

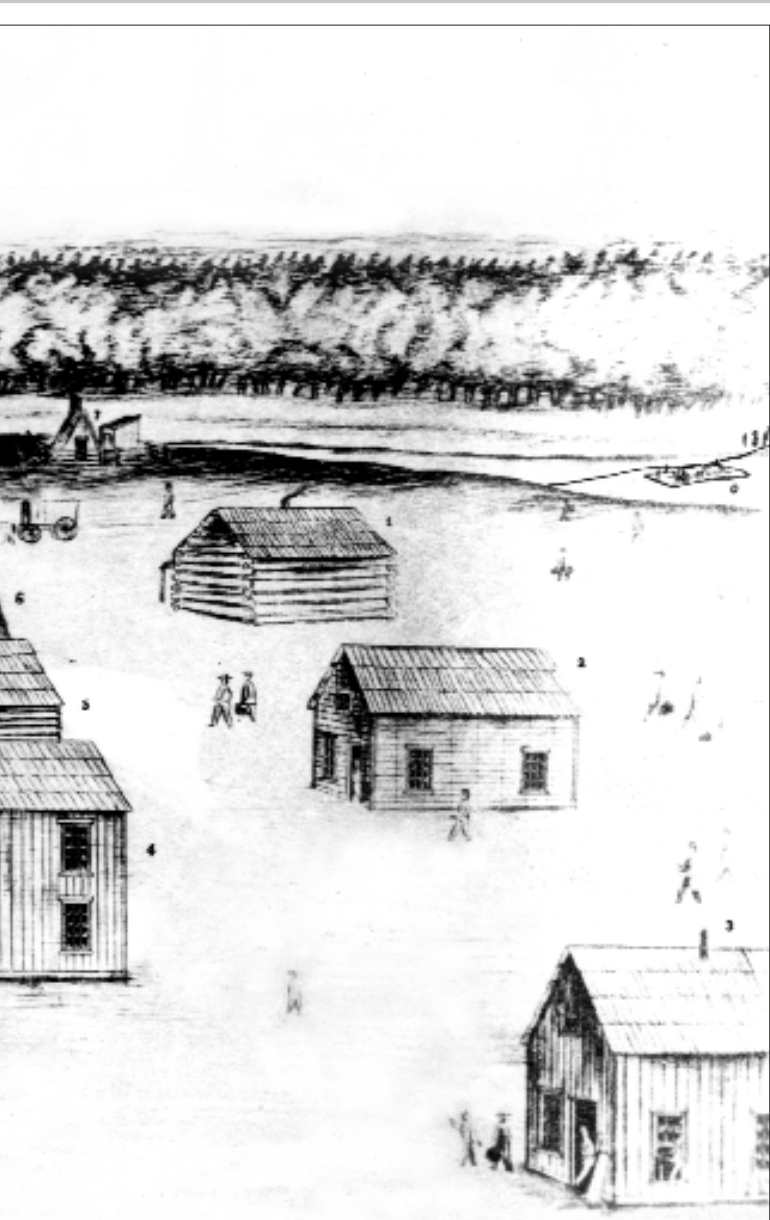
Lawrence in 1854



Lawrence, Kansas Territory, 1854–1855. Sketch by J. E. Rice. When Joseph Savage arrived in Lawrence in the fall of 1854, all residents “lived in tents until about the middle of October.” In his recollections he records that he and S. N. Simpson secured lumber from an oak tree that they cut, sawed, and split, and with these materials they constructed “the first cabin that was ever built in Lawrence.”

edited by
Shelley Hickman Clark and
James W. Clark

Recollections of Joseph Savage



Vermont Yankee Joseph Savage was a member of the second New England Emigrant Aid party—a group of antislavery migrants who came to eastern Kansas in September 1854 with the intention of keeping the territory free soil.¹ This, however, was not Savage's only reason for coming to Kansas Territory: he also planned to build a community and a new home for his family.

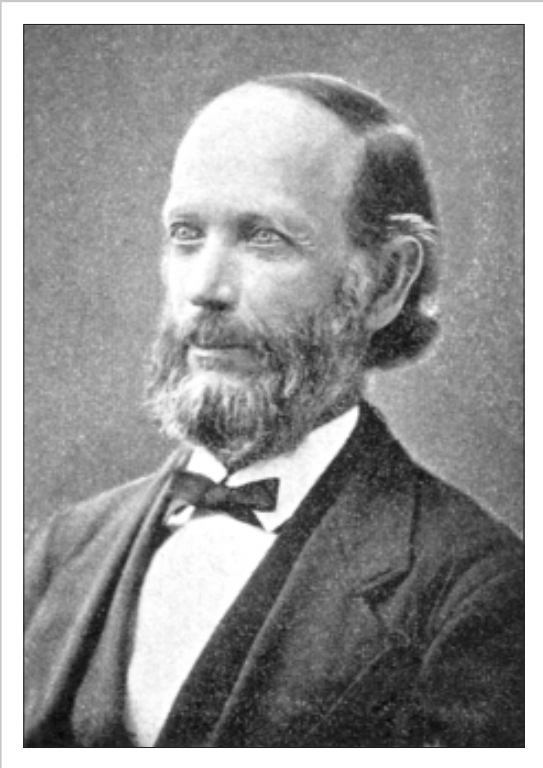
Savage was born in Hartford, Vermont, on July 28, 1823, a descendent of Englishman John Savage, who came to New England in the early seventeenth century. Two of his ancestors served in the Revolutionary War. His family lived modestly, rarely traveling far from its farm community. According to his daughter Susan Savage Alford, family members considered a trip to Boston, 130 miles away,

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1. See Robert Hay, "In Memoriam—Joseph Savage," in *Kansas Academy of Science, Transactions, 1891-'92* 13 (Topeka: Hamilton Printing Co., 1893): 65–68; see also biographical note in William E. Connelley, "The Lane–Jenkins Claim Contest," *Kansas Historical Collections, 1923–1925* 16 (1925): 62; William G. Cutler and Alfred T. Andreas, *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago: A. T. Andreas, 1883), 1: 84–85, 313; D. W. Wilder, *The Annals of Kansas* (Topeka: Kansas Publishing House, 1886), 49; Louise Barry "The Emigrant Aid Company Parties of 1854," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 12 (May 1943): 115, 124–31. The New England Emigrant Aid Company's second party of antislavery settlers to arrive in the territory was led by Charles Robinson, future state governor, and Samuel C. Pomeroy, a future U.S. senator from Kansas.

Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains 27 (Spring–Summer 2004): 30–43.



Vermont native Joseph Savage came to Lawrence in September 1854 with the second New England Emigrant Aid party. Although originally intending to settle in Wisconsin, Savage was caught up in a wave of excitement over the rush by antislavery New Englanders to settle Kansas Territory in an effort to make it a free state.

the event of a lifetime.² When offered the choice between a formal education and a farmstead in Vermont, Savage chose the latter, although he had a strong and curious intellect. He later became an accomplished writer and amateur scholar, particularly in the areas of history and the natural sciences. Savage remained a farmer at heart, however, and in the fall of 1854 he traveled to Boston with a plan to seek land in the new state of Wisconsin. One reason for seeking a new home in the West was the declining productivity of his family's land. He described his father's farm as one that once produced seventy-five barrels of apples per year for the family's use, and that in the fifteen or twenty years preceding his decision to leave, the yield had been reduced to nothing. Savage attributed this steep decline to the clearing of the land for timber, which left the apple trees unprotected from the cold and wind, but he cautioned that some believed the orchards may have failed as God's judgment for the decision to distill apple cider into ardent cider brandy.³

2. Susan Savage Alford, "My Father," presented to the Douglas County Historical Society, August 1939 (Kansas Collection, University of Kansas Libraries, Lawrence, typescript).

3. Joseph Savage, "A Father's Story," presented to the Douglas County Historical Society, August 1939 (Kansas Collection, typescript).

While in Boston, Savage was caught up in the wave of excitement over the rush by antislavery New Englanders to settle the new territory of Kansas in an attempt to counteract emigrants from Missouri and other slave states. In an uncharacteristic move for the pragmatic Yankee, Savage abandoned his Wisconsin plans and made an impromptu decision to join the second emigrant aid party leaving for Kansas. But the suddenness of this decision belies his ultimate commitment to this cause: his commitment, however, was a quiet and steady one.⁴

Savage was a man known for his moderation and respect for the views of others; perhaps these qualities provided him with a more conservative perspective on the passionate debate over the extension of slavery into the territories. For example, he derided another member of the emigrant aid party as an "ultra Abolitionist." When the second party traveled by boat up the Missouri River in the fall of 1854, he noted in his "Recollections of 1854" that in

4. See Samuel A. Johnson, *The Battle Cry of Freedom: The New England Emigrant Aid Company in the Kansas Crusade* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1954); Eli Thayer, *A History of the Kansas Crusade, Its Friends and Its Foes* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1889); Emory Lindquist, ed., "The Letters of the Rev. Samuel Young Lum, Pioneer Kansas Missionary, 1854-1858," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 25 (Spring 1959): 39-67; *ibid.* (Summer 1959): 172-96.

contrast to some of his fellow New Englanders, several slaveholding passengers were “very pleasant men indeed.”

After arriving in Kansas Territory, Savage settled a claim in the free-state town of Lawrence and then returned to Hartford, Vermont, to secure his family and bring them to their new home. His daughter later recalled:

We were eagerly awaiting his return. . . . We were watching the road by which he would come. . . . Father took his wife and four children from the clinging hands of this close-knit Vermont community to the new territory of Kansas, which in 1854 was the frontier of our country.⁵

When bringing his family to Kansas Territory in the spring of 1855, Savage closely followed the route he had taken with the emigrant aid party the previous fall. This second trip up the Missouri afforded him another, but tragic, opportunity to know members of the proslavery forces on a more personal level. His daughter Susan Alford remembers her baby brother becoming very ill from drinking the river water en route:

There were several pro-slavery passengers on the boat who had reviled the Yankees who were going to Kansas, in loud and coarse words threatening them with stories of what their fate would be. When word of little Charlie’s illness became known, the loud-voiced passengers became gentle and sympathetic, and they stood with uncovered heads when the sorrowful little group left the boat at Kansas City with Charlie’s lifeless body.⁶

This show of respect by the proslavery passengers, which became an important part of the Savage family history, offers an intimate glimpse into the personal interactions between persons of vastly different beliefs on a very divisive national issue.

Alford also remembered the hardships of the early months in Kansas Territory and the urging of her mother’s family in Vermont that they return home. Her mother, Amanda Crandall Savage, who had become embroiled in the free-state cause, refused in a letter written to her father:

You ask if we intend to stay here. I answer most emphatically, yes. I must say that I never felt a duty

5. Alford, “My Father.”

6. Ibid.

more clearly pointed out than that all lovers of freedom should stand by their posts in Kansas.⁷

Stand they did, but within a few months the young mother and her newborn child had died from the harsh conditions. The deaths of two other children soon followed. By 1857 Joseph Savage had lost his wife and four of his five children. His decision to remain in Kansas until his death in 1891 is a testament to his quiet commitment to the free-state cause and to his adopted community.

Although he gave up the chance for a formal education to stay on his family’s farm, Savage became an accomplished amateur geologist. As an early member of the Kansas Academy of Science he contributed many articles to that society’s publication, including “Sink-Holes in Wabaunsee County” (1881) and “The Pink and White Terraces of New Zealand” (1889). Although not a professional academic or a faculty member, he was a sponsor of the University of Kansas Science Club and mentored many young men, including natural scientist Samuel W. Williston.⁸ Savage’s understanding of the important fact that his life was a part of history complemented his life-long interest in history.

This understanding was one reason Savage wrote his “Recollections of 1854,” selected excerpts from which follow. His “Recollections” were first published as an almost weekly column over a period of four months in the *Western Home Journal*, a Lawrence newspaper, beginning June 23, 1870. They provide a detailed and personal account of Savage’s journey from Boston to Kansas Territory, and the first few months of settlement in Lawrence, the “free state fortress.”⁹

7. Ibid.

8. See Elizabeth Noble Shor, *Fossils and Flies: The Life of a Compleat Scientist: Samuel Wendell Williston (1851–1918)* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971); S. W. Williston and H. T. Martin, “Some Pueblo Ruins in Scott County, Kansas,” *Kansas Historical Collections, 1897–1900* 6 (1900): 124–30. In addition to “Sink-Holes in Wabaunsee County,” in *Kansas Academy of Science, Transactions, 1879–1880* 7 (Topeka: Kansas Publishing House, 1881): 26–27, and “The Pink and White Terraces of New Zealand,” in *ibid.*, 1887–1888 11 (1889): 26–30, see also, for example, Joseph Savage, “On Mastodon Remains in Douglas County” in *ibid.*, 1877–1878 6 (1878); reprint, McPherson, Kans.: W. Knaus, 1906), 10–11, 36–38; “On the Bite of the Rattlesnake,” *ibid.*

