

Kansas Memory



Charles and Sarah Robinson correspondence

Section 3, Pages 61 - 90

Correspondence between Charles Robinson, the first Governor of Kansas, his wife Sara, and others, mostly involving activities in the fight for a non-slavery Kansas. Some of the people discussed are Abraham Lincoln, James H. Lane, and Charles Jennison.

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of those who have helped to bring on this dreadful war! I did not think it would come - or that it could come. It did not seem that human folly could intoxicate itself to such madness - As if fighting would bring back a better ^{feeling}. The wounds of bitter words have been sharp enough - the wounds of fraternal conflict will rankle till two generations have passed away - I hope you have more courage than I - but I much suspect that my national pride is sorely humiliated - & domestic foil is disgraceful - a decided non-resistance

Poor Artemas Ward has had his show confiscated by the miserable secessers - I should not wonder if many others found themselves in the midst of a similar vacuum before the end comes -

It is warm to-day. My window is open to let in the sun and freshness - our first experience of such a luxury - There was a fire in the furnace yesterday - spring has come up this way very slowly -

I was in Boston a fortnight since for a few days. The Eddys were not quite ready to come en masse to Providence. According to Mrs. Eddy wrote for me to go down - Scarcely farther than one pleasant visit to Quind-

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We went to hear Dr. Huntington preach. He came and spoke to me after service. He has grown older since I had seen him previously. Mamie & I spent a long morning at the Athenaeum, where we found there much-enduring pieces of statuary - and to my joy several very handsome paintings. There was a large family party at Mr. Henry Adams' at which were present many lively agreeable persons. We dined at Mr. Willards one day and went to see Booth in the evening. On our way to the theatre we were wrecked in the crowd & stranded on the curbstone of Tremont Row. where we saw perfect the Maine Regiment pass. Fine looking fellows all and much too good to be shot. They seemed in capital spirits and one handsome, jolly fellow bid us "good bye ladies" with an air.

It is really worth while to see Booth. He made a finished Iago. I am sure I could not have taken coffee with him comfortably the next morning. We had one morning scene not in the programme, and a positive execrable on the drama. Just as the tragedy was coming to a climax and Desdemona was awaiting the operation of bolted and dagger. and Othello was wrapped up in most engrossing heroics from some accidental or malicious quarter

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there rushed upon the stage a big speckled cat. Her advent was so popular and graceful - it was rapturously encored, and pup was persuaded to dash across the boards again. The enthusiasm and general satisfaction of the audience increased. The cat after scampering hither and thither and finding no asylum in the side scenes - at last yielded to an unmistakable stage fright and leaped the foot lights into the pit. Looking about a yard long and large in proportion as she went over. Considerable agitation marked her progress. She made for a detachment of our party - in a box opposite us - and by some extravagant somersault went thwack against Mr. Ware's head knocking off his eye glasses & breaking them to flinders. Puss then vanished - and Desdemona went on with her decease - with slightly diminished effect, may be -

We have frequent letters from Paris. Willie has intervals of comfort, but does not gain strength, and I fear will never be better. His disorder is defined to be an abscess on the kidney. He wears a silver tube in the side from which flow copious discharges. The physicians are unable to close the orifice. He is dreadfully emaciated. It is such a blessed thing that his mother is with him.

Give my love to the Governor & Smith. The marriage was very nice. I owe Smith a letter, but I have w't the least heart to write it - for the will doubtless contrive to see this, which since it contains all the news must read very much like a second one - or vice versa. I send you most uncommon long letters. Where is Carlo. & the Charlie & the cows - and Mrs. Day. Mattie sends love & regards.

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[Robinson], C [harles]

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Leavenworth June 17 1861

My Dear S-

I have but a moment to write. I came here Saturday night & have been engaged ever since I left Lawrence in getting ready troops for service. Smith will tell you all the news. I shall go to Wyandotte today & hope to get off during the week. The officers at the Fort, Army officers, are very anxious I should get another Regiment in as soon as possible & I must devote my whole time to it until accomplished.

There is prospect of stirring times ahead & I do not regret it. Missouri must be taught a lesson & I should be glad of an opportunity to give it.

