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**Jayhawk to Phoenix:**  
**Diversity in Leadership**  
**in Lawrence, KS**  
**before, during and after Quantrill's Raid**



City Seal of Lawrence, Kansas

Source: Official website of the city of Lawrence  
URL: <http://www.lawrenceks.org/images/cityseal.gif>

Lawrence, Kansas has a long history of being a center for progressive values in the Flint Hills region. Starting with Lawrence's founding through the Massachusetts-based Emigrant Aid Company in 1854 with the stated goal of sending abolitionists to Kansas, to its reputation today of being the most liberal town in Kansas, Lawrence has retained the political and social influence of its New England genesis. However, this contrast of Lawrence as a progressive stronghold in a generally conservative landscape was more pronounced in Lawrence's infancy. The early population of Lawrence was staunchly abolitionist, views that not uncommonly materialized physically during the time period between Lawrence's founding in 1854 and the conclusion of the American Civil War in the form of warfare with pro-slavery, often Missourian, settlers. The most dramatic event in Kansas in this period of border warfare with Missouri was the raid of Lawrence in 1863 by William Quantrill and his guerrilla army.

The citizens of Lawrence, including women, African Americans, Native Americans, and immigrants, groups that had been granted a high level of equality in Lawrence by contemporary standards, showed great leadership during Quantrill's raid in saving lives and property. Although more than a third of Lawrence's adult male population had been killed, Lawrence drew strength from its remaining population and rebuilt. From this event comes the motto of Lawrence that, to this day, can be seen on the city: "from ashes to immortality". A key element in the leadership shown during Quantrill's raid in 1863 and the revival of Lawrence, KS following the raid was the diversity of the community and the unprecedented political and social equality afforded its citizens regardless of race or gender. After the raid, Lawrence was reborn like a phoenix from the ashes and was better able to survive as a settlement due to its values of equality and acceptance of diversity it have fostered before the destruction of Quantrill's famous raid.

The idea of sending settlers to Kansas to begin a free-state community was inspired by the repeal of the Missouri Compromise in 1854. The Missouri Compromise, passed by the United States Congress in 1820, had restricted slavery in the Louisiana Territory to just Missouri. Its repeal came in the form of the Kansas-Nebraska Act which stated that Kansas and Nebraska were new territories whose citizens had popular sovereignty rights to vote on whether or not to become free or slave states. This change of policy in 1854 was met with great concern and even anger on behalf of many New England residents, a stereotypically abolitionist section of the United States during the time of the onset of the Civil War. The Kansas-Nebraska Act also opened up much territory that had previously been set aside for Native American tribes in Kansas and Nebraska to Euro-American settlement. The Kansas-Nebraska Act was the first opportunity that abolitionists of New England seized upon as their means to ensure the permanent status of Kansas as a free-state. A description of how the Kansas-Nebraska Act was seen as an opportunity was printed in the *Christian Reader*, a newspaper founded and published by Unitarian Rev. David Reed of Boston.<sup>1</sup> The *Christian Reader* stated that it was necessary to send to Kansas's "borders quite speedily a large emigration [of anti-slavery colonists].-It may thus by preoccupancy be secured to freedom".<sup>2</sup> In 1854, shortly after the passing of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, in Worcester, Massachusetts, a man named Eli Thayer initiated the starting of a company to raise money to send abolitionist-minded colonists to settle Kansas with the objective of populating Kansas with a citizenship that would vote to establish Kansas as a free-state. Thayer partnered with another Massachusetts man named Charles Robinson in forming the New England Emigrant Aid Company. The majority of the funds used to carry out Thayer's and Robinson's campaign were donated by the rich and benevolent Amos A. Lawrence, a Bostonian philanthropist, merchant, and supporter of Thayer and Robinson's free-state ideals.<sup>3</sup>

