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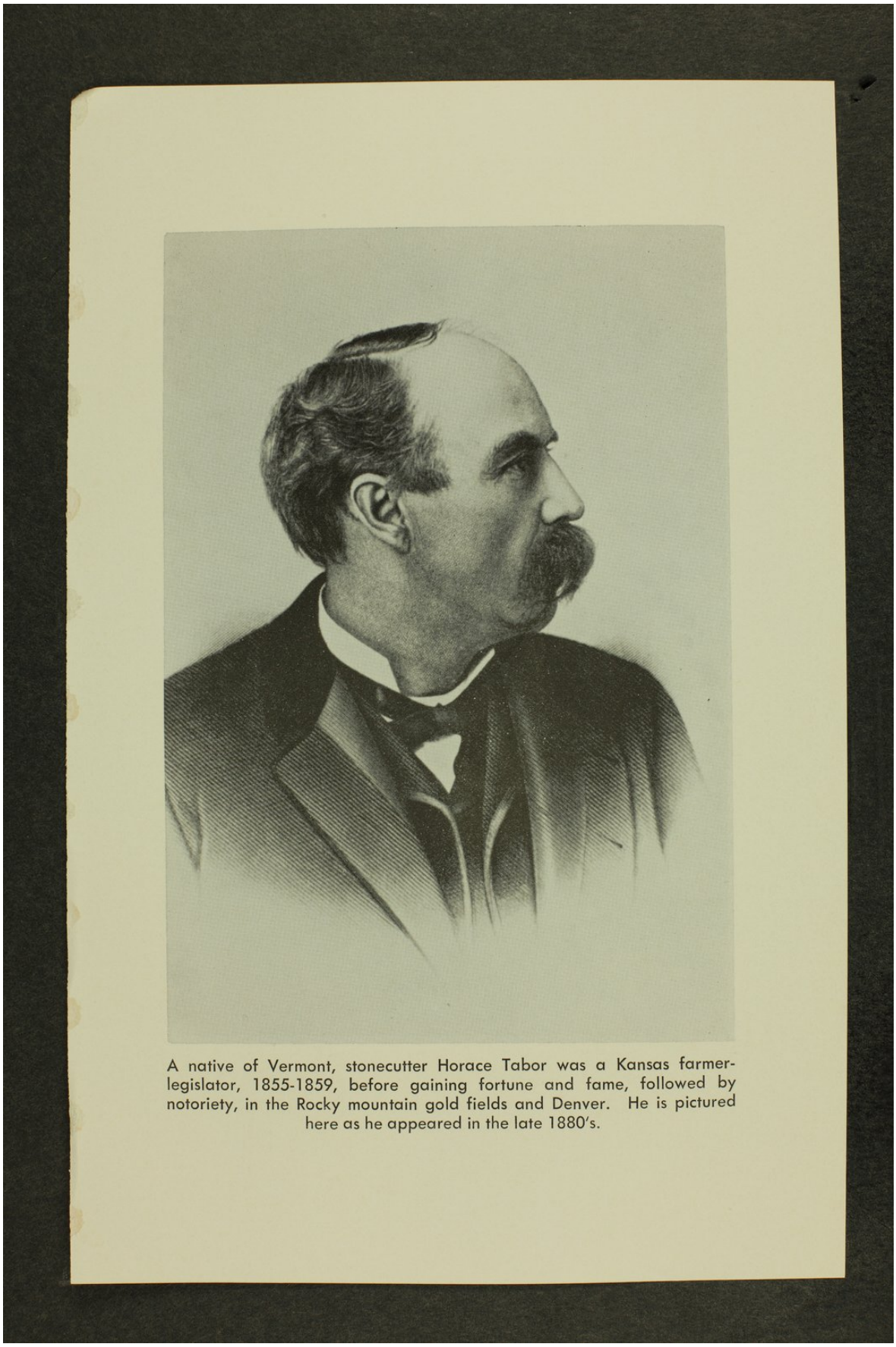
and encouraged schools, churches, and other refinements. For Tabor, a man with few resources except a willingness to work, ambition, and good health, the company promised greater rewards than those that might come from striking out on his own or continuing with stonecutting. So he came West.[1]

The Lawrence in which Tabor arrived, a hastily built community of wooden houses and stores, was not yet a year old. The company had helped establish it, along with Topeka. In Lawrence was the *Herald of Freedom,* a newspaper which served as the mouthpiece for the Free-State cause and the company. Tabor found himself in a potentially inflammable situation, which was fueled by Southerners, particularly neighboring Missourians, who were becoming increasingly anxious and sensitive about the fate of Kansas. The *Herald of Freedom* did nothing to alleviate the situation when it trumpeted, "*Kansas cannot be a slave State!* The recent outrages perpetrated here have settled that question forever. But one voice, and that for freedom, is now heard among us." Horace's views went unrecorded at the time, although years later he remarked, "My politics were free soil. I have always been against slavery." [2]

Unlike some others who rushed to take immediate part in the Free-State movement, politics, and the slavery issue, Tabor chose to avoid these issues and first seek out a farm. If he were in Lawrence on March 30, he did not bother to vote in the territorial election; some of those who came with him did, though barely qualified. Charles Robinson, the leader of the party that included Tabor, later testified that most of its members settled in Topeka, but a few went elsewhere, among them the young would-be farmer from Vermont. The *Herald of Freedom,* April 28, noted that, while emigration seemed to be moving toward the southern part of the territory, a very large offshoot was settling in the vicinity of the Big Blue river and the Fort Riley army post. Tabor picked this location in the great central valley of the Kansas river just below its junction with the Big Blue, previously a region considered part of the Great American Desert, fit only for nomadic Indians. Now such ideas were shunted aside and its fertile soil and salubrious climate were praised. A traveler passing through just before Tabor arrived, noted its rolling appearance, the frequent groves of trees, and especially the soil, a "deep rich loam." [3] Tabor settled near

1. H. A. W. Tabor, "Autobiography," Bancroft library, San Francisco, pp. 1-4; *Report of the Special Committee Appointed to Investigate the Troubles in Kansas* (Washington, Cornelius Wendell, 1856), pp. 831, 887, 889, 893; *Herald of Freedom,* Lawrence, March 24, April 7, 1855.
2. Tabor, "Autobiography," p. 6.
3. *Herald of Freedom,* March 31, July 14, 1855.



A native of Vermont, stonecutter Horace Tabor was a Kansas farmer-legislator, 1855-1859, before gaining fortune and fame, followed by notoriety, in the Rocky mountain gold fields and Denver. He is pictured here as he appeared in the late 1880's.

"Col. Sumner Dispersing the People Assembled Before the Legislative Hall, Topeka, Kansas," was the title of this sketch depicting the July 4, 1856, incident, which was published in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, New York, July 26, 1856. Constitution hall was of stone, not logs as sketched by *Leslie's*. It was located on the west side of Kansas avenue between Fourth and Fifth streets, opposite Topeka's present post office, with portions of its walls still to be seen in the more modern building on the site.

the infant community of Zeandale, a few miles outside Manhattan as the crow flies, and 40 miles from Topeka, and 70 miles from Lawrence. Thus he remained well away from the simmering cauldron of conflict.

Zeandale could not have been impressive, having just been settled by Josiah Pillsbury, whose home served as the post office. Tabor and a group of other men came in soon thereafter in April. With only a few hundred dollars, carefully saved from his previous earnings, he was in no financial condition to invest in a large acreage, securing instead a homestead of 160 acres by preemption and later, by borrowing, purchasing another 320 acres. Unbroken prairie sod on which wolves and other wild animals still prowled showed Tabor this was virgin land. There was much to do: clear the land, build a cabin, and plant crops that would result in an abundant harvest. Even though it did not accrue the necessary return to start him on the way toward his dream of riches, Tabor's first crop proved fruitful enough to get him through a severe winter, one long remembered by early Kansas settlers. Throughout late December and January, extremely cold weather persisted; according to a local Zeandale historian, the temperature dipped on occasion to 31 below, and up to three feet of snow covered the ground. Tabor's thoughts must have turned often to New England, where he had left his fiancee, Augusta Pierce, but he stayed on. One of his neighbors recalled seeing him walking home one winter day with a coffee mill under one arm. Replying to an inquiry about his health during the freezing weather, Tabor laughingly answered, "You needn't worry about Horace Tabor ever starving while he has plenty of corn and a coffee mill to grind it in." [4]

While Tabor worried over his farm and crops, others were more concerned about the encroachment of the slave-owning southerners and their hated institution. The issue at stake was who would control the territorial government. The Kansas-Nebraska bill left the question up to the people, a challenge promptly accepted by both sides. Atchison and Leavenworth became Proslavery centers, challenged from the west by an area appropriated by the Free-Staters. President Franklin Pierce launched territorial government, then watched in wonder as the slavery question corrupted democracy. The Proslavery faction, ably supported by several hundred

4. Francis A. Abbott, "Some Reminiscences of Early Days on Deep Creek, Riley County," *Kansas Historical Collections*, v. 12, pp. 392-395; A. T. Andreas and W. G. Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago, 1883), p. 1301; Tabor, "Autobiography," pp. 5-6; *Herald of Freedom*, December 22, 1855, January 12, 1856.