I saw Mr. State but a moment yesterday but he was cheerful as ever. Remember me to Mrs. A. & accept the love of your husband

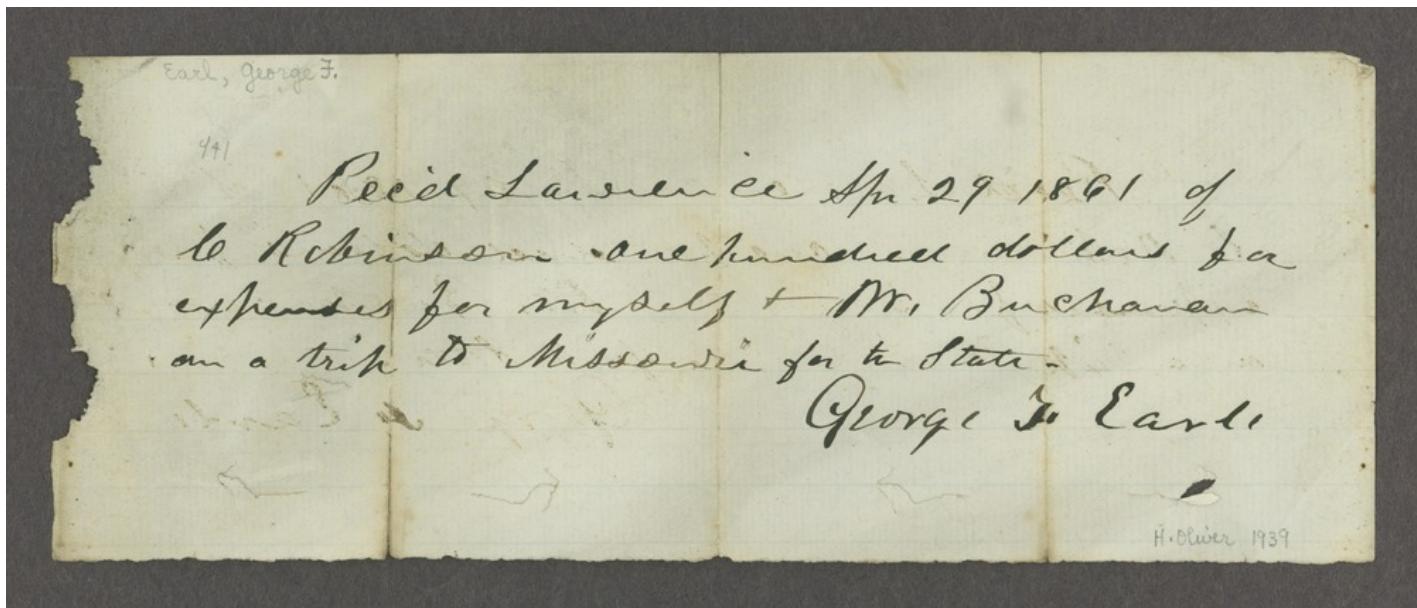
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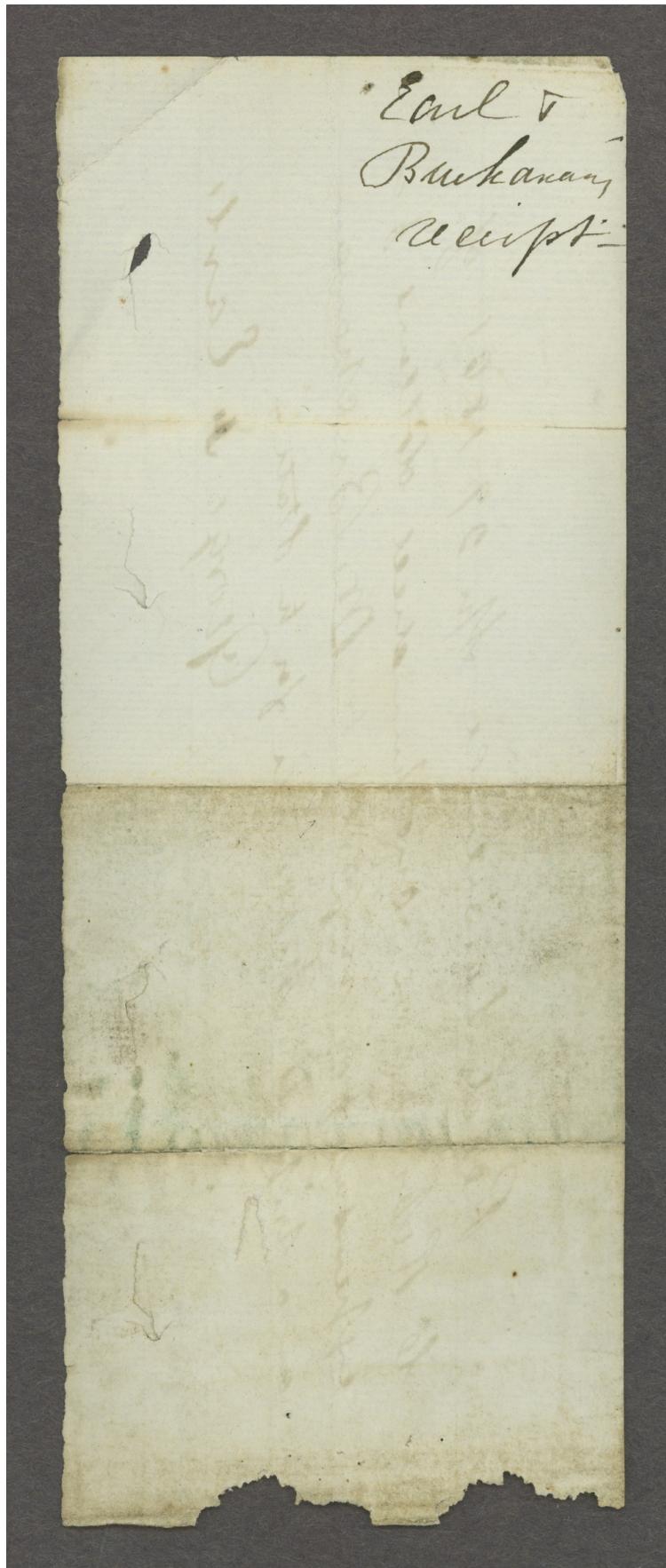
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one morning - commencing
at 1/5 o'clock & by
afternoon they had
brought up John
gradually one
that to showed

