

From Edward Fitch to Dear Father

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Lawrence, May 26, 1856

Dear Father,

Mr[.] Stowell, who you probably recollect seeing last winter, starts back for the East today and I am going to send this letter by him so to have it sure to go. I have not heard from you for some time and am quite anxious to hear. I wrote some time ago to you about sending me a revolver. I want you to send me a first-rate Colt revolver six-inch barrel with the moulds and powder flask all complete. If you can get a thousand of his metallic cartridges to go with the pistol, get them. I should think that somebody that you may know might make me a present of a pair of revolvers. Uncle Doctor or somebody, but if nobody will, I want you, if you have not yet sent one, to get one and send it and as soon as you can send by some conveyance. If you can't get one yourself, just write to Mr. Stowell and have him get it and have him bring it, unless you have a chance to send it by a trusty man before. I will write his address in this letter before I close. He will come back pretty soon I expect. Come to Worcester and see him if you can possibly. If no one will give me a pistol, I want you to buy one and send or have Stowell buy it and I will pay you sometime when I get more money, if I am not killed. I have not dared to go on to my claim for a week for I have a bitter enemy in a Pro-Slavery man for my next neighbor. I am going out tomorrow but shall not dare to stay at my cabin without a rifle or gun at my bedside. I had about ninety dollars worth of things there when I left there and I should not be surprised to find them all stolen when I get back.

Last Wednesday the ruffians came into town and burnt the hotel, destroyed both printing offices and robbed the town, burnt Dr. Robinson's house. They stole five dollars out of Mr. Stearns house that belonged to Mr. Stowell.

They have done all the mischief they could and now Shannon has called out the troops to protect him for fear we should rise up and exterminate him and the Pro-Slavery party in general. The intelligence has just come in that 5 Pro-Slavery men have been killed about forty miles south of here. And it is supposed to be true about 125 Free State men from that neighborhood had come up within twelve miles of this place and soon they are going back to attend to things there. I have written four sheets the size of this full, giving an account of this war. I have sent it to Appleton and he is to send it to Whitteman, and I want you and he to take pains to show it to anyone that wants to see it, Mr. Webster or Mr. Wheeler or anyone that takes an interest in Kansas. Explain it was written in a hurry and is not a very splendid document, but if folks want to know that facts this is them just as they came under my observation.

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Have you found any one who will send me ten dollars in money for ten in State scrip? If you have send on the money and I will send the scrip.

It is very warm here now, but there is generally a breeze blowing. The prairies look splendid covered with flowers and green grass. This is a beautiful country to look at and no mistake.

Kansas has now I think reached its turning point. If the North doesn't now arouse and do more than she has done yet, Kansas will be a slave state and we (the Free State party) shall be wiped out. The next thing they are going to do is to bring us a paper to sign that we will obey the laws of the Bogus Legislature or leave the territory or be hung and they are going to give us sixty days to do it in. If the North does as she ought, and goes in for letting them try to hang us if they can do it. But when they begin to hang, we shall begin to shoot. The Pierce administration must be broken down and we must have a Republican president or else we must dissolve the Union, anything to abolish slavery.

Fremont for president! Down with Douglas, Pierce and company. I wish I could be in Massachusetts a little while just now. I would lift up my voice like a trumpet against the administration and slavery and I should like to vote for president, but I hope now that Kansas will not be admitted as a state just yet, but the presidential contest fought on the Kansas question.

I am very short of money at the present and Pike lived in my house until he owed me fifty dollars for rent and paid none of it and I doubt if he ever does pay it.

Please hand the enclosed letter to Whittemore as soon as convenient and oblige (him and me) with.

Mr. Stowell's address is Martin Stowell, Worcester, Massachusetts. Write to him and find out when you can see him for I want you to meet him very much.

Please write soon and tell me some news for I am anxious to know. It is of the utmost importance for each man to be armed in this country.

Give my love to all my friends.

Yours from Kansas free, Edward P. Fitch