Missourians who became Kansans for a day, swept to two fraudulent election victories in November, 1854, and in March, 1855.

Such ballot-stuffing incidents convinced the Free-Staters of the uselessness of trying to win this type of rigged territorial election. In the summer of 1855, their leaders turned to the expedient of writing a constitution, organizing their own state government, then petitioning congress for admittance—the Proslavery faction be damned. Events moved swiftly; a Free-State party formally appeared in September and the call went out for a constitutional convention in Topeka in October. What interest Tabor might have had in all this is unknown, though his neighbor, Pillsbury, represented Zeandale at the convention. At this meeting, after considerable debate, a constitution was completed and ratified in December, the Proslavery voters abetting their opponents' strategy by not bothering to vote.[5]

Without a legal basis and condemned by President Pierce and the regular legislature, elections were held under the Topeka constitution. In the bitter cold of January, 1856, Free-Staters throughout the territory trudged through the snow to the polling places to cast their ballots for the new government; though some attempts were made to disrupt the election (no polls opened in Leavenworth, for instance), for the most part the day was peaceful. One of the four men elected to the house of representatives from the Sixth district was Horace W. Tabor. Tabor's role in the Free-State movement up to this time had been minimal; no record exists of his voting in the October or December elections, although poll lists have been found. Even in the Titus precinct of the Sixth district, the one which elected him, no record of his voting has been located. Having allowed himself to stand for election, Horace must certainly have indicated a willingness to serve. He himself deemed it somewhat unusual to be elected to the legislature after such a short residence (not many had been there longer, however), and later concluded, ". . . I was always prominent in the fight."[6] The young legislator traveled to Topeka in March, 1856, to assume his official duties.

Topeka showed evidence of a year's growth, since Tabor had last passed through on his way to Zeandale. The *Herald of Freedom*

5. Sources for the preceding section on the growing split in Kansas: Allan Nevins, *Ordeal of the Union* (New York; Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947), v. 2, pp. 431-433; Samuel Johnson, *The Battle Cry of Freedom* (Lawrence, University of Kansas Press, 1954), pp. 107-110; Gustave Gaeddert, *The Birth of Kansas* (Lawrence, University of Kansas, 1940), pp. 47-48.

6. Tabor, "Autobiography," p. 8; *Herald of Freedom*, January 12, 19, March 1, 1856; *Report of the Special Committee . . . Kansas*, pp. 674-683, 713-739, 786-787.

estimated its population at 700 the next year.[7] At the moment, basking in its role as the new capital, Topeka was welcoming the politicians who came to the opening session.

Tabor mingled freely with his fellow legislators and elected officers, including his old party leader Robinson, now the governor. Bluntly honest, Charles Robinson, in a calm inaugural address, defended the Free-Staters as people "distinguished for forbearance, long suffering and patience," closing with a plea for the "wisdom that comes from above" for direction, so that the legislature and officials would render a good account of their actions. Sharp-faced James Lane attended, he a rabble-rouser who could be a spell-binder, as Tabor would find out. One of John Brown's boys, his namesake John, Jr., was seated, this being the closest contact Tabor would have with this fanatical band of abolitionists.

Open conflict had already erupted between the Proslavery and Free-State factions. Back in December, Robinson, Lane, the Browns, and others rushed to the defense of Lawrence when it was threatened by a Proslavery mob. This so-called Wakarusa war ended without a battle, but tension mounted. Tabor had taken no part in this conflict, nor had anyone from his area. The editor of the *Herald of Freedom* correctly evaluated the situation when he remarked that the western country was somewhat remote from the center of excitement, and its settlers had not taken a very active part in the boisterous strife of politics. Seldom fully represented in the meetings, they indeed appeared indifferent to the whole issue of representation. Interestingly, their relations with their few Proslavery neighbors were never strained; nonetheless, according to the *Herald* of December 23, they were "as true as steel" to the freedom cause. Remote and disinterested, Tabor and his compatriots found a way of accommodating to their neighbors in the common struggle to open the wilderness.

Living quarters proved hard to find in over-crowded Topeka, despite a construction boom. But by the time for opening roll call, the afternoon of March 4, Tabor was there to answer. As the house discussed "momentous" subjects so dear to the hearts of frontier legislators, Tabor listened and observed. Not until March 6 did the house journal mention him, and only then because of his appointment to the one committee on which he served, the standing committee on public institutions. Holding neither political power nor Free-State support, he could have expected little else. The

7. *Herald of Freedom*, April 11, 1857.

same day, the house commenced voting on various bills and petitions before it; Tabor's faithful attendance at each session was reflected by his daily voting record. Though he picked up several votes for membership on a joint committee to select the site for the state capital, he ran far behind the totals acquired by the leaders. On the following Monday Horace initiated a minor amendment related to printing material and was gratified when the other members concurred. The same day the engaged bachelor and all legislators were invited to a special party given by the ladies of Topeka, the whirl of politics and society providing a pleasant change for the member from isolated Zeandale.

Prohibition was in the air long before Carry Nation smashed her way through Kansas saloons. A group of ladies twice petitioned the house for passage of stringent prohibitory laws. Tabor, who occasionally indulged, agreed with his fellow legislators that such action was premature. The petition suffered the fate of being referred to the committee on vice and immorality, where it subsequently languished. On more routine matters Tabor voted in favor of incorporating Lawrence, publishing the journal of the constitutional convention, and numerous appropriation bills.

On Friday, March 14, Tabor rose for his maiden parliamentary speech, offering the following resolution: "*Resolved* that we request the codifying committee to take into consideration the importance of a law prohibiting hogs from running at large in the State of Kansas." Regardless of its seeming insignificance, Tabor had put his finger on a sensitive issue. The *Herald of Freedom* commented on it in a blistering editorial, April 19, 1856, entitled "Hogs vs. the People." It opposed such regulation because of the high cost of corralling hogs—in effect, a heavy tax on farmers—which "keeps many a poor man from owning land, and many parts of the country from settling." Prior to the editorial, the house had professed similar sentiments and Tabor's resolution was ruled out of order. Apparently, many counties had already passed local fencing laws, which had aroused the paper's ire, rather than Tabor's resolution. Two days later, March 16, the house went into recess until July 4.[8]

Horace returned to his farm to plow his fields, plant his crops, and resume the routine of a pioneer farmer. To the east, however, the situation was not so tranquil; nationally, the Kansas situation became

8. "Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Kansas," reprinted in the *Kansas Historical Collections*, v. 13, pp. 166, 190, 192, 199-200, 203-208, 210-212, 216-220, 223-235; New York *Times*, March 20, 1856; *Herald of Freedom*, March 8, 15, 22, 29, 1856.

front page news when proponents of slavery went down before the swords of John Brown's followers, this violence begetting further violence and vengeance. Governor Robinson was arrested for his activities, and Lawrence, sacked and burned by a Proslavery mob, stood as grim testimony to the day's hatred. The *Herald of Freedom* was mute, its presses smashed by vengeful Southerners. Firebrand "Senator" James Lane was arousing passions on a speaking tour in the East. Tabor had opposed his candidacy during the legislative session, but the tide favored this popular figure and he had been elected.

