

From Sara Robinson to My Dear Sister

[page 1]

Lawrence Kansas

January 5 /1858

My Dear Sister,

I received your letter of Nov. 2[,] some three weeks after it was penned & suppose you must have just received one from me mailed at Quindaro, so I have waited until now to answer yours on account of the many pressing urgent cases, requiring both head work and hard work consequent upon commencing housekeeping, and commencing as I did [tho.?] with no no sewing done, save a few towels & pillow-cases. I have however made carpets, curtains, bed, and table linen in such quantity, that I am taking a little respite

[page 2]

in order to enjoy the delightful weather we have (& have had)[,] whether it is sensible or not.

I was sorry so many of my friends in Mass[,] were disappointed by my not coming east in the autumn. I have occasional letters from different ones telling how they looked for me week after week. I think it was better however that I did not go far with so much uncertainty in regard to politics here, & the events which a day may bring forth. I save myself from anxiety by being at the [port?] of danger.

As for the prospects politically now, I am not enough of a seer to foretell. Yesterday was the Election day. Many thought it best to go into the Election & vote down the Lecompton

[page 3]

Constitution. Charles thought the wisest course, & in fact the only one which promised victory to the Free State men. A little clique has sprung up in Lawrence who think differently & by a [trick?] at the time of the Convention they carried the no voting policy, not however by a majority of the votes. But the people in the Territory were bent upon voting, & it is probable that a good vote will be returned, though quite probably not as large as the other party may bring in through frauds. We are always on the eve of a crisis, so of course we are now. Friends in Washington think the Lecompton Constitution will not be accepted, that the President will waver in his determination through fear. We hope as much -- yes -- the Free

[page 4]

State Party will be prepared for anything[.]

We have had a most lovely winter. We had a few days of wind & cold in Nov. but for several weeks the weather has been as warm as October in NE. And such brilliant nights too. it seemed almost wicked to close ones eyes & shut out their brightness, but the weariness of nature will often make stranger appeals than its love of beauty. Yes.

I am housekeeping on the hill. There are five in our family, besides much company, gentlemen staying several days. Mr[.] Chase of Washington left yesterday after a visit of four days. Mrs[.] [Saul?] is with me, takes charge of the cooking department &c. Willie, her son[.] a lad of fifteen cuts wood &c. J.C. Smith is with Dr[.] as usual. In the evening, when we are not occupied with company he reads to us, some valuable treatise, history or something entertaining. Dr[.] & he went to Topeka yesterday to attend the session of the Legislature.

I suppose Annette will wonder where so many of us stay, so I will tell her. C. & I have the new [room?] on the end. We have a nice spring

[page 5]

bed, & when we have company, we vacate that for them then. Mrs[.] S. sleeps in the front room on lounge, Mrs[.] E. in front chamber, Willie on lounge in back chamber. Then we set up a bedstead in back chamber & curtained it all around. When we are driven from our room, we resort to that.

We use the room next the kitchen for dining room, with carpet, lounge & book-case it makes a very pleasant room. Charles took up the floor in the kitchen & dug a cellar himself. We go into it by a trap door which is under the table near the window. Tell Annette she need not laugh--for I also am used to Kansas inconveniences think it is very fine. We have a barn, two horses, twelve hens, & a dozen cords of wood, a good part of it already cut and piled, so I think we are living somewhat in nice shape. Water as usual brought

[page 6]

from town, spring water. We have tin eaves--troughs for rain water, but it has not rained for more than four weeks.

I have walked down town several times since I came back. Mrs[.] Hunt was very sick when I came, so I was down at work all day, & walked home two evenings alone after 8 'o' clock when it was so dark I could only keep the road as it lightened. Have walked over to Emilie's & back. I forgot to say that E. was married in October to Mr[.] Grover. Alfred comes to Lawrence occasionally, but scarcely ever to the house. I saw Mrs[.] Ross & [MS. illegible] not long ago. They are well & like Kansas exceedingly.

I do not know whether we are to live here or at Quindaro permanently. The claim still unsettled. Prospects are that the [MS. illegible] will be removed. Such is the word from [MS. illegible].

Am sorry Emilie's health is not better. Wouldnt it do her good to come & spend a year with me. I would take all the care of her any body could. Charles will probably go East in the Spring. He is as usual full of business. I shall try to go home another fall & see all my friends. Give love to all. I wish I could look in upon you & see Mother & all the little ones. Was surprised to learn Lucy was a mother.

[cross-hatched text on first page]

There is a fine prospect that Kansas will be peopled without Emigration from the East. The little ones come thicker and faster. I hope this letter will make up for my delay, by its length. A's things are here, packed away. I spread her carpet down on the back chamber floor. I thought it would [require?] less than to be rolled up. The mice had ate it a little. More soon.

Aff[ectionate]ly & Truly
Sara

[P.S.] How is Nettie?