

## Dwight H. and Luther H. Platt correspondence

Section 17, Pages 481 - 510

This is correspondence of Luther H. Platt and Dwight Henry Platt, missionary son and grandson of Jireh Platt, an abolitionist from Mendon, Illinois. Luther Platt's papers include letters from his wife Nettie, correspondence with religious groups, and correspondence with military officials in the South after the Civil War particularly regarding individuals still being held as slaves. The papers of Dwight Henry Platt include letters to his parents (Luther and Nettie) while he was at Washburn College in Topeka, Kansas, in the early 1880s; letters from friends; and correspondence from other individuals for business and professional purposes. Dwight served as pastor for the Congregational church in northwest Kansas, centered in Goodland.

Date: 1863-1896

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## Dwight H. and Luther H. Platt correspondence

[To L. H. Platt  
Reno Center, Ks.

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1 Apron.  
1 Ladies Hat.  
1 wrap.  
1 quilt  
4 Comfortables  
White Counterspane  
3 pc Sheets  
3 pc pillow cases  
6 towels -  $3\frac{1}{4}$  <sup>yds</sup> Cambric  
2 yds gingham  
5 night shirts  
4 Chemises  
4 night dresses  
1 balmoral skirt  
Black Mantle  
Gentleman's Hat  
2 vests

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Sea Pot.  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb Tea  
2 Aprons & 1 pr Mittens.  
Waist.  $3\frac{1}{2}$  yds Muslin.  
 $5\frac{1}{2}$  yds white Muslin.  
2 bosom Shirts  
9 yds Cashmere  
6 yds Cambric  
2 yds Chilling. Braid  
2 spools silk 2 spools trim  
1 spool Cotton. Buttons  
2 pair Silk Gloves  
1 pr Leather Gloves  
7 Handkerchiefs  
4 pair half Hose  
6 pair long Hose  
1 Shawl  
4 pair woolen drawers  
4 Under vests woolen

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Washburn College.  
Topeka Kans.

D. H. Platt. Dec. 12 - 1854

Thomas Jefferson

Thomas Jefferson was born in 1743;  
he died in 1826. It has been said by  
James Parton, that "Of all the  
public men, who have figured  
in the United States, <sup>during the revolutionary period</sup> Thomas  
Jefferson was incomparably the best  
scholar and the most variously  
accomplished man." He was a  
bold horseman, a skilful hunter,

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an elegant penman, a fine violinist,  
a ~~the~~ brilliant talker, a superior  
classical scholar, and was also very  
proficient in the modern languages.  
On account of his talents he was  
styled "The Sage of Monticello."  
He was the framer of The Declaration  
of Independence, a document,  
which will be handed down to  
posterity as long as the Republic  
~~exists~~ exists. Although the Declaration  
was written by Jefferson, a few verbal  
changes were made by John Adams  
and Benj. Franklin, which may  
still ~~the~~ be seen in their hand-

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writing, on the original document. There was a long discussion in Congress, and the Declaration was debated and criticised, word by word, and quite often it was severely attacked. Its chief defender was John Adams, while Jefferson who had written it did not say a word. In his journal he says, "During the debate I was sitting by Dr. Franklin who observed that I was withering a little under the acrimonious criticism of some of its parts; and it was on that occasion that, by way of comfort, he told

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me the story of John Thompson  
the hatter, and his new sign" This was  
a story in regard to a man who  
was about to open a shop for hats  
and proposed to have a sign-board,  
with a hat printed on it, and the  
inscription "John Thompson, hatter,  
makes and sells hats" But almost  
every word of this inscription  
met with objection from some body,  
as being unnecessary and at last  
it was reduced to "John Thompson"  
with the figure of a hat. And  
thus it was that Franklin  
amused Jefferson during the

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anxious hours when this important  
measure was under discussion

He was the leader and  
the founder of the Republican  
party as it was then called, or  
the Democratic party as it was  
afterwards called, - the party  
which sympathized with France  
rather than with England in the  
war ~~that~~ which was carried on  
at that time between those nations.

