

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

Section 1, Pages 1 - 30

This file includes subject correspondence relating to the Mother Bickerdyke Home. Topics in the correspondence cover but is not limited to affidavits, sexual harassment and administration. This file is part of a bigger collection of Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence.

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KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

Brd of Managers
89

Salina, Kansas
July 9, 1930

Mr. William H. McHale,
President Board of Managers,
State Soldiers' Home,
Kansas City, Kansas.

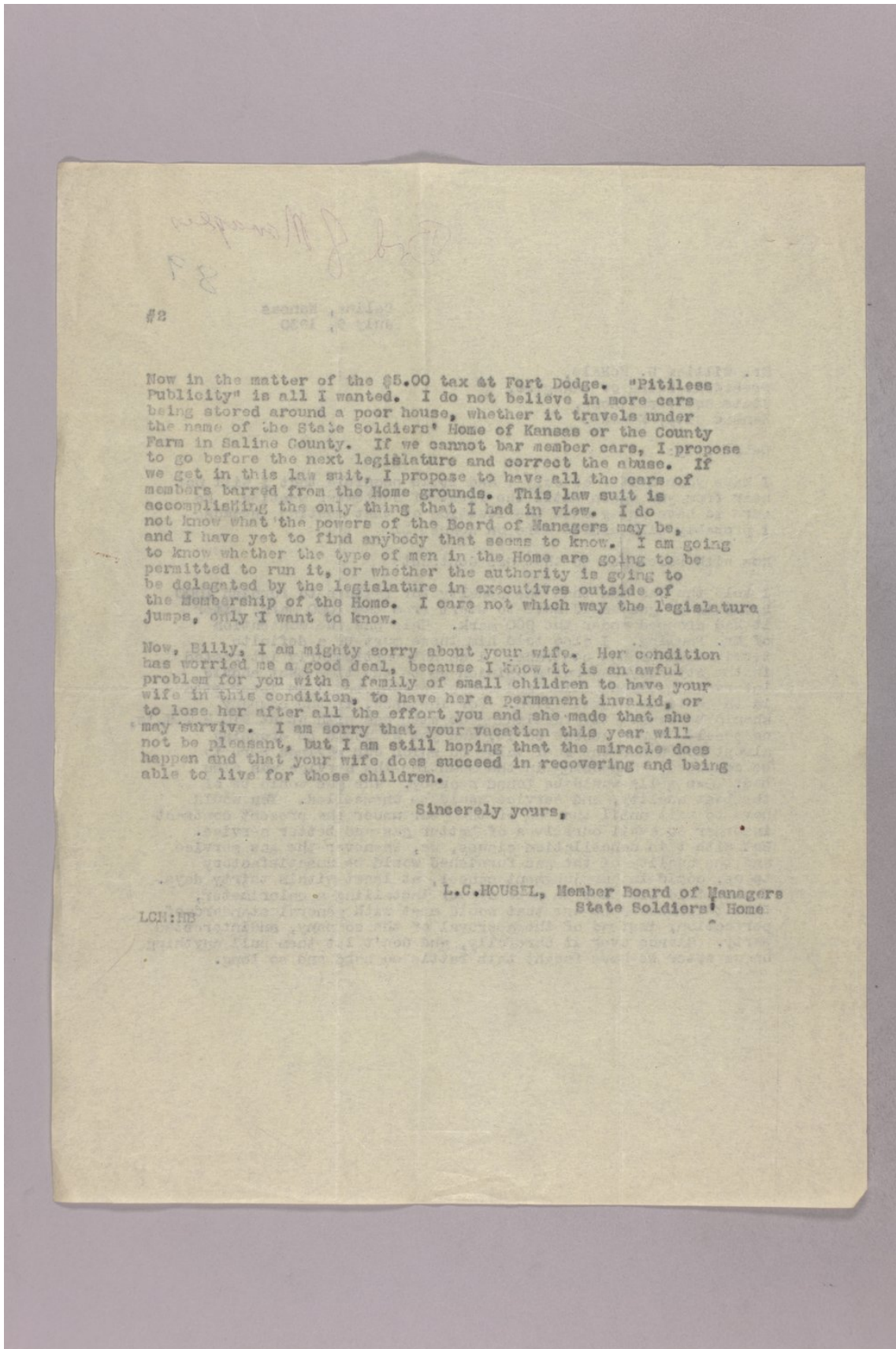
Dear Billy:

I have your letter of July 7 and it is possible that I will not hear from you again until the first of September meeting. Be sure to have on my desk the location of that meeting, because I probably will arrive here on August 31.

Now with reference to that Gas Contract:

I told the gas man that the penalty for failure to furnish 1000 B.T.U.'s of gas would have to start from the 1000 mark, after it had dropped under the 900 mark. This was the contention of Mr. Pauling. I also told him there must be a definite termination of the contract. I am not particularly interested in the Attorney-General's opinion as to the time that should intervene between notice and cancellation, but I am interested in the definite termination. For instance, if the company should be constantly furnishing us with gas with about 910 B.T.U.'s, no penalty would accrue to it, and yet we would be dropping almost 10% under the fuel value on which our savings were to be computed. Supposing in the meantime the service was also bad. Gas wells would be found near by. The gas would be of the best quality, and service would be unexcelled. You would have to wait until the end of the year under the present contract in order to avail ourselves of better gas and better service. But with this cancellation clause, we, whenever the gas service and the quality of the gas furnished would be unsatisfactory to us, could in our judgment cancel, at least within thirty days. I also told him that in case of our installing a calorimeter, that this should be one that would meet with general standards of perfection, instead of the approval of the company, and interested party. Glance over it carefully, and don't let them pull anything on us after we have fought this battle so hard and so long.

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home





Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

State of Kansas, Ellsworth County, ss.

A F F I D A V I T

I, Mary Koudelka, of lawful age being duly sworn according to law, do upon my oath depose and say:

My name is Mary Koudelka, my age is twenty five years, I am a resident at Ellsworth, Kansas, and for more than four years last past I have been employed at the Bickerdyke Home at Ellsworth, Kansas as housekeeper at Headquarters. I am acquainted with W. G. Buffington, I have known him since October 1, 1929. I met him at Headquarters when he came to inspect the Bickerdyke Home.

On October 3, 1929, just before Mr. Buffington left the Bickerdyke I was all alone at Headquarters, Mr. Buffington came in, he asked me how I liked my job, if I ever got lonely and if I had a steady bow, he pinched my arms several times and held me close, he did not kiss me for Mr. Varner came into Headquarters at this time.

On Monday or Tuesday, I am not certain which date, in October on the 28, or 29, 1929, Mr. Buffington came through Headquarters to the kitchen, I was in the kitchen alone, he put his arm around me and held me close, he asked me whether I liked my work; Mr. Varner was coming about this time and he went on out the kitchen door with Mr. Varner.

Further affiant saith not.

Mary Koudelka
Affiant.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 7th day of November, 1929.

Vincent C. Allred
Notary Public

My Commission Expires Sept 9 1933

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

State of Kansas, Ellsworth County, ss.

