertained in one of the log cabins, with an excellent supper. The room is about fourteen feet square, contains a large bed, a bureau, and a cupboard. We had upon the table, ham, broiled and boiled—(we get very little fresh meat in the Territory)—biscuit and butter, pie, two kinds of cakes, stewed peaches, and some excellent tarts; but no milk. Cows are not generally kept by the new settlers. The lady who served us, is a model for such a place, or for any place. She does not keep a boarding house, and yet has fed ten men, to-day, before we arrived. The repast was well enjoyed and relished by us. A supper at the Ton-tine, got up in Scranton's best style, (and that is saying as much as we can say,) could not be enjoyed by you, as this was here, by us. On our way to this place, we started three fine deer; but we had but one rifle with us, and were too much surprised by them to get a deliberate shot before they had bounded over the prairie, beyond our reach. We also saw wolves, pluvers and prairie hens, and beautiful flowers very much resembling our verbenas, both in their habits of growth and the appearance of the flower, now in full bloom.

But my tallow candle, held on a block of wood by three nails, is just expiring, and therefore this letter is necessarily finished. Our company are all together, in Lawrence, to-day, except one family, who stop a little below. All well, and in fine spirits. We are still ignorant of the result of your election.

Thursday Morning, 17th—We were last evening invited to an adjoining log cabin to lodge. It was a very common cabin, and yet we enjoyed a fine night’s rest. There was but one room, and one bed on a bedstead, which was occupied by the man of the house, and his lady, while four of our company were accommodated on the oak slab floor, with what they call beds spread upon it. There was no particular apprehension of suffering from “confined air,” as the door had openings in it sufficient for a good sized boy to thrust his head through, to say nothing of the roof and log sides. The size of the room was 12x14. Our host was a regular Western pro-slavery squatter. He has kept a store in the vicinity; had numerous difficulties with the Indians, who in the practice of one of their vocations were in the habit of stealing from his stock of goods whenever an opportunity offered. He caught one in the act, and shot him, and had since been pounced upon by numbers of them, and still feels it necessary to keep a sharp lookout. He keeps a savage dog at the door, who is sure to tear any man to pieces who comes within the reach of his chain. He is a recent settler, though long a trader from Missouri, and, although pro-slavery in sentiment,
condemns strongly the conduct of the Missourians. He informed us that he was offered day wages to come over and vote last Fall, but refused. We have not yet met the first man in all our travels who has a face to justify the Missouri invasion. The pro-slavery men generally express a wish to have the past "rubbed out," and reorganize with a sufficient force to protect the polls,—reference of course is not made to such men as Atchison & Co., but to the fair minded friends of a slave State, who are bona fide residents of the Territory. After we had "made our toilet" this morning, our host offered us each a glass of whiskey, and looked somewhat surprised when we all declined. We then repaired to the other cabin for our breakfast, which was waiting for us.

We paid our bill, 80 cts. each, for supper and breakfast, making, at such prices, as we thought, a paying business, and in a few moments we shall be on our way back to Lawrence.

The morning is clear and pleasant, like most of the mornings in this country. It is rarely necessary to put in as a condition, of fulfilling an appointment at some future day—"if it is pleasant"—as a day very rarely passes without some portion of it being pleasant. The storms are rapid; and more commonly occur in the night, hence arrangements for business or pleasure are made without any reservation on account of the weather.—L.²⁵

LAWRENCE, K. T., April 18, 1856.

Messrs. Editors:—We are still in Lawrence, not having yet fixed upon a location. Several sections have been examined, and the company meet this afternoon to decide between them. We are all here, with the exception of one family who have located, temporarily, below, one man who still remains in "Kanzas City," and one other remaining with the family. We are all well, and in as good spirits as circumstances will admit. Our unavoidable delay has caused unexpected expense, and, of course, some disappointment; but a few days more will fix our destiny, so far as our homes in Kanzas are concerned.

I am now writing in the office of the "Herald of Freedom,"—a room of very good accommodations. The building is new, constructed of what they call here, concrete,—a sort of throwing together of stones and mortar. It makes a very solid wall, and is being used for all their best buildings. Mr. Brown,²⁶ the principal editor, is absent, but his place is well filled by his assistant, Mr. Green. The paper is issued weekly, and is fast acquiring a position of de-

²⁵. New Haven Daily Palladium, April 29, 1856.
cided influence in the Territory. The people of Lawrence gave us a reception, at a public meeting, on Tuesday evening.

In the absence of the leading men of the place, Mr. Hutchinson made a speech, welcoming the company to the Territory. He was followed by Rev. Mr. Lum, and others, and they were feelingly responded to by Dr. Root, and several other members of our company. After which, “The Stubbs,” a company of young men who were the first military organization for the defense of Lawrence, were called out to sing a song for the occasion, very much in the style of the old “Tippecanoe and Tyler, too,” of 1840. It made quite a sensation. The meeting was a jam, and went off well. There were several ladies present, among them, the wife of Gov. Robinson, an exceedingly agreeable young woman, very unpretending, plainly dressed, and quite pretty, apparently not over eighteen years of age. She is a daughter of the late Myron Lawrence, Esq., of Belcherstown, Mass. The proceedings of this meeting, as I am informed, have been reported for the New York Times; and unless they are more correct than a report published by them of one of our New Haven meetings, it will not be of much value as a transcript of the real doings upon the occasion, and ought not to be relied upon as such. The report published by the “Herald of Freedom,” of this place, is, probably, nearer correct; and by a vote of the meeting, is to be forwarded to the New Haven papers for publication.

Gov. Reeder arrived here last evening, in company with Messrs. Sherman and Howard, of the Investigating Committee, and their retinue of clerks, reporters, &c. Reeder is a bold, energetic looking man, the features of his face resembling, somewhat, that of our old friend, Hon. I. S. Rice; but in person, less portly and taller. Mr. Sherman is a young man, and informed me that he was a grandson of Taylor Sherman, formerly a lawyer in Norwalk, Ct., and that he was a son of David Sherman, who was associated with Roger Sherman, as members of the “Committee of Safety,” in the days of the revolution.

Emigrants are arriving every day, and by far, the larger part

27. The investigating committee was appointed by the U. S. House of Representatives on March 19, 1856, to inquire into affairs in the territory of Kansas. It was composed of John Sherman, Ohio, William Howard, Michigan, and Mordecai Oliver, Missouri. The committee arrived at Leavenworth on April 18, 1856, and spent the next four months collecting evidence and taking depositions at Leavenworth, Lawrence, Tecumseh, Leavenworth, Westport, and other Kansas towns. Later they published their reports. The majority report was bitterly condemned in the South and had the effect of making the border ruffians more vigorous than ever in the territory.—I. N. Holloway's History of Kansas: From the First Exploration of the Mississippi Valley, to Its Admission Into the Union (Lafayette, Ind., 1898), pp. 296-300.
of them from free States. One hundred and forty come in this morning from Ohio, and more are coming.

But we find there is a great work to be done for Kanzas besides making her a free State. Morals are in a very low condition here; but very few of the leading free State men, even, are found earnestly contending for temperance, sabbath-keeping, purity and truth,—yet probably the cause may in part be looked for, in the inevitable fruits of a state of war, and a better time anticipated when the affairs of the State are settled.

Gov. Robinson arrived to-day. He resembles, in some respects, our late Senator, Hon. F. Gillette; is affable, firm, and evidently possessed of peculiar talents for his present position. A meeting was held in the evening, in the dining hall of the Free State Hotel, at which interesting addresses were made by Gov. Reeder, Robinson, and others.

We leave here this morning, having, as we suppose, fixed upon a location, after considerable trouble and delay; and it is gratifying to be able to say that, so far, there is no backing out. It is also proper and just to bear testimony to the uniform civility and good feeling of the people of Lawrence. When we remember how recently (less than two years) the first movement in the way of civilization began, it is marvelous that they are able to do so well. I wish, also, especially to add, that my further experience as a boarder at the “Cincinnati House,” has fully convinced me that in view of the inconveniences and difficulties that underlie, overhang and surround, the business of boarding-house-keeping, here, it is a highly creditable establishment, and but few women could anywhere be found to do as well as its present proprietress, Mrs. Hale. The new hotel will, undoubtedly, be opened soon, and as soon be filled.