9. *Western Home Journal* (Lawrence), June 23, 30, July 7, 14, 21, 28, August 4, 11, 18, September 8, 22, 29, 1870; Allen Crafton, *Free State Fortress: The First Ten Years of the History of Lawrence, Kansas* (Lawrence, Kans.: World Co., 1954). Although much of the “Recollections of 1854” has been omitted here due to limitations of space, the original Savage narrative has been faithfully transcribed in its entirety by the editors, who carefully selected here portions that reflect the author’s major themes, concerns, and interests. For the full transcript of Savage’s “Recollections” see *Territorial Kansas Online, 1854–1861, A Virtual Repository for Territorial Kansas History* at www.territorialkansasonline.org/cgiwrap/imlskto/index.php?SCREEN=transcripts/savage_joseph.



Savage's "Recollections of 1854" were first published as an almost weekly column over a period of four months in the Western Home Journal of Lawrence. Installment "No. 1" (right) began on June 23, 1870.

RECOLLECTIONS OF 1854 BY J. SAVAGE

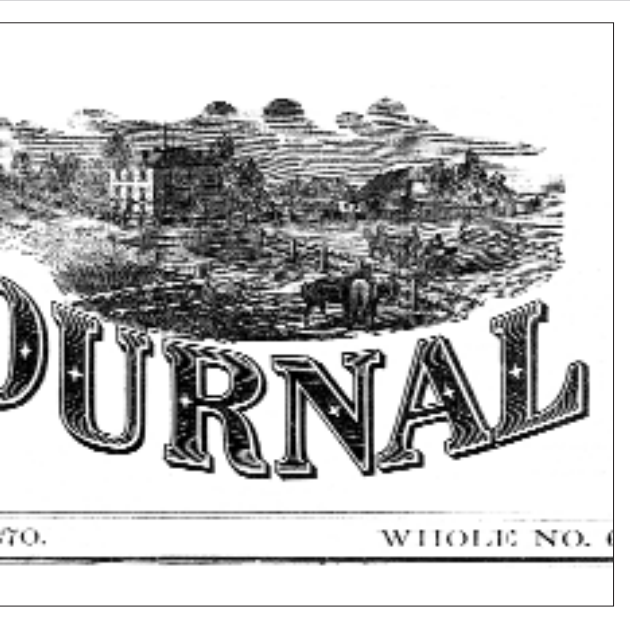
Events which are small in themselves often grow in importance as they recede from us, and pass into history. So it is with what transpired in the autumn of 1854. This year will ever be memorable in the history of our country, as the beginning of the great struggle between freedom and slavery—a struggle which brought on the war of the rebellion, and freed the slave. Around this little hated Yankee town of Lawrence, the contest began: a town that has received the bitter curses of thousands of tongues and hearts—a town that still lies and promises to be all that its founders ever anticipated in their fondest dreams.

The Quantrill raid, with all its horrors, was but the faint expression of the tender feelings our enemies ever cherished toward us. It is still the wonder of my life how Lawrence could ever survive the hate of such a host of enemies, which encompassed her on every side. An unseen hand must have guided her destiny, and prevented her from being "wiped out" from the face of the earth.¹⁰

10. This is, of course, a reference to William Clarke Quantrill's August 21, 1863, raid on Lawrence. An interesting personal history of this horrific event is Richard Cordley, *A History of Lawrence, Kansas from the*

The autumn of 1854 was ushered in with cholera raging in the large cities of the West, with many deaths occurring daily in Chicago, Cincinnati and other Western cities. I had fully purposed in my mind to seek a home in Wisconsin, but by the advice of my family physician delaying my journey one week, from fear of the cholera. During this week of delay, the Emigrant Aid Society sent out from Boston, Mass., broadcast over the Eastern States, maps and descriptions of Kansas, with circulars containing an account of its soil and climate, by Fremont, Parks and others, with offers of tickets at reduced rates to Kansas immigrants, and a special agent to accompany them to that land of promise. This part of their programme they literally fulfilled, as well as their promise to establish towns, build churches, erect saw mills and provide schools for the settlers. Lawrence city is the fulfillment of that promise, and the State University building on Mount Oread is in part of the same promise.

First Settlement to the Close of the Rebellion (Lawrence, Kans.: Lawrence Journal Press, 1895). For Savage's own recollections of the raid that could easily have taken his life, see Joseph Savage, "Quantrill's Raid on Lawrence," *Kansas Telephone* (Manhattan), August 1883, in "Douglas County" clippings," vol. 2, 90–93, Library and Archives Division, Kansas State Historical Society.



RECOLLECTIONS OF 1854—NO. 1.

BY J. SAVAGE.

Events which are small in themselves often grow in importance as they recede from us, and pass into history. So it is with what transpired in the autumn of 1854. This year will ever be memorable in the history of our country, as the beginning of the great struggle between freedom and slavery—a struggle which brought on the war of the rebellion, and freed the slave. Around this little hated Yankee town of Lawrence, the contest began; a town that has received the bitter curses of thousands of tongues and hearts—a town that still lives and promises to

I first met Gen. [Samuel C.] Pomeroy at the office of Dr. [Thomas Hopkins] Webb, the secretary of the Emigrant Aid Society. His hands were hard with honest labor, and his sunburnt countenance bespoke for him a place among the toiling yeomanry of New England. He took each emigrant by the hand with a warmth of feeling that told us all that in him we had a friend on whom we could rely, and so it proved in the first trying years of our settlement in Lawrence. And here let me say that, beyond all cavil, without the active and ardent support of the Emigrant Aid Society and their agents, Kansas could never have been settled by free State men.¹¹

I had gone alone to Boston, to seek a home among the Western prairies for myself and family, and had bidden adieu to home and friends with a sad heart. The second party was to start on Wednesday, and who can judge of my glad surprise to meet on Tuesday, the day before starting, four of my companions from home, with instruments of music in their hands, to accompany us to Kansas. This was

11. For more on the New England Emigrant Aid Company, see Johnson, *The Battle Cry of Freedom*. Pomeroy (1816–1891), a Massachusetts native, was general agent for the New England Emigrant Aid Company, moving to Kansas Territory at the head of the company's second party. He resided first in Lawrence and then in Atchison, where he served as mayor (1859) and as one of the state's first U.S. senators (1861–1873).

the origin of the old Lawrence Band—a band that has made patriotic music in times and celebrations that have tried men's souls; a band that played the funeral dirge around the grave of a murdered Barber, and around the graves of those other martyrs to freedom who fell in quick succession after him. . . .¹²

At Boston a large crowd gathered at the depot to see the second party off for Kansas. The great American poet, J[ohn]. G[reenleaf]. Whittier, had written a poem expressly for us. It was printed on nice large cards and distributed freely among the crowd, and a request given by Dr. Webb for all to join in the song, which they did in good earnest. It was set to Auld Lang Syne. We played the tune over once on our instruments, and then the song was sung by many with tears in their eyes. The song was worthy the poet and the occasion, and should be written in letters of gold, or

12. Thomas W. Barber, who lived on a claim in rural Douglas County southwest of Lawrence, became a martyr to the free-state cause when proslavery partisans shot and killed him on December 6, 1855.

