

From James Henry Lane to R.M. Ainsworth

[page 1]

Lawrence

Dec. 1, 1855

D[ea]r friend[.]

I am not fully posted as to all the facts connected with the Transaction of which you speak[.] having been absent at Topeka when they occurred[.] My understanding however is--that a Free State man by the name of Dow was cowardly & brutally murdered by a gang of Proslavery men--near Willow Springs--that afterward they engaged in the murder for the purpose of getting up a difficulty in the Territory[.] swore out a peace warrant against a man by the name of Branson[.] a true great gentleman--that the Sheriff went to Branson[']s store late in the night[.] pointed his pistol at Branson[']s head & without showing his warrant compelled him to mount a mule & go with them--that on the road they were met by an equal number of Free State men who peaceably inquired if Branson was in the crowd[.] he[.] Branson[.] answered he was & a prisoner[.] they said to him come out which he did.

It is understood this city is to be demolished without delay & Dr[.] Starr will be pleased to see you & your friend with the "baggage[.]"

Yours,

Lane

Dr. Ainsworth

Wyandotte

[P.S.] If Kansas men [burned?] it was their act to prejudice our party[.]