A F F I D A V I T

I, Ellen Lewis, of lawful age being duly sworn according to law, do upon my oath depose and say:

My full true and correct name is Ellen Lewis, my home is in Wichita, Kansas, I am now resident at the Bickerdyke Home at Ellsworth, Kansas and occupy the position of head nurse at that institution; I am twenty nine years of age. I am acquainted with W. G. Buffington; I have known him about one month, I first met him at a Board of Managers meeting at the Bickerdyke Home, October 1, 1929.

On the night of October 2, 1929, W. G. Buffington was at the Bickerdyke Home, we were playing cards at the superintendent's home, Mr. B. L. Varner; there was present Mr. McHale; Mr. and Mrs. Varner, myself, Mr. and Mrs. D. C. Crosby and Mr. Buffington. About 11 o'clock p.m. Mr. Buffington offered to take me home, I lived not quite a block from Mr. Varner's, I said nothing, I walked out of Mr. Varner's house and Mr. Buffington followed me, he said he was going to take me home. On the way home, nothing especial occurred, when I reached my home Mr. Buffington asked me to kiss him good-night and love him; he further said that he did not blame me for not wanting to love him because I did not know him very well. I refused to do as he requested and went on in the house.

On the morning of October 3, 1929, Mr. Buffington asked me to make the round of the cottages with him as he had heard that there were some dirty cottages around there. I went with Mr. Buffington. At cottage number five the lady was out, and Mr. Buffington requested me to accompany him inside to inspect the same. While in the cottage Mr. Buffington grabbed me and kissed and hugged me against my wishes, I tried to break away from him but he is much bigger and stronger and I could not, we were in the cottage probably five minutes when I succeeded in breaking from Mr. Buffington's embrace and went out side of the cottage just as Mr. Varner came by with the mail for the rest of the cottages; Mr. Varner accompanied us on the remainder of our inspection. I told Mr. Varner what had occurred the same day but not in Mr. Buffington's presence.

On the same morning Mr. Buffington asked to see the cottage in which I had requested Mr. Varner to allow me to stay; I told Mr. Buffington that Mr. Varner had the key and that he would go with us but Mr. Varner said that he was busy and could not go and gave Mr. Buffington the key to this cottage, number fifteen. I went to the cottage with Mr. Buffington and there again the same thing occurred as I have heretofore related, I ran out one door of the cottage and Mr. Buffington the other, we were not in the house more than five minutes.

On October 3, 1929 at about 2:30 in the afternoon, I was going into Ellsworth and Mr. Buffington suggested that he was going and for me to wait and go with him, this I did. He took me around the country square and told me that, if anyone asked what we were doing up there to tell them that we were counting the grave stones in the



Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

Bickerdyke cemetery. Mr. Buffington again kissed and hugged me while we were at this old cemetery. He suggested to me that I go with him to Dodge City that night, as he had never been there to inspect that home. I told him that Mr. Varner would not let me go and he informed me that he was more my boss than Mr. Varner. When I refused to go with him, he suggested that he stay in Ellsworth that night and we could have a date. I told him that I already had a date, but I did not have. It took us about one hour to go from the Bickerdyke to Ellsworth; the home is less than one mile from town, the way we went it would be about three miles from town.

When Mr. Buffington left me he told me that if I ever left the Bickerdyke to be sure and leave my address with Mr. Varner so that he could find me in Wichita, as Oxford was only thirty five miles from Wichita. He further told me that sometime when there was not a board meeting he would come through Ellsworth and pick me up and then we could have a date. I have never been with Mr. Buffington since the last mentioned occurrence. I am divorced from my husband, was granted a divorce in Sedgwick County, Kansas in April 1929, I have two children, they are in my custody and control at the Bickerdyke Home.

Further affiant saith not.

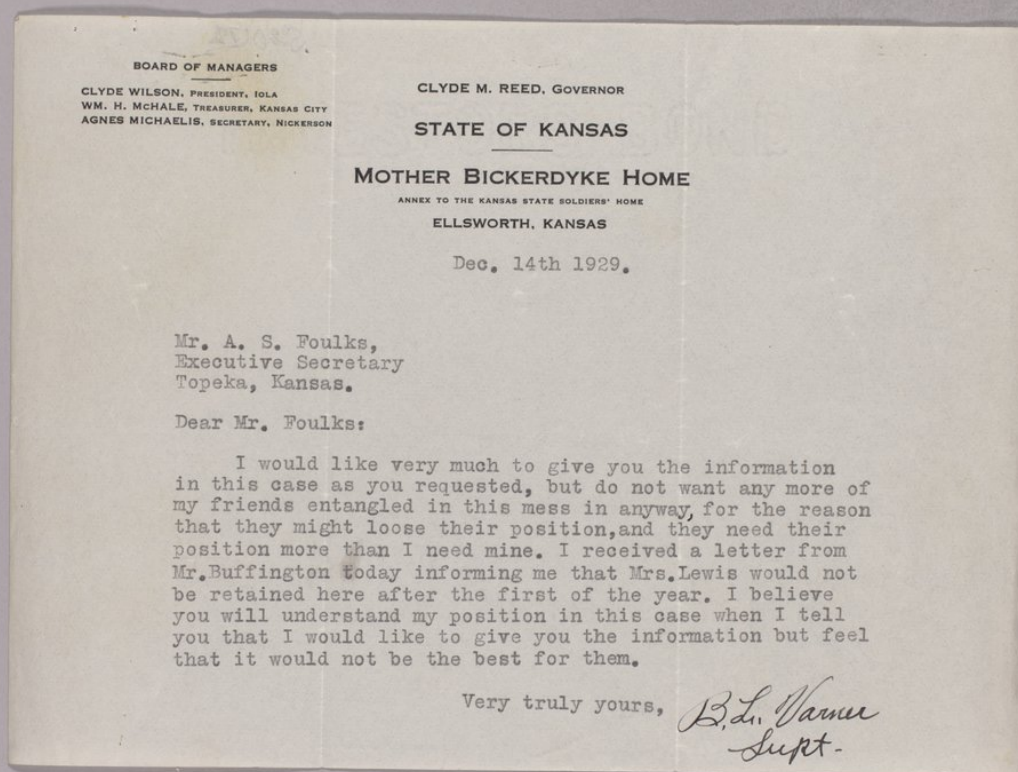
Ellen Lewis
Affiant.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 7th day of November, 1929.