Shaw 2 mo - £3.
have filled
handed them but he
many more
sent to their
familys they
have filled
2 number
of plants -

Bethel town June 30th 1861 -

My dear Sara -

I guess it has been
three weeks since my last was
sent - but I had nothing to write
so particular - so I waited - I was
~~speed~~ when I did your last &
I saw the dollar - you are so bent on
paying for the Atlantic - please
remember the two dollars of the
Gentry Pen sent - Has Mark written
you? I did a letter from him saying
he was going to write you - He
said the other day - Mark saw
Dr. in Springfield - How it was
brought about - I do not know -

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— and how many more to pay off — enough
to Major W. — to reform his own
ways & ridget up another. His
He is very uneasy as usual his
ways have not been raised
as he expected owing to his unpop-
ularity we hear) Susan earns a dollar
a day stitching Officer's belts — Hank
is coming out here during vacation
He was delighted with his letter —
Is very much pleased with the
"Illustrator" — Poor Winthrop's blood
has been freely shed — I hope
after Congress meets this week —
we shall hear not a breathing
of "Compromise" — would we
had more "Gen Lyons" — That was
a sad accident at Wyandotte —
Are you & Mrs. Atte alone? Mr.
A. has gone with the first
reconvent — I see — I wonder if
it's as dry with you as here
we are covered with dust &

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— among my neighbors here & there very
little grass grows upon the ground
" only - no - very very little & the
grass is dying & crops under
your feet. The clouds over every
day & we do so hope it will rain
but not a drop falls. Our gar-
den looks finely though it's a
deal of work to carry out water.
I think it very singular Mr. Haws
shouldn't visit Mrs. Tucker not to
come - after her arrangements
were all made to go under his
direction. The horse sented her
things packed away in those
little low chamber & she & Nelly
living there. Martha has another
son a month old - weighed 12 lbs.
Martha James also has a son
born at her Father's - Mary Tucker
has been taking care of Mrs. Bright-
Bridgeman a little time - she has a
tumor in her bowels growing rapidly.