The great want of the Territory is Capital.—Above this point, there is nothing to be bought. All kinds of provisions are monstrously high, because of the great scarcity; and yet there is plenty at Kanzas City and Leavenworth. For example, at the latter places, potatoes can be bought for $1.25, and shell corn at 50c; while at Fort Riley, corn is worth $2.50, and potatoes from $5 to $10. In these matters, everything is out of joint, and $100,000 brought in now from the East, could be so used as to bring a splendid return to the capitalists, and do very much to settle and organize the affairs of the Territory. But our teams are about starting, and I must close.—L. 28

ON THE PLAINS OF KANZAS, 70 miles west of Kanzas City
April 26 [20], 1856

MESSRS. EDITORS:—As you will see, we are now out upon the prairie ocean of this far off country. We were detained at Lawrence until Saturday morning, waiting the return of our pioneers, and left at that time, bound West. We encamped for the Sabbath at this point near a log cabin; and as most of us walked from sixteen to twenty miles during the day, a hard bed upon the grass was a luxury. A few only could be accommodated in the cabin, as it contained but one room 12 by 18 feet, no window, and was occupied by a man with his wife and eight children, from a young lady of 17, down to a native,—and yet four of our company were provided with lodgings among them, and five others in an adjoining cabin, built for a store-house, and without a floor; the remainder slept under tents and out upon the open prairie, snugly buried in a buffalo robe. One gentleman from Hartford, the most of an invalid of any in our company when he left home, slept in the latter style, and informed me in the morning that his rest was sweet, and better than any he had enjoyed on the way. He continues to sleep in the same way.

Our fare at this place consisted of coffee without sugar, bacon, bread and pickles. Six sat down together, and were furnished with three spoons and other fixings to match. Part of the company cooked for themselves, and enjoyed it very much. They make tea and coffee, broil ham, make hasty pudding and eat it with molasses,—making their spoons of sticks, and using the knives from their pockets. Some of the good marksmen occasionally have stewed plover, prairie chicken, and other game.

On our way, we stopped at Judge Wakefield's and Col. Walker's for refreshments, and passed the spot where Barber was shot.

Judge Wakefield has a very good farm, about eight miles from Lawrence. You will remember that he was a candidate for Congress against Whitfield, and that the votes of one District given for him were transferred to the latter gentleman, or thrown out, because there was no such man as Wakefield in the Territory. Col. Samuel Walker is a member of the Free State Legislature, and came here among the first, in a company of about forty. They intended to

30. Thomas W. Barber settled near the site of Bloomington, west of Lawrence, in 1855. He was murdered by a Proslavery party, under the command of George W. Clarke, Potawatomi Indian agent, on December 6, 1855.—George W. Martin, "The First Two Years of Kansas," Kansas Historical Collections, v. 10 (1907-1908), p. 135.
have reached the Territory in season to vote at the first Territorial
election, but on arriving at Boonville, on the Missouri river, they
were put on shore by the captain of the boat, although they had
paid their fare to Kanzas,—for the pretended reason that the boat
was overloaded. The captain, however, retained their freight, and
left the men and their families behind. These men thus wronged
and outraged, sought in vain for redress. They were also entirely
unsuccessful in their efforts to procure teams, until two weeks had
elapsed and the election passed. In the meantime, they witnessed
hundreds of the citizens of Boonville, openly leaving for Kanzas
to vote, and return. They saw one thousand dollars distributed
among the hireling voters, to pay their expenses, and two dollars per
day for their time. This company were subjected to all sorts of
embarrassment and trials, and when Mr. Walker arrived upon his
claim with his wife and children, he was reduced to ten dollars, and
one of his children with a broken leg.

He immediately became an active participant in the great struggle
for freedom, and sustained by his heroic wife, has forced his way to
a condition of comparative competence and comfort. His cabin is
a large one, all in one room, and is patronized extensively by trav-
elers, from whom he derives a handsome income. They gave us
a very good dinner for 25 cents each. The beds are arranged like
the berths in a vessel, one above another. On one side of the room
a platform is built, about 3 feet wide and 20 inches high, on which
barrels and cupboards are arranged, and under which we noticed
a hen setting, about four feet from the stove, where our cooking was
done. This is made necessary in order to protect the young chickens
from the various wild animals that are not yet driven off.

Mrs. Walker, like all the farmers' wives we have seen, who have
been in the Territory a year, says she could not be coaxed, hired
or driven away from Kanzas. There are many who come out, re-
main a few days, and return disappointed, but of those who hold
on a few months or a year, very few return; on the contrary, they
become enthusiastic in their love for Kanzas, and their deep interest
in her welfare.

We spent our Sabbath very pleasantly, having religious service
in the forenoon in the cabin of Mr. Shields,31 where we took our
meals, and upon slabs fitted up for the purpose, outside and adjoin-
ing. In the afternoon we held a prayer meeting at the same place,
and such meetings we have not often enjoyed at home. The settlers

31. This was Hiram Shields who lived on the California road south of Tecumseh.
Luther H. Root, a member of the colony, liked this location so well that he settled here.
from a few adjoining cabins came in, and it was truly affecting to
witness the gratitude to God manifested by them, that men of prayer
had come to the Territory. . . .

We have not, as yet, seen anything to disappoint our expectations,
excepting the want of a boat upon the Kanzas River, and it is still
uncertain whether this stream will be to any considerable extent
navigable, but there can be little doubt that a railroad will be con-
structed along its banks before many years, passing through thriving
villages and towns, as busy and prosperous as any in the West.—L.32

MISSION CREEK,33 K. T., April 22, '56.

MESSRS. EDs.: The point from which this letter is written is about
ten miles south of the Kanzas River, between Topeka and Union
Town. A committee were sent here to examine the locality for our
company. We find in this region, streams of living water, a good
supply of wood, and plenty of unoccupied prairie, and we could
readily recommend this as a good place to settle, except that it is off
from the general traveled route, and of course too far removed
from the principal settlements. Yet it is possible we may decide to
come here.

There is less objection in this country to a few miles travel to and
from market than there would be in yours, because of the facility
for making good wagon roads. We have traveled many miles with
our teams over the "California Road,"34 running up this valley,
and with the exception of some bad places in crossing the ravines
and fording the streams, they are first rate. The soil seems adapted
to make them good, and after a little Yankee enterprise has been
bestowed upon them, in the way of filling up and bridging, it must
be a delightful country to travel over. Now everything is new,
but if we can judge from what we have seen, richness of soil and
salubrity of climate are not to be the only attractions in this country.
There are also unpleasant things here. Among them, the winds,
at this season, are occasionally very high, dry and uncomfortable;
but we are informed that March and April are the months especially

33. At Mission Creek the company camped near the home of a Colonel Henry who has
not been identified. He made every effort to induce them to settle near him. The main
group camped at his place for several days while waiting for the committee to return from
Wabaunsee. When they left Colonel Henry looked "on with profound surprise and disgust"
and prophesied that half of them would be back within three weeks.—"Minutes," April 25,
1856.
34. The California road or the California-Oregon trail followed the same routes through
eastern Kansas. Leaving Douglas county a main route passed south of Tecumseh and
Topeka. About six or seven miles west of Topeka one of the branches of the trail turned
northwest, passed through Uniontown, a half-mile east of present Willard, and crossed the
Kansas river near present Silver Lake. The Connecticut Kansas colony probably turned off
the California road below Uniontown and followed one of the roads through the Pottawatomie
reserve to Wabaunsee.
devoted to high winds, which in the summer the severe heat is very much alleviated by gentle breezes, that rarely rise to a gale and seldom give place to a calm.

We were accommodated last evening by a half breed Indian, who, with his wife and two children, occupy an unfinished cabin, the logs merely laid up, and the winds blowing through the apertures in every direction. Our supper consisted of very good ham, bread, and fried onion tops, the latter growing here in great abundance, wild.—There are but few settlers in this vicinity, and they express great anxiety to do so. While at this point we noticed several shrubs, trees, &c., part of which had attracted our attention before, and which afford some indication of the adaptation of the soil and climate to various productions.

The woods in every direction are rendered beautiful by the gay attire of a shrub, the name of which is forgotten, but which may be seen in the dooryard of Prof. Salisbury, covered in early Spring with a rich pink blossom, before any appearance of the green leaves. Some of them are twenty feet high, and now in full bloom. Plum trees are also in flower and very abundant. Grape vines, gooseberries, blackberries, mulberries, strawberries, raspberries, &c., are scattered in profusion in many places; hops also grow abundantly, wild.—At one of our stopping places, yesterday, we were shown a fine lot of peach trees, three years from the pit; they had been killed by the past winter, which has been severe beyond any precedent, and the owner informed us that he had never lost any before—he sold his fruit (from a small garden spot) last year for $150, and frequently had them weighing one pound each; the trees were very beautiful and thrifty, measuring five inches thro'. Every kind of vegetation in this country grows. A very intelligent Indian pointed to a prairie swell, where he assured us a man on horseback was completely covered in the grass, last summer; he remarked, however, that it was not usually so high, but that last season the rains were abundant in the latter part of Summer.

