

Samuel Lyle Adair to John Brown

Samuel Adair wrote his brother-in-law John Brown from Osawatomie on October 2, 1857, to explain why he could not come see Brown in Iowa. Much of letter describes the general poor state of health in his locale, but he also comments on the political and especially the prospects for free state success in the upcoming election--Adair was not optimistic.

Creator: Adair, Samuel Lyle, 1811-1898

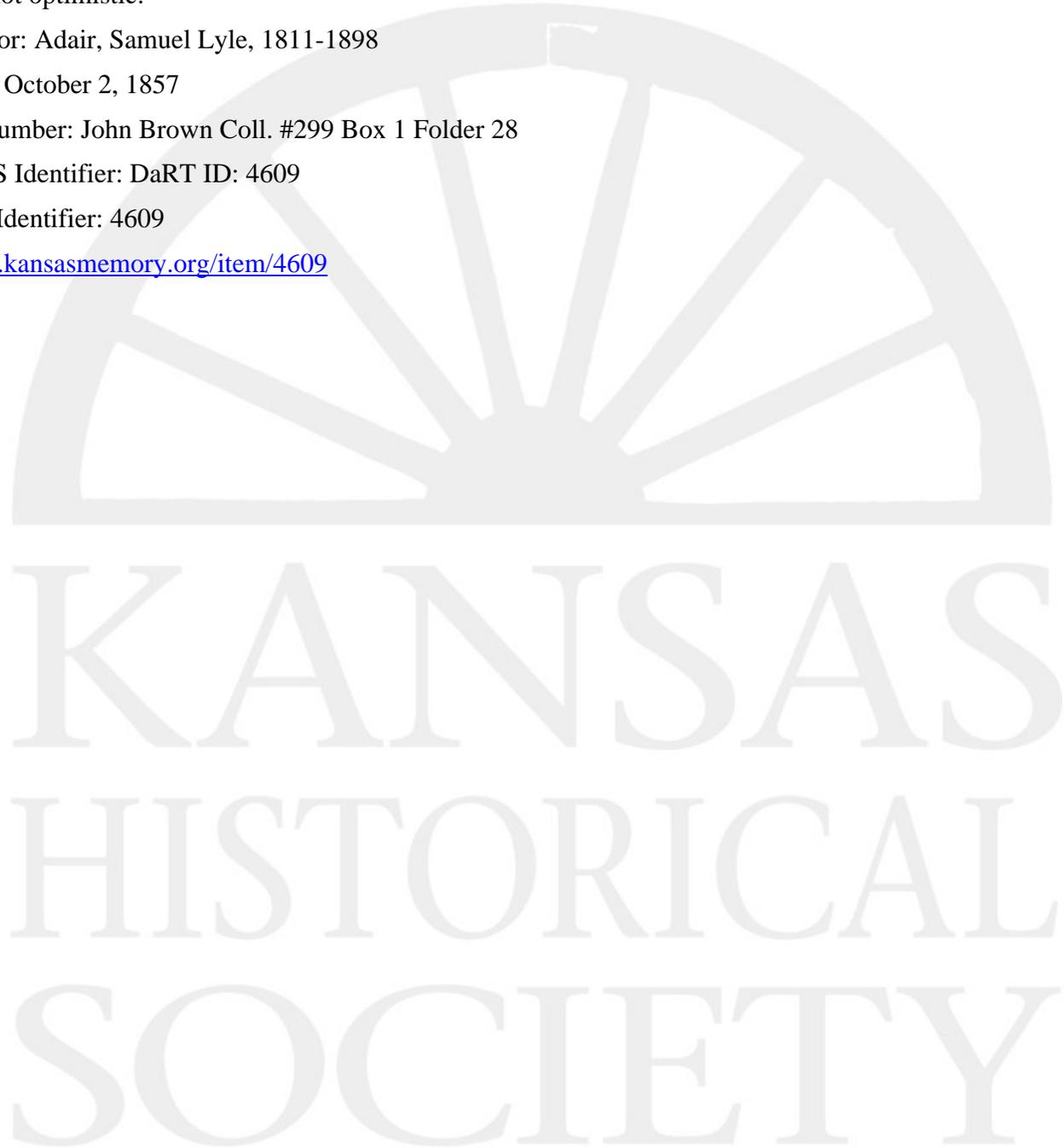
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Lawrence, Kas.
Oct. 2nd 1857.