For more on the Lawrence band, see Joseph Savage, "The Old Lawrence Band," in *The Kansas Memorial, a Report of the Old Settlers' Meeting Held at Bismarck Grove, Kansas, September 15th and 16th, 1879*, ed. Charles S. Gleed (Kansas City, Mo.: Ramsey, Millett and Hudson, 1880), 160–62; Edward Bumgardner, "The First Kansas Band," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 5 (August 1936): 278–81.

1. Kansas has an area of 114,784 square miles.
2. The land at present open to pre-emption is large enough to accommodate 75,000 families, or half a million of persons, exclusive of the population of cities, towns and villages.
3. Kansas is the Garden as well as geographical centre of the United States.
4. Its climate is genial and healthy, and its soil of unsurpassed fertility.
5. It has wood enough for all practical purposes.
6. Coal banks have been discovered in every district of the Territory.
7. It is intersected in every direction by running streams; pure water is found, at moderate depth, in every part of the Territory.
8. There are numbers of salt springs a few miles westward of Fort Riley.
9. The land will be sold at a dollar and a quarter per acre.
10. Every man has the power, if not the legal right, to sell his claim before he pays for it; and if he sells it judiciously, he will find no difficulty in disposing of it. A great deal of money can be made in this way by young men who have the courage to "rough it" and the industry to improve their claims.
11. Every male adult or widow is entitled under the laws of Congress, to pre-empt 160 acres; and they are not required to pay for it until the time of the public sale.
12. Land warrants—those issued in 1850 excepted—will be taken in payment of pre-emption claims.
13. These men—free state men—who cannot raise \$200, when their land falls due, will find no difficulty in borrowing it, or in mortgaging their farms.
14. All the Indian tribes are friendly to the Free State Men.
15. Stone masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, plasterers, wagon makers, gun smiths, cabinet makers, tanners, brick makers, shoe makers, tailors, painters, barbers, pedlars, men willing to work at any manual labor, may emigrate to the Territory as soon as navigation opens and find little difficulty, if any, in procuring steady work and remunerative wages.
16. For the services of respectable young women as teachers, domestic helps and seamstresses, there is a great demand in every new country and especially so in Kansas.
17. While Kansas is pre-eminently the country for the poor man, it holds out advantages equally encouraging for the man of limited fortune. While a man without a dollar can find remunerative work, the small capitalist or stockholder will increase his fortune more rapidly there than in any other territory in the United States.
18. He can do it by buying Tract Lands, town lots, claims or by loaning money on good security at a heavy rate of interest.
19. He can do it more rapidly still, by establishing work shops or stores; by building and renting houses; by keeping a hotel or erecting a saw-mill. There are no openings enough for all these enterprises, —and every variety of them—in every town and district of Kansas.

(Left) To encourage settlement in Kansas, the New England Emigrant Aid Society broadcast, throughout the East, circulars containing information about the new territory, including descriptions of its climate, land claims, available jobs, and other attributes of the area. (Right) Renowned poet John Greenleaf Whittier wrote a poem expressly for the members of the second party leaving for Kansas. "The Kansas Emigrant Song" was printed on cards and distributed at the departure point to the crowd, which joined in singing the lyrics to the tune of "Auld Lang Syne."

chiseled in the solid marble on the monument which will some day be here erected to freedom. We sang this song on our weary march across the Shawnee reserve, around our camp fires, and in the lonely tent on the town site; it was the inspiring sentiment in the hearts of those who dared to brave all for freedom, and thus forever consecrate these hills and valleys to her children.

THE KANSAS EMIGRANTS
We cross the prairie as of old,
The pilgrims cross the sea,
To make the West, as they the East,
The homestead of the free! . . .¹³

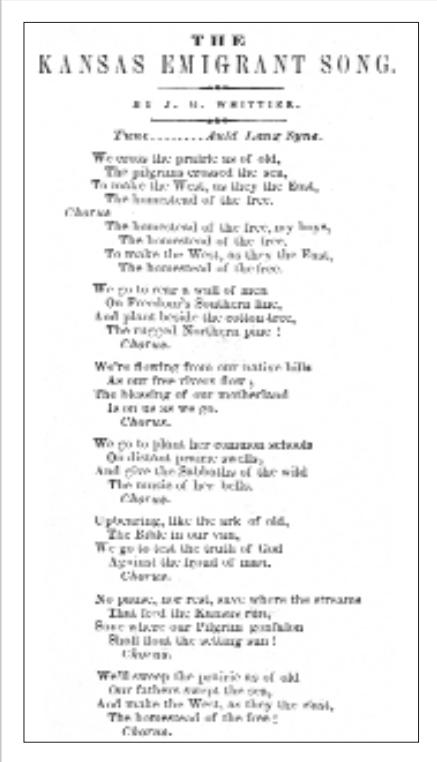
. . . The second party started from Boston on August 29th, 1854. It numbered about sixty souls. It received three hearty cheers as it rolled out of the depot, while its band struck up, "O, Susannah, don't you cry!" It was composed mostly of young men seeking homes and fortunes in the new West. Some had gray hairs. A few were enthusiastic young men, willing, and perhaps anxious, to become mar-

13. Savage's column appeared on page one; his first installment ended with an additional six verses of the Whittier poem/song. See *Western Home Journal*, June 23, 1870.

tyrs to their principles—who would go out of their way to let pro-slavery men know their sentiments. But most were modest, quiet men—men of brains and backbone. It used to be said that the second party had more of these two qualities than any other party ever had that started West from Boston. They had frequent occasions for using what they possessed, be it much or little. . . .