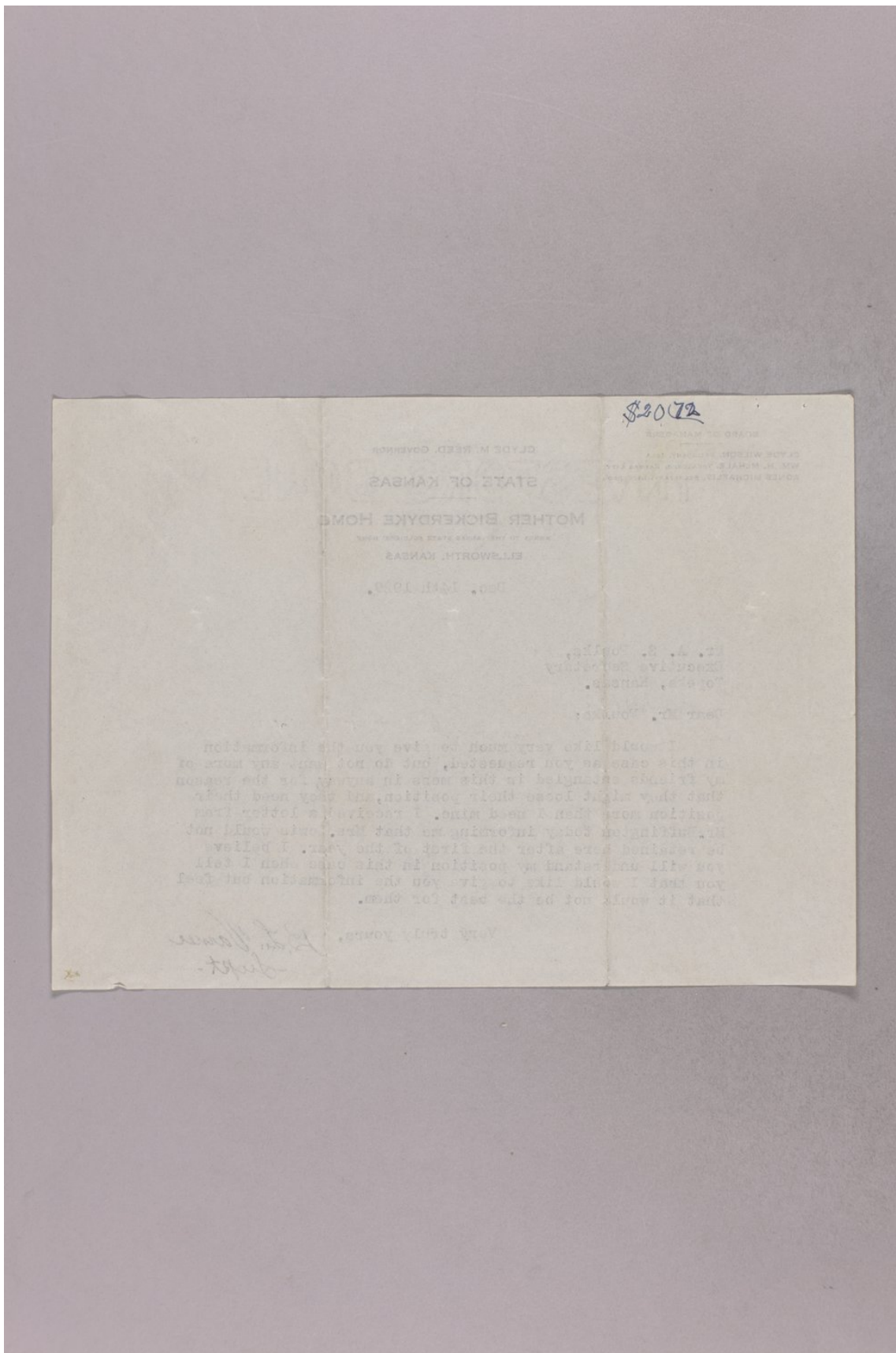
Vincent C. Allred
Notary Public

My Commission Expires Sept 4 1933

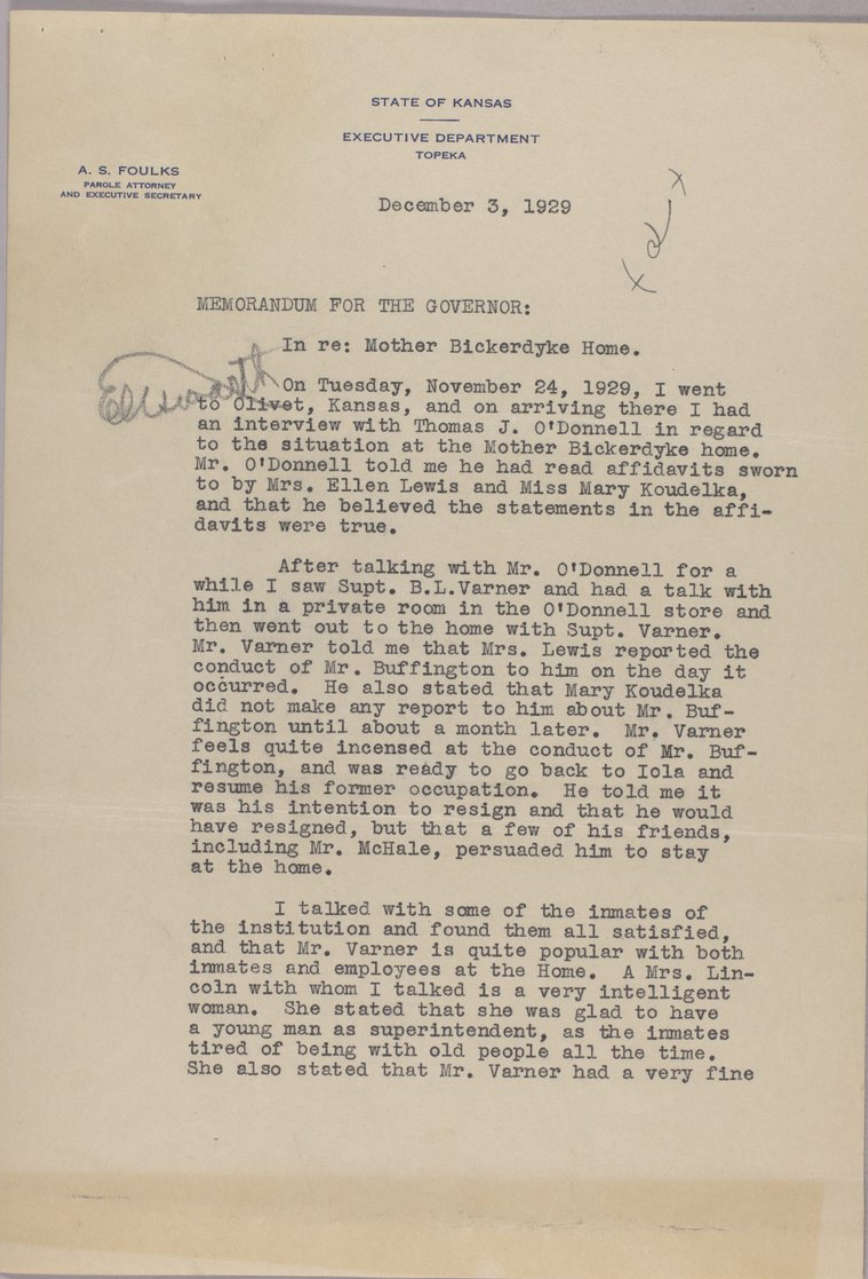
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Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home



STATE OF KANSAS

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
TOPEKA

A. S. FOULKS
PAROLE ATTORNEY
AND EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

December 3, 1929

MEMORANDUM FOR THE GOVERNOR:

In re: Mother Bickerdyke Home.