As tempers flared and emotions hardened, Tabor tended his fields. Then, in July, he retraced his steps to Topeka, toward the session which would open at high noon on the fourth. Western Kansas had not yet been threatened; consequently, its people did not feel the same apprehension about the "border ruffians" as did their eastern neighbors. One traveler cagily observed that politics were discussed a good deal, but "Missouri is some distance off." [9]

Topeka, understandably, was in an uproar when the legislators arrived; rumors of threats and Free-State plans abounded. Slightly below the surface, hostility smoldered toward the federal government, ready to flare with the slightest encouragement. President Pierce was burned in effigy, and speeches clearly hostile to the administration incited the crowd.

Against this background, the house attempted to meet on July 4, only to be confronted by federal troops commanded by Col. (later Union General) Edwin V. Sumner. Sumner and his dragoons, supported by artillery, advanced on a meeting hall ringed by hostile Free-Staters, well aware of the military mission. Compelled by Presidential proclamation to perform this painful duty, as he confessed in a dramatic confrontation with the assembled members, Sumner nevertheless ordered them to disperse. He carried out his assignment with efficiency and dispatch; the brief session was abruptly terminated, with no violence arising from the legislators or spectators. Three cheers for the Topeka constitution and legislature, answered by three "deep and loud" groans for Pierce, startled the already nervous horses of the troops and closed the episode.

Robinson, from his prison cell, justly praised the Free-Staters for their self-restraint under such stress. Any act of retaliation toward the troops would have brought the federal government's full weight against them, thereby undermining their cause. Legis-

9. *Herald of Freedom*, April 5, 1856.

lator Tabor remembered the scene in this manner: "We had at that time, I suppose 600 men in Topeka under arms. Our own people; people that were in sympathy with this move of ours and I never saw as hard a task as it was to keep those people from whipping the United States troops, as we had. Oh; They wanted to do it so bad; they were itching to do it." [10] Calling it "a great outrage," Horace returned to Zeandale to tell his constituents what had transpired. After Topeka on that July 4, farming must have seemed tedious.

Unbeknown to Tabor or the others, this dispersal marked the high-water point of the Topeka legislature and its influence. As the summer wore on, Pierce finally found a governor able to cope with Kansas. Skilled and energetic John Geary vigorously applied pressure on both sides to end the troubles. Disbanding the local militia solved one problem and skillful use of federal troops stopped the violent acts of pillage. Apparently, Tabor remained at home during the remainder of the year, but his almost life-long allegiance to the Republican party dated from this period.

On Tuesday, January 6, 1857, the Topeka legislature was again called to order; almost forgotten amid the rush of events of the past six months, it met according to constitutional provision. Horace appeared for the session, which opened inauspiciously, neither house being able to muster a quorum at the first meeting. More active now than earlier, Tabor, on the second day of the session, moved to elect a sergeant-at-arms protem and advocated the organization of a committee to prepare an election law. Most significantly, he was appointed a member of the committee to prepare a memorial to congress stating "our grievances" and asking for admittance into the Union. How important a role Horace may have played in drafting the memorial is unknown; nevertheless, it was a signal honor to be selected as one of the three members. Probably the major responsibility was carried by the chairman, James Blood, a lawyer by profession, who had come to Kansas in 1854, serving as a legal adviser to the New England Emigrant Aid Company. The committee, instructed to report at an early date, did so the very next day, lending credence to the idea that much of the memorial was already prepared and required only formal committee acknowledgment.

The two houses met in joint session to hear the committee's report.

10. Tabor, "Autobiography," p. 7; New York *Times*, July 17-19, 1856; "Journal of the House . . . . ," p. 235; Charles Robinson, "Topeka and Her Constitution," *Kansas Historical Collections*, v. 6, p. 299.

Opening with a statement of grievances, the memorial then explained why statehood was desired. The arguments were familiar: the disgraceful and unhappy condition of public affairs, the "legally adopted" Topeka constitution, and the "wholesale and monstrous usurpation of power by a horde of unscrupulous partizans [*sic*]." A straightforward recitation of the Free-State cause, the document was openly biased in intent. Reconvening, the house found it did not have a quorum and promptly recessed until June.[11] The memorial, meanwhile, arrived at congress, but came to nought, the actual situation having changed too drastically.

The now-renovated *Herald of Freedom* gave more space to Governor Geary and the regular legislature's activities than it did to the Topeka body, which it had so ardently backed before.[12] What led to the session's termination primarily was the arrest of some of the leading members of the legislature on the charge of "usurping the government," dating back to March 4, 1856. If the Proslavery group hoped this would bring about armed resistance, their hopes were dashed; the officer serving the warrants was not hindered.

In the months that followed, a debate continued over what was to be the fate of the Topeka government. The debate ended when the legislature again went into session on June 9. Tabor was not mentioned in the house journal until the last day of the abbreviated four-day session, when the house adjourned *sine die*. Little was accomplished by this now-needless body; even some Free-Staters themselves were happy to see it go. One wrote that, with few exceptions, we "rejoiced at the happy and speedy dissolution [which came] without disturbing the present tranquility."[13] When the legal government became responsive, the extra-legal one was only a burden.

Tabor was undoubtedly one of those not unhappy to see it go; its usefulness had passed and, personally, he could gain little more from its existence. Throughout the meetings, until January, 1857, he had been only a minor figure, emerging then to stand only briefly in the limelight. It had served as a valuable course in parliamentary procedure and frontier politics and government for the inexperienced New Englander, a lesson that would prove useful in the years ahead. As those years passed, Tabor would always reflect

11. *Herald of Freedom*, January 17, 1857; *Squatter Sovereign*, Atchison, January 20, 1857; "Journal of the House . . . ," pp. 236-238; Andreas-Cutler, *History . . . Kansas*, p. 155.

12. *Herald of Freedom*, January 17, 24, 1857.

13. *Ibid.*, June 20, 1857. *See, also*, issues of April 25, June 13, 27, July 4, 1857; "Journal of the House . . . ," pp. 242-246.

with pleasure and pride upon the days of his 20's, when he stood symbolically against slavery in Kansas, a time when it took courage to express one's views, with the threat of violence stalking the land.

Though he had gained a certain measure of fame during the January, 1857, events, the lonely Zeandale delegate was eager for the session to end and impatient to be off. Back in Maine he was going to be married to Augusta Pierce, who had waited two years while he established himself in the West. Absence, in this case, did make the heart grow fonder, and the two were married on January 31, 1857, remaining in Augusta, Maine, for another month before leaving for Kansas. The boredom of a slow, tiring March railroad trip was alleviated by a pleasant boat ride up the Missouri river to Kansas City. Augusta remembered that they purchased a yoke of oxen and wagon there, loaded it with seed and farming tools, and then continued on to their farm. Her husband was rather terse about their years together in Kansas, passing over them swiftly. It should be mentioned that one Kansas source offers an alternative possibility regarding their means of arrival.[14]

Upon reaching their destination, Augusta was shaken by what she saw; her New England upbringing had not prepared her for the harshness of frontier life. The desolation, the chill prairie winds, and the loneliness accentuated the meanness of the small, solitary cabin. What had till now served adequately as a bachelor lodging was to be converted into their first home. The cabin's appearance had not been improved by being vacant for several months.

> I sat down upon the trunk and cried; I had not been deceived in coming to this place. I knew perfectly well that the country was new, that there were no saw-mills near, and no money in the territory. But I was homesick and could not conceal it from those about me.[15]

Inside she found only a "no. 7 cook stove," a dilapidated trunk, and a rough bedstead made of poles, "on which was an old tick filled with prairie grass." She more than mastered the situation. Quickly the cabin was cleaned and old issues of the New York *Tribune* pasted on the bare log walls, serving not only as wallpaper, but also as reading material, a commodity in short supply on the frontier. Horace began preparations for planting, while Augusta made their cabin more homelike, often joining him in the fields after she

14. Albert Greene states that Tabor, his brother, and their young wives came to Lawrence on the steamer *Lightfoot*, basing his account on a story of a passenger, John Speer.—Albert R. Greene, "The Kansas River—Its Navigation," *Kansas Historical Collections*, v. 9, pp. 338-339; *Herald of Freedom*, April 11, 18, 1857; for Augusta's version, *see* Alice Polk Hill, *Tales of the Colorado Pioneers* (Denver, Pierson & Gardner, 1884), p. 219.

