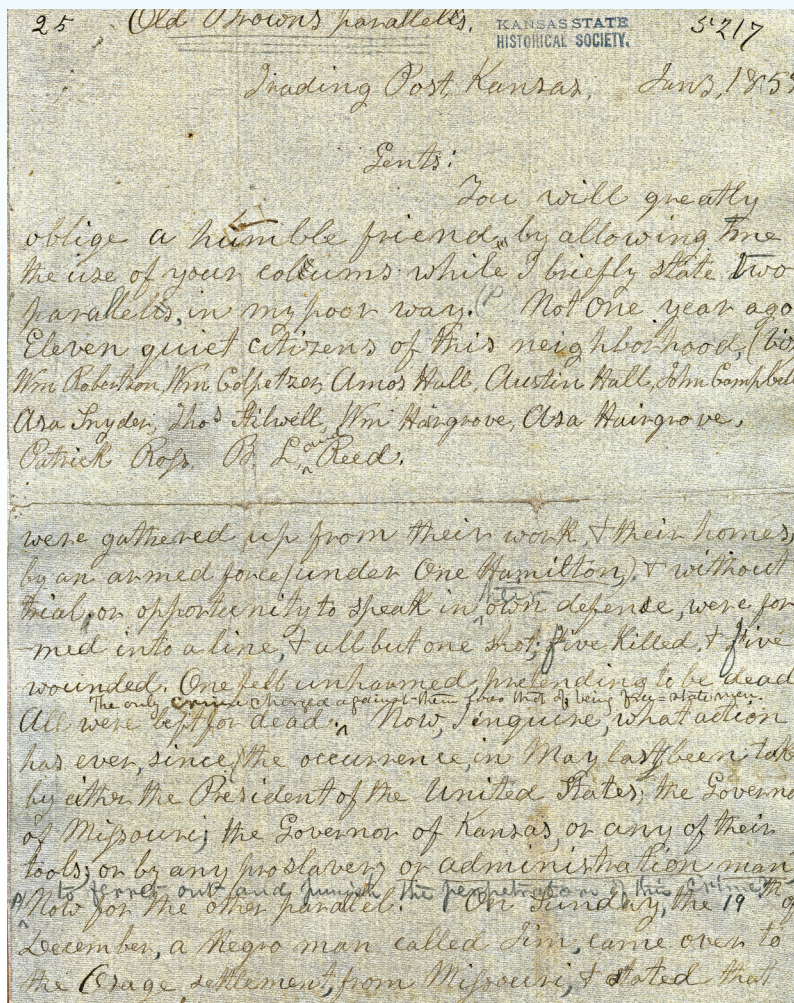


By the Kansas Historical Society

Excerpt from "Parallels"

In 1859 John Brown wrote a letter that was published in several newspapers. The letter has since become known as "Old Brown's Parallels," or simply "Parallels." In the following excerpt, Brown describes his work as an abolitionist.

"Two small companies were made up to go to Missouri & forcibly liberate the five slaves, together with other slaves. One of those companies I assumed to direct. We proceeded to the place, surrounded the buildings, liberated the slaves, & also took certain property supposed to belong to the Estate. We however learned before leaving [sic] that a portion of the articles we had taken belonged to a man living on the plantation as a tenant, & who was supposed to have no interest in the Estate. We promptly restored to him all we had taken. We then went to another plantation where we freed five more slaves, took some property, & two white men. We moved all slowly away into the Territory for some distance & then sent the White men back, telling them to follow us as soon as they chose to do so. The other company freed one female slave, took some property & as I am informed Killed one white man, (the master) who fought against the liberation."



Directing John Brown to the Free State Camp, by Samuel J. Reader



In this painting Samuel J. Reader depicts himself (figure on the far right) greeting John Brown (figure standing beside the ox's head). Brown is returning to his camp in Brown County, Kansas. Brown is dressed as a surveyor in order to spy on proslavery forces in the area undetected. Reader served in Brown's militia and documented his experiences through diaries and paintings.