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Sept 20th - 1861
I am not well enough
now to write myself
They sent for a Surgeon from St. L.
Mo Dr. Mull - Dr Temple - He came & said
he thought she would die under
an operation - but might live
several years with good care &
charged \$150. for his visit -
People thought it would come
very hard for the close fisted
old miser to pay it - but he
did not complain - Mrs Fay
is dead had Puerperal Fever -
has left a little boy 13 days old -
My employment lately has been
killing black ants in the gar-
den - There are a world of them
undermining the plants - As heat-
water & pour into the holes -
when they are in - Then a set
of them bring out the dead &
& another class carry them away

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My dear Sara -
Mother says Jason
has attack'd very
much about five
yesterday. He
will glad find
the "comes
back" for
your "Year's" as soon
as he can get
that news.
He has now
left York & will
get to Belchistown April 28th 1861
I have sent
you a pair
of that no
your great
direct -
I say so -
yours of yesterday rec'd -
Thank you for the seeds - will sow them
as soon as the ground is warm
enough - we have occasionally a very
warm day - followed by a cold chilly
one - though we have put in order
the beds in the garden - the plants
are looking nicely - we worked out
holes in the yard and garden
after doing my morning work in
the forenoon - and read the papers
in the afternoon - till I was weary
of this contradictory statement -
A week ago today - the Telegraph
announced it was read in many
Northern papers - that "Washington
was taken by the Rebels" causing

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With great some pain I have
intense fulness - The news
more troops through Springfield at
noon did not tally the excite-
ment - The several congregations gath-
ered around the cars - and bade
them "God Speed" - but a week
has past - & no decisive blow
yet struck - N.E. & N.Y. are pouring
down their troops & may God
grant it may not end in any
Compromise - You will have
seen in this the shameful course
taken by Virginia & Maryland.
Perhaps you ask what is Bel-
chertown doing? Sixty four men
have enrolled their names -
Enough for a Co - have met to
drill day & evening for a week -
A Town Meeting has been called
for Tuesday to meet expenses but
I see no faith in it - many will

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He left us & went back down with Virginia Richard was ready to die for his country the day the flags were raised but there was called his seal Jane Clapp was in last evening She said "Why the moral power at the North was not strong enough to govern the South It was well enough to let those who wanted to fight do so" She leads nothing Walks the common with Gilmer till after ten o'clock ^{at night} After the flag raising a part of the company went over to Col Darlings Mr Clapp got so beastly drunk that they laid him away till toward evening (this was about noon) when he came home for a little while the next day I went about the streets took some pills his father was

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Dear Wood and Cassell -
Whether you will
whether have grand
and joyful news.
What is to be of San Joaquin
and his men? I am sure
they will take the place of the regular Co-
which is dead & buried is not
known - The ballotting ticket goes in
here Town Meeting - Frank Dick & Co -
had leave to attend to their
private matters - Mr Delano
has charge of the P.O department -
It has not yet been removed
probably will be to Longley's -
H. A. Longley has gone Holton then
Woonsocket to the old place -
Cordial Chase has been appointed
Inspector over Alpheus
Winter in the Custom House -
Charles Phelps secured his place
am sorry for it there is so
little he can do - He had a
very successful school this
winter - Do you like Topeka as