On Tuesday, November 24, 1929, I went to Olivet, Kansas, and on arriving there I had an interview with Thomas J. O'Donnell in regard to the situation at the Mother Bickerdyke home. Mr. O'Donnell told me he had read affidavits sworn to by Mrs. Ellen Lewis and Miss Mary Koudelka, and that he believed the statements in the affidavits were true.

After talking with Mr. O'Donnell for a while I saw Supt. B.L. Varner and had a talk with him in a private room in the O'Donnell store and then went out to the home with Supt. Varner. Mr. Varner told me that Mrs. Lewis reported the conduct of Mr. Buffington to him on the day it occurred. He also stated that Mary Koudelka did not make any report to him about Mr. Buffington until about a month later. Mr. Varner feels quite incensed at the conduct of Mr. Buffington, and was ready to go back to Iola and resume his former occupation. He told me it was his intention to resign and that he would have resigned, but that a few of his friends, including Mr. McHale, persuaded him to stay at the home.

I talked with some of the inmates of the institution and found them all satisfied, and that Mr. Varner is quite popular with both inmates and employees at the Home. A Mrs. Lincoln with whom I talked is a very intelligent woman. She stated that she was glad to have a young man as superintendent, as the inmates tired of being with old people all the time. She also stated that Mr. Varner had a very fine

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

sense of humor that was refreshing to the inmates.

I talked with Mrs. Lewis and Miss Koudelka in private, and they confirmed the statements made in the affidavit and added a few more incidents which were not brought out in the affidavits in regard to the conduct of Mr. Buffington. Mrs. Lewis stated that she had never met Mr. Buffington until the first of October, and that she had done nothing that would in any way indicate that she was willing to flirt with Mr. Buffington. Mrs. Lewis further stated that Mr. Buffington asked her if she didn't think that Mrs. Crosby would be willing to step out a little. She said she told Mr. Buffington that he would find out if he tried. Mrs. Lewis also figured that Mary Koudelka did not tell anything about her experience with Mr. Buffington until the nurse at Dodge City had stated that Mr. Buffington told down there that he had flirted with Mary Koudelka, and that Mary had told Mrs. Varner what had occurred.

Mary Koudelka stated that she had never met Mr. Buffington until the first of October, and the first incident occurred on the third of October. She also stated that Mr. Buffington asked her if she had a steady beau, and if she wanted to hold her position; that he also asked her all about the office and the employees of the institution. She stated that she considered his actions very silly and very unbecoming to a gentleman.

She also stated that she had been working at the institution for four years and liked the work there and desired to keep her place in the institution, and that she did not want to get into any trouble and for that reason did not report the incident with Mr. Buffington.

After Mr. Varner heard of all of these incidents he took the two ladies to the county attorney's office where the affidavits were made out and signed by the women. Both Mrs. Lewis and Miss Koudelka stated that they knew the contents of the affidavits and that the same were true.

A. S. Foulks

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

T. G. O'DONNELL ~~HARDWARE CO.~~
HARDWARE, IMPLEMENTS, HARNESS
GUNS, REVOLVERS, AMMUNITION, SPORTING GOODS
ELLSWORTH, KANSAS

Nov 22nd 1929.

Governor Clyde M. Reed,
Topeka, Kansas.

My dear Governor :-: I want to thank you for your letter of the 14th regarding matters at the Bickerdyke Home.

I trust matters will be ironed out that will make for efficiency in the conduct of the institution.

Chairman McHale's remarks regarding Mr Crosby the present steward are in the main correct. Mr Crosby I believe is alright a steward but that's all. He should be given to understand what his duties are as steward and not allow meddling with the other help, causing in confusion and distrust that makes for ⁱⁿ efficient service.

As I stated in my former letter Mr Varner is a good superintendent and the board will be lucky if they get him to stay on, which at present he has decided to do.

Hope the board will get everything ironed out in a way that will be best for the institution and that peace and harmony will prevail.

With best wishes, I am.

Very truly yours,

T. G. O'Donnell

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

December 13, 1929

Mr. B. L. Varner, Supt.
Mother Bickerdyke Home
Ellsworth, Kansas

Dear Mr. Varner:

When I was out to your institution and talked with the two ladies there in regard to Mr. Buffington's conduct, I understood from one of them that Mr. Buffington had said something at Dodge City about his flirting with one of the women at the Bickerdyke Home. I believe this was told to your wife when she was visiting at the Soldiers' Home at Dodge City. If you have any knowledge of this matter I wish you would please write me at your earliest convenience.

Very truly yours,

Executive Secretary

ASF-J



Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

*Bd f Mayo
Soldier Home*

November 14, 1929.

Honorable Thos. G. O'Donnell,
Ellsworth, Kansas.

Dear Tom:

With further reference to yours of the 4th, I am
advised by Chairman McHale of the Board of Managers as follows:

"At the last meeting of the Board we were advised that
Mr. Varner, Superintendent of Bickerdyke Home, wished
to resign. He is a World War man and has been a very
good superintendent and I was indeed sorry to hear that
he intended to resign. Since then, I have talked with
him over the 'phone several times and he intends to stay
on the job. He feels that an influence such as Mr. O'Donnell
complains of was responsible for his thought of resignation."

"As Mr. O'Donnell states in his letter, Mr. Crosby is a
veteran of the Spanish-American War and at the meeting
held in Ellsworth on the first of October, spoke to me
about getting the superintendent's job, stating that he
had heard rumors about Varner's resignation. At the
November meeting and after Mr. Buffington had advised us
that he thought of resigning, Mr. Buffington suggested
that we put Mr. Crosby in as superintendent of the Bicker-
dyke Home and ask him to do the steward work in connection
with the superintendent's duties."

"I personally have no complaint to lodge against Mr. Crosby
and he has made a very efficient steward. Feeling confident
that Crosby would not want to take the superintendent's job
plus the steward's job for the superintendent's salary, I
indicated that his promotion would be acceptable. Mr. Crosby
was at one time a banker and after his bank failed because
of poor loans, he was gentleman enough to turn his personal
fund and his property in so that the depositors of the bank
might be protected."

I trust this will explain the situation.

Cordially yours,

Governor.



Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

MRS. AGNES MICHAELIS, SECRETARY
NICKERSON, KANSAS

CLYDE WILSON, PRESIDENT
IOLA, KANSAS

WM. H. MCMALE, TREASURER
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

KANSAS SOLDIERS' HOME FORT DODGE, KANSAS

November 13, 1929.

Honorable Clyde M. Reed,
State House,
Topeka, Kansas.

Dear Sir:

I am in receipt of a letter written by you November 7th enclosing a communication from Mr. T. G. O'Donnell relative to the conditions at Bickerdyke. I have delayed answering this letter until this time because I did not want to be too hasty about it.

At the last meeting of the Board we were advised that Mr. Varner, Superintendent of Bickerdyke Home, wished to resign. He is a World War man and has been a very good superintendent and I was indeed sorry to hear that he intended to resign. Since then, I have talked with him over the phone several times and he intends to stay on the job. He feels that an influence such as Mr. O'Donnell complains of was responsible for his thought of resignation.