Mr. L. B.

Dear Friend, yours of Sep. 5th was received yesterday, having been mailed at Lawrence the day before. Your where-a-bouts had for some time been to us unknown. The letter you sent to Mr. "Laddis" was forwarded to me in the latter part of June. I secured the sum of money requested, but the men failed to go. I was in Lawrence about a month since. Whitman was east. Mr. "Laddis" said that the last he had heard of you, you had gone to Chicago, but expected you would return to Topeka again before long. - Thought some persons would go & meet you, - talked some of going himself. You desire much a personal interview with me, - also definite information about matters "as they really are now in the territory. As to a personal interview, I should be happy to have one; but the state of my own health & of my family, forbid my going to Topeka at present. For nearly five weeks past, I have spent most of my time in taking care of the sick - when able to do any thing. I had a man hired to work for me, who about the first of Sep. was taken very sick, fever & internal inflammation, - has been better & again worse, &

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is still dangerous. I was absent nearly one week at Leecompton, as a witness in the case of the Orawa-Tonnie town site, some outsiders having tried to pre-empt a part of it. Had to hire a man during my absence to take care of the sick man. Since my return I have been much troubled with diarrhea, some times severe, when I exercise much. Flora & the babe have very sore throats - the babe is teething, has chills sometimes, & requires much care. Charles & Emma are well at present. Mrs. Garrison & babe have been with us since the first of June until last week. She came back, went to Leecompton to pre-empt her claim in June just before the land office closed, but did not succeed because I could not swear that she had built, ^{as a widow} or caused to be built, a house on the claim. The house her husband built they would not recognize as being built by her "as a widow". She had to return, have another built. It has been done, she went last week & pre-empted & has returned to Ohio. For a number of weeks before she left, she & ^{her} babe had both been sick. Though we have not had much sickness among the members of our own family proper, yet we are in a measure worn out taking care of the sick. One greatly feels the need of rest & quiet. There is a good deal of sickness around, chiefly among the more recent immigrants. It has been drier here this year than last. My corn & potatoes are almost an entire failure. Mine were planted early, late crops have done better.

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As to political matters, I have my own views of ~~many~~ things. Walker has disgraced himself. He has not fulfilled a pledge made in his Topeka speech. I need I never had confidence to believe he would. But the free state men have determined to go into the October election, & many are sanguine that they will carry the election. I maybe disappointed, but cannot see things in a favorable light as they do. An invasion, such as we had in '54 & '55, I do not expect; but doubtless many voters from slave states will be smuggled in, & fraudulent returns will be made. Nor do I suppose it will be possible for the free state men to so show up the frauds as to gain their ends. The showing up of frauds does not amount to much when there who are to decide upon the frauds are the voters or perpetrators of them; & the highest rewards are given from head quarters for the most bold & outrageous perpetrators of them. Hence I rather expect that the pro slavery men will carry the day, Oct. 5. If disappointed, shall rejoice. What course things will take if the free state men fail I do not know. Some prophesy trouble right along. This would not surprise me were it to occur. But I would deplore a renewal of war. If it is to be commenced again, the ball ^{should} ^{be} better be ^{probed} ^{at} ^{the} ^{center}, at Washington, where the corruption is the worst. The pro-slavery men in the territory are but petty tools.

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No recent word from Hudson, Atkinson,
Grafton. We have now a tri-weekly mail
to Westport & also to Lawrence. Mails
generally regular.

I know of no means of sending you
by private conveyance, or send by
mail addressing on the envelope as you
requested.

S. L. Adair.

Mr. John Brown

P.S. A letter from you to me by mail would
probably reach me without much risk.

S. Lyle