The first night we stopped at the Delavan House, at Albany [New York]. The friends of freedom gave us a reception there. It was late when we arrived, and the night was cool. So was the reception, as few were present, and speeches were made by them, and responded to by Pomeroy, [Charles H.] Branscomb and [Luke P.] Lincoln. This was the first public speaking I had heard from Gen. Pomeroy. His oratory was then, as now, rather of the "spread-eagle" style, but somewhat impressive and pathetic. He then said that the great Western valleys were not scooped out by the hand of the Almighty to be the burial place of freedom, and then asked, "Shall the great Mississippi continually weep to the ocean eternal tears over the wrongs and woes of the African slave? And shall the great American eagle forever soar over a land containing four millions of bondmen, living in ignorance as the dark as midnight darkness?"

The next day we had given to us, at Rochester, a splendid bible from a Mr. Bross. That bible is in our possession



helping the young children get aboard of the steamer bound for St. Louis, at which place we arrived about the middle of the afternoon, and got aboard of the steamer New Lucy, bound for Kansas City, and points further up the Missouri river.

. . . The river was low, and we had to walk around some of the worst sand bars on the river. On board the boat there were several slaveholders, very pleasant men indeed. We showed them our Sharp's rifle, for we had the first one ever brought to Kansas from the East. It was brought by Mr. James Sawyer. We fired it several times on the boat, for the amusement of our pro-slavery friends. We also had several sharp discussions on the slavery question with them, Mr. S.[Stephen] J. Willes and Mr.[Matthew H.] Spittle were the chief speakers, and did credit to the subject.

We arrived at Kansas City just seven days from Boston, and were provided with cotton tents by the Aid Society, and camped by a nice spring of water just north of the city, over the line in Kansas Territory.¹⁵

Two days living in the hot September sun, in cotton tents, and two nights sleeping in the cool dew and camp of the Missouri river bottom, made the children cross, and the women impatient and homesick. . . .

Our outfit consisted of a sack of flour, a ham, dried apples, a box of yeast powder, a frying pan, Dutch oven, mixing pan, spoon, tin cups, a bucket with a little salt and pepper, camp kettle, coffee and coffee pot, with a few pounds of sugar. [Joel] Grover and [Franklin] Haskell were the first to leave the camp at Kansas City—seventeen men all told.

After loading boxes, trunks and provisions into our wagon, we found that we had more load than we could easily haul; but we lightened it by taking out each our gun or rifle, from fear of being attacked at Westport—for we had read in the papers of the threats to shoot all the Yankees that attempted to go through that city into the new Territory. We carefully loaded our guns, and went into Westport with them on our shoulders. We saw but few men, and a great many hogs, in the town. We stopped at a grocery, and bought each a glass of new cider and some ginger bread, and went on our way unmolested. After traveling a few miles over gently rolling timbered country, we came in sight of Kansas prairie. It was indeed as green as a carpet, and lovely, too. Our hearts beat high and strong. The writer of these sketches was said to have

to this day. The speeches on that occasion were full of eloquence and patriotism, and were cut short by the cars starting on their way, amidst the cheers of a multitude of spectators. That night, at about ten in the evening, we went on board a steamboat at Buffalo, bound for Detroit, Mich. That ride across the blue waters of Lake Erie will be long remembered by us all. During the passage, many speeches were made and resolutions passed bearing directly on our future settlement in Kansas. . . .

At Detroit we stopped at the Leonard House, and went up to see the residence of Gen. Cass,¹⁴ and then started for Chicago, by way of the Michigan Central Railroad, at which place we arrived the next forenoon. Here the party was put up at different hotels. The cholera was raging. . . .

We came to the Father of Waters [Mississippi River] the next day, at about ten o'clock in the forenoon. Here we all bathed in its waters for the first time in our lives. It was a great day to many of us on that account. I remember of

14. General Lewis Cass (1782–1866) was the former territorial governor of Michigan and a U.S. senator from that state. He was the 1848 Democratic candidate for the U. S. presidency and was known for his conservative views on the issue of slavery. Cass championed westward expansion and promoted the principle of popular sovereignty for deciding the issue of slavery in the Mexican Cession territory. See *American Nation Biography Online*, s.v. "Cass, Lewis."

15. End of column "No. 2," *Western Home Journal*, June 30, 1870.

THE STORY OF THE OLD BAND

PLAYED IN BLEEDING KANSAS

**Musicians Who Went Out from Boston
for the Immigrant Aid Society and
Helped to Make a Free State.**

More than once in his recollections, Joseph Savage mentioned the Lawrence Band, formed by members of the emigrant aid party. According to Savage's daughter, Susan Alford, "It was in August, 1854, that four young men, my father, uncle, and their two cousins, who had played together in the band of a Vermont village, determined, each unknown to the other, to join the Kansas party starting out under the auspices of the Emigrant Aid Society. They met, with mutual surprise, in the railroad station at Boston, each carrying in his hand a band instrument." The headline (above) is from the Springfield Republican, September 21, 1913.

swung his hat high in the air over his head, and shouted, "Glory! glory!" at the top of his voice. Of this he does not now remember, but he does recollect of forming in platoons, with arm-in-arm, and marching and singing.

"We cross the prairies as of old
Our fathers crossed the sea,"

with unbounded satisfaction. . . .

About two o'clock in the afternoon, on the 16th of September, 1854, we arrived on Mount Oread, near where the observatory now stands. Here we found what remained of the first party, with Mr. Levi Gates and family and Mr. [William] Bruce and wife, all in tents. Near this is now seen the remains of an old cellar, dug by the first party before our arrival. The day was warm, and we asked for a drink of water, and were given some from the ravine back of where the University now stands, where was then tall grass. It was warm and brackish, and made us quite sick. Soon our teams came up, and we drove down on the town site, and pitched our tents nearly in front of where the jail now stands. This was the first Yankee tent, and our first night, on the then to be great city of Lawrence.¹⁶

16. Column "No. 3," which ends here, was carried on page 2 of *ibid.*, July 7, 1870. For more on early housing in Lawrence, Kansas Territory, see

Before pitching our tents for the night, we, like pilgrims at the end of their journey, went for the first time to bathe our wearied limbs in the turbid waters of the Kaw [Kansas River]. As we first cast our longing eyes over its surface, and felt the cooling embrace of its waters, a feeling of ownership and affection sprang up in our hearts, for on its banks were soon to be our homes. On its farther shore, where the city of North Lawrence now rears its walls and hurries with its bustle and business, stood then one continuous forest. The tall oak, elm and cottonwood then spread out their long branches defiantly to the noonday sun, while beneath their shade the silence of nature reigned supreme.