The wet season in this country ordinarily begins the last of April and continues through May and June, and sometimes into July, during which time it rains frequently and copiously, but as yet we have seen no signs of a shower, and we are informed there has been none; yet the grass is green and the trees are putting forth their leaves rapidly, and the soil, from its peculiar nature, is moist. No indications of drouth appear.

35. This was undoubtedly the redbud tree.
The prairies abound in horses, and in some sections droves of cattle may be seen. We were shown yesterday some very good looking horses that had never tasted grain of any kind and had lived on the prairie over winter. Their owners have a way of keeping them from straying by giving them occasionally a dose of salt. We saw yesterday an evidence of the effect of this practice—a man appeared at a distance riding toward a flock of horses, and as soon as he was seen they all galloped off to meet him and crowded around him like a flock of chickens about their mother. This we were informed was the salting operation.

We were near being lost, last evening, in seeking this place, the roads being merely wagon tracks and Indian trails. We missed our way upon the prairie and were as much confused as you would be in a skiff on Long Island Sound, out of sight of land. We had concluded that we must sleep on the prairie with nothing but the earth beneath and Heavens over us, but just as we were arranging our thoughts to submit to our fate and take the consequences, a light from one of the cabins we were in pursuit of, was discovered glimmering through the woods. We of course were very essentially relieved. We are now just leaving to report the results of our observations to the company, who are encamped ten miles distant, on the road leading up the Kanzas Valley. We have not as yet heard one word from home, except a rumor before referred to, that the election had resulted favorably. Yours, &c.,—L. 36

WAUBONSA, 37 April 26, 1856.

MESSRS. EDS.:—Our Company have at last selected their location at this place, on the "Kanzas River," at a point sixty-five miles above Lawrence and twelve below Manhattan. There are scattered about this region some thirty or forty settlers, chiefly on the line of the creeks and streams where the timber is found. There is no town, church, school house, store, blacksmith shop, or anything else except a few rude cabins to mark the spot as the home of civilized man.

We have given a very thorough examination of the eastern portion of the Territory, and find scattered settlements everywhere, and no


37. According to J. M. Bisbe, in his article "Pioneering in Wabaunsee County: Early Day Transportation," in *Kansas Historical Collections*, vol. 11 (1900-1910), p. 595, Dr. Johnston Lykins, superintendent of the Baptist Mission School for Pottawatomie Indians, suggested the name Wabaunsee, a Pottawatomie word meaning "Dawn of Day," for the settlement in 1855. Wabaunsee county was established as Richardson county and attached to Shawnee county for judicial and revenue purposes by the legislature of 1855. It was organized as a separate county in 1859 and the name changed to Wabaunsee. The town of Wabaunsee was the county seat from 1859 to 1866 when it was moved to Alma because of its more central location in the county.
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desirable locality for a town without them. There are plenty of
good claims in various quarters, where a few persons can locate
together, but there is but little opportunity for large companies to
make satisfactory settlements in the same vicinity. The Mission
Creek region, before referred to, presents several strong attractions
for a company, but is too far from the line of travel, and in a
locality not likely to be reached by railroad communication for a
long time to come.

The committee therefore after examining this section, on returning
to the company at "Mission Creek," found the company pre-
pared to respond to our recommendation very heartily. After
listening to the report and a statement of the various advantages
of this locality, the question was submitted, and decided by an aye
that made the welkin ring, and the vote was followed by three
hearty cheers for our chosen home. Whereupon the oxen were
gathered in from the valley, where they were grazing, the camp
broke up, the wagons repacked and with high hopes and glad
hearts, our company, with all the imposing aspect of a caravan, was
soon moving over the prairie, toward our new home. The train
consisted of nine wagons, thirty-one yoke of cattle and about sixty
men.

Up to the time of our departure from Mission Creek, five only of
our company withdrew from us. Mr. Pease and Crane of Hartford,
Mr. Crossman of Derby, and Mr. Parmelee of New Haven, left, as
we supposed, with a view of returning home. Dr. Penfield, his
brother and family have located themselves for the present at
Topeka, but will most likely unite with us hereafter; two others
have gone back but intend to return, and three behind are coming
on. We have admitted two members 38 while on our way, and had
applications from many others, but we prefer not to increase our
number any farther until we are established, especially as by so
doing we do not add to the population of the Territory. We are
constantly told that our company cannot be kept together for the
reason that no other has been, and therefore we must be scattered,
but as yet we see no reason for despondency upon that point. There
has been no time since our departure that our men seemed more
determined to adhere to each other than when they left the camp
ground on Friday last, and it was truly gratifying to hear squads of

38. John H. Gould was one of the new members and the other may have been a Mr.
Hull. The "Minutes," April 7, 1856, read as follows: "Mr. Lines made a statement in
regard to Mr. Hull. It was voted, that unless objections should appear, the Secretary should
be authorized to record his name on our arrival at our destination."
them, as they trudged over the rolling swells of that fine country, singing as they journeyed,

"As when the weary traveler gains
The height of some o'er looking hill,
His heart revives if on the plains,
He sees his home though distant still."

A few of our number came on in advance of the main body to make the necessary arrangements for them on their arrival here. We left them in the "Potawatomi Reserve,"

59 crossing the mill creek, since which time we have been visited by a copious rain storm, extending through most of the day, Saturday, and we fear subjecting our friends to serious inconvenience. The storm was quite unusual for the season, and although of great value in softening the sod for the action of our plows, and starting the grass for the benefit of the cattle, came in a very bad time for the comfort of the company. We feel anxious to hear from them, especially as two of our number are down with the measles; we have therefore dispatched a wagon with a good supply of cooked provisions, and hope to see them soon, as the storm is now over.

At the crossing where we left them the government have a mill for grinding corn for the Indians. It is kept by a half breed Indian by the name of Jude W. Boussa, a very intelligent man of good character. He is employed by the government on a salary, and his house is made available by travelers as a stopping place, and is the best we have seen in the Territory. It has been my good fortune to be "entertained" by him on three different occasions. His wife, a French Canadian, is evidently a good housekeeper. He has eight children, among them two young ladies, highly educated, decidedly pretty in appearance and prepossessing in their manner. The only piano we have seen in the Territory is at this place. While Mr. Boussa is very attentive to his guests and liberal in his charges, he will furnish no whiskey under any circumstances. He complains that the policy of the government toward the Indian tribes is very bad, calculated to prevent any progress among them, and to promote only indolence, pauperism and crime.

59. The Potawatomi reserve was established in 1846 and embraced a tract of land 30 miles square, located in the present counties of Shawnee, Wabaunsee, Jackson and Pottawatomie.—William E. Connell, "The Prairie Band of Potawatomi Indians," Kansas Historical Collections, v. 14 (1915-1918), p. 491.

40. Jude W. Bourassa had come to the territory in 1846 or 1847 when the Potawatomi tribe was moved from Indiana. Apparently he was an important member of the tribe. As early as 1852 and probably before that time he was operating a mill on the Potawatomi reserve. He is described in the "Executive Minutes of Governor John W. Geary," as "an enterprising Indian, having a good mill, and cultivating a rich farm."—Ibid., v. 4 (1886-1890), p. 623.
As things are a large section of the best part of the country is "reserved" for the use of a tribe, and every Indian has a right in common to the whole, but no one has an absolute right to a rod. The land still belongs to the government, the use of it to the tribe; hence if an enterprising man among them desires to raise stock, to cultivate a farm, to plant an orchard or make any permanent improvement, he is sure before hand that others of the indolent and unprincipled class will avail themselves of the fruits of his toil, in which case he has no redress—hence these wide extended plains are as the Lord left them at the creation, and will remain so until a wiser policy toward the Indian is adopted or the land brought within the reach of the white man's grasp. Under the influence of his industry and skill, some of the tribes have already effected an arrangement by means of which at some future day each family is to receive a liberal grant of land absolutely, and the balance of the Reserve be thrown open to preemption. . . .—L. 41

WAUBONSA, April 28, 1856.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—The name of this locality adopted by the few settlers we find here, will, no doubt, soon give place to a new one more in accordance with our Connecticut notions, and congenial to our tastes; especially is this probable, as the pioneers themselves are desirous of a change. We have a post master, but no office, yet letters for the present may be safely directed to Waubonsa, K. T.,—and if they do not find their way to our locomotive Post Office, they will be found by us at the nearest one, which is at Uniontown, on the Reserve, about twenty-five miles east.