The New England Emigrant Aid Company then recruited and helped pay for the emigration of a group of 96 colonists to the Kansas Kaw River Valley to establish the settlement that grew into the town of Lawrence. The settlement was named after its benefactor Amos Lawrence.<sup>4</sup> This group of colonists was probably generally more radical in their abolitionist views than the typical New Englander, given that they were willing to abandon their comfortable Victorian lifestyle for the harsh western frontier all for the sake of keeping Kansas free of slavery. The journey to Kansas also worked to further radicalize the settlers; many lost family members and friends on the wagon trail and in the primitive conditions of early Lawrence. Joseph Savage, a member of this first group of settlers to colonize Lawrence, returned to Hartford, Vermont for his wife and five children in 1855 only for them all to die on the return journey and in the days after their arrival except Joseph himself and only one of his children before the end of 1857.<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, Savage remained in Lawrence and later recounted the Lawrence was “a town that still lies and promises to be all its founders ever anticipated in their fondest dreams.” These founders were the Emigrant Aid Society of which Savage notes that, without the help of, “Kansas could never have been settled by free State men.” On their journey west the Kansas emigrants sang a song to the tune of Auld Lang Syne that Savage recorded. The last verse sums up the idea of the mission the first group of Lawrence’s settlers felt they were fulfilling: “We cross the prairie as of old, the pilgrims cross the sea, to make the West, as they the East, The homestead of the free!”<sup>6</sup>

Progressively principled institutions from New England continued to have great sway over the politics and of the society it had began on the western frontier. *The Kansas Herald of Freedom*, one of Lawrence’s first newspapers and, as its name suggests, a promoter of the abolitionist cause, was largely an Emigrant Aid Company mouthpiece.<sup>7</sup> Another anti-slavery

group also saw Kansas and the town of Lawrence as an opportunity to spread their progressive message. This was the American Unitarian Association (A.U.A.). In 1855 the A.U.A. sent a Unitarian minister, Rev. Ephraim Nute, to establish a Unitarian congregation in Lawrence. Nute was told by the A.U.A. that his sermons must be in line with the anti-slavery stance taken by the A.U.A. Not long after Nute's arrival in Lawrence in 1855, the A.U.A. sponsored the construction of a Unitarian Church in Lawrence, a church that even back in the New England states was known for supporting the equal rights of underprivileged groups.<sup>8</sup>

As can be inferred from these origins and associated social ideals, Lawrence quickly became known as an abolitionist center as well as a main station and even destination of contraband slaves that traveled on the Underground Railroad. According to Richard Cordley, Lawrence resident and historian from the time of the first settlement to late the 1800s, "it was said that the line of the Underground Railroad ran directly through Lawrence and Topeka, then on through Nebraska and Iowa", eventually entering Canada, assisting a great number of the contraband former slaves on their journey to their freedom. Cordley and his wife themselves hosted a former slave which he called "Lizzie" in his account of his experiences with the Underground Railroad. In his book *Pioneer Days in Kansas*, Cordley tells the story of "Lizzie's" escape from federal authorities with the help of the citizens of Lawrence and their aid in helping her to continue on her journey to Canada.<sup>9</sup> Another active member of the Underground Railroad in Lawrence claimed in 1859 that around three hundred escaped former slaves had been assisted on their journey to freedom by the abolitionist settlers of Lawrence.<sup>10</sup> James (Jim) Henry Lane, a Kansas Senator, Union general, and Lawrence citizen whose fame for being a Kansas abolitionist is probably only surpassed by that of John Brown, claimed in a speech to the New York Emancipation League to have personally been involved in helping secure the freedom of 2,500

former slaves!<sup>11</sup> This number is certainly exaggerated but Lawrence was undoubtedly well known as a stop where fugitive slaves were guaranteed to find hospitality. Yet another abolitionist citizen of Lawrence writing on the subject of the Underground Railroad described the town where he resided as “the best advertised anti-slavery town in the world, and where the slave was sure to receive sympathy and encouragement”.<sup>12</sup>

Not all African Americans fleeing the institution of slavery in Missouri and other slave states journeyed as far as Canada. As the town of Lawrence grew, there was a corresponding trend for former slaves to remain in Kansas and make Lawrence their home. By 1862 there were enough contraband former slaves to warrant the building of the Second Congregational Church of Lawrence or the “Freemen’s Church”, a sanctuary built by and for the former slave community in Lawrence.<sup>13</sup> This was actually the first church for fugitive slaves in the history of the United States.<sup>14</sup> More and more African American families emigrated to Lawrence and by the end of 1862, within one year, Lawrence constructed four African American churches. Besides the Second Congregation Church, the Second Colored Baptist Church, the Second Missionary Baptist Colored Church, and the African Methodist Episcopal Church were all organized in 1862.<sup>15</sup> In January of 1862 the Lawrence State Journal ran an article stating “contraband [the term used for escaped former slaves] are becoming one of the institutions of Lawrence”.<sup>16</sup>