As Mr. O'Donnell states in his letter, Mr. Crosby is a veteran of the Spanish-American War and at the meeting held in Ellsworth on the first of October, spoke to me about getting the superintendent's job, stating that he had heard rumors about Varner's resignation. At the November meeting and after Mr. Buffington had advised us that he had stopped at the Bickerdyke Home and had been told by Mr. Varner that he thought of resigning, Mr. Buffington suggested that we put Mr. Crosby in as superintendent of the Bickerdyke Home and ask him to do the steward work in connection with the superintendent's duties.

I personally have no complaint to lodge against Mr. Crosby and he has made a very efficient steward. Feeling confident that Crosby would not want to take the superintendent's job plus the steward's job for the superintendent's salary, I indicated that his promotion would be acceptable. Mr. Crosby was at one time a banker and after his bank failed because of poor loans, he was gentleman enough to turn his personal fund and his property in so that the depositors of the bank might be protected.

I have read with interest Mr. O'Donnell's communication concerning Mr. Buffington. So far our contact has been so limited that I am not able to form an unbiased opinion concerning him. He is earnest in his efforts and I think sincere and seems to want to do those things which he believes are right. I would rather, however, talk with you personally about this matter and upon my



Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

MRS. AGNES MICHAELIS, SECRETARY
NICKERSON, KANSAS

CLYDE WILSON, PRESIDENT
IOLA, KANSAS

WM. H. MCHALE, TREASURER
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

KANSAS SOLDIERS' HOME
FORT DODGE, KANSAS

Page 2, Clyde Reed.

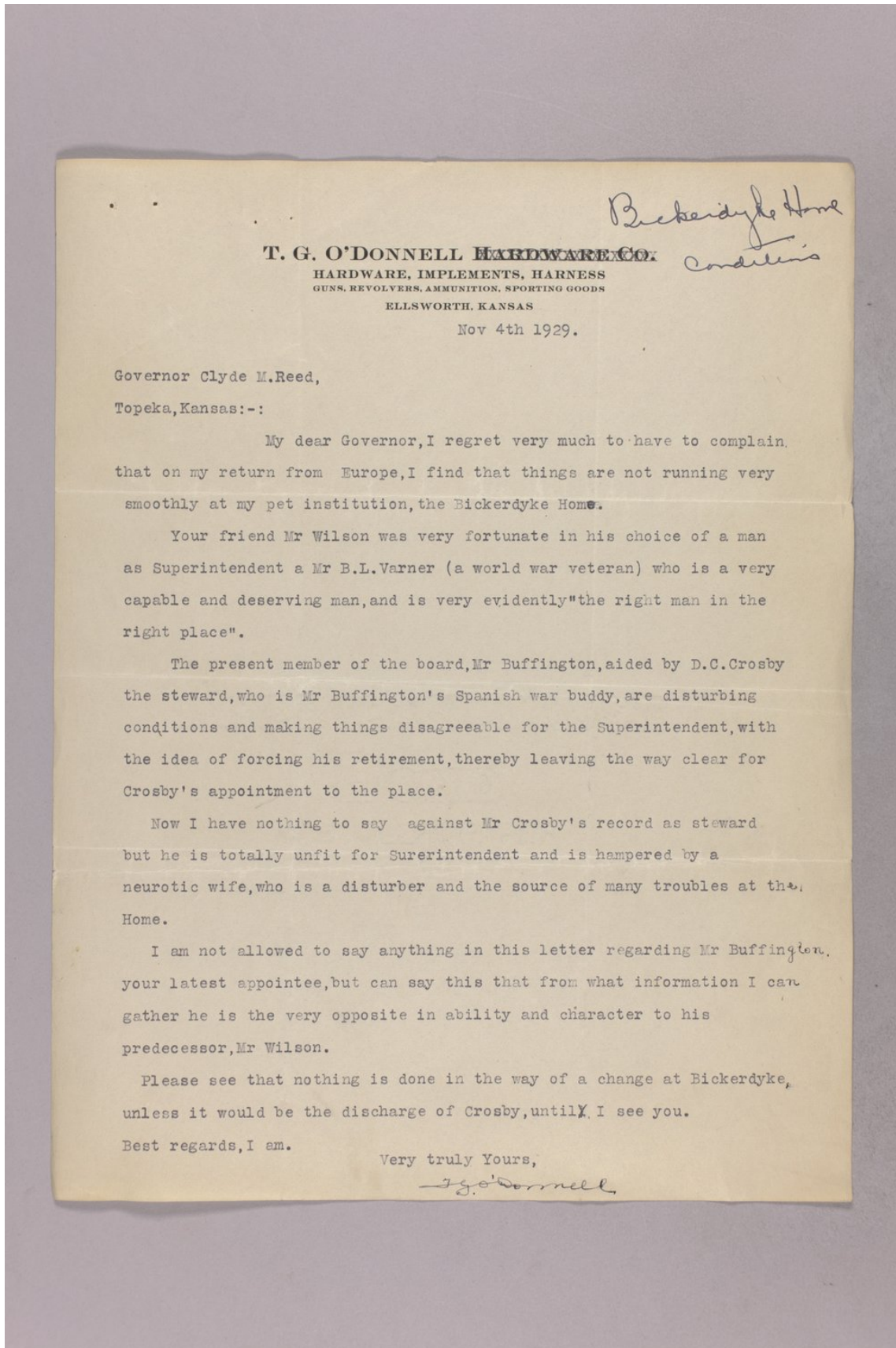
next visit to Topeka, which I trust will be some time in the near future, will confer with you.

I am returning herewith for your files Mr. O'Donnell's letter.

Yours very respectfully,

WHMc:NB

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home



*Bickerdyke Home
conditions*

T. G. O'DONNELL HARDWARE CO.
HARDWARE, IMPLEMENTS, HARNESS
GUNS, REVOLVERS, AMMUNITION, SPORTING GOODS
ELLSWORTH, KANSAS

Nov 4th 1929.

Governor Clyde M. Reed,
Topeka, Kansas:-:

My dear Governor, I regret very much to have to complain that on my return from Europe, I find that things are not running very smoothly at my pet institution, the Bickerdyke Home.

Your friend Mr Wilson was very fortunate in his choice of a man as Superintendent a Mr B.L. Varner (a world war veteran) who is a very capable and deserving man, and is very evidently "the right man in the right place".

The present member of the board, Mr Buffington, aided by D.C. Crosby the steward, who is Mr Buffington's Spanish war buddy, are disturbing conditions and making things disagreeable for the Superintendent, with the idea of forcing his retirement, thereby leaving the way clear for Crosby's appointment to the place.

Now I have nothing to say against Mr Crosby's record as steward but he is totally unfit for Superintendent and is hampered by a neurotic wife, who is a disturber and the source of many troubles at the Home.

I am not allowed to say anything in this letter regarding Mr Buffington, your latest appointee, but can say this that from what information I can gather he is the very opposite in ability and character to his predecessor, Mr Wilson.

Please see that nothing is done in the way of a change at Bickerdyke, unless it would be the discharge of Crosby, until I see you.