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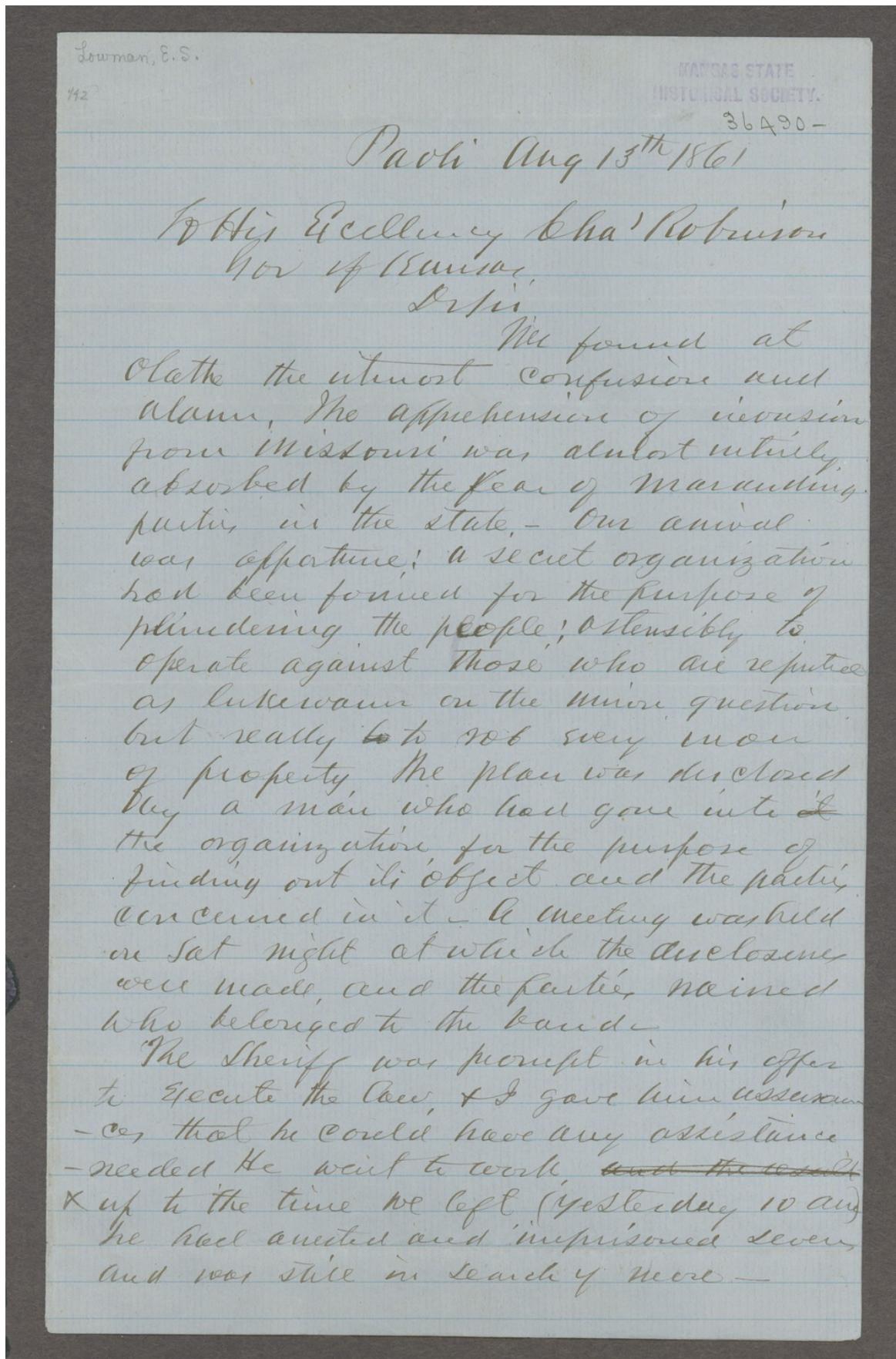
Wife
We're
some
visible
shows
into the heights
into the Army - as he now commands
we should have abundant uses
for the money - Olive came in here
the other day - saying have you
heard from I lately? What shall
does she say about the war?
"Don't he come to help Lincoln?"
Supposing she "he" do mean Dr. I
tried my best to convince her
she dauber did not all lie
at Washington that Kansas
would do her duty - but her sum
would be needed at home or
on the border - but in vain -
she re claimed sadly "Why now
I thought he would leave his
army & come on" Col. Decker
has written & that the Bel-
Co. would be called out in the
next draft for troops on Mass.

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These vigorous measures have given the people confidence and I think there will be but little trouble in restoring to that neighborhood to a condition of comparative quiet. - I directed the Sheriff if at the jail at Olathe was insecure or insufficient in any respect, to tell the prisoners to leave - Twenty Muskets were delivered to Capt Craig for the use of the Olathe posse -

Great Searle with four men yesterday delivered to the Capt of the Atchey Company, 15 Muskets. This is a settlement within two miles of the line east of Gardner. The people as I ascertained are in danger of being plundered and robbed by these "jay hawkers" from both sides of the line - ~~so~~ I left for Capt Green of Gardner 15 Grins -

