

fore a justice of the peace, and released according to contract. Captain Newby brings a request from Major Sedgwick to Captain Walker, asking him to come for the howitzer, which had been placed, according to agreement, in his charge. The various military companies are under arms. The prisoners express themselves thankful for the kindness shown them, and make loud promises of the same treatment to Free-State men, should the fortune of war ever place them in their hands.

The prisoners are now in wagons, and under escort of the dragoons, guarded also by the Free-State forces, on the move for Leocompton. Captain Walker, with a detachment of men, has gone for the howitzer.

For months back, the papers of the North have been mourning over a Kansas subjugated to slavery. To-day, they may cheer for a Kansas conquered by freedom. Next week, we may want powder, ball, and men. The towns on the border are alive with excitement. Already the Missourians are coming in at Leavenworth. They may have to go out.

EXPERIENCE OF N. W. SPICER IN KANSAS.*

I am a native of Susquehanna county, Pa. I am a carpenter and joiner by trade. I was receiving \$40 per month in the spring of 1856, when the news reached me of the Kansas difficulties, and I determined to have a hand in the operation myself. I immediately went to Chicago, where, after some delay, I joined a company of emigrants bound for the "land of promise." And on the 17th day of June, we started on the cars, intending to take the river route for the Territory. At my exit from Chicago I had \$60. The company of which I was a member were promised our passage free and \$30 in money or its equivalent in provisions when we should have reached our destination. A Sharp's rifle was also promised us.

After reaching Alton, we took passage on the Missouri river steamer, "Star of the West." In about four days we reached Leavenworth city, on the borders of the Territory. Before we reached this point, we encountered considerable opposition, having our guns taken from us by a large force. But here the spirit of mobbery and ruffianism increased to such an extent that we were compelled to return on the same boat. There were seventy-five men when we set out from Chicago.

On our return from Leavenworth, and when we were ready to pursue the overland route, there were but about thirty of the original party left. These kept on their way through Iowa and Nebraska, and after a tedious journey of many weeks, on the 13th day of August we reached Topeka, the Free-State capital of the Territory.

Before we had time to pitch our tents, a messenger arrived from Lawrence, bringing information of the difficulties at Franklin, that had occurred the day before, and bringing intelligence that the enemy were assembling in large force at Fort Saunders, near Washington creek. This was a stronghold occupied by the enemy in harassing, plundering and robbing the Free-State settlers in the neighborhood. Large numbers of the Free-State men had already assembled within three miles of the fort. The messenger requested all who could to repair to the spot to reinforce them.

In less than half an hour from the time the message arrived, the Chicago company were prepared, and ready to start. We traveled nearly all night, and on the 14th, at 2 o'clock, we reached the general encampment of Free-State men.

During the day a scouting party under Capt. Shombre started from camp to reconnoiter the ground of the enemy, and also find and bring in the murdered remains of Hoyt, who, we had been informed, had been assassinated by the gang in the fort, the day before. They returned late in the afternoon, bringing in the mutilated remains of the

*From the Hyatt manuscripts.

murdered man. When the corpse was exposed, the men were very indignant, and swore revenge.

Next morning the men wished to be led to the fort, but Lane deemed it imprudent, (or rather, I should say "Capt. Cook," who had not as yet undisguised himself.) He sent the same scouts out again, who returned about 11 o'clock. Cook wished to postpone the attack until next morning, but the men becoming so enraged at the suggestion, he changed the programme that he made, and arranged that the attack should be made that afternoon.

At 2 o'clock the whole number of about five hundred accordingly set out for the fort. Before they had got in sight the enemy fled, leaving forty guns, the horse of the murdered Hoyt, and much other plunder, in our possession. We returned to our encampment, and after dispatching a hasty supper started for Lawrence.

Before all the men had left the camp, intelligence reached us of new difficulties at Leecompton. We immediately changed our course, and steered for this place. We marched until about midnight, when we arrived in the vicinity of Judge Wakefield's. Here we encountered a gang of horse thieves, headed by a desperado under the appellation of Col. Titus. This gang, finding themselves closely pressed by our advance scouts, at once fired upon them, which was returned with such success as to wound and kill two of their men. One of their number was taken prisoner; also two of their horses were left on the ground, which were secured by our party.

We stopped for the night about a mile from where this occurred. During the night, Titus, fearful that we would attack him in his house, which was a mile south of Leecompton, on the Lawrence road, sent a dispatch, and caused the whole force in town to come to his defense. They returned, however, early in the morning.

At daybreak, the horsemen under Shombre, learning the state of affairs, started in advance of the main body to surprise Titus and his men, and take them prisoners. They rode so close to the house, that they were fired upon unawares. Several men were badly wounded—Capt. Shombre mortally. One of the men in the house was killed by a return fire.