The former slaves were generally welcomed and integrated in the population of Lawrence. An early Lawrence man named Mr. S. N. Simpson started a free night school where former slaves were taught to read, write, and do simple math. This was a highly innovative move considering it was illegal to teach literacy to slaves in the United States at this time. The school was opened in 1862 with approximately 100 attendees. Students included women and men, the

young and the old. The students were divided into small groups of 6 or 8 and were taught by volunteer literate teachers (mostly women).<sup>17</sup> Former slaves quickly became integrated and important members of the Lawrence community, working skilled-labor jobs such as blacksmithing.<sup>18</sup> Many former slaves also were hired to help with seasonal farm work. Since they greatly added to the number of bodies working the Kansas fields, former slaves helped to make 1863 one of the best years for wheat harvest in Kansas in the mid 1800s. In fact, there had been a wheat famine for the several years before the influx of these farm laborers that had previously worked for no pay in Missouri. This extra season farm labor was particularly needed at this time in Kansas because many of Kansas's able bodied men were employed in military service and unable to work fulltime as farmers.<sup>19</sup>

Many former slaves also joined Kansas militias. In September 1861, a Jayhawker (a term used for Kansas abolitionists that made militant attacks on pro-slavery Missourians) deployment in Missouri near Fort Scott and under the leadership of Lawrence's General Jim Lane, encountered a large group of escaped slaves that had come to take refuge under the protection of Lane's army. The fugitive slaves were secured shelter under Lane's Army and plans were made to sneak them across the Kansas border to freedom. The next day however, Hugh Dunn Fisher, one of Lane's officers, was ordered to give thirty fugitives rifles while heading back toward the Kansas border.<sup>20</sup> This assembly was perhaps the first group of organized and armed African American soldiers in a Union army during the American Civil War.

The Jayhawkers continued to free Missouri's slaves and recruit the men from the former slave population to be soldiers throughout the Civil War. The account of Andrew Williams, a former Missourian slave, describes how his mother and her seven children, him included, were freed by the Sixth Kansas Calvary in 1862. The Kansas soldiers that freed Williams raided his

former owner's plantation and thieved some pigs as well as emancipating his family. In the words of Williams "one of the officers said to my mother don't you want to go to Kans and Be free my mother Said yess Sir get your children in this wagon". The Williams family moved to Lawrence and Andrew eventually joined the Seventh Kansas Calvary.<sup>21</sup>

Between 1862 and 1865 the main occupation for young male African Americans in Kansas quickly became being a soldier.<sup>22</sup> Kansas army units, without the approval of federal authority, led the way in the nation for including African American soldiers. In stark contrast to Kansas military policies was Abraham Lincoln's administration's policies which, for the first 15 months of the Civil War, refused to allow African Americans to join Union forces. Kansas militias were regularly deploying African American units months before Lincoln's Secretary of War Simon Cameron was fired for advocating the use of African American troops. Another Jayhawker general and follower of John Brown, Charles Jennison, led the "Tri-color Brigade," a small army which included white, Native American, and African American units. Senator and General Jim Lane furthermore did not keep the use of African American troops a secret from the United States War Department which chastised Lane and stated that it did not allow the service of African American troops.

Lane continued to recruit and deploy African American troops however, and though African American troops were not allowed in the federal Union army for the beginning of the Civil War, they fought honorably in Kansas militia units. In the battle of Cabin Creek, Union units from Kansas fought in the first battle of the American Civil War where African Americans and whites fought side by side in the same army. In the Battle of Honey Springs, African American units from Kansas fought exceptionally, capturing a Texas regiment's flag and refusing to lose their ground. In 1864, African American soldiers in Kansas received equal pay to



white soldiers of the same rank . It is also evident that the bravery of African American soldiers in Kansas units helped to convince the Lincoln administration to integrate African American troops into the Union army at large through federal policy.<sup>23</sup>