In order to give your readers some idea of the condition of things here, and the trials of new settlers, it may be well to state a few facts. We are sojourning under the roof of one of the pioneers, 42 and I suppose we have as good accommodations as the County affords. The cabin is built of hewn logs, the crevices between them being partially filled in with blocks of wood, leaving any quantity of ventilators, through which the wind whistles most freely. It is partially covered on the outside and roof with oak shingles, slit out with an axe, and with the exception of the doors and windows, there is not the slightest evidence that a plane, or any other tool, except a broad axe and saw, was used in its construction. Our floor is the ground, our carpet, hay.

The size of the cabin is about 14 by 24. It contains a stove, bureau, table, four chairs, and two cupboards. Two of the bed-

41. New Haven Daily Palladium, May 19, 1856.
42. This was the home of James M. Bisbey.
steads are made as follows: four sticks of hickory sawed off about sixteen inches long, same as for fire-wood, and four rails about three inches through, roughly hewn, and driven into holes dug out of the posts, the cord stretched across in both directions by drawing it over the rails. It does not appear that any tool, except such as was used in building the cabin, was employed upon the bedsteads. Sheets are hung up to hide the beds occupied by men from the view of others in the room. Last night, two ladies were lodged on one of the beds, four men in the other two, and four children with four men upon the ground, with a fresh bed of hay spread over it, and in the morning all seemed to feel well. We were not dull from having breathed heated or impure air over night. We had not been alarmed by the cry of fire, nor were we frowned upon by the lady of the house for spitting upon the carpet. In this matter we had our choice, to make the spread hay our spittoon, or spit out doors through the crevices between the timbers.

We have here plenty of good milk, butter and bread, together with pork and fresh fish. The lady informs me that they arrived here in November, 1854, and until Christmas, or for about six weeks, she cooked out doors by the side of a tree, and that the family, six in number, slept under a tent just large enough to accommodate them, if they all lay straight. About New Year's they united with another family, and took up their winter quarters in a small cabin,—so small, that those whose beds were made at one end of the room, were under the necessity of retiring first, otherwise, the last to bed were obliged to walk over the others; but, notwithstanding these inconveniences, our friend informed me that she enjoyed herself very much while living out doors and sleeping in a crowd. They were all well, cheerful and happy. Their food was of the most common kind,—and yet their children, formerly very dainty, were glad to get hold of a dish of raw meal and molasses.—Their cabin now is in a bad location, too near the stream, and last Fall most of them were visited with "the shakes;" but with the exception of those who live in the woods, for the sake of securing the timber, this troublesome complaint in all new countries was not any more prevalent than is usual under similar circumstances.

Last evening, about bed-time, a young man called and desired Mrs. B[isbey] to go up and assist in laying out his mother, who had just breathed her last. The distance was 3½ miles,—but the wagon was got up, and the melancholy service performed. The scene, from the description given us by one of our company who was present when the poor woman died, was sad indeed. The
husband is in common parlance, “a poor stick.” The children, eight in number, living in abject poverty, saw their mother die on a buffalo robe spread upon the floor. The first difficulty after her death, was to provide a coffin. There were men who could make it, but no boards could be found. At last, one person offered to use part of the bottom of his wagon; another furnished the balance, and after great difficulty, a box was put together and made to answer the purpose. How changed the scene to one who has been accustomed to witness these last sad rites of respect for the dead performed in a very different style. The effect of being transferred in a few weeks from a community where a choice is given between a variety of habiliments for the dead, from a neat plain coffin to one of costly mahogany, rosewood, or metal, to one where the only alternative is between a coarse box and blanket, is on many accounts hard to be endured,—and the transition in many other respects is equally striking and painful; but the more these things are manifest, the greater the need appears for toil and sacrifice in order to plant here those institutions and influences which will speedily change the aspect of affairs, and cause this wilderness, covered as it is with a moral waste, to blossom as a rose.

Whatever may be said of the vices of our large cities at the East,—and there is little danger that they will be over-estimated,—we can already see the effect here of an absence of Christian institutions. We passed the Sabbath, yesterday, in our log cabin, without hearing the sound of a church-going bell, or seeing the children and their parents, dressed in their neat Sabbath attire, winding their way to the Sabbath School and to the church of God. We could read the Bible, sing and pray together, as we did; but, after all, the genial influence of a New England Sabbath is wanting,—and until a church is erected, schools established, and the services of a stated pastor enjoyed, we shall see but little reverence for God’s word, or for His holy day. Neither shall we experience the many creature comforts that are found only in Christian communities and under the influence of Christian institutions.

It just occurs to me that personal cleanliness will be very much less regarded and practiced where the Sabbath is like all other days, and “Sunday clothes” are out of date and out of use. But it is useless to attempt a specification of the loss we suffer where God is not honored and habitually worshipped; but with the aid of our Christian friends at the East, we hope, ere long, to see a church edifice erected and hear the voice of the living preacher.
We find many good people here, scattered abroad, who feel deeply the wants referred to, and rejoice in the prospect of a better state of things. The past two days, Saturday and Sunday, have been severely trying to our company; the former by the severe rain storm, and the latter by the violent winds, which amount to a regular gale. They have not yet arrived, but we are looking for them every hour. These winds seem to us hard to be endured, but the gentleman with whom we are stopping, says they are no worse than they have in Western New York, and notwithstanding they appear to us so formidable, it is nevertheless quite possible, that the weather, as a whole, will be more agreeable than at the East.

In my next, I hope to inform you of the safe arrival and satisfactory beginning of our company in their Western home.—L.43

WABONSA, May 2d, 1856.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—This letter is being written at our camp, under a tent, with plenty of thunder rolling over our heads, lightning flashing in the distance, and occasional showers pattering upon our cloth roof. If it were pleasant I should be otherwise employed, and you of course would be minus this "copy" for an unoccupied column of the Palladium. We are incommodeed by the rain, and yet it is so useful in softening the sod and starting the grass, that we feel quite resigned. Our men have generally staked out their claims. The surveyors are at work finding the boundaries, and the appraisers fixing their relative value, and we hope in a very few days to complete the arrangement and see every man singly located upon his farm. Two have left us since my last letter; one to locate in Lawrence, the other to return. A few others, who find it so difficult to be contented away from their wives, will very likely go home, and still others may do likewise, because of the "difficulties by the way," and the deprivations they did not anticipate, and yet there will no doubt remain a good company of not less than fifty, who will persevere in their efforts to build up a new town and organize a thriving community in "Kanzas."

We have had dry weather until within the past week, and the rains coming unexpectedly, found many of the company poorly prepared with shelters. At the close of the first rainy day a number were thoroughly wet and obliged to locate for the night as best they could. The tents we had were crowded to their utmost capacity, while the few cabins within our reach were also resorted to.

43. New Haven Daily Palladium, May 21, 1856.
The occupants afforded us all the accommodation in their power. The nearest one, but a few rods from our camp, is not over eight feet by ten, in the clear, and has barely room for a bedstead, table, stove and barrel, and yet the kind-hearted owners, a man and his wife, relinquished the bed to two of our men sick with the measles, for part of the time, and fixed a tolerable sleeping place for them under the bed for the balance of the night. One or two others were also sheltered in the room. Upon the same occasion six of us found an unoccupied cabin belonging to a gentleman from Maine, who when at home was Secretary of the Board of Education, and had been a member of the Legislature of the State. It was situated upon the bank of one of the creeks in the midst of woods and underbrush. Its size, thirteen feet by eleven, and without a floor. We found it very damp from the two fold cause of its location, and the dripping of the rain through the apertures in the roof and the openings between the logs.

We kindled a fire, groped our way through the wood to the creek for water, and prepared a "hasty" meal by cooking a little ham and warming over our mush; having finished supper and devoted a little time in a social way, we prepared to retire. One of the company having with him a hammock, suspended it from the roof and thus provided himself with a very comfortable lodgement. Another found two oak "shakes," or shingles, as we should call them, about three feet long and six inches wide, which he laid upon the ground, gathering up three straws, as he said, and laying upon the shingles, wrapped himself in his blanket and "turned in" among the spiders and other vermin that are usually found in a deserted human dwelling.