We ate our first meal on the town site, from the scanty stores left of bread, cheese and dried meat, which had been so carefully packed by our wives and mothers, in our Eastern homes.

James C. Malin, "Emergency Housing at Lawrence, 1854," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 21 (Spring 1954): 34–49. Included in Malin's article is an early sketch of Lawrence (J. E. Rice's "Lawrence, Kansas, A.D. 1854–55") and its built environment, along with some lengthy contemporary quotations about housing types and materials. [A reproduction of Rice's sketch appears on page 30–31 of the present article.]

During the second night after our arrival, there occurred one of those terrific thunder storms so frequent in this climate. Our tents had been staked in haste, carelessly, so that they reeled to and fro in the wind like a ship in mid-ocean. Each one of the five occupying our tent seized its flapping folds, and held with might and main the cords to their places. . . .

On this day (the 18th), we met on the hill nearly, if not exactly, where the new University is being erected, to form an association for laying out the city. The day was rather windy, and, it being difficult to hear each other, we adjourned over the point of the bluff to the south, and for seats, occupied the large rocks that lay scattered on the surface of the ground. It was at this time and place that the discussion arose as to a name for the association, which finally gave name to the city. . . .

The vote was then taken, and was quite unanimous in favor of Lawrence. Seventy-nine members were that day enrolled on the books of the Lawrence association, as entitled to equal shares in the lots of the city. Any one present that day could, by registering his name, have become a member of the association, and our titles to city lots still date back to this time. . . .

On the first Sabbath, Mr. E.[Erastus] D. Ladd conducted religious service by reading a sermon, with singing, and for prayers he repeated the Lord's prayer, which he claimed was adapted to all men under all circumstances.¹⁷

Meetings of the Lawrence Association were now held every week, and many speeches were made, and much boasting, with loud, swelling words, was heard concerning the new city we were then founding. According to some it was to be three miles square, with streets wide, and in keeping with the growing West. Its lots were to be large and ample, and its park in particular must be truly magnificent. Why this result was not realized in fact, and why our park now surrounded by a tier of lots so uncomely, is in part owing to man's greed for gain, and in part because much of the city passed out of our control, contrary to our wishes. I believe that if the Lawrence Association had continued in full possession of the city, its lots and park would have been far more desirable than they now are.¹⁸

. . . [James] Baldwin pitched his tent within a few rods of our encampment, while his heavier improvements were further east, towards the Galveston depot. I had then bought the only Sharp's rifle there was among us; and one day, just as I was coming into camp for my dinner, Frank Bailey called to me to come up there, for we were going to have a fight. I ran up, rifle in hand, and saw Baldwin's tent lying prostrate on the ground. Mr. B. swearing vengeance on the Yankees and their settlement on his claim. He had his rifle, and for a while he acted as though he would shoot some of us with it. He finally went off, saying that he would raise men enough to clear us all out of the country.¹⁹

I relate these incidents minutely, because they caused by far the greatest excitement of anything in our early settlement.

This occurred near the first of October. That evening we had a meeting called, and formed a military company for defense. Gov. Robinson was chosen to conduct the defense, while Joel Grover was elected captain of the company. I think the company numbered about fifty men. . . . In making a speech after he [Capt. Grover] was elected to office, among other things he said: "Now, gentlemen, I want no man to join this company who is afraid to take the d - - - I [devil] right by his horns." Not being anxious myself to see that person then and there, I did not join the company, but went in on my own hook.

The sight of these excited, unshaven men, as seen that night by the light of one tallow candle in the old log cabin, on the town site of Lawrence, will not ever be forgotten by any of those who were then present.

S. J. Willes was selected to occupy with a tent the ground occupied by Baldwin's. Mr. W. slept there at night, and stored his things in it.

We knocked out port-holes from the chinking of the old cabin, to shoot from.

The next day a large pro-slavery party collected on the east side of town, and sent two of their number on horseback over to Gov. Robinson, who was busy at some kind of work near where the ruins of the old Emigrant Aid mill now stand.²⁰ They came up on a full gallop, with a note in

19. James Baldwin, whose brother William also "took a claim in the east part of the city itself," according to Savage, operated a ferry over the Kansas River. Jim Baldwin came to Kansas Territory from Illinois via Missouri and "was at this time pro-slavery," as were several other early "squatters" whom Savage mentions.

20. The old "Emigrant Aid Mill" stood on the Kansas River a few blocks west of the present river bridge. See "Notes on the J. E. Rice Pen Sketches of Lawrence, Kansas" in Malin, "Emergency Housing at Lawrence, 1854," facing 48.

17. End of "No. 4," *Western Home Journal*, July 14, 1870.

18. Only the first paragraph of "No. 5," *ibid.*, July 21, 1870, has been reprinted here.

Babcock's hand-writing, saying that if we did not remove the tent in thirty minutes, they would remove it for us. The Governor sent back this note: "You molest our property at your peril." We all collected at the old cabin, with our guns, to see them remove the tent. It was a long half-hour to me. It was during this half-hour that some one standing near me asked the Governor if it would be best to shoot over their heads, or hit them if we could. He answered by saying that he should be ashamed to shoot at a man and not hit him.

That day passed and no fight occurred; but a horseman rode by us, saying that they would get 20,000 men together and clean us all out. . . .

Thus the contest raged till the summer of 1855, when Gov. Robinson went East, and Pomeroy was left in his place. The association were getting weary of the uncertainty of titles, and it was often said we should drive away all investments by our quarrels, and ruin the prospects of the town, if we kept them up longer. A compromise was then made by giving up nearly one-quarter of the lots to [William H. R.] Lykins, [J.N.O.P.] Wood, [Carmi W.] Babcock and Baldwin.²¹ Each of our own drawings were thus reduced from sixty-four lots down to twelve, which we drew and received titles for, which titles are good to this day.