Best regards, I am.

Very truly Yours,

T. G. O'Donnell

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

January 30,
1929

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Mr. John B. Pierce, Commander,
Manila - King Camp No. 1
National Military Home, Kansas

Dear Mr. Pierce:

Your letter of January 28 embodying Resolution adopted by the Manila - King Camp No. 1 United Spanish War Veterans, addressed to Governor Clyde M. Reed received.

Governor Reed has directed me to reply and advise that his most careful consideration will be given your letter relative to the management of the Soldiers' State Home at Dodge City. Thanking you, I am

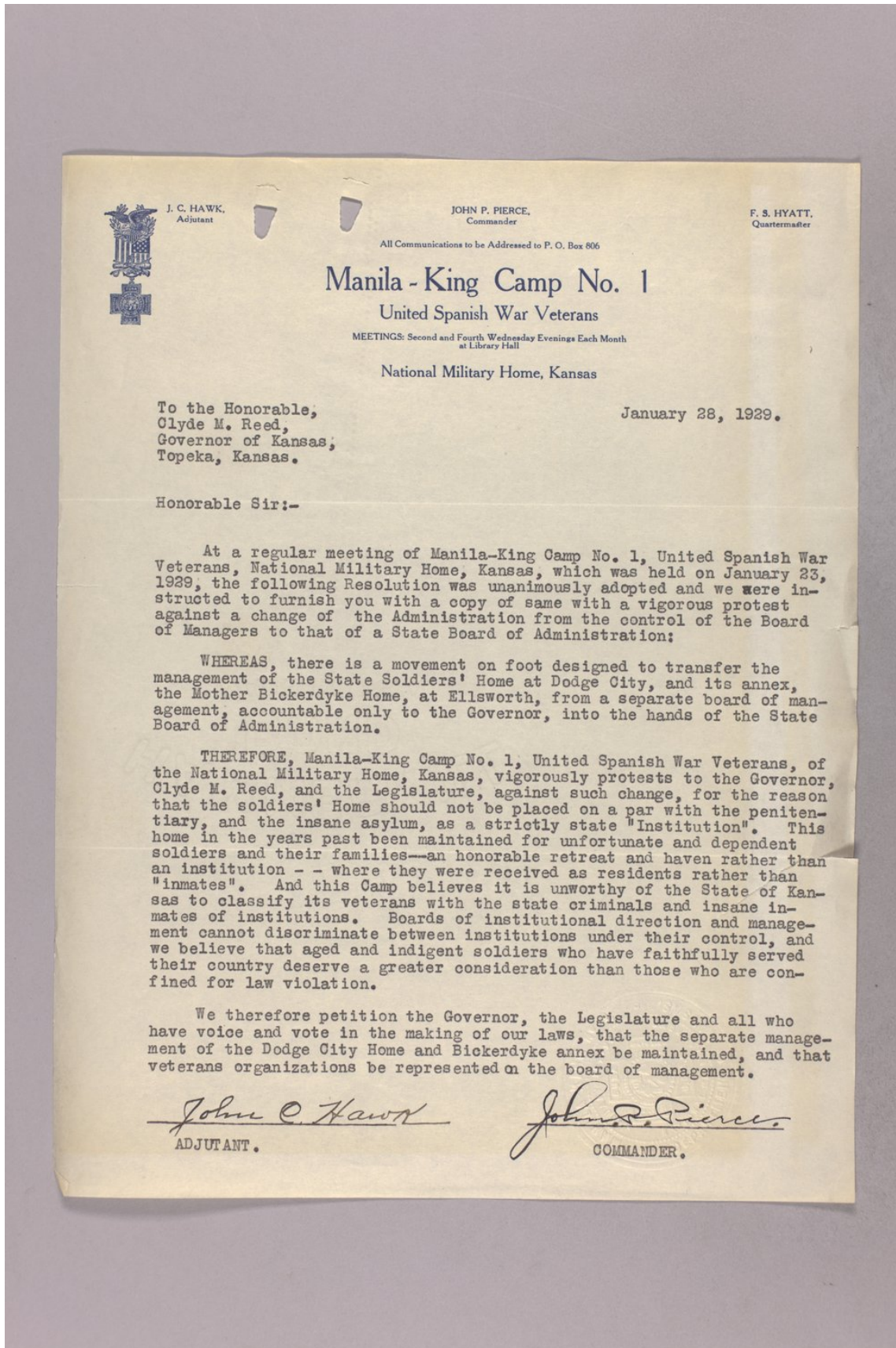
Very truly yours,

WGW-M

Secretary to the Governor



Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home



J. C. HAWK,
Adjutant

JOHN P. PIERCE,
Commander

F. S. HYATT,
Quartermaster

All Communications to be Addressed to P. O. Box 806

Manila - King Camp No. 1

United Spanish War Veterans

MEETINGS: Second and Fourth Wednesday Evenings Each Month
at Library Hall

National Military Home, Kansas

To the Honorable,
Clyde M. Reed,
Governor of Kansas,
Topeka, Kansas.

January 28, 1929.

Honorable Sir:-

At a regular meeting of Manila-King Camp No. 1, United Spanish War Veterans, National Military Home, Kansas, which was held on January 23, 1929, the following Resolution was unanimously adopted and we were instructed to furnish you with a copy of same with a vigorous protest against a change of the Administration from the control of the Board of Managers to that of a State Board of Administration;

WHEREAS, there is a movement on foot designed to transfer the management of the State Soldiers' Home at Dodge City, and its annex, the Mother Bickerdyke Home, at Ellsworth, from a separate board of management, accountable only to the Governor, into the hands of the State Board of Administration.

THEREFORE, Manila-King Camp No. 1, United Spanish War Veterans, of the National Military Home, Kansas, vigorously protests to the Governor, Clyde M. Reed, and the Legislature, against such change, for the reason that the soldiers' Home should not be placed on a par with the penitentiary, and the insane asylum, as a strictly state "Institution". This home in the years past been maintained for unfortunate and dependent soldiers and their families--an honorable retreat and haven rather than an institution -- where they were received as residents rather than "inmates". And this Camp believes it is unworthy of the State of Kansas to classify its veterans with the state criminals and insane inmates of institutions. Boards of institutional direction and management cannot discriminate between institutions under their control, and we believe that aged and indigent soldiers who have faithfully served their country deserve a greater consideration than those who are confined for law violation.

We therefore petition the Governor, the Legislature and all who have voice and vote in the making of our laws, that the separate management of the Dodge City Home and Bickerdyke annex be maintained, and that veterans organizations be represented on the board of management.

John C. Hawk
ADJUTANT.

John P. Pierce
COMMANDER.

