

Bypaths of Kansas History

LITERAL REPORTING

A Missouri wedding as reported in *The Kansas Weekly Herald*, Leavenworth, June 27, 1857.

MARRIED.—In the county of Crawford and State of Missouri, by the Rev. E. H. Headlee, at two o'clock, June 11th, 1857, between a hazel thicket and the wagon, Mr. J. M. Vanslyke to Mrs. Matilda Morgan, both in a traveling condition.

AN OFFER OF PUBLIC SERVICE WITH NO TAKER

From correspondence of the executive department of Kansas territory, Archives division, Kansas State Historical Society:

COBOURG, CANADA WEST

January 1st, 1858

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE OF KANSAS

SIR

As I am making arrangements for carrying on a very extensive Land Agency Establishment, on board the Leviathan Steamship, now being launched in England, upon the following principles, I should feel obliged by your informing me if your State will join in conferring on me, an appointment for the sale of your lands.

First I shall have an office on board the Ship under the name of the "American Land Agency Office, by authority" containing maps and all information relative to each district.

Secondly. I shall always sail with the vessel: and on the return trip from England, intend lecturing on Board, and Selling Lands by private contract and Auction.

Thirdly, While in England I intend delivering lectures on the advantages of America &c, distributing Pamphlets and selling Lands, returning with the purchasers, & taking them to their respective purchases in order to protect them.

Fourthly. To sell the already cultivated Lands for private parties in order to bring out capitalists, and a more respectable class of Farmers, thereby forcing the present occupants back on the wild lands.

Fifthly. After being furnished with all the requisites from the various States, Territories, Provinces &c I intend selling on commission paying all my own expenses.

Your early reply in order to facilitate my arrangements will greatly oblige.

I have the honor to be

Sir

Your most obedt Servt

THOS. F. NICHOLL Land Agent

THOS. F. NICHOLL,

LAWRENCE, K. T. Jan. 19, 1858.

SIR,

I have just received your letter of Jan. 1st, 1858, in which you propose to act as the agent for the "State of Kansas," "on board the Leviathan Steamship," and assist her in disposing of her public lands. There are two or three slight obstacles in the way which must first be removed before your wishes can be complied with. First, there is no such institution as the "State of Kansas," known to the Constitution or laws of the United States although there are two constitutions now before the people contending for the honor of transforming this Territory into a Sovereign State, and another proposition of a similar character is now being discussed by the Legislature. Which of these will have the honor of bringing the new state into the world, or whether either of them will be able to do so, is, just at this time a matter of some considerable doubt.

But this difficulty being removed, obstacle number two, presents itself. The "State of Kansas" expects to become the owner of a goodly quantity of lands, and should she determine to dispose of them at private sale it is very probable that she will find a number of gentlemen among her own citizens who are sufficiently patriotic to undertake the job, and who may be foolish enough to suppose they could do it as well as yourself, especially if they were to get a handsome per centage by way of commission on the sales and be under no obligation to account for the principal. It is possible, however, that you might convince such gentlemen and the "State of Kansas," that they are or would be in error in this matter, and thereby get rid of that objection.

Obstacle number three, is to this effect: Some people here are foolish enough to believe that it would not be possible for you to give exact and reliable information about every quarter section of land in this Territory without first personally inspecting the same, and they are too conscientious to allow an agent of theirs to make a misrepresentation. But this might be remedied by devoting your time for two or three years to travelling over and examining the country, by which time the "Leviathan" may possibly be launched and "afloat on the briney deep."

The fourth obstacle I fear you will find more difficult than all the rest. You say you propose to bring out "a more respectable class of farmers, thereby forcing the present occupants back on the wild lands." Some of us are silly enough to believe that our farmers here are as respectable as any you are likely to bring from England. In this we don't think we can be mistaken but energy and enterprise will overcome many difficulties, and as Richelieu said "there is no such word as *fail*," you, entertaining the same opinion, may try the experiment of bringing a cargo of the "respectable class of farmers" to whom you refer and make an exhibit of them on our western prairies, when it may be possible for you to procure an expression of opinion on this subject from *our* farmers.

Unless you think you can remove each and every one of these obstacles, it will hardly be worth while for you to prosecute this matter any farther.

Very Respectfully

Your Obt. Srvt.

J. W. DENVER

Secretary Kansas Territory.