It was at this time that the park was cut down, by taking off a tier of lots the entire distance around it, to satisfy their demands. The park, before it was cut down, contained forty acres. . . .²²

After we had been on the town site two or three days, one of my friends asked Gen. Pomeroy this question: "Well, General, I suppose after you have got rich in Kansas, you will go back East to live again;" to which the General replied: "No, sir; I have enlisted in this cause for

21. Some information on these land questions and the individuals involved can be found in William E. Connelley, "The Lane-Jenkins Claim Contest," *Kansas Historical Collections, 1923-1925* 16 (1925): 21-176; see also Cutler and Andreas, *History of the State of Kansas*, 1: 308-9. Savage wrote that J. N. O. P. Wood often was referred as "Alphabet" Wood; C. W. Babcock, who was employed as Baldwin's attorney during these early months of settlement, later made a smooth transition to the free-state side, becoming a prominent political and business leader in the Lawrence community. See R. G. Elliott, "The Big Springs Convention," *Kansas Historical Collections, 1903-1904* 8 (1904): 368; Connelley, "The Lane-Jenkins Claim Contest," 52, n. 7.

22. The "park" in question was, of course, Lawrence's South Park. The final paragraph of this installment, "No. 6," has been omitted here. See *Western Home Journal*, July 28, 1870.

life; and shall not only stay here till Kansas is a free State, but, in ten years, Missouri will be free also;" and so it proved.

One forenoon, after we had been here nearly four weeks, Pomeroy came riding into camp on a light-gray horse. He had just come up from Kansas City, bringing our first letters from home. He rode around through camp with them and delivered them to us in person. "Here, Mr. S., is a letter from your wife," he said to me, and with some kind of remark he delivered the mail over town to us all. These letters were nearly all taken from his hand with tearful eyes. . . .

One of the pleasantest and most interesting occasions of the fall, was our reception of Gov. [Andrew H.] Reeder in Lawrence. It was his first visit, and we strongly hoped that he would locate his capital here; so we did our best to make the reception agreeable to him. We sent to Missouri and got a large squash, and made up some nice squash pies for the occasion. These were baked in our stove, in the little cabin we had then built. The men that served as waiters were dressed with linen shirts on the outside, for white frocks. . . . It was served in the long hay tent, which then we used as a boarding house, as well as for meetings on the Sabbath, and those of the association. . . .

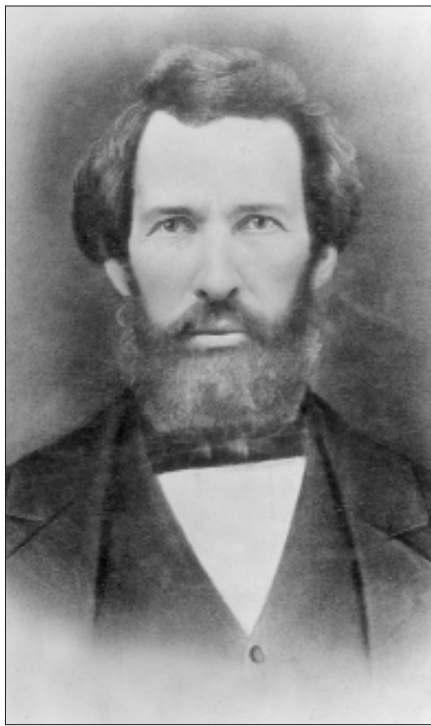
Gov. Reeder and suite came in with Government ambulances, with four mules and a driver for each team. . . .²³

These early scenes, whether viewed in the light of the then uncertain future, or in the near past, are increasing in interest; for they make up, in part, our history—a history as yet almost wholly unwritten. . . .²⁴

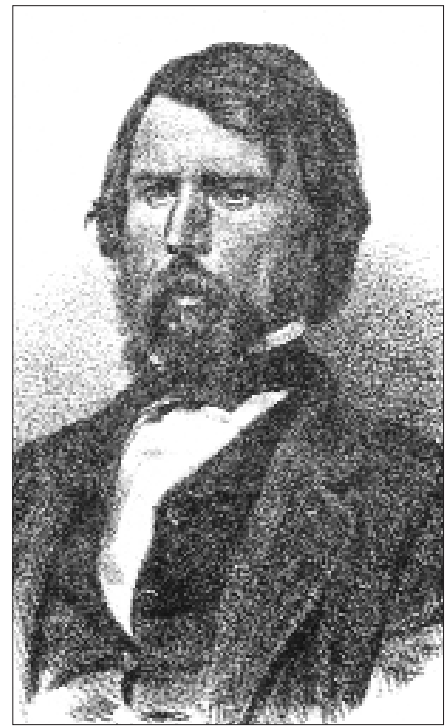
At the first squatter meeting that was held after our arrival, the Free State men had the majority. It was held at Ferril's store, two miles west of Lawrence, on the old California road, September 28. Judge [John A.] Wakefield was president. It was voted that each squatter be allowed to hold 160 acres of prairie and 80 acres of timber land. We were nearly all present at this meeting. Previous to this time the pro-slavery men had had the majority, and controlled the squatter meetings. . . .

23. The gubernatorial reception occurred on October 19, 1854. Savage's description of the event and Pomeroy's welcoming remarks followed, but they are not reprinted here.

24. Installment "No. 7" ended with praise for Governor Robinson, "the savior of Lawrence" See *Western Home Journal*, August 4, 1870.



Among the many free-state men with whom Savage became acquainted were several individuals who promoted the "Kansas Cause" in the pages of their newspapers. Pictured here are (left) George W. Brown, editor of the Herald of Freedom, and (right) John Speer, editor of the Kansas Tribune.



Our cabin that fall was the "head center" of music in Lawrence, and every pleasant evening we had concerts within and large audiences without. Our songs consisted mostly of Sabbath school songs and sacred hymns; frequently the crowd on the outside joined in, and often, at this day, do I hear men speak in grateful remembrance of our cheerful music in the rough cabin of 1854. . . .²⁵

. . . We lived in tents till about the middle of October, trusting to Pomeroy's promises for lumber to build our cabins. At this time our mess commenced and completed the first cabin that was ever built in Lawrence. For this purpose, we cut two poles and pinned them together in the shape of the large hay tents then built. [S. N.] Simpson and myself then cut down an oak tree with a hollow spot on one side, and sawed off the first length with a hand-saw. This we split up into shakes and ribs for the cabin. The shakes were rather winding and poor, and were the first we had either of us ever split. We nailed the ribs to the poles, and then nailed the shakes on the ribs, and in a few

25. Much of the omitted portion of this column, "No. 8," *ibid.*, August 11, 1870, deals with the Reverend Samuel Y. Lum and "Sabbath meetings." Savage also described several other individuals, including Samuel N. Simpson, Robert Buffum, and T. F. Reynolds.