There was a great deal of excitement  
in <sup>the</sup> United States, because France  
had been the great <sup>ally</sup> of America  
in the Revolution. So there was

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in <sup>the</sup> United States a very strong party, which sympathized with France; on the other hand there was a strong party who were afraid of French influence and example and wished the new nation to resemble England as much as possible. The admirers of England were called Federalists, and ~~that~~ as I have stated above the other faction was the Republican party. This difference between the two parties showed itself even in regard to the forms and ceremonies

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of the government. The Federalists were afraid the government would not command enough ~~dignity~~ respect, they thought there should be a great deal of dignity and formality. On the other hand the Democrats were afraid the National Government would become too strong and would crush out the rights of the states, and that it would become aristocratic and costly like European nations. President~~s~~ Washington's way of living was complained of as to showy and

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expensive. When Washington drove to a session of ~~the~~ Congress, he went in a state coach, the body of which was in the shape of a hemisphere, cream colored, bordered with flowers around the panels, and ornamented with figures representing cupids, and supporting festoons. On great occasions the coach was drawn by six horses, on ordinary by four, and on Sunday by two only. The driver and postillions wore liveries of white and scarlet. Washington held levees once a

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fortnight in his own house.  
At four o'clock in the afternoon  
the doors were ~~then~~ thrown  
open, and the people might pass  
in and gaze in admiration  
upon their President and his  
Cabinet, who were ~~dressed in court~~  
attired in court dress. He did  
not shake hands with his  
guests but simply bowed. The  
birthday of the president, was  
celebrated in all the large towns  
by dinners and meetings.

Jefferson like Washington  
was of aristocratic birth, but his

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principles were intensely democratic.  
He <sup>hated</sup> ceremonies and titles; even Mr.  
was distasteful to him. He did not  
want to be called anything <sup>but</sup> Thomas  
Jefferson. These traits were the  
more remarkable, in a person  
of his birth and education, and  
endeared him to the common people.  
Coming into power on a wave  
of popularity; he studiously  
sought to retain this favor.  
There were no more brilliant  
levees and courtly ceremonies  
as in the time of Washington  
and Adams. On his inauguration

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day he rode without any attendant down to Congress, dismounted, ~~hitched~~ hitched his horse, and went into the Chamber, and read his fifteen minute inaugural. The example thus set by the nation's president was wise in its effects. In a short time the public debt was reduced, the treasury replenished, and the army and navy ~~etc~~ were diminished. A man of such force of character necessarily made bitter enemies, but he had the respect of his antagonists, and the admiration

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of his friends had no limit. The latter part of his life was spent at Monticello, near his birthplace. He had long before his death, spent his wealth with generous hand. He died poor in money, but rich in honor. His last words were "This is the fourth day of July"