African Americans were not the only nonwhite group incorporated into the early Lawrence community. The nearest Native American tribe to the vicinity of Lawrence was the Delaware. This tribe numbered about 1000 members and were on good terms with the early town of Lawrence.<sup>24</sup> Some members of the Delaware tribe, as well as the Shawnee, another tribe numbering about 300, lived in and around Lawrence, had learned English, and had partially integrated into the culture and society of the Lawrence settlers.<sup>25</sup> In 1858, a reporter for the New York Times travelled to Kansas to do a special news story on the movement by Kansans to enter the Union as a free-state. The reporter, who unfortunately remained unnamed in his article, visited several members of the Shawnee tribe, including the chief, Chief Pascal Fish, to listen to the “testimony of one who certainly [was] not a “Minion of the Emigrant Aid Societies”” and yet also held a strong free-state conviction. This special correspondent for the New York Times reported that it was evident that the Shawnee were militarily cooperating with the Jayhawkers of Lawrence to fight Missouri Bushwhacker militias.<sup>26</sup> Considering the high level of hostilities many settler communities contemporarily had with Native American tribes, it is remarkable that the Shawnee and the Delaware tribes were in line politically and even willing to help militarily with the causes of the settlers of Lawrence.

Lawrence was further diversified in having a large German population. German immigrants were attracted to Lawrence’s free-state stance and more welcomed in the Lawrence community than in many other frontier areas.<sup>27</sup> An article in the New York Times written in 1857, only three years after the Emigrant Aid Company send the first group of 96 settlers to

Lawrence, notes an influx of Germans to the Lawrence area. A group of 25 German families moved from Hartford, Connecticut, their first location of settlement in America, to Lawrence at this time. They brought with them a minister, Rev. Mr. Legantete, who delivered a sermon in German from the podium of the Unitarian Church in Lawrence, as there were not yet any established German churches upon the new settlers' arrival. Another slightly smaller group of German immigrants, whom had first attempted settlement in Chicago, migrated south to live slightly outside of Lawrence in the same year of 1857.<sup>28</sup> A reporter traveling in Kansas in the late 1850s claimed that German business owners were so great in number in Lawrence that the number of German names on shops and warehouses was almost greater than the amount of English names.<sup>29</sup> By the early 1860s, German immigrants no longer had to attend church service in other churches' sanctuaries, such as in the Unitarian Church. Two churches were constructed where sermons were given in German.<sup>30</sup> The German community of Lawrence was well integrated and thriving in Lawrence from shortly after Lawrence's origin.

Lawrence's welcoming of German immigrant communities was not typical of American settlements in the mid 1800s. Germans were contemporarily discriminated against in populated areas across the United States. Germans were particularly despised by Missouri border ruffians who portrayed the "Dutch", as many Missourians mistakenly called German immigrants, as "brutal, bombastic, incompetent, and cowardly."<sup>31</sup> In an account written by Quantrill's scout John McCorkle, a "Dutchman" was an easy target that threw his hands above his head and surrendered quickly.<sup>32</sup> Considering the discrimination Germans would have faced in many other United States cities, the German community's acceptance in Lawrence was a reason for the high influx of German emigrants.

Women also held many leadership roles in the society of early Lawrence. In 1857, a group of women in Lawrence organized a Temperance Vigilance Committee to rid the town of whiskey.<sup>33</sup> In one instance during this campaign, 25 years before the exploits of the famous Carrie Nation, the women of Lawrence organized the raid of a newly opened saloon and smashed every bottle and barrel they could find inside with axes and hatchets.<sup>34</sup> There was also a contemporary women's movement to prevent prohibition. The honorable Rev. Fisher of Lawrence referred to the women of the anti-prohibition movement as "rummies". In a counter-scheme to resist the movement of the prohibitionists, a drunken group of these "rummies" actually arrested Elizabeth Margaret Fisher, the reverend's wife and a supporter of prohibition, and held her "under bond for six weeks. The ladies signed her bond and would not allow a man to sign with them."<sup>35</sup> It is evident that the women of Lawrence were strong-willed and determined to carry out their own agendas without patriarchal overbearing.