15. Hill, *Tales of the Colorado Pioneers*, p. 220.

completed her household chores. Despite combined efforts, their first crop failed for lack of rain.

Augusta reported that her husband went to Fort Riley to work as a stonemason to supplement their income, but post records fail to confirm this. Meanwhile, she boarded some of the nearby bachelors who fancied home cooking. Though living alone was not to her liking, she proved equal to the demand, and their combined efforts somehow pulled them through the winter. The country around the Tabors was growing, looking less like a frontier each month. Zeandale witnessed the organization of a Congregational church in 1858, and a school was started the next year. Kansas City and Lawrence were both expanding, and even neighboring Manhattan had made a start with 27 dwellings and three stores.[16] For the first time in his life, Horace observed the mania for speculation, so typical of the frontier, in both land and town promotion. He saw and remembered, although, at the moment, he was able only to take small advantage of the opportunities.

The year 1858 proved to be a better one for the Tabors with respect to crop production. They had an abundant harvest, as did all their neighbors, which resulted in the bottom dropping out of the market. Fate seemed to be against them in Kansas. To add to their responsibilities, Augusta and Horace had become parents of a son, Maxey. Tabor's auspicious beginning and continued hopes for wealth dimmed before the rigorous demands of frontier life and agriculture. Two seasons had passed and the family fortune looked no better than it had upon arrival. Reminiscing later about his Kansas experiences, Tabor said they "offered me little inducement to remain there."[17] They had persevered and worked diligently; with Augusta taking in boarders and selling butter and eggs, they had been able to keep going. Was this really the life they wanted?

By the late fall or early winter of 1858-1859, rumors and then confirmed stories of gold reached the Tabor neighborhood, offering prospects of the wealth he had sought when he came to Kansas. Fortunately, the gold fields' location was not discouragingly far away, only a few hundred miles westward in the Pike's Peak region. Excitement gripped Horace, as it did thousands of other Midwesterners, and posed questions not so readily answered. Should the Tabors go west, sacrificing a farming season in the expectation

16. *Herald of Freedom*, April 11, 1857; Andreas-Cutler, *History . . . Kansas*, p. 1301; Albert Richardson, *Beyond the Mississippi* (Hartford, American Publishing Co., 1867), p. 26.

17. *Portrait and Biographical Record of Denver and Vicinity, Colorado* (Chicago, Chapman Publishing Co., 1898), p. 137.

of gaining wealth? Should Horace leave his family and go alone, or would it be better to ignore the stories and remain where they had made a small beginning?

Tabor, weighing the pros and cons, decided to go, because it seemed the easiest and quickest way to retire the mortgage on his farm. This came to be, in his thinking, the primary motive.

> I came out here [Colorado] for the purpose of mining, because we knew nothing of this country except as a mining country. . . . I came for the express purpose of trying to make money enough out here to redeem that land. . . . At that time I really had no other idea, except to redeem that land.[18]

Even though Augusta was not well, suffering from those common pioneering complaints of the "fever and ague," she was determined to go with her husband. They rented the farm out, made preparations, and in April, 1859, left for the Pike's Peak gold fields via the Republican river route.

Tabor's Kansas days were over, even though he continued to own the farm and a few lots in Lawrence, which he had acquired sometime during his stay, into the 1880's.[19] Like many others who settled in Kansas, his fortunes had not been outstanding; undoubtedly, they would have improved had he been willing to wait for a gradual accretion of wealth. But this was not Horace Tabor's nature. He had come to Kansas a New England stonecutter-farmer and left an experienced frontiersman; this experience was in itself worth the four years he lived and worked there. One wonders if Tabor fully appreciated that as his covered wagon lumbered along the trail toward Denver and a future that even he probably never dreamed possible.

18. Tabor, "Autobiography," p. 9.
19. E. Moys to Tabor, March 19, 1887, "Horace Tabor Papers," State Historical Society of Colorado, Denver; Tabor, "Autobiography," pp. 8-9; *Rocky Mountain News* Denver January 5, 1881.

Kansas historical quarterly

In Pursuit of Quantrill: An Enlisted Man's Response

EDITED BY WILLIAM E. UNRAU

I. INTRODUCTION

WILLIAM QUANTRILL'S surprise raid on Lawrence still stands as one of the most successful—and vicious—attacks in the history of American civil conflict. In the wake of his lightning-like assault in the early morning of August 21, 1863, he and his bushwhacker Confederates left a sea of death and destruction: an estimated 150 persons dead, another 30 wounded (of whom some died later), the retail district of Lawrence a wasteland of smoke and rubble, homes destroyed, and horror-stricken survivors roaming the streets in utter disbelief.[1]

Almost from the beginning the eastern border country of Kansas territory had experienced more than its share of economic and social difficulty. Repeated conflicts with the Indians over their rightful claim to virtually all of the land were aggravated by the squatters' belief in their own moral superiority, as well as the unrestrained aggression of speculators, political hopefuls, and a host of lesser opportunists. Certainly no less distressing was the emergence of the territory as a strategic place for translating ideological arguments over human chattels into acts of uninhibited violence. Whether Quantrill's regrettable action stemmed from an unwavering belief in the virtue of the Proslavery cause is no more certain than characterizing him as a cheap, bloodthirsty thug, whose performance was completely devoid of reason and/or ideological justification. A more balanced view of the problem suggests that the guerrilla leader considered retaliatory action a logical response to the depredations committed in western Missouri by the abolitionists at an early date; that the attack was planned with considerable care; that the quest for plunder was a high priority; and that once the attack was underway, certain individuals and groups for reasons best known to themselves succumbed to a level of senseless brutality.[2]

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1. Albert Castel, *William Clarke Quantrill: His Life and Times* (New York, 1962), pp. 135-136.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142; Albert Castel, *A Frontier State at War: Kansas, 1861-1865* (Ithaca, 1958), pp. 136-141.

Quantrill made good his flight back to Missouri, but not before the Unionists had attempted to apprehend him. Sen. James Lane, for example, always ready to reap political benefits when conditions seemed appropriate, hastily collected a motley group of poorly armed citizens, and eventually joined with Maj. Preston B. Plumb and approximately 200 troops of the Ninth and Eleventh regiments, Kansas volunteer cavalry near Baldwin. Later this force joined yet another Union detachment near Paola, under the command of Ltc. Charles S. Clark of the Ninth Kansas volunteer cavalry. However, these troops were able to mount little more than a token counterattack, for they were outnumbered, poorly mounted, disorganized, and hindered by ineffective leadership. By the time Quantrill had reached the heavy timber country of western Missouri in the early afternoon of August 22, any organized Union plan of pursuit was in shambles.[3]

The immediate brunt of responsibility for the disaster fell on the shoulders of Brig. Gen. Thomas Ewing, commander of the District of the Border. Pressured by Lane, and anxious to exonerate himself both militarily and politically, he issued, on August 25, his famous "Order No. 11," which in effect required a massive civilian evacuation of the Missouri border counties from whence future bushwhacker attacks might originate. It was a bold and controversial move, but strategically successful. Although it occasioned great suffering to the civilian population concerned, "Order No. 11" discouraged future attacks on the model of Quantrill's. It created a little reassurance among the terrified citizenry of eastern Kansas, served as a catalyst for increased machinations among the more ambitious Kansas politicos; and, from Ewing's personal point of view, it tended to detract from the purely military role he had played in the troubled hours after he had learned of the Lawrence tragedy.[4]

According to his official report, Ewing was in Leavenworth "on official business" the day of Quantrill's attack. At 10:45 of that fateful morning, upon learning that the Confederate leader was marching on Lawrence (which in fact was about the time Quantrill was beginning his retreat), Ewing immediately assumed command of five companies of the 11th Ohio volunteer cavalry, which had only recently arrived at Fort Leavenworth from Camp

3. Report of Brig. Gen. Thomas Ewing, Jr., U. S. army, commanding District of the Border, August 31, 1863, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1888), Ser. I, v. 22, pt. 1, pp. 580-581; Castel, *A Frontier State at War*, pp. 134-135.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 142-144; Castel, *Quantrill*, pp. 144-145; report of Ewing, *War of the Rebellion*, pp. 584-585.