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

Condensed
Mother Bickerdyke's

Ellsworth, Kan
Jan 3rd 29

Dear Mr Reed
Gov of Kansas

We are all awaiting so anxiously for you to get in too office and get busy. as we do need some thing done here in this home. the most of the old folks here are afraid to say one word as to their treatment here. as many of them have no other home. but, Oh Mr Reed if you could only know of certain things that are done here and how the



Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

now hoping and praying
that all tangles will be made
right before long and adjusted
to the satisfaction of all and
wishing you success in your
new Office. (as I sure did
work for you and your nomination
in Wichita and so glad you were
successful and know you will
be just the man for the good
of the state and all concerned
yours Respt- address



Marion Beam
Ellsworth
Bickerdyke Home
Cottage 11
Kan

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

old ladies are treated by the
head ones and I do pray and
hope you will do some thing
here and with the Attorney
Gen - Ten & Smith and
straighten things out here soon
and give us a new Suft -
and a Godly man.

"Now Mrs Reed I believe
you the Clyde Reed shot about
20 years ago or more, that came
to my Cafe in Wichita and took
your meals with me a small
place on Lawrence Ave 1st Block
my name then was Mrs Cochran
a small dark eyed woman
I think you are the same man
and when you come here to
the Home (and I do hope you will)
come to cottage 11, and enquire
for Mrs Beaman I want to see
you.

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home



The Craftsman Club
 UNITED STATES VETERANS HOSPITAL No. 90
 Muskogee, Oklahoma Jan 23 '1929,

Hon. Gov. Clyde M. Reed.

Dear Sir.

I am at present writing you on
 behalf of the Patients here in the Hospital
 who are members of Lawton Camp No. 18.
 of Wichita the best City in the State
 of Kansas that we vigorously protest
 to You and the Legislature of enforcing or
 supporting a movement of transferring
 the management of State Soldiers Home
 at Dodge City and its Annex The Mother
 Bickerdyke Home at Ellsworth into
 the hands of the State Board of Administration.
 After serving our Country in time of
 need we do not think it Justice to be
 placed on a par with a Convict or an

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

E. A. CORNELL, SECRETARY OF STATE

ARTHUR S. McNAY, ASSISTANT SECRETARY

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OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE
TOPEKA, KANSAS

January 18, 1929.

To the Governor:

Management.

There will, no doubt, be committees and individuals come forward with recommendations dealing with the soldiers home. However, only those residing in the Home and those connected with the management of the Home are qualified and in a position to know the essential needs.

The Civil War veterans, founders and builders of this great state have passed on until now only a few remain.

Their places in the Home are being filled by Spanish War, World War and ex-regular army men.

Management that was in vogue and successful 30 or 40 years ago when there was only one veterans organization in the Home has not and will not prove a success in 1928.

Practically all the learned and intelligent inmates are agreed that the present system "Board of Managers" should be abolished and the management transferred to the State Board of Administration. We would therefore suggest that our Governor select a trained business manager for Commandant, accountable only to our Governor and the State Board of Administration.

There is more or less jealousy existing between different veteran organizations and with a petty and wishy washy Board of Managers connected with the Home, there would be continual strife and friction.

It should ever be borne in mind that the Home is intended for sick, disabled and indigent veterans. That peace and contentment for us that are forced to go to the Home and spend our last days is just as essential as bread and

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

E. A. CORNELL, SECRETARY OF STATE

ARTHUR S. McNAY, ASSISTANT SECRETARY

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OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE
TOPEKA, KANSAS

butter. Every applicant should be given a thoro examination by the Home surgeon and all able bodied job hunters and trouble makers should be discharged from the Home.

Admittance.

Many Spanish War veterans are gaining admittance to the Home by fraudulent means.

There are those being admitted that are non-residents of Kansas. It being an actual fact that certain ones have been admitted that never lived or resided in Kansas until they came to the State Soldiers Home.

There are others in the Home that are better off financially than the County Commissioners that signed their application for admittance.

A thoro investigation would result in the discharge of many inmates that have no legal right in the Home, thereby making more room for worthy and deserving Kansas veterans.

Improvements.

A new school building is the outstanding need of the Home at this time.

The Budget Director has recommended \$25,000 for this purpose. This amount would be sufficient if properly expended.

The Home membership has increased 27% the past two years, and if the present practice of admitting all applicants is continued, it will be necessary to erect more cottages and barracks, with a corresponding increase for maintenance.

Employment.

There are no doubt many jobs connected with the Home that could be done by inmates, at a saving of several hundred or more dollars annually.

Inmate labor would not prove satisfactory where education, refinement and executive ability was required.



Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

E. A. CORNELL, SECRETARY OF STATE

ARTHUR S. McNAY, ASSISTANT SECRETARY

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OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE
TOPEKA, KANSAS

Children.

Children of Spanish War veterans is one of the big problems in the Home.

Boys and girls ranging in age up to 25 years, come with or follow their parents into the Home. These older children are not admitted as members of the Home, and cause the state no extra expense. Some of them neither go to school or attempt to find work. They are wasting away the best part of their young life and setting a bad example for the younger children.

This evil could be largely overcome if the House had a kind but stern and just Commandant to handle the situation.

Submitted by Clyde M. Best, in behalf of the inmates of the Kansas State Soldiers Home.

Clyde M. Best
Fort Dodge
Kansas

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

Fort Dodge, Kansas,

January 11, 1929.

Hon. Clyde M. Reed,

Topeka, Kansas.

Dear Governor:-

We the undersigned Spanish War Veterans and wives of Spanish War Veterans desire to introduce to you Mr Clyde M. Best.

Mr Best is a Spanish, also Philippine War Veteran, a member of the Kansas State Soldiers' Home, and since his admittance to the Home, June 4, 1927, has at all times had a progressive and constructive attitude, and has put forth his best efforts to better conditions for worthy and disabled veterans in this Home.

Mr Best is thoroughly familiar with conditions within the Home, is qualified to render a report based on facts and figures, and since we assure you will meet with our approval, we kindly request you give Mr Best due consideration.

J. A. West
Mrs J. A. West
J. H. Daisy
Mrs J. H. Daisy
J. M. Reese
Mrs W. A. Betts
E. R. Chapin
Ida M. Chapin
J. W. Allen
Mrs Jennie Allen
A. R. Moore
Mrs. A. B. Moore.
J. B. Rush
Mrs J. B. Rush
R. C. Strickland
Mrs R. C. Strickland
M. L. Lucas
Mrs M. L. Lucas
M. J. Johnson
Wilton Carter

M. B. Riddle
Mrs W. G. Riddle
Fred Thompson
Mrs Ada Thompson.
Miss Dora Dorton
William H. Dorton
Mr. J. W. Wolfe
Mrs Myrtle Wolfe
J. H. Moffett
A. Watson
Mrs A. Watson.
J. L. Speller
D. B. Stillwell
Mrs Stillwell
A. R. Pace.
Geo Shirley
Mrs Stella Shirley
Fashon Carter
Mrs Geo M. Dickson

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

FOREWORD.

These two Homes are very different from the state correctional and educational institutions, in that the membership is made up of those who gave service in the wars of our country. They feel that what the state gives is theirs and their dependents by right, and that they should have some voice in the management, thus presenting problems very difficult to handle.

At the present time there are veterans of four wars among the members—Indian wars, Civil War, War with Spain, and World War. The World War veterans are not as yet admitted on regular rules of admission, but by special act of the legislature.

The children of the younger soldiers form one of our great problems.