The women of early Lawrence were politically active in a plethora of fronts. A women's group from Douglas County pushed to have women's suffrage included in the Kansas Constitution. This group wrote a petition and collected 560 signatures in which they demanded the right to have equal "legal and constitutional guarantees enjoyed by any class of citizens" for women. They furthermore "protest[ed] against any constitutional monopoly or pre-eminence of rights, based on sex."<sup>36</sup> Although they did not achieve their number one goal of women's suffrage in this campaign, the women of Lawrence did help win "unprecedented right[s] to acquire and possess property and retain equal custody of children."<sup>37</sup> This right was not guaranteed anywhere in the United States outside of Kansas until five years later in the state of New York.<sup>38</sup> Women in Lawrence were also quite active in the abolitionist movement. To name one of many, Eliza Gardner's house was a well-frequented stop on the Underground Railroad.<sup>39</sup> Mrs. Anna

Morgan Ward, one of the last of the survivors of Quantrill's raid, recalled years later how her mother had organized their home to be an central Underground Railroad station.<sup>40</sup> In her obituary, Mrs. C. H. Smith, a settler who came to Kansas in 1859 is described as an active participant in the free-state movement.<sup>41</sup> Women undoubtedly played a critical role in the political and activist movements of early Lawrence.

Women were also powerful figures in Lawrence's school systems. In her giant scrapbooks put together towards the end of her life, Sara Robinson, one of most well-known women leaders in early Lawrence, cut and pasted an article from an unknown newsprint source entitled "The Kansas Woman". In the article it is written: "The Kansas woman was our first teacher".<sup>42</sup> Many of the first teachers in Lawrence were women, including Kate Kellogg, Lucy M. Wilder, Henrietta Ross, Sarah A. Brown, Lizzie Haskell, and Isabella G. Oakley.<sup>43</sup> Women also held administrative roles in Lawrence's schools. In 1858 the principle of Lawrence's high school was Mrs. Mary Carpenter.<sup>44</sup> In 1861, with the help of nationally famous women's suffrage activist Clarina I. H. Nichols, the women of Lawrence lobbied for and won the right to vote in school elections.<sup>45</sup>

The strength of the pioneer women of Lawrence can also be seen in a story reported by the Lawrence correspondent for the Boston *Traveler* on Oct. 22, 1856. A sixty-year-old German immigrant woman used a pail of boiling hot water to threaten a group of "border-ruffians". The woman asserted that if the ruffians would not leave, she would scald them (they had come for a cow they claimed was theirs). The woman, a Mrs. Everhart, was threatened by the men with a rifle to not make use of her hot weapon, but she flung the pail of water at them nonetheless and the ruffians only just escaped receiving burns by the quickness of their flight.<sup>46</sup>

Indeed, Lawrence was far more radical in its ideology, especially in its abolitionist views, when compared to the contemporary federal government under James Buchanan Jr., and even his successor Abraham Lincoln. This can be seen in Gen. Lane's use of African American troops before it became federal policy. It can be seen in the extreme by the example of John Brown. Brown was an organizer for the abolitionist movement in Kansas and lived many of his years that he was most active in fighting for the abolitionist cause in Lawrence. Brown's radical abolitionist principles led him to murder in the name of abolishing the institution of slavery. A price was put on his head both by the Missouri government and President Buchanan.<sup>47</sup> Brown was an extreme radical but was certainly not the only radical to live in Lawrence in its early days. In a letter written by Amos A. Lawrence, the philanthropist whose donation to the Emigrant Aid Society enabled the formation of Lawrence, Amos Lawrence describes the actions of the people of the town named for him: "They [the people of Lawrence] will not obey the Missouri laws and ought not; but they never have and never will resist the U. S. Government, even when by its troops is has undertaken to enforce these laws."<sup>48</sup> The fact that Amos Lawrence had to defend the legality of the actions of the people of Lawrence implies they were involved in radical exploits.

Even the early Kansas legislature was often more in line with Confederate political views than the radicalism of Lawrence abolitionism. The first legislation passed by the legislature was an act that harshly condemned offenses toward slave property.<sup>49</sup> This was a strike against the Lawrencian Jayhawkers that raided Missourian plantations with the justification that they were only harming unmoral slave owners. The Kansas Legislature also enacted a measure to prevent free-staters from molesting U.S. troops. In a letter to a friend, John Lawrie, an original settler of Lawrence and a member of Gen. Jim Lane's Kansas brigades, stated that he was once arrested by

United States troops for participating in Jayhawker exploits. Lawrie also stated that he found himself at home with the “hatred of tyranny” that was commonplace in Lawrence, Kansas.<sup>50</sup> Undoubtedly, Lawrence was a center for radical abolitionism in the region and arguably the entire United States.