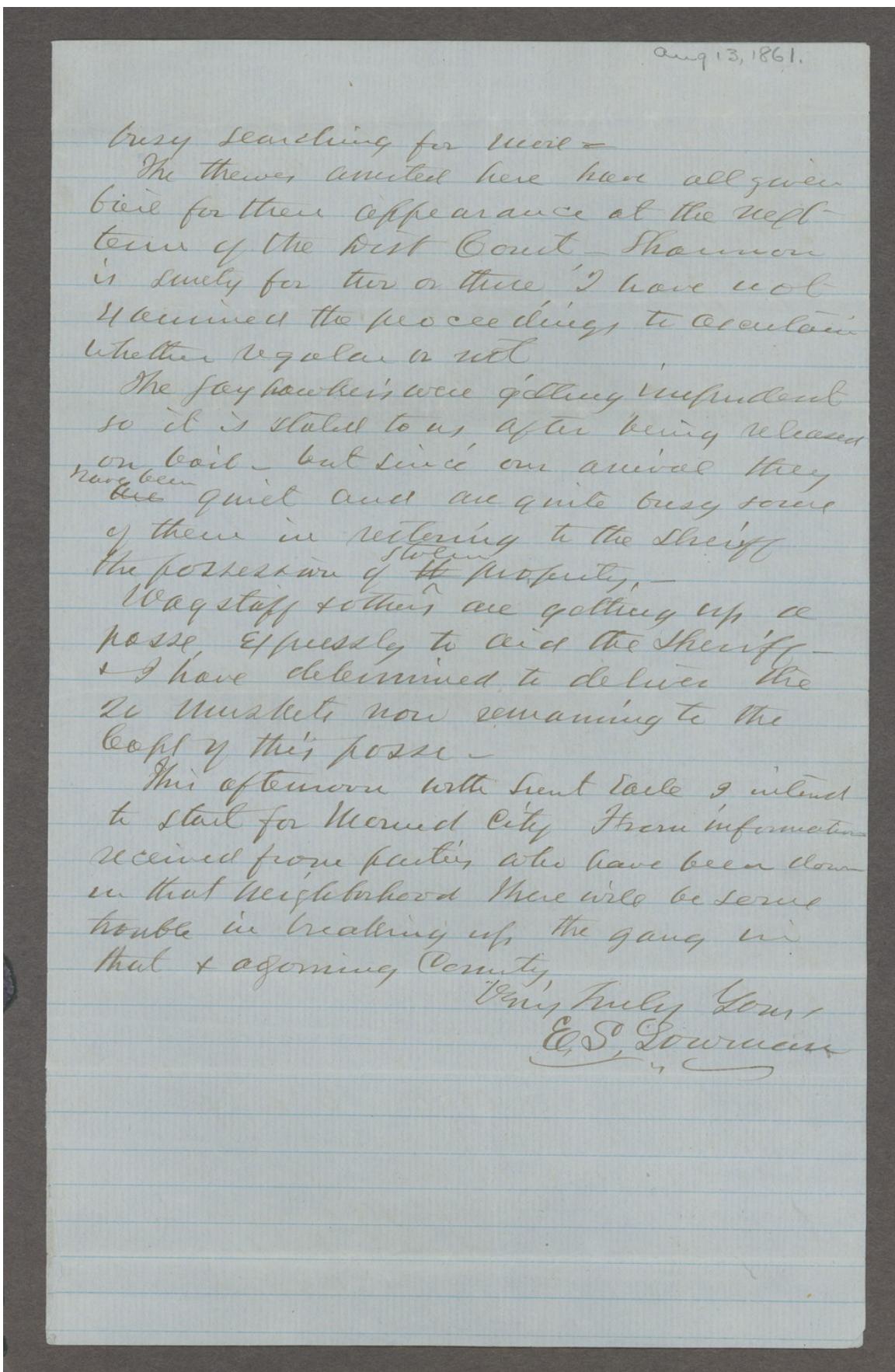
Mr Morgan a brother in law of the man Allen whose cattle and horses were taken from him a few days ago called on me at Olathe and stated that he believed his cattle had been taken by the parties then in the neighborhood of Paoli. At my suggestion he sent a messenger to Mr Roberts another victim - asking him to come to Olathe. Mr R. failed to come himself but sent his son a lad of 12 or 14 years who with Mr Morgan & a Mr Peat, ~~not~~ brought with us yesterday to identify the property - 11 head of cattle and two horses, have been found - and the Sheriff here is now

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O. L. Lawrence
Report of trip
to Johnson & Lykins,
Aug 15-61

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ego - & he is doing
nothing but
drilling cons-
My & has taken
some sand
to plant &
dear Sara I presume
has old man
to care for as
he is able to -
Many days
not a bird
about it - of
course A. Fisher
is sick at the
Fenchurch, but does
not & has not
been home -

I wish you were here to walk
in the garden with me this beau-
tiful morning - we have very fine
weather now but it was so cold
last week - we had a fire to be
comfortable - My headaches have
been caused (I think) by the
extreme warm weather - It was
scorching - & such pain I never
endured - I could not bear to
have any one breathe in the
house - Hank was all sympa-
thy - He would stay down stairs
as long as he could - Then I would
hear the kitchen door softly open
& so still would he come up on