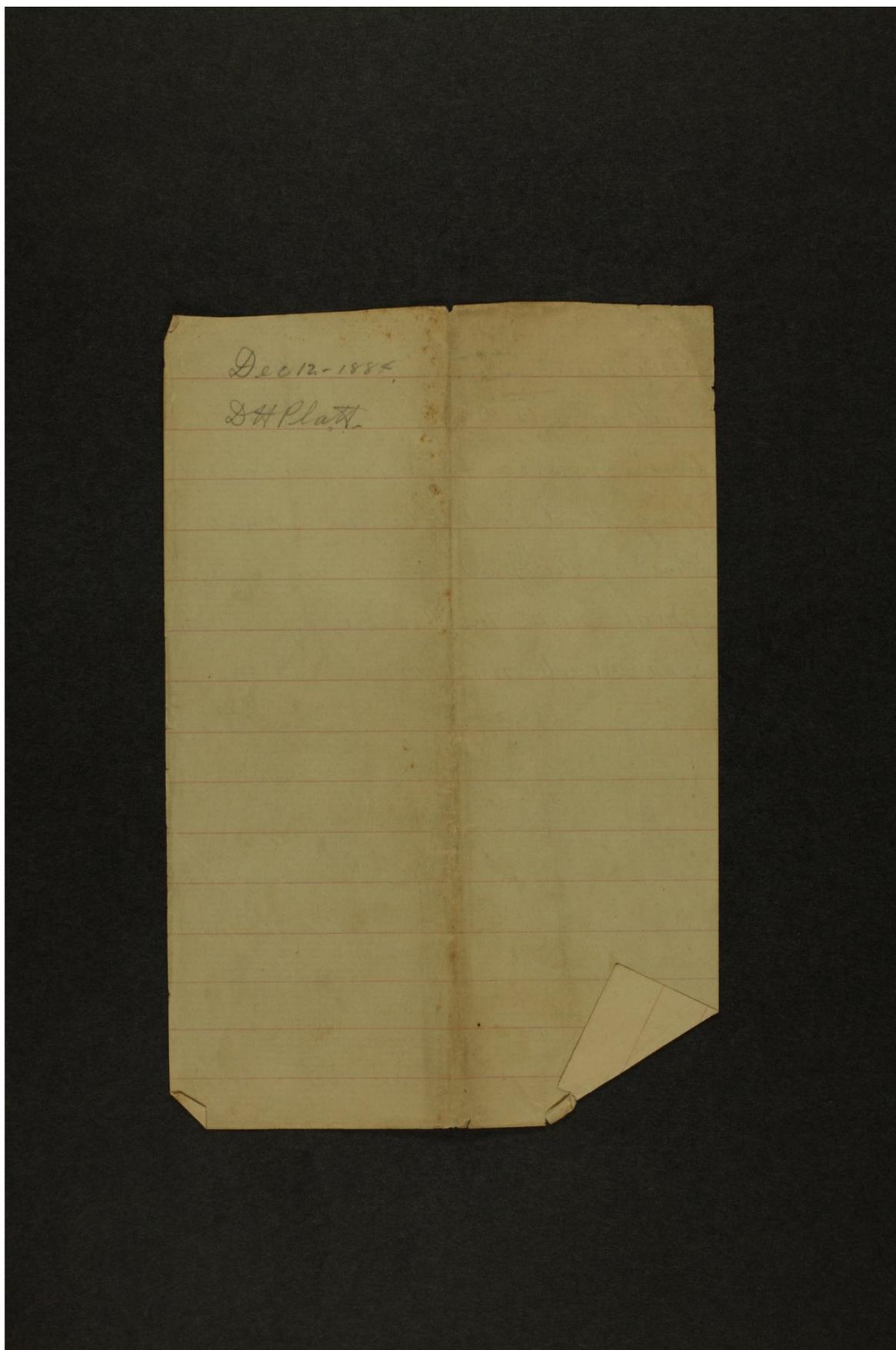
Jefferson and Adams were firm friends during the Revolution, but political strife ~~had~~ made them enemies. They became reconciled however after their return to private life. They both died on the same day (the fiftieth anniversary of

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American independence). Adams  
last words were "Jefferson still  
lives". Jefferson however was already  
lying dead in his Virginia home.  
Thus by the passing away of two  
great men, the fourth of July 1826  
was made memorable.

## Dwight H. and Luther H. Platt correspondence



## Dwight H. and Luther H. Platt correspondence

Washburn College, Topeka, Kans.  
Jan. Feb. 7 - 1885.

Dear Father:

Your kind letter and card were received this morning. I guess I was somewhat in writing as I did about not hearing from you. But I was greatly surprised and did not know how to account for it. Please excuse my hastiness. In regard to your question,

what will you do with yourself? I do not know what I can do, what I am fitted for, or what it is best for me to do. The more I think about the subject, it seems as if the conclusion advances <sup>further</sup> away from me. I want ask a few questions. What do you wish me to be? What am I best fitted for in your ~~judgment~~ judgment? I am very glad that you are feeling so much better, and I hope that you will continue to improve. With love to all,

Your Loving Son

Dwight H. Platt

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Washburn College, Topeka, Kans.

Feb. 15, 1885.

Dear Father:

Your card was received night before last. I am sorry on your account that we are having such severe ~~wheather~~ wheather. I ~~am~~ hope that Ferny's sickness will not proceed any further, but that he may be around again in a few days. I believe that this is the coldest winter that I remember that I have passed through. I suppose that you have before this time received my letter in regard to those questions which you asked. I have been working under a disadvantage during the past weeks. The <sup>wind</sup> has been blowing quite hard from the north, and ~~the~~ my stove smoked so that I could not stay in my room. And <sup>I</sup> did not think ~~it~~ best to study in the room without a fire when mercury was down to 20° below zero. So I had stay with some of the other boys during the daytime, and was placed in circumstances where it was difficult to carry on my work uninterrupted.