Dennison, Ohio, under general orders to report to Fort Laramie as soon as they could be outfitted.[5] In the early afternoon of August 21, then, it was with considerable surprise that about 300 men of this regiment found themselves riding south, and not west. After several arduous hours of forced march in the hot August sun, they certainly were no less surprised to learn that their immediate objective was to engage one of the most notorious guerrilla bands in the trans-Mississippi West.[6]

Brigadier General Ewing led the 11th Ohio due south to the Kansas river. After a time-consuming delay in crossing the river, he continued to De Soto (for reasons not altogether clear, since he had been advised that Quantrill might "go thence to Topeka"), and then on south to Lanesfield, in present southwestern Johnson county. Here, at daybreak of the 22d, after learning that Quantrill had passed near that point on his eastern retreat, Ewing "left the command to follow as rapidly as possible," and hurried on to "the point on Grand River where Quantrill's force had scattered." There he met with Lane that night to work out the details for the infamous "Order No. 11."[7] The 11th Ohio was left to fend for itself, which it did with little if any concern for the rather vague orders it had received from Ewing.[8]

The five companies that participated in the abortive Quantrill campaign were recruited largely in Highland county, Ohio, in the late spring and early summer of 1863, by Ltc. William O. Collins of Hillsboro, Ohio. Earlier, in 1861, Collins had recruited a regiment designated the Sixth Ohio volunteer cavalry, to which shortly were assigned four companies of the Seventh Ohio, so as to bring the regiment up to its desired strength. Then, in 1863, with the enrollment of the five companies who saw action under Ewing in Kansas, the combined regiments were permanently designated the 11th Ohio volunteer cavalry, and, more informally, "The Mountain Battalion." After the Quantrill episode the men of the 11th served three years in present eastcentral Wyoming (then Idaho territory), with headquarters at Fort Laramie.[9] At such ostensibly exotic

5. *Ibid.*, p. 582.

6. Hervey Johnson to folks at home, August 29, 1863, "Hervey Johnson Correspondence," original copies in possession of John J. Wassall, Jr., Wichita. The author gratefully acknowledges Mr. Wassall's permission to edit the Johnson correspondence for publication.

7. Report of Ewing, *War of the Rebellion*, p. 582.

8. Hervey Johnson to folks at home, August 29, 1863; Hervey Johnson to Sister Sibil, September 1, 1863, "Johnson Correspondence."

9. Thomas M. Vincent to Ltc. W. O. Collins, May 13, 1863, "Muster-In Roll" of Col. W. O. Collins, independent battalion of Sixth Ohio volunteer cavalry, archives division, Ohio Historical Society; *History of Ross and Highland Counties, Ohio* (Cleveland, 1880), pp. 138-140; *Official Roster of the Soldiers of the State of Ohio in the War of the Rebellion, 1861-1866* (Akron, 1891), pp. 547-548.

places as Devil's Backbone, Red Buttes, and South Pass their principal duties were to protect emigrants traveling the Oregon and Bozeman trails, guard and operate the Pacific telegraph line, police the Indians of that region, construct military substations, cut ice, hay, and timber, and, on occasion do simply nothing. Indeed, boredom, monotony, and homesickness were some of the most common complaints expressed by the enlisted men of the 11th Ohio. [10]

Hervey Johnson, the author of the letters that follow, was born on June 13, 1839, at Leesburg, Highland county, Ohio. His great grandfather, "Governor" James Johnson, migrated from Botetourt county, Virginia, to southwestern Ohio in 1812, where he devoted himself primarily to land speculation and town promotion. His progeny, however, including Hervey's father Gerrard, apparently were less footloose, and thus content to settle down as farmers and practitioners of their Quaker faith.[11]

Previous to his enlistment in the 11th Ohio at the age of 24, Hervey Johnson attended Oskaloosa College for an undetermined period of time,[12] after which he too sought security in the agrarian enterprise so fashionable at that time. But as was the case with so many young men of that time, the Civil War changed his life radically. It afforded him, of course, an opportunity to serve his state and nation. More importantly, however, it provided him with a welcomed opportunity to satisfy an abiding curiosity he had concerning the vast, romantic expanses of the Great American West. The 100 letters he wrote during the three years he was stationed in Idaho and Dakota territories are replete with sensitive and perceptive observations regarding the natural wonders of the region, the Indian population of the North-Central Plains, the tribulations of the white emigrants, and the character of frontier military life at the grass roots level.

After commendable service at Fort Laramie, Platte Bridge, Sweetwater and Deer Creek stations, Corporal Johnson was mustered out at Fort Leavenworth on July 14, 1866. He married Elizabeth Engle the following year, raised a family of one son and two daughters, and successively lived in Highland county, Ohio; Laurener county, Tennessee; Mahaska county, Iowa; Todd

10. "Johnson Correspondence," *passim*, 1863-1866.
11. *History of Ross and Highland Counties*, pp. 402, 406-407; William Wade Hinshaw, *Encyclopedia of American Quaker Geneology* (Ann Arbor, 1946), v. 5, pp. 253, 342.
12. Hervey Johnson to Sister Abi, July 10, 1864, "Johnson Correspondence."

county, Minnesota; and Sedgwick county, Kansas. He resided in Wichita from 1889 until his death on March 12, 1923.[13]

It should be remembered that the letters reproduced here were written early in Hervey Johnson's military career, and that about a month prior to his arrival at Fort Leavenworth, his regiment had experienced a brief and insignificant encounter with Gen. John Hunt Morgan's Confederate cavalry in the vicinity of Miamitown (near Cincinnati), Ohio.[14] Thus by the time he had arrived in Kansas, Private Johnson had some first-hand experience of the problems to be encountered while attempting to contain bold maneuvers on the part of the enemy. The first letter provides the general setting as Johnson saw it at Fort Leavenworth in August, 1863; the remaining two deal primarily with the abortive pursuit of Quantrill, and especially the confusion and disorganization accompanying Ewing's short-lived command of the raw recruits from Ohio.

II. THE LETTERS

FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS
August 18, 1863

DEAR SISTER SIBIL,

I was just preparing to write thee a letter this morning, when one of my comrades told me he had a letter for me. I thought I would wait, then, till I had read it, before I wrote. I was very glad to hear from home again. This is the first letter I have received since I enlisted. It came up last night on the packet Emile. There is a great stir and confusion in the camp this morning caused by preparations to go after some guerrillas who are prowling in the vicinity. Twenty men were detailed from each company to go. I would have gone if I had not intended to write. Enough volunteered to go without me anyhow.

We arrived at this place last fifth day[15] about four o'clock. I was sick when we got here; had been ever since we embarked at St. Louis and was for two or three days after we got here. We got our bounty (twenty-seven dollars)[16] the next day after

13. "Muster-Out Roll" of Cpt. James A. Brown's Co. G., 11th regiment Ohio cavalry, commanded by Thomas L. Mackey, July 14, 1866, archives division, Ohio Historical Society; "Consolidated Military and Pension File," Cpl. Hervey Johnson, Co. G, 11th Ohio volunteer cavalry, National Archives.

14. Hervey Johnson to Sister Sibil, July 18, 1863, "Johnson Correspondence." *See, also,* Basil W. Duke, *A History of Morgan's Cavalry* (Bloomington, 1960), pp. 439-446.

15. August 13, 1863.

16. The official records indicate that the bounty paid to Hervey Johnson was $25 at enlistment and $75 at the time he was mustered out, "Muster-Out Roll . . . July 14, 1866," archives division, Ohio Historical Society.

our arrival. I soon got well, then; for then I could buy something fit for a sick man to eat. We live well here. The peddlers bring in vegetables every day such as green corn, cabbage, onions, tomatoes, beans, cucumbers, buttermilk, ice cream and other luxuries. Fresh tomatoes cured me completely. I would buy them at five cents a dozen and eat a dozen at a time, pretty good sized ones, too. There are several of the company sick, now. One or two in the hospital. The general complaint is diarrhea.