The bedstead belonging to the cabin was still in reserve for the accommodation of the remaining four of the company. It was constructed after the ordinary style of the country, no tool, except an axe, saw and auger, having been used upon it. Its dimensions, six feet long and three feet wide, and the bed, a brown bag with a little hay stuffing—but it was too small for four, and we therefore placed the table, three feet square, by the side of it, as one end, which gave an average of four feet and six inches in length by eighteen inches in breadth to each person. The table looked very much like the frame commonly used to scrape hogs on after they are killed, and consisted of a frame made from four round sticks, connected by two being driven into auger holes in the other two, and four legs attached by the same means—one of which was
constantly dropping out—with three of the “oak shakes” laid loosely across for the top; but as the table was somewhat higher than the bed, the projecting ends of the long sticks came in contact with the backs of those lying next them. Still after fixing them the best way we could, the Doctor preempted one outside claim, the President the other, at right angles, and the Deacon and a young man who came out with us, for his health, (and who, by the way, is decidedly improved,) fitted themselves upon the inner sides, with their legs necessarily hanging over toward the floor and our heads being together.

The Doctor, to prevent his young friend from pushing him off upon the lodger on the ground, was obliged to prop himself by means of a pole, braced against the side of the cabin. Thus arranged, after sundry expostulations for crowding, and complaints on account of sticks pressing the backs of the young man and the Deacon, we found repose for our exhausted bodies and dreamed of the loved ones we had left behind. Notwithstanding these rough and rustic scenes, these hard beds and hardships, we were all in good spirits, and in view of the object before us were no doubt happier than many of the denizens of ceiled houses in our old cities, who sleep upon spring mattresses, in chambers, carpeted and curtained after the latest style. Hope is a powerful stimulus in all our migrations and trials in this world, and we feel its blessed influence here. We are content, though absent from those we dearly love, because

“We still are joined in heart
And hope to meet again.”

And we rejoice notwithstanding our deprivations, because we hope “there is a good time coming,” and we are willing to “wait a little longer.” It is more and more wonderful to us every succeeding day to notice how pioneers live, and yet how content they seem.

Among the variety of dwellings found here, I noticed one to-day occupied by a very respectable man, which consisted of a box in which he brought fruit trees into the territory—seven feet long, three feet wide and three deep—with a slight roof fixed over it, leaving one side entirely open. In this box is his bed, across the end of it his chest—with a frying pan and testament lying upon the top, and yet he pursues his daily toil, is cheerful and looks forward to better times, being, like most of those who come to any of these new settlements without means, obliged to pass through severe trials before reaching a position of competence and comfort; but
even when after a few years of success they acquire the means of living in good style, they are slow to improve their condition, having from the mere force of habit become content with moderate and simple accommodations.

The farmer with whom I have boarded more or less since arriving here, and who has a fine farm and is evidently improving his condition rapidly, seems quite content to yield his lodging place by the side of his wife in favor of a lady of our company, and bunk down upon his free soil carpet for weeks together. Whether he is governed by a desire of gain, or a spirit of accommodation, does not fully appear; but under similar circumstances it is hardly probable that many of us would find motive enough in the former consideration to follow his example, however much we might be affected by the latter. Since lodging in this man’s cabin I have twice been aroused from a morning slumber by the good lady selecting a piece of pork for our breakfast, from the barrel, which stands at the foot of our bed.

In traversing the prairies yesterday, for the purpose of appraising the claims taken by the members of our company, we discovered a variety of beautiful flowers, and among them the “sweet pea” in full bloom, much more beautiful than we have them in our flower gardens at the East, and of a delightful spicy odor. It would have given us very great pleasure could we have sent to our friends at home a bouquet, by telegraph, made up of these various native products of “Kansas.” We also noticed strawberries in full bloom, raspberries leaved out and budded, grapes in leaf, and wild hops in great profusion. We are every day more impressed with the great agricultural resources of this country, and when it becomes subdued and under genial cultivation, and the arts and privileges of a Christian civilization are established here, we can see no reason why it may not be a delightful land, filled with abundance and variety for the sustenance and happiness of man.

Your readers may wonder why no more is said about the political affairs of Kanzas, the prospect of her State government, &c. The truth is we have nothing to say. In the region where we dwell everything is as quiet in these respects as they are in Hamden. We are busy in preparing to break up the land and provide our habitations, and hear nothing said by any one of a political character. We know of only two pro-slavery men in our vicinity, and have but little fear of any difficulty on that subject. Lawrence is the center if not the circumference of agitation, excitement and confusion upon this subject.
We have heard within a few days of a new outbreak in that community, involving in all probability the death of the bogus Sheriff. But as our mails from there come but once a week, we are without any definite information on that subject. We nevertheless fear that our friends in Lawrence may be on the eve of more trouble, but we must wait for the particulars. The Territory generally is quiet and persons wishing to emigrate hither need not be deterred by any statement they hear of a warlike character. We may witness a different state of things when the time for voting returns again; but we intend to push on our improvements, attend to our legitimate associations and be in readiness for whatever events may hereafter transpire. Of one thing be assured, KANZAS WILL BE FREE, unless the mistakes and imprudences of her friends prevent it, which is not probable. May we all have wisdom according to our necessities, be patient under trials and truly desire to make the worst of our lives for the good of mankind and the glory of God.—L.  

WAUBONSA, K. T., May 8th, 1856.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—Since my last communication we have made some progress toward a settlement of our company in this beautiful locality.—The more we reconnoiter the country the better it appears, and as the season advances the natural beauty and extraordinary fertility of the earth is more and more apparent. The deep black soil just turned up to the sun for the first time, shining in all its luxuriance, cannot fail to impress the beholder with its capacity for extraordinary production.

The grass roots in this primeval turf are so firm and penetrate to so great a depth, that a team of three stout yoke of oxen is required to break it up and the ploughing of one acre is a good day's work but as to its cap[acity it would almost seem capable of yielding ten penny nails, jack plains or sledge hammers. As yet the principle product is corn, planted in the newly turned turf with an axe, and then left with no further labour until harvest.—The roots of grass, if the first ploughing is well done, will decay during the summer and the following spring. Cross plowing will bring the soil into a mellow condition, suitable for any kind of culture. It is supposed that the "ague" is caused chiefly by this decaying vegetation, and of course, that after the land is generally broken up, the cause being removed, the malady will disappear. My own

44. The bogus sheriff who is mentioned frequently in these letters was Samuel J. Jones. He was postmaster of Westport, Mo., but had been appointed sheriff of Douglas county, K. T., by the so-called "bogus legislature."

45. New Haven Daily Palladium, May 24, 1856.
impression, however, is that the want of good shelter and suitable food is the principle source of the disease; but that all these causes are of short continuance, and necessarily advert to the settlement of all new countries.

But as before indicated we are continually charmed with the new beauties of the country, as developed by the progress of the season. On our arrival a large portion of the surface in every direction was covered with the long brown grass of last year’s growth, presenting at a distance very much the appearance of the sand plains and banks so frequently seen in Connecticut—but the scene now is changed, and the process by which the change was in part effected, has not been without interest. The “prairie fires,” which may be seen in the early spring, every evening, sometimes exceedingly beautiful, are the natural and efficient agents of this very necessary work. We are told they are much more magnificent in the fall, but it has been my privilege to gaze upon some of these western fireworks with great pleasure. Upon one occasion while on our way, in rear of a cabin where we remained over the Sabbath, we witnessed the finest exhibition of this sort. The grass was very long, the surface undulating, and the distance from our point of observation about half a mile. A slight breeze served to give increased activity to the element, and a gentle waving to and fro of the flame—the effect was truly sublime; it seemed like a battalion of soldiers formed of fire—now as the flames passed a level plain in line, and anon as they descended the ravines and rolled upon the swells—counter-marching, moving in echelon, and forming columns of attack, until finally as the wind increased, a rapid retreat was apparent, and it was not difficult to imagine that the noise of the crackling underwood was caused by the tread of an army, as the fires disappeared over the summit of a distant bluff.