Soon the whole force came up. The cannon was stationed in front, about 50 rods from the house, the Chicago Sharp's riflemen diagonally from it below, and covered by a rail fence. After a few discharges of the cannon and rifles, a white flag was suspended from the window, when the firing ceased. All who were in the house, nineteen in number, were taken prisoners. Their horses, arms and munitions were also taken, when the whole force took up their march for Lawrence. The reason why the company did not pursue their journey to Leecompton, was on account of the United States troops interfering.

Directly after, Gov. Shannon came to Lawrence, which was the Sunday following, and Col. Eldridge addressed the men assembled, numbering over 500. He stated that they, of Lawrence, would probably be subject to an attempt on the part of their enemies to invade the town again. It would be necessary to have men for her defense, and if the Chicago company would relinquish, for the time being, the project of locating their claims, and remain and be ready against any emergency to fight if necessary, he, as agent for the committee, would be responsible for their support. The men, on account of this promise, remained.

During our sojourn here we were constantly active. Some of the men of the Chicago company went to Osawatimie; others assisted in bringing grain and hay to Lawrence. At one time we went to Topeka, under Col. Harvey's command, to bring arms and other munitions that were in charge of Mr. Moore to Lawrence.

About this time, as I had been a scout, and was pretty active when the regiment was made up, I was given the office of Adjutant. Prior to this, I had been elected First

Lieutenant of the Chicago company. My father is a military officer, and I had learned the discipline under him.

At one time during the company's stay at Lawrence, assistance was called for from the people on Little Stranger creek, toward Leavenworth. In this campaign, we took between thirty and forty horses and mules, and surprised and took a company of Carolinians who were on their way to reinforce a company of Pro-Slavery men at Atchison. We immediately released them, and returned on our horses to Lawrence. Two nights we ambushed in the woods, about 100 in number. Nothing of importance, however, occurred at either time, excepting a heavy thunder-shower, when we managed by rolling our guns up in our blankets to keep them dry.

We had not returned from this expedition long enough to become rested, before we were summoned to march to Hickory Point. We were successful in our mission, until our return, when we were all surprised, and were taken prisoners by United States troops to Leecompton. After being detained there about a week, I with some others passed the guard, and made our way to Lawrence.

Soon after I escaped, a militia company was formed for its protection, which I joined, and was elected orderly sergeant. This officer receives for his services \$20 per month. My time is now expired, and I intend settling on a claim. I have no means, except as I draw for my services (two months) in the militia. During the summer and fall I was obliged to expend what means I brought with me for the necessaries of life, such as food, clothing, etc. I am now destitute of clothing, bedding, etc., suitable for the winter. I am determined, however, to stay in Kansas and fulfill the object of my coming, which is to assist, if possible, to MAKE KANSAS A FREE STATE.

LAWRENCE, KANSAS TERRITORY, Dec. 6, 1856.

LETTER OF JAMES MONTGOMERY.*

MOUND CITY, LINN CO., KAS., May 8, 1861.

GEO. L. STEARNS, Esq., † *Medford, near Boston* :

DEAR SIR: Your favor, dated April 22, came to hand by yesterday's mail, and the duplicate, to care of G. W. Collamore, came with it.

Without designing to flatter, I must be allowed to say that you have shown yourself a friend in need. We are in a perilous position here, and have not ammunition enough to make a respectable fight. I have organized a regiment, and hope soon to increase it to a brigade. I have accepted a position on the Governor's staff, with the rank of colonel, with the understanding that I am to be a member of the war council, and that my position on the staff shall not interfere with any other command which the people may give me. I have just received a letter from Leavenworth companies, proposing to cooperate with us, and "go in for the war."

I think our true policy, for the present at least, is to defend our own doors. The Missourians have had a strong force along the line of Linn and Bourbon for several months, and they have increased it recently.

*From the Hyatt manuscripts.

† Wilder's Annals, page 461, under date of April 17, 1867, has this entry: "Death, in New York, of George L. Stearns, the early friend of Kansas and John Brown." When the noble and self-sacrificing band of men and women who befriended Kansas, and through Kansas the cause of human liberty, shall have just tribute paid them, none will be found more deserving of such tribute than George L. Stearns, of Medford, Massachusetts. Elsewhere in this report reference has been made to the great work done for Kansas by him and his noble wife in 1856. These two were the constant and unflinching friends of John Brown and Montgomery, and men of their class, and none did so much as they to furnish the means by which these devoted men carried on their warfare against slavery, and for the protection of the settlers of Kansas.—F. G. A.