

Richard J. Hinton to Thomas W. Higginson

This letter from Richard J. Hinton was written from Lawrence, Kansas Territory, to Reverend Thomas W. Higginson, who was a radical abolitionist and agent of the Massachusetts Kansas Aid Committee. The letter is filled with information about the struggle for Kansas Territory. Hinton mentions the trials of the free state prisoners at LeCompton and Governor Geary's order to arrest other free state figures. Colonel Titus is also threatening to help the U.S. troops arrest free state men. Apparently a Captain Homes [sic] from New York had become so frustrated that he had collected several followers and was determined to administer his own brand of justice. Hinton does not completely approve of such action, claiming that while it is understandable, it is "not generally beneficial to our cause." Hinton had experienced some personal troubles as well, when some thieves who claimed to be free state men carried off the belongings of his company, which was settled at Lexington, Kansas Territory. The letter concludes with updates about the various men in his company.

Creator: Hinton, Richard J. (Richard Josiah), 1830-1901

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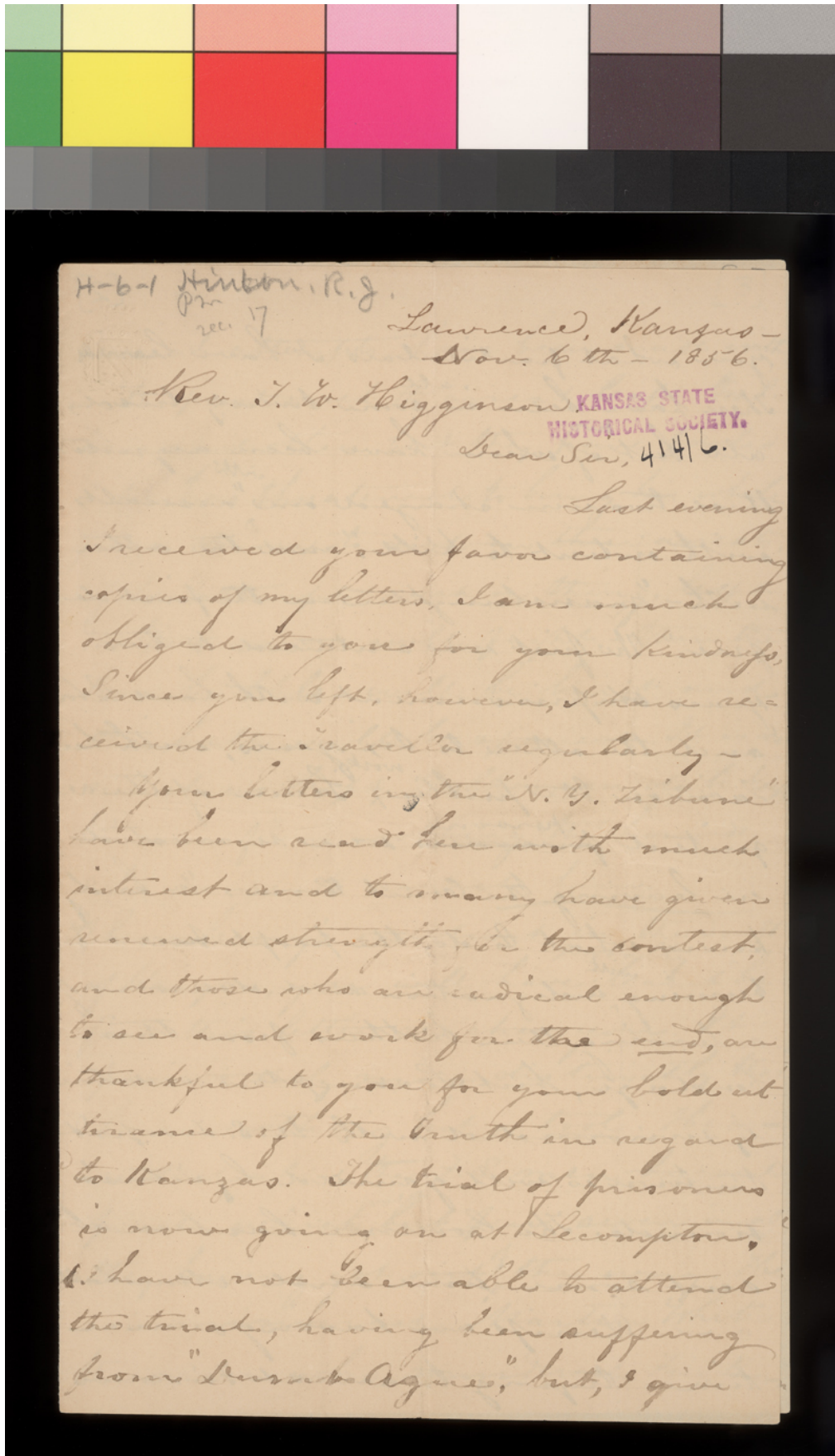
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you what particulars I have learnt. Seven
 There have been ^{all} in some twenty trials, in
 all but of whom have been acquitted, ^{two} ^{with}
 these two were charged one "assault with
 intent to kill," and the other for
 with - "manslaughter in the first de
 gree." The first was sentenced to two
 years imprisonment with hard labor ^{work}
 and the other to six years, with hard
 labor on the public ^{work}. Seven of the ac-
 quitted ^{persons} were re-arrested ^{while}
 in leaving the Court Room. We hardly
 know what to do, the people here are
 burning ^{with} indignation and desirous of
 releasing their brothers from this
 bondage, but LeCompton is entire
 ly surrounded with U.S. Troops &
 the town is well guarded by citi-
 zens' ^{re} ^{sur}rounds. The Governor has been ab-
 sent some time and Marshall the
 and Sheriffs are having a nice
 time trying to arrest F.S. men the

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[2] Several attempts have been made with
out, in the past week to arrest Capt. Wal-
ker, Ken and others, but they have failed
yet. Titus has threatened to bring his whole
force down to aid in these arrests,
and if he attempts such a thing, Capt
Walker's men will fight. - then the
Laba Gov. bubble will be burst and
then the ball will be opened. It is as
much as Capt Walker can do to keep
his men from mobbing the hounds
who come to arrest him.