These fires leaving the surface black and smooth are now being succeeded by occasional showers, the influence of which is seen in the rapidity with which nature is spreading her green carpet over these broad prairies, and starting into life and beauty the ten thousand flowers that greet us in every direction. The denizens of an old city know but little how the mind is affected in walking out over these field[s] in the early morn, gazing upon nature in her natural dress, listening to the singing birds as they warble their early praises, and hailing the rising sun as it comes up from the distant east in no way intercepted by any of the works of man; or by a similar promenade in the evening twilight, when all
nature is sinking to rest,—and when from some elevated point of observation you see an unbroken horizon in every direction. The sky in the west gilded with the mellow rays of the "glorious orb of day," just departed; the moon with its "borrowed light," and the stars, differing in glory, now becoming the companions of your solitude. The *impression* of these scenes as they bring the mind in direct contact with God in his works cannot be realized in a crowded city, and there is an *unbounded extent* apparent to the mind here that cannot be realized with you, even in the country. I have never found such a *closet* for the contemplation of the greatness and glory of God as is afforded by an evening walk over these silent prairies. . . .

We have within the past few days completed our arrangement for the distribution of "claims,"—(A "claim" in this country means a quarter section of land subject to preemption)—and within the past two days they have been sold at auction to the highest bidder. Our plan provided that on our arrival here, each man should at once "squat" upon his claim and hold it subject to the final distribution; after which a general survey and appraisement was made and the choice sold precisely according to the plans usually pursued by religious societies in renting or selling pews. The appraisement amounted in all to $450, and the bonuses for a choice to nearly $600. By agreement the $450 appraisement is to be distributed among those who take outside claims, not considered worth the average, while the bonus goes into the treasury for company expenses. About fifty have taken claims and are beginning to work upon them. Our plan was carried out to the letter and the harmony of the company preserved entire; every man appears entirely satisfied with the result of the sale.

It is remarkable that a company of men, most of whom were entire strangers to each other, should be able to travel the distance, encounter the privations, and be subject to the disappointments necessary in reaching our present locality, without having any root of bitterness spring up among them; but the fact is so. Almost every vote passed by the company has been unanimous, and I am not aware that any two individuals have been made unhappy by means of disagreement or controversy. A few have left from various causes—chiefly from becoming *homesick*; but I am sorry to say that in one or two instances individuals after leaving have spoken disparagingly of our location and prospects,—while the company are highly pleased and entirely satisfied with *both*. That
we are severely tried in consequence of absence from friends, poor accommodations, and undesirable food, is true—and that some of us are still more troubled with the loss of all kind of literary and religious privileges, is also true; but that we have made an unwise selection for a town, is not true,—nor that our prospects for the future are unpromising.

Several of our men have already commenced ploughing, and some have planted corn and potatoes. Our blacksmith shop will soon be in operation, but we very much need a shoe-maker, and a good stone mason. Our company are very well, considering the circumstances, and although we miss many comforts, our great aspiration will be relieved when our families are with us, and the sound of a church-going bell is heard in our midst.—L.46

WAUBONSA, K. T., May 13, '56.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—By the arrival of a lady connected with our company, who remained behind at Lawrence, we learn some particulars in regard to the state of things in that troubled city. It appears that the difficulties originated in the attempts of bogus Sheriff Jones to arrest certain persons connected with the State Government: these attempts were resisted, and in every instance where an individual was taken he was immediately rescued by the people. No violence was done to the Sheriff in all these proceedings—he was held back and in various ways prevented from accomplishing his purpose. These scenes were witnessed by our informant on the Sabbath, while returning from church, which circumstances will serve to illustrate to some extent the power of moral restraints in this country, or in other words the influences of the Bible and religious institutions over the masses of the people.

The character of the Sheriff is not alone the cause of this desecration, as it will be obvious that no man, however base, would attempt to make arrests in New Haven on the Sabbath, under circumstances certain to excite the populace, when from the nature of the case a postponement could be made without at all jeopardizing the ends of justice.—The truth is therefore that the people of Lawrence and to a great extent, I am sorry to say, of Kanzas are not generally in the habit of respecting the Sabbath, but great allowance is no doubt to be made on account of the circumstances of the country, and the trials and agitations to which the people have been subjected, while we throw over the mantle of charity inscribed "there are no Sabbaths in revolutionary times." There are very many good

46. Date of publication unknown.
people in Kansas, and whenever the Govt. becomes settled we shall no doubt see and feel their influences in establishing here those institutions we so highly prize in our New England homes.

The Sheriff having entirely failed in his attempts to make arrests by the power of his own authority, returned on the following Monday from Lecompton with twelve pro-slavery men to assist him, but it was no go. The people would not permit him to effect a single arrest, by his authority, for they do not and will not acknowledge him as a legitimate officer, but on the following day he appeared backed by a small number of U. S. troops, when all resistance immediately ceased, the people saying that any show of authority from the government of the United States they should always respect, and by the venal power of these allies—for their number was too insignificant to excite alarm—the Sheriff effected the arrest of six persons,47 charged with various offenses, took them to Lecompton, where after a few days detention they gave bonds and were discharged.

On the night of these arrests Jones being in his tent in the suburbs of the city, and near where the U. S. troops were encamped, was shot by some unknown person. This circumstance of course produced great excitement, as it was supposed his wounds were mortal. He was immediately removed under an escort of troops, to an adjoining village, after having been kindly attended by one of the Free State physicians of Lawrence whom he had the day previous arrested. The Doctor was at once discharged in return of his kindness.—The following day Gov. Robinson called a public meeting, at which the attempted murder of Jones was strongly condemned and a reward of $500 offered for the arrest of the murderer. The Sheriff is now considered out of danger.

During these movements a Sheriff's Deputy entered a house and inquired of the lady for her husband. She denied his authority and ordered him to leave the house, and upon his refusal dashed a kettle of scalding dish-water in his face, saying that as long as stoves and hot water were under her control no pretended creature of the bogus Legislature should ransack her house “by authority.” There were several other instances where ladies treated these “territorial officers” with most decided contempt. In all cases, however, where the officers were accompanied by “troops” the soldiers were re-

47. G. W. Smith, G. W. Deitzler, and Gains Jenkins were arrested at this time for high treason. The marshal had warrants for the arrest of several other individuals, including Governor Reeder and James H. Lane but could not find them. George W. Brown was already in custody under the same indictment and Charles Robinson, also a prisoner, faced an indictment for usurpation of office.—“Correspondence of Governor Geary,” Kansas Historical Collections, v. 4 (1886-1890), pp. 415, 417.
spected and no attempts at resistance to them was made. A few
days subsequent to these events a U. S. Marshal 48 appeared with
several warrants for the arrest of persons for “high treason.” He
called upon Gov. Reeder and requested him to follow, but the Gov-
ernor declined on the ground first, that he was Senator of the United
States and therefore not liable to arrest, and further that he was in
the service of the Committee of Congressmen in session at Law-
rence, and they were unwilling he should leave, as his services were
very important to them in the progress of their investigations. He
acknowledged the authority of the Marshal, but denied his right to
arrest him under the circumstances.

It is said that Gov. Reeder is piling in the testimony in such over-
whelming heaps of unanswerable facts, that the proslavery men feel
there is no escape for them, except disposing of him, and it is feared
this state of things may lead to difficulty, and force another resort to
arms, even while the Committee of Congress are on the ground
pursuing their investigation. We hope, however, that our friends
will not be unnecessarily alarmed upon our account. We are so far
removed from the seat of war, that in the event of an outbreak in
that direction our services will hardly be available. We hope there
will not be any serious affray and cannot believe there will, cer-
tainly while the Committee of Congress are in session there, but
if our company are called upon and the circumstances are such as to
justify a response, they will undoubtedly be ready. Still we have
no serious apprehensions at present. The real cause of all the trou-
ble at the present time is no doubt to be found in the facts alluded
to, that the proslavery party are alarmed at the progress of the in-
vestigation before the Committee, but they will not I think dare to
raise a fight upon such an issue. Yet it would be no more inconsider-
ate than many of the steps already taken by them. Let them
rave, however,—give them all the rope they desire and the common
result in such cases will follow—“suicide by hanging.”

A new and deeply interesting event transpired in our little com-
unity to-day. I allude to the butchering of an ox, by means of
which we have been put in possession of fresh meat for the first
time since our arrival, and it is highly relished as you may readily
believe. We hope to be more regularly supplied hereafter, as
several of our men have decided, after planting, to go upon a
buffalo hunt and bring back a supply for the season—while others
will kill deer sufficient to supply our wants. In the interim we

48. Deputy United States Marshal William P. Fain was the officer who attempted to
arrest Governor Reeder at this time. Fain was a Southerner.
have now two cows and in a few days will be supplied with one or two more, for purpose of milk and butter. We find growing wild a fine vegetable called “Osage plums,” which grow somewhat like cranberries and look almost precisely like our common gooseberry. When boiled they taste very much like green peas, and are eaten freely by us. They are found in considerable quantities without difficulty upon the open prairie.