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But at last was able to get a fire agoing that would not smoke me out. Some of the boys organized a class to study the Bible not a great while ago. We take a certain subject and find what we can <sup>in</sup> the Scriptures concerning it, and meet every Sunday afternoon to compare notes and talk about the subject. Today we had repentance, and some one quoted the 6<sup>th</sup> verse of the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis. We had quite a discussion over the meaning of that passage. Will you please give me your explanation of it. I can't say that I know what it means, but don't that the word "repented" is used in the ordinary sense in that place, Dr. McVicar, I believe I told you, has gone to New England. Give my love to all

Your loving Son.

[D. H. Platt

Dwight H. Platt.

Reno Center, Ks.]

P.S. Enclosed find a programme of exercises that were held in the Chapel last Friday evening.

Miss. Parker is niece of Gov. John. ~~It~~ I think that you are acquainted with Miss. Leidigh's father, he is a merchant in Speareville, <sup>I suppose it is not needed any to introduce you to.</sup> John Errickson, Howard Tucker, Miss Fairfield, and Miss. Storms. Marshall is an old student

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of the Agricultural College. Miss Taylor I think you have  
heard me speak of. She is Florence Warr's prospective  
sister-in-law. The others are day scholars from the city.  
D.H.P.

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Washburn College Topeka Kansas  
Feb. 24 - 1885.

Dear Father:

Your kind letter was received yesterday. Last Friday our association held its oratorical contest. E. G. Buckland of Great Bend won the laurels and will go as the Washburn orator to the state contest which will be held at Emporia on 13<sup>th</sup> of next month. The students ~~are~~ of Washburn are arranging to charter a R. R. coach and go down en masse to support our man. The man that comes out ahead ahead at Emporia, goes to the Interstate Contest to be held at Columbus Ohio. I would like go down there, but I guess I can't afford it. The round trip would be about two dollars.

Prof. Whittlemore and Miss Lyman expect to go down with them. I think just as you do about that passage of Scripture I the limitation of meaning of the word to one sense is almost as absurd as Tom Browns ~~reading~~ rendering of his Latin

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lesson in which he speaks of the "sorrowful wolf." Last Sunday we had the conversion of Paul and also the return of "The Prodigal Son. Some of the boys thought that God looked on the conversion of The Prodigal Son in the same light that he did upon that of Paul. But it seems to me that the conversion of Paul was of a much higher type. Paul while a remained a Pharisee, had wealth, honor, great political and religious influence, and a large host of admiring friends, when he became a Christian, he not only lost all these things, but received persecution, and finally death, on account of his ~~adherence~~ adherence to the new faith. The Prodigal Son was living after spending all his money in riotous living, was living on the husks of corn which the hogs left. If he staid where he was he would surely die of starvation. If <sup>he</sup> went home and tired out to his father, he would at least have plenty to eat and wear. If he had had ~~plenty~~ an abundance of the good things of life through

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out the rest of his days it is not likely that he would ever have returned home. In fact he was almost forced by surrounding circumstances, to repent. On the other hand how different the position in which Paul stands, there is no promise of temporal improvement which urges him on to his course of action. In the eyes of the world his choice is a fatal mistake. He does not look at the worldly but looks at spiritual side, and makes the choice of his own free will. I think the prodigal sons are "saved as it were by fire" while the Pauls will have a "full and free entrance into the joy of their Lord". But I must close as I have two more lessons to get yet tonight. With love & all I am ~~your~~

Yours son

Dwight H. Platt.

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Washburn College Topeka, Kansas. March 2-1885.