I reckon I must tell something about the country here. Fort Leavenworth lays on a high bluff on the west side of the Missouri River. It commands the river for some miles both above and below. But why it is called a fort is something curious to me. It is a kind of soldiers town with no walls or guns mounted. The only sign of a fort that I have seen is an old ridge of dirt and a row or two of posts set close together. The government buildings here are mostly of brick. The barracks for soldiers are very comfortable. They are all two-story brick. We are living at present in the open air. We have tents but the most of the boys would rather sleep on their blankets outside. I have got so that I can sleep anywhere or anyhow. The weather has been very fine since we came here, almost hot enough to melt a person. This is why the boys prefer to sleep outdoors. Our captain [17] got badly hurt last night. He went down to Leavenworth City about two miles below here and somehow or other his horse got drunk and coming through a bridge on his way back the bridge broke or something happened that the captain got off his horse and had to be carried to his tent. I don't think his horse will get drunk again soon as he don't allow anybody to ride him out but himself. Sam Engle [18] is sitting by me writing to someone at home.

I don't know when we will leave this place. We were to have

17. Cpt. Levi Rinehart. According to his "Consolidated Military File," National Archives, Captain Rinehart was enrolled and appointed captain at Columbus, Ohio, on May 29, 1863, and was "killed in action with Indians at Mouth of La Prelle Creek, D. T., on February 13, 1865." A more explicit version of this tragedy (and, perhaps, an indication of the quality of leadership at Fort Leavenworth in August, 1863) suggests that he was killed by one of his own men at La Prelle creek, and that at the time he was under arrest awaiting trial by court martial for "paying attention to emigrants and squaws to the neglect of his duty to his men."—*See* Hervey Johnson to Sister Sibil, October 23, 1864, and February 19, 1865, "Johnson Correspondence." Recounting a first-hand report of Rinehart's untimely death, Johnson wrote, "I must add that the whole party was drunk, from the Captain down. It was whiskey that did the mischief and nothing else. There were only five Indians there and there were at least twelve men and soldiers. Had they been sober they never would have run from five Indians, or committed the sad blunder that deprived us of the Commander of our company."—*See* Johnson to Sister Sibil, February 26, 1865, "Johnson Correspondence."

18. Samuel Engle, who enlisted at Camp Dennison, Ohio, on July 20, 1863.—"Consolidated Military File," Pvt. Samuel Engle, Co. G, 11th Ohio volunteer cavalry, National Archives. Engle was Hervey Johnson's future brother-in-law.

left today, but it is three o'clock now and we have not started yet. We may start tomorrow and may not this week. But, before this reaches its destination we will have set out on our seven hundred miles horse back ride. It seems hard to look ahead and think of it, and we will no doubt endure many privations and hardships. But I hope we will get through it all. I have a nice little bay mare that I think will carry me through. I call her Fanny. She is as spunky and as big a fool as old Bet was, but I think I can manage her. I have not heard, yet, whether there was any draft in Ohio or not. I would like to hear if there was and who of my acquaintance drew tickets. It seems to me that there are no young men about there. Almost all the boys I know are either here or in the Twenty-Fourth Battery. It must be very lonesome to those who are at home, I think. Sam will not stay at home when he gets home from Earlham. I know it will be so lonesome to him. You folks at home have no idea what we soldiers have to endure but it is not soldierly to complain, so we say nothing and console ourselves with the thoughts that it would have been worse had we been drafted and sent south especially at this time of year. Two Kansas boys have enlisted in our company here. They are both in the same tent with me. Their names are George Sebastian and Hervey Merwin. Hervey has been in the western country eight years. He says we will have nothing to do out there in the mountains. He don't know what they want so many men out there for. He has been out there and I suppose he knows the natives. I hope what he says will be true.

I want you to take care of my clothes. Put them where the moths won't get at them. My overcoat that hangs upstairs, I would like to have kept if it can be without too much trouble. If not then let Warren wear it. The bugle has just sounded and I must close.

HERVEY JOHNSON

Hervey Johnson
Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas
Care Capt. Rinehart
Company G. 11th O. V. C.
To follow the Reg't.
Our letter is changed from B to G.

HERVEY

CAMP COLLINS, KANSAS
August 29, 1863

FOLKS AT HOME,

I thought when I wrote my last letter, that the next time I wrote, we would be on our march across the plains. But things have turned out differently. We were to have started the next day [19] after I wrote. We got everything ready, our tents struck, horses saddled, wagons loaded, when there came an order for fifty men from each company armed and mounted. None of us privates knew it though. We were all ready to start, and orders were given to forward.[20] We started, but not toward the west. We went out south through Leavenworth City. When we got there we thought we were going across the river into Missouri, but we kept on south. We soon discovered that we were on a forced march, we knew not whither.

I never saw such a time before. The roads were dusty, and we run our horses so that we could not see three feet before us; we marched on in this way till ten at night, when we came to the Kansas River. We were near three hours crossing the river [21] and while the forward companies were crossing the others were down in the dirt asleep. I got off and tied the halter strap round my wrist, and laid down in the road and slept till it came our turn to cross. We got on the ferry boat and went over. We stopped and got something to eat, and fed our horses at DeSoto, a small town on the southern bank of the Kansas. The officers told us we would not go on till morning; so we unstrapped our blankets and laid down to sleep. We had no more than got to sleep when we were ordered to saddle up and hold ourselves ready to march at a moment's notice. We started about three in the morning,[22] riding like maniacs; several horses stumbled and threw their riders and dragged them in the dust, but no one was hurt much.

At DeSoto we learned why we were called out. The citizens told us that a rebel leader by the name of Quantrill, with five hundred men was committing depredations in Kansas. That he had sacked and burned the town of Lawrence and butchered three hundred of its citizens. That Jim Lane had him cornered

19. August 19, 1863.
20. About 1:00 P. M., August 21, 1863, report of Ewing, *War of the Rebellion*, p. 582.
21. Brig. Gen. Ewing reported "an unavoidable delay of five hours in crossing the Kansas River," *ibid.*
22. August 22, 1863.

and they were preparing for a fight. We soon found this news to be too true. Men, women, and children were murdered without discrimination. He seemed particularly spiteful against the black inhabitants. They were hunted and shot like dogs.[23] The town was fired and the citizens were not even allowed to escape out of their dwellings, so that many of those who escaped the slaughter met a more fearful and cruel death by being burned with their own homes. This massacre is without parallel since the war began. The inhabitants say it was scarcely equaled by the Indian massacres in the early settlement of the western country.

And it was the perpetrator of this high handed deed that we were in pursuit of, but not likely to overtake, for instead of Jim Lane having him cornered, he could not get near enough to corner him. In fact, Jim came very near being cornered himself. For when Quantrill came to town he went right to Lane's house and intending to take him, but he got out at the back door, just as Quantrill came in at the front. The whole thing was done in the night. He left the Missouri border, marched to Lawrence, plundered, butchered and burned, and just as day was dawning, he started back. In the meantime Jim Lane, who had fled to a cornfield with nothing on but his night clothes, had gathered together about one hundred and fifty men and started in pursuit. Two hundred men were sent from Kansas City;[24] two hundred from some other place[25] and our two hundred and fifty made in all about eight hundred men after him on different roads. Our battalion did not get in sight of him at all; some of the others did. Several of Quantrill's pickets were killed. None of ours that we heard of were injured. He did not come into the state to fight and they could get no fight out of him. I must give the particulars of the remainder of the march.

After leaving DeSoto we reached a small town[26] about sunrise where we stopped and got something to eat and fed again. We soon started again on a fast run and ran for several miles, every moment expecting to come on the enemy. This was on seventh day[27] and there being no breeze on the prairie, the heat was

23. Having been warned of Quantrill's attack most of the Negro recruits encamped near Lawrence managed to escape.—Castel, *Quantrill*, p. 127.

24. Johnson probably was referring to the combined forces of Maj. Preston B. Plumb, Cpt. J. A. Pike, and Cpt. C. F. Coleman, report of Ewing, *War of the Rebellion*, p. 580.

25. Here Johnson may have been referring to the combined forces of Ltc. C. S. Clark, Maj. James A. Phillips, and Cpt. N. L. Benter, *ibid.*, p. 581.

26. Lanesfield (or Uniontown), in southwestern Johnson county, *ibid.* *See, also*, O. B. Gunn and D. T. Mitchell, "Gunn and Mitchell's New Map of Kansas and the Gold Mines" (Lecompton, 1862), archives division, Kansas State Historical Society.