William Quantrill himself was most likely not raised to despise these values of acceptance that gave Lawrence its’ unique culture. Quantrill was born in Dover, Ohio in 1837. In 1857, the young Quantrill moved to Lawrence, Kansas and worked odd jobs under the false name “Charley Hart”. Quantrill took a train to Utah where he lived for a few years, worked in the mining industry, and then traveled back to Lawrence. Sometime after Quantrill left for Utah he began to associate with a group of men whose ideology was similar to the politics of the Missourian Bushwhackers. His politics grew more in line with the Confederacy as he had to move to Kansas City after fleeing Lawrence for the impending prosecution his supposed theft of a horse.<sup>51</sup> Soon after his quick departure of Lawrence, Quantrill became a fulltime Bushwhacker and eventually became the leader of a band of approximately 300 hundred men that raided Kansas Jayhawkers settlements for political and personal economic reasons.<sup>52</sup> On August 21, 1863, he led the infamous raid on Lawrence. This was perhaps the most dramatic event that occurred in the Civil War in Kansas. Quantrill escaped capture from Union forces after the raid but his life did not last much longer. On June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1865, Quantrill died, 27 days after being shot in Kentucky by a Union militia detail that had been charged with his capture.<sup>53</sup>

Although Quantrill no doubt held a personal grudge against the community of Lawrence since his quick exit, many of the other raiders that followed Quantrill point to an incident in which a prison collapsed on a group of women in Kansas City as motivation for the raiders to take revenge upon Lawrence. The nine women in the prison had been arrested by the Union

army in Kansas City for being Southern sympathizers. However, the women were also all relatives of leaders in Quantrill's army. The prison, an old dilapidated building, collapsed while the women were stuck in the basement. Two were saved by Union soldiers and one more survived the collapse. The remaining six women however, were crushed under the weight of the building and perished. The many of Quantrill's group of raiders believed that the Union army had actually "removed a large section of the foundation wall of the woman's prison", though there is little evidence to back this conspiracy. According to John McCorkle, Quantrill's scout, "this foul murder was the direct cause of the famous raid on Lawrence, Kansas."<sup>54</sup> This account, where women are portrayed as helpless victims, offers an interesting contrast to the glorification of the value of leadership in stories of Lawrence's women. The story of the women portrayed as innocent victims and killed in the prison collapse was perpetrated as justification for the violence committed against the Lawrence community in Quantrill's raid. Another reason for the raid was undoubtedly the desire for revenge for parallel raids of Kansan Jayhawkers destroying Bushwhacker lives and property. For all these reasons, the raiders of Quantrill's band were more radicalized toward Confederate politics and their political views were in heightened contrast to the progressive views of the Lawrencian free-staters at the time of the raid.

Before Quantrill's 1863 raid, Lawrence had already come under fire from pro-slavery Missourian attackers several times. In November 1855 a large band of raiders marched to Lawrence to destroy what they called the "abolition nuisance". However, Lawrence was warned and prepared for the raiders' arrival and the Missourians were consequently forced back by the militias of Lawrence and their Sharps rifles. In what is known as the "First Seize of Lawrence" of May 1856, Missouri factions took a Kansas grand jury's ruling in which several buildings in Lawrence were declared "nuisances" as an excuse to shoot at one of the buildings named in the

ruling, the Eldredge brothers' Free-State Hotel, with a cannon and then burn it down. Some of the women of Lawrence reportedly stayed in the rifle pits with the men in the defense of Lawrence during this seize in their determination to be part of the fight. In the "Second Seize of Lawrence", occurring in the fall of 1856, Missouri raiders robbed and murdered several well-known free-stater activists on the raiders' route to Lawrence. However, upon their arrival, Lawrence itself was too heavily armed for the Missourian raiders to penetrate and therefore little damage was incurred to the town itself.<sup>55</sup>

