

Thomas J. Marsh to George L. Stearns

Thomas J. Marsh, who arrived in Kansas Territory on July 11, 1857, made Lawrence his base of operation. He was an agent for the Massachusetts State Kansas Committee. His objective was to observe and financially support free state efforts to capture the legislature at the polls in early October (this included conducting a census). During his first week in Kansas Territory, Marsh attended the "entirely harmonious" Free State Party convention in Topeka and reports on initial efforts to organize the campaign. He is very concerned about "petty, personal feuds" among the leadership in the territory. Marsh had discussed this issue with the men involved and believes the "discordant elements have been harmonized." Upon his return to Lawrence, Marsh found "U. S. Dragoons parading the streets" and Governor Walker threatening to make numerous arrests because of the unauthorized election of city officials the previous Monday.

Creator: Marsh, Thomas J.

Date: July 18, 1857

Callnumber: George L. Stearns Coll. #507

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Marsh, Thos. J.

KANSAS STATE
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15507.

1857

Lawrence, K.T. July 18.
George L. Stearns, Esq.
Dear Sir:

I wrote you a note upon my arrival in this Territory - last Saturday morning - I then intimated, that in my opinion you had better send me some money at once, leaving the precise expenditure to my discretion. Since writing that note - I have been to Topeka, to attend the Convention of the Free State Party - I went up Monday & returned yesterday. The Convention was large, its doings entirely harmonious - every one seemed pleased with the result - I send you a copy of their proceedings - The next thing to be done is to canvass the Territory, this will be done - A Central Committee was chosen, who were to have the management of the Canvass. I suggested the importance of having the Districts by their delegates present, holding meetings and temporarily organizing for the Campaign - This was done, and I believe all agree that thereby, much time and expense saved. Notices for meetings in every precinct where polls are opened have been

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printed, and many of them sent out the
 speakers are announced &c. All agree in
 saying that a good vote will be polled,
 by far the largest ever yet in Kansas.
 The Speake Constitution is to be submitted,
 and a large vote may be expected in its
 favor. I think if the people are permitted
 to vote in October fairly, and the neces-
 sary work done previous, the result will
 be most cheering - One point is certain-
 ly gained - discordant elements have
been harmonized, and all the leading men
 will act in concert, this I think is a good
 point gained, you will hear no more of
 petty, personal feuds - this is certain. I
 have seen them all - and told them, that
 that they could not, at a time when so
 much was depending, afford to contend
 among themselves - they had a common
 enemy that all must unite upon. This
 will be done - I have not yet received the
 money from Judge Conway - he told me,
 that he expected two hundred dollars when
 Dr. Webb, arrived and he would then pay
 over, but if he did not come I should
 have the money - I think this is, an im-
 portant time ^{for} ~~the~~ the future of Kansas -
the people here, are earnest, tho' they are
apparently quiet, and at their business.

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they need help. As an evidence of their earnestness let me say, that in the Convention were men who had to ride more than a hundred miles, from the extremes to the place of meeting, & this, not by rail road conveyance, but on horse back very many of them, with the Thermometer ranging all the time from 95 to 110 degrees - and consuming, including the two days occupied by the meeting not less than from a week to ten day time. The work of Census taking has not been completed some 50 Thous and inhabitants have been returned. The number of voters is ^{much larger} larger ~~which~~ in proportion to the whole number of inhabitants than with us. as an instance, I saw one return that the number of a Township there, voters 1584, Total 3008. The Census will be continued it is said there is a large portion not yet taken. By a Proclamation I send you, you will see that Gov. Walker is making a stir here. When I got home yesterday I found two Companies of U. S. Dragoons parading the streets, Col. Cook is said to be in command, Walker is with the Troops just on the outside of the town this morning. U. S. Marshall Dennis is here. Perin

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Thos J. Marsh
 Stanton, Mo. - And all for what? Why
 simply because ^{Barrow} the judge last Monday
 choose some ^{city} officials - to bury dead
horses, and remove other nuisances with-
 out consulting with his Majesty, or ack-
 nowledging the sovereignty of the Missouri
elected Territorial Board - This is
 certainly a great offense - only he can
 not get qualified - not get done a thing
 but the soldiers are here - they are just now
 firing off their Pistols. Walker has made
 a mistake and he will find it so. it
 will be his word in Kansas. There is
 some talk that the Massacre will
 make some 50 arrests this morning -
 but I don't believe it. A meeting was
 held here last evening to ratify the
 deeds of Poppeka - A motion was
 made, ~~and~~ and voted without
 dissent that the citizens would keep
 at their business, and have nothing
 to say to Walker, only through their mu-
 nicipal head, Col. James Blount.
 Mayor East. Yours &c T. J. Marsh