27. August 22, 1863.

most oppressive. We reached a small river,[28] a branch of the Osage about noon, and stopped to water. Here the first Lieutenant of Company E was killed by sun stroke.[29] His body was sent back to Ft. Leavenworth to be interred. We then marched on, and soon struck the trail where Quantrill had passed along. We followed it for two or three miles. I never saw as hot a day in my life. Men and horses were completely wearied out. We came to a small stream with thinly wooded banks about three in the afternoon. Here our Lieutenant[30] told us to halt and rest for half an hour, though it was directly contrary to the General's orders, which were to follow on the trail as fast as possible. At this place several more of the men were sun struck, though none fatally. Several horses fell down apparently unable to move further. The men appeared to care for nothing. Some tied their horses; some let them loose and all, nearly, laid down in the dirt and went to sleep. Half an hour passed but no order came to move, and nobody moved. We finally concluded to stay all night. The Officer[31] told us to take care of ourselves and horses. We had nothing to eat ourselves nor to give our horses.

Some of the boys went to the fields and got corn. I had half a dozen ears in my feed bag, that I bought at the Fort before we left. I cooked on some coals and ate them. I then thought of my mare. I saddled up and took another boy with me and went to a farm house about a mile off, and asked for our supper and horses fed. They said they reckoned we could have it if we would wait till they cooked something. We told them we were soldiers and often ate cold victuals. They said they had nothing cold. They appeared to [go] about cooking rather reluctantly. We waited, however, and in half an hour we were invited to supper, which consisted of warm cornbread, butter, sliced onions, fat bacon, buttermilk, etc. I then asked the woman what I must pay for any horse feed and supper. She said to speak to the old man about it. He told me to pay the old woman for our supper and we might have our horse feed for nothing. I paid her twenty-five cents for both of us and went back to our men. They had all

28. Probably Bull creek, "Gunn and Mitchell's New Map."

29. Lt. David S. Dick, report of Ewing, *War of the Rebellion*, p. 583.

30. 2Lt. Caspar W. Collins, who enlisted at Camp Dennison, Ohio, on July 20, 1863. He was the son of Ltc. William O. Collins, and was killed in action against the Sioux Indians at Platte Bridge, D. T., on July 26, 1865.—"Consolidated Military File," 2Lt. Caspar W. Collins, Co. G, 11th Ohio volunteer cavalry, National Archives. *See, also,* Agnes Wright Spring, *Caspar Collins: The Life and Exploits of an Indian Fighter of the Sixties* (New York, 1927).

31. 2Lt. Caspar W. Collins.

laid down and we unstrapped our blankets and laid down and had slept an hour or two, when we were ordered to saddle up and move back about a mile to a hill near a farm house, and picket our horses out on the prairie to graze. When we got up there, I tied my mare to the fence, threw my saddle over into the yard and laid down and went to sleep on it. My mare made so much noise, pawing the fence that I did not sleep much till I got up and pulled an armful of grass for her.

Morning came at last and we found ourselves in the vicinity of Marysville,[32] a town of twenty or thirty houses. I bridled my mare and rode over to town to get something to eat. I called at a private house. The people seemed very hospitable. They were very willing to cook for the soldiers, of whom there were several there besides myself. As I went back to where the horses were, I met the men coming towards town. They stopped near a spring and picketed the horses. We remained there during the day, putting up tents to keep the sun off us, by sticking our guns and sabres in the ground and spreading our blankets over them. Just at night we were ordered to move again. We started off in a north eastern direction. We did not think we were going after the rebels again, for we were told at that town that Quantrill had got back to Missouri and disbanded his men. Anyhow, we went on and about ten in the evening we encountered a storm. I think it exceeded any storm I was ever out in before. The wind blew a perfect hurricane, the thunder and lightning was terrific, and the rain and hail fell in torrents. About one o'clock we reached Olathe, the county seat of Johnson County. We stopped there. Tom Cooper [33] and I left the company as soon as we stopped and went to hunt a place to dry ourselves and warm, for it seemed almost like winter after the storm. We found the house of a printer. He welcomed us in and made a fire for us and after we were warm and dry we laid down, Tom on the lounge and I on the carpet. In the morning we went someplace else to get our breakfast, for the printer's wife was not at home. We got a very good breakfast and felt much refreshed. We found a wagon load of corn in a yard and every man went for it and fed his horse. Tis getting dark and I must quit for the night.

HERVEY

32. St. Marysville, Sec. 9, Twp. 16, R. 23, in northern Miami county, just north of present Hillsdale. This town was founded by H. L. Lyons and James Beets in 1856, and later was renamed Lyons, "Dead Town List," manuscript division, Kansas State Historical Society.

33. Pvt. Thomas J. Cooper, who enlisted at Camp Dennison, Ohio, on July 20, 1863.—"Consolidated Military File," Pvt. Thomas J. Cooper, Co. G, 11th Ohio volunteer cavalry, National Archives. Apparently Cooper was one of Hervey Johnson's boyhood friends.

CAMP COLLINS, KANSAS
September 1, 1863

SISTER SIBIL,

I received thy letter this morning, which was mailed on the twenty-eighth, and has been about five days on the road. Thee talked of receiving my letter, but said nothing about which one. I have written seven or eight letters, and have received but two, and to which of mine they were answers, I am unable to tell. When thee writes of receiving my letters, please name the date of such letters. I was very glad to hear from home and to hear that you were all well. I am in good health and have been for some time. There are but three or four sick boys in the company. I began to write a letter three or four days ago, describing a scouting expedition that we had. I filled two sheets with it, and will finish in this letter.

I believe we were at Olathe when I left off. We went from there to Kansas City. Arrived there in the afternoon, camped in the woods below the city for the night. Next morning Tom Cooper and I took our guns and went to the woods to look after game. Saw two squirrels, shot at them about a dozen times with no effect, got tired of hunting and went back to camp. Got there about two o'clock, found several of the horses saddled, ready to go somewhere. The boys told me that they had an inspection of horses, and those which were disabled were to be sent back to the fort. I saw my mare among the discarded ones so I saddled her at once. We were soon off from camp and took the boat for the fort. Arrived there after night, found nobody there; didn't know what to do. Lieutenant told us to tie to the fence and be ready to start by five in the morning. Another lieutenant told us to go on, that our men and teams were camped about eight miles out on the prairie. Some of the boys went with one, some staid with the other, myself included. We left by eight in the morning, stopped at the groceries along and got something to eat and arrived in camp about one. It being fifteen miles instead of eight. It is getting late or I would describe the camp. I will however say that it is near a splendid spring which bursts out on the prairie. It is about eight or nine times as strong as the spring at grandfather's old place. Day before yesterday the rest of the boys who were left at Kansas City came into camp from the Quantrill scout. The results of which were, when all summed up, as follows: the loss of one of the best men of the Battalion,

the loss of several horses, a ride of one hundred and forty or fifty miles over Kansas and Missouri, the loss of two or three weeks of time that we ought to have been on our road across the plains and gained not one thing. There is great bustle in camp this evening, preparing to move tomorrow.[34] It is getting so dark that I can scarcely see the work.

Direct thy letters as before.

Farewell,

HERVEY JOHNSON
Co. G. 11th O. V. C.

34. Hervey Johnson's next letter was written on September 20, 1863, from "Camp Near Ft. Kearney, Nebraska Territory." He and the 11th Ohio arrived at Fort Laramie on October 10, 1863.

The Forgotten Feminist of Kansas: The Papers of Clarina I. H. Nichols, 1854-1885

Edited by Joseph G. Gambone

III. The Papers, 1857-1863

[EDITORIAL IN QUINDARO *CHINDOWAN*] [1]

[Quindaro, Kansas]

[May 23, 1857]

OUR SENIOR has made his bow, beaver in hand, defining his position politically.[2] Now friends, here's our sun-bonnet, and as for our positions, political or social, we simply pledge ourself for the future by the past, to speak for what we regard as truth and right, in the love of them and of our neighbor, and trust God for the result. We confess, that, from our own standpoint of observation, we have come to feel the deeper interest in the social structure, as underlying and determining the character and stability of our political institutions. With intemperance, ignorance and idleness, lounging in and about our homes and public houses, what better can we expect than misrule and lawlessness in "the Powers that be?" As individuals, we must, one and all, labor to promote intelligence and virtue in our neighborhood relations, and loving freedom, lay broad and deep its foundations in the great social heart.