[3] are of Gov. Geary's conduct in the South
of Kansas, you will have ^{probably} heard be-
fore this letter reaches you. It
entirely proves only more distinctly that
he is nothing but a tool. He ar-
rested all the F. P. men he could
find, which ^{was} but few, seven in all
they having got out of the way. He
commissioned Martin White
the man who murdered Fred Brown.

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as justice ⁴ and left six Dragoons
to aid in making arrests. He
promised protection to noto-
rious scoundrels, who but a
few weeks before, were burning
and murdering on Sugar Creek.
A guerilla party of seven F. S. men,
commanded by Capt. Homes a brave
fellow from N. Y. who has taken
up arms against our enemies
and sworn never to lay them
down till Kansas is free, find-
ing the Gov. did not give them
justice, determined to admin-
ister it themselves. Two hours after
^{the Gov left it} they entered the house of a Capt. Brown
a Pro Slavery Bandit, took him prison-
er and stripped the dwelling -
When Geary heard of it, his ~~high~~
~~own~~ Dignity was wonderfully wound-
ed Homes daring to prove that there
was no peace, after he had pro
claimed ^{it}. The Dragoons chased
Homes and his ^{band of} brave seven to the
borders of Missouri, ^{into} which Homes

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penetrated ~~fifteen~~ miles, and
meeting a man who had been
engaged in the burning of Osso-
watomie, they plundered him of
everything. This is the first foray
into Missouri, and having learned
the way it will not probably be
the last. These bands are not gen-
erally beneficial to our cause,
but even at ^{and around} Ossawatimie who
have suffered so much, are fill-
ed with a determination never to
rest, till their foes or themselves are
crushed out. It was bad for our
cause, for Thomas to have plundered
in Missouri, at the present moment,
but it is not to be wondered at when we
consider what provocations they have
endured. Dictator Geary is terribly
wroth at this thing and threatens
to inflict ^{on} the Hero of this adventure
the most condign punishment,
if he ever get hold of him.

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Our Lexington Co. have met with to
a sad loss lately. Brown went to Lexa
ington last week, ^{on} with the purpose of an
seeing about our luggage. When he
got there, he found the place desert
ed by all except Bowers, and we
that a party of thieves, calling them
selves F. S. men and belonging to
the Plymouth Co, headed by a
fellow named Buchanan, had
made a descent upon Mr Hatfield's
premises and taken off all the in
trunk, carpet bags &c, but four
belonging to the Co. My trunk was
^{not} taken, but the large part of my
clothes, being in Cuming's trunk
was stolen with his. Brown & Har
riss lost everything, Cuming to
Linnell, Co. Stewart also. I
have my books left, but no cloth
ing but what I ^{have} got on. They took
also a large chest of Carpenter's at

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 id tools, belonging to Mr Brewster, who was
 to be a member of our Association. The
 amount of loss cannot be less than
 the \$1200. Mr Bowers remains on the
 West Settlement, the two Harts and Stewar
 will be back, they have gone to Ark
 themaska City for provisions. Sweetzer
 & Babb, have secured splendid
 claims on the Big Blue. Harris
 is working in the Herald Office,
 at Peoria, where I also am engaged. Brown
 is near Topeka, defending Harris'
 claim from being jumped. He has
 to carry his revolver all the time
 and expects every day to have a
 trunk stripe about it. Cummings is in Tope
 ka. Bunnell has gone to Lexington
 to see what he can recover. Sum
 & several others are in Ark
 aska City. Messon has left for
 the East. Bundy & Ottwood are still
 at Tecumseh. Oliver has left for

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[8] R. J. Hinton.
 the East. Harris still remains
 at Ossawatimie. Another of the
 der's Co. is in town and I be-
 lieve that is all I can hear about.
 The boys all felt bad about
 losing their things, ^{it is} worse because
 it was done by pretended
 friends. Stewart was at Nemaha
 City when Eldridge's Train
 came in, and came down
 as far as Plymouth and was ar-
 rested with the Train. Stewart took
 Col Eldridge and the other Con-
 ductors, severely to task for not
 resisting the Troops and exciting a
 great deal of amusement by his
 criticisms on the management &c.
 He left at Lexington.
 I believe I have told you all
 the news relative to the Co. In Lawrence
 Stearns, myself and others are about
 starting a Literary and Social Club, Stearns
 giving a room free for reading & de-
 bating meetings. We want to form
 a library and should be thankful
 for donations of books. If Mr. Parker
~~had~~ would present us with copies
 of ^{his} sermons &c it would be very accept-
 able. The ^{Com.} are distributing clothing &c
 a large quantity of which has already
 arrived. We are all very anxious about the
 Election. I remain Yours for Freedom R. J. Hinton
 Dr. Stearns sends respects.