At noon on the 19<sup>th</sup> of August 1863, Quantrill assembled his Bushwhacker gang of around three hundred armed and mounted men and headed toward Lawrence. They arrived the next day and were given orders by Quantrill to kill every adult man they found, but to not kill women and children.<sup>56</sup> The first citizens of Lawrence they encountered were a young couple out for a horse ride. The woman, Sally Young, was captured by Quantrill's men and forced to guide the raiders to the homes of abolitionists targeted by the Bushwhackers. Young intervened on behalf of many of the people on Quantrill's hit list for their protection from death by Quantrill's raiders' guns.<sup>57</sup> "For some she plead, for others she grew bold enough to order that they might be spared...She never faltered where she thought she could save the lives or property of her friends."<sup>58</sup> Sally Young was perhaps the first but certainly not the last of Lawrence's brave women whose actions during the raid prevented loss of life and property. As Lawrence resident and historian Richard Cordley writes in his account of the raid, by far the most extensive and complete primary source account,

We would like to...record in detail the deeds of heroism enacted by the brave women of Lawrence who in that fearful hour saved many a precious life, and extinguished the flames in nearly a hundred burning dwellings, but volumes would be required for such an undertaking.<sup>59</sup>

As stated by Cordley, there are a plethora of stories involving the bravery of Lawrence's women during Quantrill's infamous raid. One unnamed lady attempted to distract and even talk



some humanity into the raiders by striking up conversations with members of Quantrill's band from her front yard as the raiders rode by.<sup>60</sup> A woman named Mrs. Bell extinguished the fire from her burning house and saved it.<sup>61</sup> A Mrs. Hindman prevented a cornfield full of refugees hiding from the danger of the raid from being searched through her wit. She talked a group of raiders out of entering the cornfield by telling them they were welcome into her blazing hot cornfield in a trick that succeeded in keeping them from searching the hiding spot of many a fugitive. She personally knew the cornfield was scorching in the heat of August as she had been delivering water to the cornfield refugees before her encounter with the raiders.<sup>62</sup>

A woman named Mrs. Carpenter's sister saved the Carpenter's house by putting out the flames while Mrs. Carpenter was distracted by the death of her husband.<sup>63</sup> Mrs. Sargeant and Miss Mary Hanom moved the body of the injured but still living Mr. Young into a pile of dead bodies to disguise him as a corpse and to prevent further fatal injury to him.<sup>64</sup> Mrs. Thornton ran between her husband and his would-be murder raider and directly prevented him from being shot by using her body as a human shield.<sup>65</sup> Elizabeth Margaret Fisher tricked several groups of Bushwhackers who were particularly interested in killing her husband as he was in Gen. Lane's army. She hid her husband in the basement but told Quantrill's men he had run off over the hill with their older children. She even gave the Bushwhackers a lantern to search her house to put them off. After they set fire to her house and stayed guard to watch her, she wrapped Mr. Fisher in a big carpet, disguising him as a mere object she was saving from the fire, and moved him under a willow tree outside of her house with the help of her next door neighbor, Mrs. Mary Shugro.<sup>66</sup> Mrs. Morgan was able to save her house by paying off a group of raiders with a bribe of 50 cents.<sup>67</sup> Mrs. Grosvenor is said to have grabbed the reins of no less than Quantrill's own

horse and was therefore able to yank his mount around by the reins in order to prevent Quantrill from shooting his target.<sup>68</sup>

Another unnamed woman stood in the middle of town and helped 8-10 men find refuge in a well-hidden cellar. A group of Bushwhackers discovered that their victims were disappearing in the vicinity of the woman and threatened to kill her if she did not reveal where the men were. She is said to have been unmoved by their threats and coolly answered: ““You may shoot me,” ... “But you will not find the men.”” Finding they could not intimidate her, the Bushwhackers left.”<sup>69</sup>