"I'm a free mon;" "I'm a free mon," was the exclamation of an

Joseph G. Gambone is a member of the manuscript and archives staff of the Kansas State Historical Society. He wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to Vivian Bryan, Vermont State Library, T. D. Seymour Bassett, University of Vermont, and Eva J. Leech, Brooks Memorial Library, for their assistance in gathering these papers.

1. Quindaro *Chindowan*, May 23, 1857. After her return to Kansas in March, 1857, Mrs. Nichols settled at Quindaro, a new townsite on the south bank of the Missouri river in Wyandotte county, about six miles above Kansas City. She became associate editor of the *Chindowan*, a weekly Free-State journal that began publication on May 13, 1857. In announcing Mrs. Nichols's appointment, John M. Walden, editor of the *Chindowan*, stated: "It is well known in the East that Mrs. N. has become earnestly engaged in the cause of Freedom in Kansas. We take pleasure in announcing that her influence will be exerted through our columns in behalf of this great cause."—*Ibid.*, May 13, 1857.

For Mrs. Nichols's account of her return to Kansas in 1857 and her observations of Quindaro, *see* Nichols to the editor, Pomo, Calif., March 9, 1882, cited in Wyandotte *Gazette*, March 31, 1882; Nichols to the editor, Pomo, June 6, 1882, cited in *ibid.*, June 16, 1882; Nichols to the editor [Pomo, December, 1882], cited in *ibid.*, December 22, 1882. These letters will appear in a later installment of her papers in the *KHQ*.

2. Mrs. Nichols refers here to John M. Walden, editor of the *Chindowan*, who was only 26 years old and an ardent abolitionist. For a biographical sketch, *see* James Grant Wilson and John Fiske, eds., *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, v. 6 (New York, D. Appleton and Company, 1889), p. 320.

In the initial issue of the *Chindowan*, Walden wrote: "We are in favor of making Kansas a Free State. We wish, now, to see its soil consecrated to Free Labor by the voice of the People, and to feel that that consecration is forever—not like that made by Congress six and thirty years ago, to be revoked in partizan strife—but made to stand FOREVER INDEED."—Quindaro *Chindowan*, May 13, 1857.

Irishman at the recent municipal election at Leavenworth, and throwing up his well-worn cap, he added—significant words—"I hav'nt had a chance to be free mon before."

This honest-hearted Irishman had probably never heard Pollok's definition—"He is the Freeman whom the *Truth* makes free."

But he did his duty for truth and right when he "had a chance," and thus won the right to rejoice, as he did, in the result, and hurra for the triumph of his ticket. To be a free-man, or a free-woman, in a legal sense even, is a glorious estate. To be free in a political sense is more desirable still. Our fathers felt thus, when they perilled their fortunes and lives for civil freedom.— Our mothers, when they blessed their sons, and bade them face the cannon's mouth for it.

But to be free morally—unfettered intellectually, is immeasurably better worth the devotion of our entire energies for a life time. As a people, civil freedom is our most precious treasure, our noblest aim. As individual members of young and growing communities, to hold ourselves free in the truth, is of still higher moment, since the best Governments, while they guard, are but representatives of the aggregate virtue and intelligence of the people;—they follow, but never lead, the popular sentiment.

As a people we claim the right of self-government, and are justly indignant at a usurpation which attempts to govern us by laws made for us, not by us. The people that submits to be governed by Legislatures and laws, from the making of which they have been excluded—we call an enslaved people. Our national Declaration of Rights presents them as such. Our position as a people at the present writing, is one of earnest protest against this usurpation, and also of firm determination to resist its demands. *This is as it should be.* But there is a tyranny more to be feared, because radical in its effects, and insidious in its operations. It is the tyranny of ignorance and prejudice (mother and child,) born of exploded and exploded despotisms. Protesting and battling against these, we may take the nobler stand individually, and maintaining it socially, dig deep the foundations of popular freedom.

The measure of success ultimately in securing the right of self-government to all "who have an evident common interest in the institutions under which we live," depends mainly upon the educating of all such up to a just appreciation of the virtue and intelligence, which "perpetuate free institutions," by making the exercise of the right of self-government, an unqualified blessing.

"The perpetuity of free institutions depends upon the virtue and intelligence of a people," and "He is the Freeman whom the truth makes free," are declarations alike involving the momentous truth, that to *know* what is right or true in principle, and *live* it, is to be *free*,—free as an individual, free as a people.

May it never be said of the *people* of Kanzas—of the citizens of Quindaro,[3]—either politically or socially,—"Ye knew your duty, but ye did it not?"

New friends, old friends, we pledge you our hand, with our heart in it, for earnest work wherever the interests of our own or other mother's sons and daughters are involved in the threatened ill or promised good.

N[ICHOLS].

[EDITORIAL IN QUINDARO *CHINDOWAN*] [4]

[QUINDARO, KANSAS]
[May 30, 1857]

When I left the East to return to my Kansas home, I was persuaded into numerous promises to write back my impressions and observations of the present conditions of the Territory,—its prospects in the immediate future, and the social and political heart throbbings of the people. I delayed to reply to these queries until I could visit several important localities and communicate with intelligent residents of other settlements. From data thus gathered, I can speak satisfactorily to myself, of the social conditions and prospects of the Territory. But of the immediate future politically, everything now, is waiting for "the Powers that be," to make the first move.— One fact is apparent to every person,—whether for or against free Kansas—who mingles freely with our people, viz: their confidence in ultimate success on the one hand, and on the other, the quiet watching—while they build and invest and improve —that bespeaks conscious readiness for whatever looms in the horizon. The impression is general, of an entire population "up and doing," evidently "with a heart for any fate." Expecting nothing from the Government, they are still open-hearted to any just consideration of their rights or wrongs. Determined to achieve their freedom, they are coolly looking to seize upon the happiest means

3. For additional information on the early history of Quindaro, *see* Alan W. Farley, "Annals of Quindaro: A Kansas Ghost Town," *KHQ*, v. 22 (Winter, 1956), pp. 305-320; Blackmar, *Kansas: A Cyclopedia of State History, Embracing Events, Institutions, Industries, Counties, Cities, Towns, Prominent Persons, Etc.*, v. 2, pp. 528-530; *Herald of Freedom*, January 10, 1857; Lawrence *Republican*, June 4, July 16, 1857; Quindaro *Chindowan*, May 13, June 12, 1857.

4. *Ibid.*, May 30, 1857.

for themselves and country, to vindicate their intelligent adherence to, and support of "law and order." Such is evidently the position of the people, without distinction of sex or class—for in truth there are but two parties in Kansas, politically considered—the actual residents or people of Kansas, and the office holders and seekers. Here, as in New England, the line draws directly between the people and the hangers-on of Government and its pass-feeders.

Socially considered, Kansas is in a condition of remarkable prosperity.—When I speak of its prosperity, as remarkable, I take into account, the unparalleled obstacles that have impeded, and which must, with less of wisdom, perseverance and courage, have utterly depopulated the Territory of its best inhabitants. Indeed, I have arrived at the conclusion, that Kanzas is richer to-day in purse, as well as stronger politically, for what she has suffered in the past. Trial has developed the capacity of the people to endure, and directed and schooled their energies to do. The struggle for existence has taught them what are the actual necessaries of life, and the result is a wiser application of means, juster estimates of the good and ill of life.

Had the emigrants been allowed to make homes and improve their condition quietly, fewer eyes would have been turned upon the Territory, and probably many years would have slipped away, before its advantages would have been as generally known as they now are. But the driving out policy reminds me of a certain vender of unappreciated goods;—he hired men to travel the country, labelled with the names of his goods, while his traveling advertisers furnished the glowing details, and thus won him trade among men who would not have read his advertisements even if they "took the papers." Not a man was driven from the Territory, that did not advertise it most effectually: not a pen was tempted from its rest by galling outrages, that did not draw scores of true hearts and skillful hands to share the wealth and the dangers of the Territory, by the glowing descriptions of soil, climate and face of the country with which it ended its communications.

The invasions and outrages that brought the inhabitants to the verge of starvation, thus drew hither men of *nerve* and men of *means,* and while money "is tight" in the States, it is abundant here; and the inhabitants who have been obliged to sell their unpre-empted claims, in order to raise means to put bread into the soil, have sold for prices, cash down, enabling them to locate again to equal, if not better advantage. The reason of this is