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his foes. I would hear nothing more - till I was conscious of his breathing by the bed - He only came "to see" & I began to feel very bitter. Then when I did - he was delighted "Oh then he could stay" but I'm have been free from them the week past - we were glad to receive your last - Is Mrs. Hale still away? I should think they were both crazy to think of her going into Camp - in constant expectation of an engagement. Did she under Gen. Lyon's command before the battle? Brave Gen. Lyon did his duty well - would that some others higher in command & power would do theirs as well - Kansas has lost some brave men too - I notice Col. Dittler's name

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among the wounded - Is he serious-
ly wounded? George Stone came
home from Washington last evening.
He has been sick a long time &
has void his discharge - The 11th
regiment left Mass. Thursday. Old
Sol Shumway went as Lieutenant.
Rufus & David are in the 10th -
we have heard from Pliny once.
The novelty had not worn off
them & he was well so he liked.
Cousin Elisabeth has all the
sewing she can do & her friends
help her - She is wild with
Spiritualism - At one of their
late meetings - the Spirits informed
them they could not com-
municate with them any more
till they would dress themselves
of shirt clothing - At another a
person speaking in a trance -

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displeased Mr Davis (Rodney) & he
closed & commenced speaking -
whereupon Asa Walker ordered
him to stop - & Cousin E had a
few words to offer - & some children
came to box - So for a while 'twas
confusion & uproar - They have
not held any public meetings
since that was in the Hall -
She has not heard directly from
Adrian since "she was" begun -
Business is good with him - as
so many who usually come
North are obliged to stay
at home - drugs are in demand
Many speak ill with Miss
Wright Bridgeman - who is a very
great supplier - has a name
in the world - My vision of
the matter is that Mr Hawks
is very much reduced by the
~~now - day~~ ~~now - day~~ ~~now - day~~

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I hear of no trouble in Northern Mo.
Mr Blake has his vacation now
I wish it might be so long he never
would return - He had a minister
from Springfield ^{Conn.} who preached not
such senseless nothing - we usually
hear I suppose you are aware
Olive has a great deal of the
same kind of pride - you speak
of in her conduct - Want of means
alone prevents her from making
a display - Mr Blaile is very low
indeed - has a tumor in the
bowels & one under the arm -
He has been unable to be moved
for a long time - Rich Daight
comes home every Sunday - paying
34 sometimes 40 dollars for his
horse - Do you think he will get
rich at that rate? Mother is quite
drooping & of course very low spirited
Write when you can to Sophie

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I've been trying to press
some flowers you sent ^{for your} but the
white one is so delicate I don't
succeed I'm afraid I shall
not be able to save any seed
the flower falls off leaving not
a bit of any thing on the
stem Sarah Parker's little boy
came here last week with his
grandparents - He is very droop-
ing - has had the whooping cough
& Measles - which have left him
feeble - His mother sent him
to Wales to spend a little time
hoping he would be better - He
had changed so much since
last fall - we did not any of
us know him - He is an unusually
intelligent boy - I wish
I knew whether there was much
danger in sending you him along

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Earl, George F.
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36490-

Lawrence, Aug. 26th 1861.
To His Excellency, Gov. Robinson,
Sir.

I am authorized by a
meeting of the Kansas Union Greys, this day
held, to tender their services to you, as
part of the Regiment of Home Guards
called for by General Order no. 9.

Very Respectfully,

George F. Earl

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Ged. A. Earl.
Gender of Co, for
Moore Grapes
Aug 22 1861

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Wessells, H.W.

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KANSAS STATE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Fort Riley, Kansas

August 29 '61

Hon Chas Robinson
Gov. of Kansas
Sir

I have noticed in recent papers
that you are authorized by the War Department
to raise three additional Regiments of Kansas
Volunteers, and understanding from late
acts of Congress that Officers of the Army can
accept appointments in such Corps without
prejudice to their rank, I have the honor to
offer my services in connection with this move-
ment, and am ready to assist you to the ut-
most of my ability - In the present condition
of affairs, I consider the organization of an
efficient well instructed Regiment of Home
Guard, as of the highest importance, in view
of predatory incursions from the borders of Missouri
and hope you will succeed in accomplishing

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that object - the column for New Mexico should move without much delay, or both men & animals will suffer in the mountainous -

I would see you in person, but being the only officer at the post, it would be unproper for me to leave

With much respect
Yr Obedt Servt
Tom McSparran
Major U. S. A.