Dear Father,

Your kind letter, with stated enclosure of five dollars came to hand a few ago. I am well as usual and hope that the folks at home are enjoying, at least, a reasonable degree of health. We are <sup>having</sup> beautiful weather. These sunshiny springlike days are quite different from the falling snow and sharp frosty air of last week. But this kind of weather also has a bad side to it; for the mud is almost intolerable ~~for one~~ if one wishes to move around out <sup>of</sup> doors to any great extent. Last Friday after dinner several of the boys were out snowballing, I was among them, and I succeeded in getting my face washed. But the washing did not tend to the purification of my face as there was some dirt mixed in with the snow. After a little that I started for my room, but I met several boys in the halls who made a good deal of fun at my expense. When Prof. Whittemore came

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up stairs and informed us that it was study hours. I had suppose that my deportment will suffer for that. Now had not heard the bell, and was not aware that the study hour had commenced. The bell must have rung while I was coming up stairs for I am sure I would have heard it if I had been out doors. I am sure that I have never tried harder to get 100 in deportment than I have this month. I would not done the thing if I had known that the bell had rung. I don't know for certain that he will mark it against me but I presume that he will. Wednesday is the close of this school month, ~~at~~ and at ~~that~~ <sup>that time</sup> the regular monthly reports will be made out. Yesterday Fow Taylor, and his sister, who is attending ~~the~~ Washburn, joined the 1<sup>st</sup> Cong. Church. Their father and several other prominent of Reno County, are in Topeka. I suppose that you know that there is a bill before the ~~leg~~ legislature relative to the division of that county. I was down town last night to hear Rev. Robt. Colyer, of New York City

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the celebrated Unitarian preacher. His sermon was the grandest piece of oratory that I have ever listened to. His subject was ~~the~~ "Is there a hereafter and if so what of the elsewhere?" I could not believe everything he taught. He brought very conclusive argument to prove that there is a life beyond this life, and that there is but one true and just God who rules over all. He touched the men who believe that Nature is God. He said that Nature was cruel and unrelentless god, to whom such a thing as pardon and forgiveness was unknown. He ridiculed <sup>at</sup> ~~Ingersoll's doctrine doctrine~~, with bitter sarcasm. If any of Nature's laws are broken ~~is~~ the penalty is sure to follow. He placed Bob Ingersoll's doctrine in a very ridiculous light. He was very sarcastic when speaking of it. After proving that there was a hereafter, he dealt with the question, "what is the elsewhere?" He then proved <sup>that</sup> without a doubt there is a heaven and a hell. He said that he did not believe that hell was a huge furnace in which sinners would roast and fry throughout and an endless eternity. He said that he did

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not believe in physical hell, but in <sup>a</sup> spiritual hell. I think that I agree with him so far. He then said that he did not believe in everlasting punishment, he thinks that it is possible for a man to be forgiven after he has gone to hell. If a man dies and goes down there, and <sup>if</sup> while there turns from sin, ~~asked~~ asks Gods forgiveness he will receive it. Now it seems to me that this is contrary to the teaching of the Bible. If the parable of "Lazarus and the rich man" does not lead us to the opposite conclusion I am greatly mistaken. Admitting his theory to be true, is it ~~that~~ likely that a man who goes through this life without repenting will ever repent in the other world.

I saw Mrs Slie in church yesterday. She asked me to give ~~the folks at St. John's~~ my folks her regards. Donnell's mother and father are in the city. I suppose you know that Dr. Donnell is state senator from his district. But I must close. Give my love to Mother and Perry,

[Dwight H. Platt  
Perry Center, Kas.]

Yours,

Dwight H. Platt

## Dwight H. and Luther H. Platt correspondence

Washburn College Topeka  
March 23, [1895]

Dear Father

I suppose that you have returned from Great Bend before this time. One of the ~~Great~~ Bend boys wanted to know if you stopped their place, his name was Forsusley. Things ago are going on about as usual. The term closes a week from next Tuesday. We had expected to have a weeks vacation then, but I guess <sup>we</sup> will not have it. I am very glad to hear that there is a prospect of your having a parsonage to live in. I will be so much more pleasant than the way in which <sup>you</sup> ~~we~~ are now living.

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I hope that measles will prove fatal in neighborhood of Reno Center. The State Oratorical Contest was held a week ago last Friday. The State Normal man came out first, a girl from Ottawa University second, & E. G. Buckland of Washburn third, Buckland was the youngest man on the program, he is only seventeen. The Contest next year will be held in Topeka under the auspices of the Washburn College Oratorical Association. We are having pleasant weather, but it is quite cool. As I am in haste I must close, with love to all.

Your son

Dwight H. Platt.

[D. H. Platt

Reno Center, Co.]