The season is now rapidly advancing. Our cattle find ample pasture without expense to us, upon these broad fields as they work and grow fat.—Vegetation is coming forward finely, and if we are not disturbed by “civil commotions” there can be nothing to hinder our making a good beginning this season. We regret to find that some of the persons who have “gone out from us,” are giving most unmistakable evidence that “they were not of us,” by the false representation made by them in regard to our company.

We wish therefore to caution the public against any stories they may hear upon the subject, and to say that we are finely located in a good section of the country—that we are united, there being more than sixty of our company with us—all of whom are well pleased, and that the reports circulated by some who have left us are slanders, unworthy the men who utter them, and undeserved by us. While it is probable you may hear little of these things at home, we hear and feel their influence with us, as we know of numerous instances where individuals on their way to join us, have been influenced in another direction by them. The facts in the case will appear in due time, while we hope to be gaining strength in our position, so that in the end all these things will work together for our good.—L. 49

WAUBONSA, K. T., May 17th, 1856.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—We have experienced within the last two days some symptoms of war, and yet we trust nothing serious will result. Some ten days since we dispatched five teams to Kanzas [City] to bring up our groceries and provisions. On their way back one of the teamsters left the road to do an errand at Topeka, and while there he was called up in the night and requested to proceed forthwith to our camp and request our men to be in readiness to march at a moments warning to the defense of Lawrence. He arrived here during the night of Monday, having walked that day forty miles, and communicated the information that the officers of the militia residing in Topeka had been

sent for, to repair to Lawrence and consult upon some means of defense; the messengers stating that Gov. Robinson had been arrested, that the Committee of Congress were in danger, and the city liable to be destroyed any moment.

We did not regard the story as very probable, and took no action in relation to it, except that some of our young men employed themselves in brushing up their rifles, running bullets and making cartridges. On Tuesday evening another messenger appeared, also from Topeka, stating that an express had arrived from Lawrence with the information that the officers who left Topeka had been arrested, that fifteen hundred Missourians were approaching the city, from the neighborhood of Leavenworth, burning houses, &c. The President of the Company was called upon after having retired, and requested to convene a meeting of the company at midnight; this, however, was found impracticable, and a meeting was warned at 6 o'clock next morning.

In consequence of the distance at which some of the members are located from the camp, the meeting was attended by only about thirty. The business being stated, a motion was made by one of the younger members to dispatch twenty-five armed men immediately to Topeka, there to await further orders. This proposition was firmly resisted, on the ground that our information was altogether too indefinite to justify a decisive movement upon our part. The question now assumed a serious importance, the younger men generally favoring a march, the older counselling delay. The question being taken the proposition was negatived by a very close vote, and a resolution adopted appointing a committee of three\textsuperscript{50} to proceed towards Lawrence for the purpose of ascertaining the facts in the case, and report the result as early as possible. The committee are now absent and we are waiting their return with much anxiety. In the meantime we have organized a rifle company, to be called "The Prairie Guard," with about forty members, and elected the following officers:

\textit{Captain—William Mitchell,\textsuperscript{51} of Middletown.}

\textsuperscript{50} This committee was composed of William Mitchell, Jr., Dr. Joseph P. Root and J. H. Nesbitt, an early settler of Wabash, who had been admitted into the colony. Nesbitt went only as far as Topeka, then returned home.—"Minutes," May 14, 19.

\textsuperscript{51} William Mitchell, Jr., was born June 24, 1836, in Kilmarnock, Scotland. While an infant his parents came to the United States and settled at Middletown, Conn. In 1849 he went to California by boat, thence to Australia and home by way of Great Britain. After coming to Kansas with the Connecticut Kansas colony, he was active in Free-State affairs. His home served as a station on the Underground railroad. Two or three years after the settlement of the colony, his father, William Mitchell, Sr., and his maiden sister, Agnes, joined him. He was one of the first county commissioners of Wabash county and held other public offices in the county. He served in the Kansas legislature of 1868. On March 31, 1868, William Mitchell was married to Mary N. Chamberlain, a childhood friend in Middletown, Conn. They had four children, Alex, Raymond, William L., and Maude,
1st Lieut.—William Burgess, of New Haven.
2d Lieut.—George Wells, of Hartford.


No Corporals were deemed necessary. The company were drilled thoroughly in the afternoon and will parade again to-morrow at 5 p. m. My own impression is very decided that there will be no occasion for our interference, and my hope is that prudent councils will prevail with us, and our company be preserved from unnecessarily involving themselves in trouble. Yet if the call is to protect the innocent and defend the right, there will be no voice raised to deter our men from going to the rescue. On the contrary all will feel disposed to participate in the struggle and abide the issue. I think we are in no special danger of moving rashly. We suppose no friend at home would wish us to refuse to act if prudent councils shall clearly point out our duty in that direction.

We are now getting our affairs into a more comfortable shape, having completed a large tent fifteen feet by thirty, and received our stock of provisions, which are safely landed in the tent, and are now being distributed among the members as they are wanted. Our friend, George Coe, Esq., is entitled to the honor of being the first person in the Company to establish a regular business among us. He has opened an eating house upon the “European plan” under his tent. The dimensions of the apartment are about fourteen feet by ten. He furnishes meals at all hours, or as some of our men say meals without the s. Certain it is that his variety is not large. The conveniences of the establishment consist of a tent that cost $15, stove $10, sundry tin plates, pots and pans $5—no tables nor chairs—trunks serving in place of the latter, and a box for the former; five knives and forks and two water pails, and yet with his diligence and obliging manner there can be no doubt of his ultimate success. His prices are 50 cts. per day or $3 per week, without butter or milk except occasionally. He sometimes

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52. The Prairie Guards were enrolled as Company H of the Free Kansas militia. The officers received their commissions from C. W. Topliff, adjutant general.—“Minutes,” May 14, 1856.
accommodates thirteen with lodgings. Of course [he] is bound to make money, having now twelve regular boarders and as many more waiting for the completion of his new tent, which is making. He has a lady connected with the Company to assist him.

Mr. Isbel, from Guilford, is getting ready to start his blacksmith shop. Several of the Company are already constructing their cabins and ploughing up the prairie. I had my first lesson in the latter employment to-day and like the work very much, although I do not expect to find many opportunities to engage in it after the present month. We require three yoke of oxen to break prairie, and our practice is to join teams and plough for each other. We hope that some of us will be able to "put in" ten acres of corn. I have already started some grape-vines, strawberries, currants, blackberries, raspberries, and a few pear trees, brought from my own garden in New Haven, and from present appearances they do well. I intend to-morrow to plant melons, tomatoes, potatoes, and all the ordinary garden vegetables, if we are not summoned to shoulder our rifles and engage in a different kind of ploughing and planting.

One of our New Haven delegation, Mr. Church, left us a few days since, on his return home. He was pleased with the country and with our location, and we were much pleased with him and sorry to see him turn his back upon us, but we suppose he had reasons of a domestic character to influence his movement, that could not easily be controlled. We wish him well and have no fears that he will treat us with the unfairness that we have experienced at the hands of some others who have left us.

J. D. Farren is no longer one of our number, having as we understand, located in Lawrence, where he thinks his services in "the great cause of freedom" will be more needed than with us.—Another who left us last week has returned, so that our number is now fifty-seven. The day is rainy and we are in our cabins and tents, occupying our time as best we can. In our domicil at one of the best cabins in the place we have 8 members of the Company. Mr. and Mrs. P[ond], of our city, are reading; Dr. R[ead] of Milford is writing; Mr. T[uttle], of Bloomfield, is at present an invalid, but recovering; Mr. W[ells]?, of Hartford, is reading and drying his clothes, which were wet in our ploughing experiment, this morning; Mr. S[eiden], of Haddam, is an invalid, but doing well and enjoying himself very much; Deacon H[all], of our city, is just now running bullets to kill buffalo with, as he is bound to
go on a hunt during the season. But our landlady summons us to tea, and as we have a pie on the table, the first of any kind I have seen since our arrival, made from sorrel and sweetened with molasses, I must wind up, only adding that as soon as any further intelligence is received from the seat of war I will write you.—L.