days had a cabin with a shake door hung on wooden hinges, with a wooden latch, and the "latch-string always out." This was the first hinged door in Lawrence, and was visited by Judge Elmore and Gov. Reeder as one of the "sights" of the town at the time of their reception. . . .²⁶

. . . About the first of November there appeared among us the several editions of the newspapers afterwards published in Lawrence—Judge [Josiah] Miller and R[obert]. G. Elliott, of the Kansas Free State, and John Speer, of the Kansas Tribune: also G[eorge]. W. Brown, who had already printed one number of the Herald of Freedom in Pennsylvania, but dated "Wakarusa, Kansas Territory," Lawrence not having been named at the date of the first issue. The first two were very quiet and still in their manners, but

26. See Malin, "Emergency Housing at Lawrence, 1854"; James C. Malin, "Housing Experiments in the Lawrence Community, 1855," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 21 (Summer 1954): 95–121. Judge Elmore is Rush Elmore, associate justice of the Kansas territorial supreme court, 1854–1855, 1858–1861. The final six paragraphs of "No. 9," *Western Home Journal*, August 18, 1870, are not reproduced here; no selections have been included from "No. 10," which appeared three weeks later. See *Western Home Journal*, September 8, 1870. That particular installment deals with the construction of Lawrence's first saw mill and some additional "firsts."



According to Joseph Savage, Mrs. J. H. Nichols, a member of the fourth emigrant aid party in 1854, "had from Mount Oread taken a pencil sketch of Lawrence" (above). Despite the obvious discrepancy, Mrs. J. H. Nichols probably was Mrs. Clarina I. H. Nichols, a well-known advocate of abolition and women's rights. This ca. 1854 pencil sketch is in the collection of the Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas.

well dressed in suits of black, surmounted with stove-pipe hats of the latest fashion. Speer had more of the "pitch in" in his habits, and went in heart and soul in unison with us; while G. W. Brown always had an oily tongue, but was very mercenary in his make-up, and, on the whole, unreliable in times of trouble and discord.²⁷

Charley Stearns appeared in Lawrence about this time also, and was a good merchant and companion, but had abolition "on the brain," and was often found in violent debates, showing therewith an unreasonable amount of bad temper. He was the embodiment of what was then known as an "ultra Abolitionist." . . .²⁸

27. Savage's memory appears to be faulty as to the date of the newspapers' appearance in Lawrence. Brown's *Herald of Freedom* is believed to be the only one published before January 1855 and the first published in Lawrence, dated January 6, 1855; the first number of the *Kansas Free State* was issued at Lawrence on January 10, 1855. See Bill Cecil-Fronsman, "'Advocate the Freedom of White Men, As Well As That of the Negroes': The Kansas Free State and Antislavery Westerns in Territorial Kansas," *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains* 20 (Summer 1997): 102-15.

28. The last five paragraphs of installment "No. 11," *Western Home Journal*, September 8, 1870, have been omitted. Savage closed this column with a brief description of the first election—that for delegate to Congress, November 29, 1854.

The election for Delegate for Congress came off on the 29th day of November, 1854. It was voted by the association that all of its members should remain in Kansas until after this election before going East, or forfeit their interest in the city. On the morning after the election, a large number started for their homes in the East. That morning was clear, beautiful and lovely. Back of our little cabin, the Emigrant Aid Society had a stable containing two yoke of oxen, which were in the care of a Mr. Kent. He had often broken in upon our morning slumber by his profanity, used by feeding his team before light. The morning of the election, the members of our band started East, and before the break of day, in the still morning air, we played "Home, Sweet Home." Big warm tears rolled down the rough, unshaven cheek of Mr. Kent, and the old pioneers yet often speak of the memory of East homes brought to mind by that good old tune as its strains died away in the stillness of early dawn.

We left the lights of Lawrence still burning as we gave our last look at the embryo city, and started on our journey to Kansas City in a lumber wagon.

After dark that day, just as we neared Westport, under the shade of a thick grove of trees we came to a "grocery," at which the voters from the Territory were celebrating their victory over the Yankees. One man rushed out and

seized our horses by their heads, and called out to know if we were "all right on the 'goose question.'" This phrase, "all right on the goose," was universally used at that time on the border, to distinguish the Pro-slavery from the Anti-slavery party. As pistols were being drawn on both sides, one man, soberer than the rest that were there all right on the goose question, or some other question, kindly led away the man at the bridle-bit, and we went on to Kansas City unmolested.


Here J. F. Morgan was keeping the hotel, and I well remember how I enjoyed eating potatoes and vegetables, after being without them for three months in young Lawrence.

The last boat of the season went down the Missouri river on the first day of December, and on board were Col. [James] Blood, Mrs. J. H. Nichols, Henry Hovey, John Armstrong and a large party from Lawrence. Mrs. Nichols had from Mount Oread taken a pencil sketch of Lawrence in 1854, which is still preserved by being photographed. I recollect well seeing her sheltered behind a stack of hay from the rough November winds, taking this sketch, for several days previous to our departure. . . .²⁹

29. Despite the obvious discrepancy, Mrs. J. H. Nichols was probably Mrs. Clarina I. H. Nichols, a well-known advocate of abolition and women's rights. Nichols and her two older sons, A. O. and C. H. Carpenter, came to Kansas Territory with the fourth emigrant aid party in October 1854. Nichols took up a claim in southern Douglas County and then

We left Kansas on a warm, Indian-summer day, and were surprised to find the railroad blocked up, and the trains stopped by drifting snow and cold, wintry weather, at Detroit. . . .

Away up among the Green Mountains of Vermont, a few miles from where White river makes its junction with the Connecticut, I met my wife and children. They came running out of the house to meet me, and declared that father looked better with his Kansas beard on than they ever saw him before. It was one of the happiest days of my life, and I have often wondered how it was possible for man to enjoy so much happiness in this changing, fleeting world. To-day, those happy ones that so kindly greeted me there are all but one hushed in death, and their bodies are mouldering beneath the sacred soil of Kansas, awaiting the morning of the resurrection.

Here, my "Recollections of 1854" are ended.³⁰ 

left for the East in December; she returned in the spring of 1855. See Barry, "The Emigrant Aid Company Parties of 1854," 140, 143; Joseph G. Gambone, ed., "The Forgotten Feminist of Kansas: The Papers of Clarina I. H. Nichols, 1854-1885," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 39 (Spring 1973): 12-57.

30. Final installment, "No. 12," *Western Home Journal*, September 29, 1870.