We point with pride to the fact that we have managed our finances in such a manner that no deficit is shown for either Home at the close of the two years. By glancing over the financial statements, here included, you will see by what a narrow margin this has been accomplished in many instances.

These statements do not show how we have had to cut our forces and curtail the needed work of repair and improvement to keep out of the red, but while we deplored the necessity of such a course, we followed it.

Our membership is increasing and the large families of the Spanish American War veterans will necessitate the erection of more cottages, as such families cannot be cared for in the single rooms of the barracks.

There is great need of a revision of the laws of admission to the Homes. A special investigator of applications would save the state many times the amount of yearly salary of such officer, in weeding out the applications of those who are not necessitous or entirely disabled.

Too often the county commissioners are unaware of the true financial condition of the applicants and sign sworn statements that the applicant is or will become a county charge unless admitted to the Home, when such is not the case, and the Homes become filled with members who could live in comfort outside, thus depriving the actually needy because of lack of room. Or the disability clause is often overdrawn. After admission the members demand full-time jobs at full pay. The state law says those able to work can be required to labor without compensation.

We take great pleasure in the permanent improvements of the past year, but realize there will never come a time when nothing more will be needed.

We have given of our best efforts towards the management of those two Homes in an orderly and businesslike manner, often falling short of desired results but continuing our efforts to merit the approval of our governor and of ourselves.

BOARD OF MANAGERS.

By MINNIE M. MICKEL, *Secretary*.

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL.

Governor Ben S. Paulen:

FORT DODGE, KAN., July, 1928.

DEAR SIR—The Board of Managers of the Kansas Soldiers' Home and the Bickerdyke Annex herewith submit the biennial report of these two institutions for your information and that of the legislature to convene in January, 1929.

We have endeavored to show all the transactions of these Homes and point with considerable satisfaction to the reduction in per capita cost to the state in the last year.

This is partly due to the permanent improvements made in the power plant and heating system, eliminating much waste of fuel and resulting in better care and surroundings for the members.

We desire to thank you for your interest and helpful coöperation in all our undertakings for the betterment of these Homes.

Most sincerely,

BOARD OF MANAGERS.

MINNIE M. MICKEL, *Secretary.*

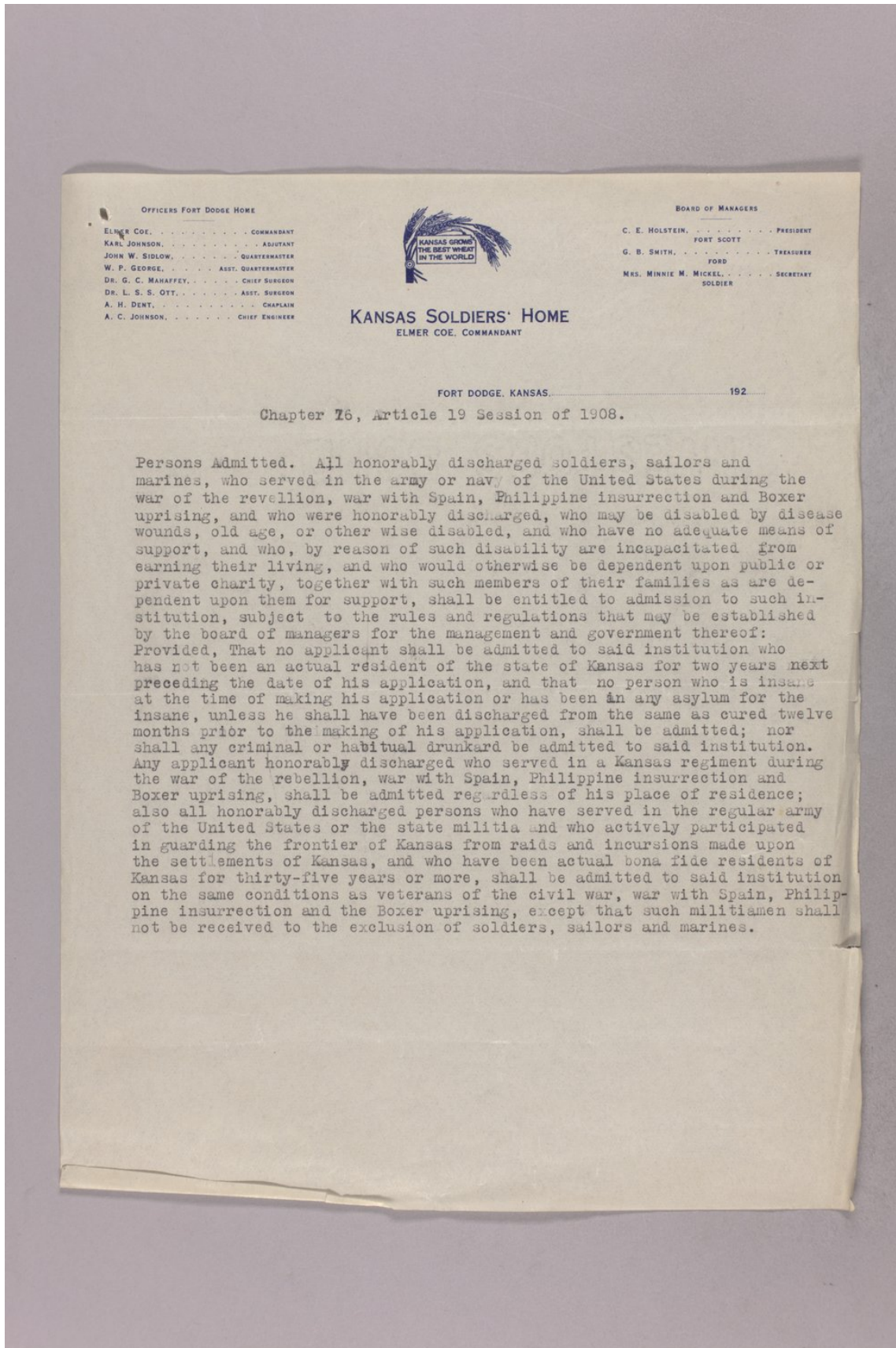
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Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home

There were 62 Spanish war vets in
the State Soldiers Home, Dec. 31, 1928.
Of this total number, 38 came
from 3 counties as follows:

| "Ford" | "Leavenworth" | "Sedgwick" |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|
| Dorton | Bernat | Allen, J.W. |
| Lee | Creamer | Best |
| MacGregor | Carter | Bettis |
| Mallonee | Miller, J.E. | Chapin |
| Moffett | Moore, A.B. | Daisy |
| O'Grady | Pratt | Elliott |
| Shirley | Rush | Hice |
| Read | Miller, John | McBride |
| | Symington | Moore, C.F. |
| | | Muck |
| | | Miller, W.G. |
| | | Milton |
| | | Riddle |
| | | Strickland |
| | | Schaar |
| | | Traller |
| | | Wolfe, J.W. |
| | | Watts |
| | | Widdoes, J.W. |
| | | Wolfe, B.R. |
| | | West, J.A. |

Governor Clyde M. Reed correspondence, Mother Bickerdyke Home



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