P. S.—Since writing the above we have been visited with more rumors in regard to the state of things at Lawrence. During the day a military company of about twenty-five men from the region of Manhattan passed through our village, and made strenuous efforts to induce us to join them, but we preferred to wait the return of our committee, knowing that sufficient time had transpired to give them opportunity to communicate with us from Topeka, if in their judgment it was expedient for us to move. I think our company are decided not to mix themselves up with any fighting operations merely at the call of military officers. They intend to know for what purpose they are wanted, when the evidence is clear and duty points to the cannon’s mouth, they will not be found wanting.—L.53

WAUBONSA, K. T., May 22, 1856.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—When I last wrote you, it was stated that in consequence of several dispatches which had been received within a few days, we had thought best to send a committee to inquire after the safety of our teams, then past due, and possibly detained by some of the guerrilla parties of Missourians upon the road between here and Kansas City, and also to ascertain, as far as practicable, the real motive of the difficulties reported as existing in Lawrence. The committee left here on Wednesday, the 14th inst., and the facts in regard to their progress, are as follows: They proceeded from here to Topeka, having passed our teams a short distance from here, all right. At Topeka, they were informed that the Lawrence people did not wish any reinforcements. Feeling a desire, however, to learn all the circumstances in regard to the matter, they proceeded to Lawrence, arriving there on Friday, the 16th inst. After completing their inquiries, they left the city in the evening, in company with two other men from another part of the Territory, who were on the same errand. We were informed, before they left, of a camp of Georgians, who had pitched their tents on the public road about seven miles west of Lawrence, but some of our men, with their teams, had stopped among them, and found no disposition to be quarrelsome.

53. New Haven Daily Palladium, June 14, 1856.
It now appears that this encampment had, at this time, assumed a different character, purporting now to be "a posse comitatus," collected by the U.S. Marshal, ostensibly to aid him in making certain contemplated arrests in Lawrence. From all we can learn, they are a desperate set of men, entirely lawless, and while waiting the orders of the Marshal, the U.S. are in no way to be held responsible for their acts.

As we suppose, the moment they are interfered with, the Marshal will assume the command and claim their protection as forces under him. A deputation from Lawrence visited the camp a few days since, for the purpose of ascertaining the wishes of the Marshal, when he informed them that he intended to come into the city, make such arrests as he chose and require the citizens to give up their arms. The committee signified their willingness that he should proceed without any hindrance, with a reasonable force, to arrest all persons for whom he had warrants, but protested against the introduction of a thousand armed men into their community, to be set at liberty among them, for the purpose of murdering and plundering their citizens. Nothing was accomplished, and they returned. That community are now waiting for the action of the Marshal. It will be perceived that this plan of subjugating the people of Lawrence is peculiar and difficult to meet, because ostensibly the invaders are acting under the authority of the United States. How far they will go in arresting unoffending citizens, and taking from the people their arms, in open defiance of an express provision of the Constitution of the U.S., remains to be seen.

Two only of our committee proceeded to Lawrence,—the other one remaining at Topeka until Sunday morning, when he left, arriving here in the night. He brought the very unwelcome intelligence that two men arrived at Topeka on Saturday, stating that they had been sent from another part of the Territory to investigate the state of things at Lawrence, and that they had left there on Friday evening in company with our committee, and when passing the camp referred to, were hailed and ordered to stop, but that they put the spurs to their horses and escaped, while our men, as they suppose, were detained. At all events we have heard nothing from them direct, since then, and as several guns were fired at the time, we of course feel anxious for the result. We do not yet believe they were harmed, but we have no evidence that

they were not, and no doubt as to the fact that they were stopped as represented.

We have held several meetings of our company since. We have sent two committees as far as Topeka, to inquire, but as yet get no information, and are thus placed in very trying circumstances.—Some of the company are anxious to proceed in a body to rescue our friends, or die in the attempt. That probably will not be done, as we are sure that we should be under the necessity of contending with more than a thousand men, and, after all, the plea may be set up that our men are only detained as a part of the Marshal’s force, or some other equally plausible pretext. In the meantime, we are to-day applied to from Topeka to furnish a few men, and as many rifles as possible, to aid in organizing a company of mounted men to take the place of a governing power so far as to protect persons and property on the highway, and punish, if need be, those who are found guilty of violating the rights of travelers, or in any way practicing their atrocities upon unoffending people. We are to hold a meeting this afternoon to act upon the application.

One of our men in charge of the last teams that arrived, stopped at the camp referred to, but it was then the “Georgia Camp,” so called. He had conversation with many of the men, and saw no disposition among them to quarrel. They informed him that they had been misled in leaving their homes upon this enterprise,—that a number of their men had returned, and more were intending to do so. One man, who was a sort of a leader of a portion of the company, told him that it was all a bad speculation, that he was intending to return and should do what he could to prevent others from coming.—These are the men who came out under Co. Buford,55 to make Kanzas a slave state. It is a remarkable fact, that most of those who come from the South, come with the avowed purpose of accomplishing that object. They do not, therefore, generally locate,—neither do they work. On the contrary, the great body of those who come from the free States, come to settle, bringing their ploughs and cattle with them.

55. Maj. Jefferson Buford, a lawyer of Eufaula, Ala., organized a party of men to come to Kansas for the purpose of strengthening the cause of the South. Many of the men expected to settle in Kansas. The company, consisting of men from Georgia, South Carolina and Alabama, left Montgomery, Ala., on March 31, 1856. The men were unarmed but each carried a Bible. This was intended as a rebuke to Henry Ward Beecher.

Upon reaching Kansas the men scattered to find claims but were soon summoned to Lecompton. Here they were enrolled and armed by Governor Shannon as territorial militia. After the hostilities of the summer of 1856 had died down many of the men returned home, others enlisted in the United States troops in Kansas, while a few went over to the other side and became Free-State partisans.—See W. L. Fleming’s “The Buford Expedition to Kansas,” in The American Historical Review, v. 6 (1900-1901), pp. 93-49.
Yet we are those to be disarmed, and in various ways molested, while the others are all right. Was ever such a monstrosity practiced before under the forms of free government? Take the case of our two men. By what constitutional right are they detained? Why are they abridged of their liberty? What evil have they or we done? We came here in an orderly and quiet way, and have commenced breaking up the land and erecting our cabins. We sent out a committee on perfectly legitimate business. By what right are they arrested and detained? Is no protection to be furnished, or are we thus to live at the mercy of a mob? Two men have been murdered within the past week upon the road, because they would not give up their money, arms and horses. Who are to be held responsible for these abominations? We have all been disappointed that during the sojourn of the Committee of Congress in the Territory, these things should be enacted,—but some suppose that one of the objects is to prevent that Committee from a successful fulfillment of their duties. They have spent some time at Lawrence, and are now at Leavenworth. It is reported that testimony has been given before them, directly convicting Oliver, one of the Committee, of voting in Kanzas. This is given only as a report,—it may or may not be true.

With the exception of these embarrassments, all things are going well with us, and in a few months we should be ready for our families, and prepared to lay the foundations of a future prosperous community and populous town,—but where these troubles are to end, it is impossible to say. The difficulties are multifarious. Yet it is not easy to see exactly how the very large majority of free State men in the Territory are to be overcome, if they stand firm.

The facts in regard to the character of the Territorial government, the nature and absurdity of their laws, causing very properly an utter disregard of their exactions from the people, are a great source of trouble, but the position of the U.S. government, and the character of President Pierce's officials here, is, after all, perhaps the greatest embarrassment. We cannot contend with them, and do not feel disposed to. We doubt whether we shall be permitted to pursue the peaceable avocations in which we are engaged, without being constantly annoyed by those whose purposes may be defeated by the accumulation in the Territory of quiet citizens in favor of a free government.

There probably will be no permanent peace until after the Presidential election, and not then if the pro-slavery democracy
are successful. It is quite clear that we are to have slavery established here if it is in the power of Missouri, aided by government officials, to accomplish the object. Whether in the Providence of God this result is to be permitted, He who controls all events, alone knows. To him we must commit our case, with confiding trust. This is our only safe reliance—our only ray of hope.

The meeting has decided to take no action in reference to the application from Topeka, except to send a messenger communicating the result of our deliberations. I wish, in conclusion, to say that our weekly mail leaves to-morrow morning, and we hope our friends will be free from alarm until they hear something from us that can be relied upon.—L.  

56. New Haven Daily Palladium, June 16, 1856.

[To Be Concluded in the Summer, 1956, Issue.]