

James Butler "Wild Bill" Hickok to Horace D. Hickok

A letter from James Butler "Wild Bill" Hickok, [Monticello?, Kansas Territory] to Horace D. Hickok. He writes about his experiences in Kansas and includes a description of the land and people. Hickok gives an account of Hickory Point, and admits that if "Uncle Sam's" troops would have arrived 15 minutes earlier he might have joined them. He also comments on the political situation in Kansas and describes it as quiet now. Hickok later became a well known gunfighter, sheriff, and marshal.

Creator: Hickok, Wild Bill, 1837-1876

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James Butler "Wild Bill" Hickok to Horace D. Hickok

November 24 1850

Dear brother I received your letter
dated the 7 and was glad to hear
from you and always will be glad
to get letters from home but when
you get ready to write to me again
please leave it off another week and
make you can think of nonsense enough
to fill a letter without writing capitally
I see you mentioned that marry ann
masterman married mr hunt I was sorry
to hear it though I was glad to hear that
that you had a chance to enjoy a few
leisure moments at an evening party
and am very much obliged to you for
dancing with Sarah M^r for me and I hope
that you will continue to do your duty
for I consider it your duty to dance with
the girls for me while I am absent from home
(you never mentioned how gorgeous and
his wife got a long ~~stitch~~ ^{stitch} Mrs ish and
family are all well here is a dan. riger sitting
a here before me and I cant think of
any thing to write she is a free board
lady (you said something about that
dand old shot gun of mine I left the
locks out at bil wiles to be sent to old
brunkers I do not know whether they were
ever sent or not if you want to get
it there is a card on the gun with the any name
on it. I opened your letter when I was coming
home this evening to see who it was from
and the first thing I read you wanted to no
what was going on in Kansas I looked a head
of me to where the roads cross I saw about

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500 soldiers a going on and I looked
Down the river an saw some nice steamers
and they were all going on and that
is the way with all the people in Kansas they
are all going on I guess they are going out to
hell so you see I have told you what is
going on in Kansas I f I had none as much
one month ago as I do now I would have had
a Deal to 160 acres of land now but never mind
there is more land to be sold in Kansas yet
there is the finest country in Kansas I ever
saw nice rolling prairie nice timber on the
creeks you mentioned something about my
being in governing protection but I aint nor
have not been but iff uncle Sams troops
had been at hickory point fifteen minits
 sooner than they were I might have had
the honor of riding with uncle Sams troops
but Captain harvey had given orders that
scouts should be sent towards Leavenworth
city to ^{see} whereabouts the companies of Captain
Dun and miles company's were
camping for you must no that they were
camping all the while only when provisions
got so scarce that they could not help marching
and that is they way with all the proslavery
companies done there is 29 of our company
in custody at Sacomton yet I have
been out to see them once I had as good
a horse and as good a ~~horse~~ ^{gun} as there was in
our company there was a man living on
Crooked Creek who furnist me with a horse
and rifle and revolver what I have told
you is true I have rode night night
after night with out getting out of my saddle

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There is no roads no breaks no trails
no groves no brookings no springs no parties
of any kind between Leavenworth and Lawrence
or Sacount but what I know well I am going
to bet just now you wanted to no how
much don't you was owing me \$2.50 to I suppose
you know that you I had the pleasure of boarding
with colina or while I was out there well you
want to know what is going on in Kansas well I will tell
you the land sales commencing the 14 of November there is
more speculators here than you can have any I deal of
these men don't trouble the squatters at all but take every
foot of vacant land rough or smooth for trouble are it and
and things are very peaceable here now governor gary told
judge Sacount that he had no further use for him
nor marshal donelson that can't sum excitement
annet the proslavery party but they know better
than to make much fuss about it you talk as if
you thought if you was here that I would hunt
with you I have something else to do I can
kill all the game we want before sunrise and
by moon light so what would be the use for
me to hunt anymore and that you could not
do for you don't get up early enough and
you never scoured any and so you could
not hunt well at night I must quit for the
night again for that wild niger has got here before
me again (25th) the 29 I have ^{been} in maoria every day
for a month and staying in Kansas every night & I
am a pilgrim and a stranger and I am going
to wander till I am twenty one and then I will
tarry a little while If P. D. Hickok rights you
any more letters I want you to send them
to me whether there is any thing in
them of any account or not just so
that is all for to night

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the 27 1856

Now my Dear Brother I want you
to excuse these few lines that I have written
to you and also those bad mistakes and
bad spelling for I have written them
all by candle light every night when
I was a bit half tight and the other
half not exactly right and I can't see
well enough to spell well at night
when I am all right I have got a bad
cold otherwise I am well weighing 180 pounds
now I will tell you a few things I have
quit ^{quit} swearing now take care that bill I have
quit drinking but not now bill I have quit
playing poker now there take care what you
say I have quit dancing entirely I have
quit chewing tobacco and I don't
touch any lager beer and I don't speak
to the girls at all I am getting to be
a perfect hermit my fiddle my dog and
my gun I all most worship I hold
no intercourse with the world around
every thing looks dark about me
and is round about but there is a bright spark
ahead and it is I and it I will persevere
till my fiddle strings break and my dog
dies and my gun bursts that is so
I want Lydia and Selinda both to write to me
every week with out fail hiram higin the rescal
was going to write to me of ten if I would
write to him twice and am waiting for answers
I wish this sheet of paper was a true target
for I would like to write a little more
I shure I will have to quit and only these
few lines I am sorry but I can't help it
from your Brother James to H D Hickok
Hickok