Mr. Winchell, with raiders at his heels, ran into the house of Rev. Charles Reynolds for shelter. He was saved by the wit of Mrs. Reynolds who quickly dressed Winchell in a dress and bonnet, shaved him with a knife, and “set him in a rocking chair with a baby in his arms ... christening him “Aunt Betsie”.” The Reynolds’ house was searched by the raiders but the true identity of “Aunt Betsie” was not discovered.<sup>70</sup> Mrs. Reed, whose house was lit on fire and saved by her seven times throughout the length of the raid, blew out each match one by one as they were struck by the last raider in town, Larkin Skaggs, while he was attempting to burn her house down. Larkin Skaggs is said to have commented that Mrs. Reed was the queerest woman had had ever seen.<sup>71</sup> The actions women of Lawrence throughout Quantrill’s raid prevented damage and saved many lives that would have been lost without their leadership in the face of a crisis. Even Quantrill himself is said to have remarked “The ladies of Lawrence were brave and plucky”.<sup>72</sup>

The acts of valor of two young and unmarried women during Quantrill’s raid were the beginning of love matches that resulted in marriage. In one case an unnamed young man was on the run from the raiders and searching for a hiding spot. He was helped under a pig pen by a

young woman he previously was not acquainted with but who hid with him and there started their romance. In another case, the maid of a saloon owner who was killed early in the raid was made to serve drinks to the raiders. She flirted with the raiders and served them liberal amounts of alcohol in an attempt to distract them from their task of killing Lawrence's men. A young man running by the saloon was caught by the Bushwhackers and was about to be killed when the serving girl ran out in front of the young man and emotionally proclaimed that he was "her only brother". Actually the girl had no previous acquaintance with the young man but his life was spared on behalf of the girl's good terms with the unknowing raiders. This was also the beginning of a romance between the maid and the young man who were later married and known as Mr. and Mrs. Haseltine.<sup>73</sup>

Since Quantrill openly targeted the African American population, they generally hid themselves well.<sup>74</sup> However, African Americans also displayed their bravery by helping to save lives in their community during the raid. In one case, an unnamed officer in Gen. Lane's army escaped raiders by a similar means to "Aunt Betsie". He ran into the house of an African American family who helped him into a dress and bonnet and sent him out the back door "in the twinkling of an eye".<sup>75</sup>

Native Americans also played a role in the fight on behalf of the community of Lawrence during Quantrill's raid. One individual, the Shawnee scout Pelathe (the Eagle), volunteered to warn Lawrence that Quantrill was coming when the Union army in Kansas City received notice of Quantrill's plans. Quantrill and his band took off from Kansas City several hours before Pelathe learned of this danger for Lawrence and consequently volunteered to play Paul Revere. He spurred his horse on until the horse died from exhaustion. Pelathe then attempted to run the last 13 or so miles to Lawrence but unfortunately he was too late, Quantrill had already arrived.<sup>76</sup>

The military initiative shown by another Native American tribe during the raid led to the only death of a Bushwhacker during the raid. The Delaware tribe, led by Chief White Turkey, formed a small group of riders that swept through town and chased out the last of Quantrill's raiders. Quantrill's band was already on their way out but White Turkey was able to shoot Larkin Skaggs, the Bushwhacker who was unable to burn down Mrs. Reed's house due to her blowing out his matches, and also the only Bushwhacker killed in the duration of the raid. The Delaware pursued Quantrill's raiders on their flight back to Missouri and two more raiders were caught and scalped by Delaware tribe members.<sup>77</sup>

Quantrill's raid left the community and infrastructure of Lawrence badly damaged. The exact number of those killed in the raid is debatable. John McCorkle, Quantrill's scout, claimed that by the time Quantrill rode out of town, 175 of Lawrence's men had been killed.<sup>78</sup> According to Richard Cordley, Lawrence historian, McCorkle's figure is approximately accurate with the exception that about 25 of the 175 survived their wounds.<sup>79</sup> According to Rev. Fisher, 154 businesses, houses, and other dwellings were burned down.<sup>80</sup> 75 buildings on Massachusetts Street alone were burned down. The total property damage was estimated at 2 million dollars.<sup>81</sup> Approximately 80 women were left widows and 250 children lost their fathers to the raid. These numbers were significant to a former population of only around 2000 residents.<sup>82</sup>

After several days of burying the dead and mourning, the citizens of Lawrence were still in a state of emergency. Most major stocks of food and supplies had been looted or burned down by the raiders. Farmers from the nearby countryside brought in free shipments of food as aid for the disaster-struck community. This food was partially harvested by the ex-slave population that had been drawn to settle in the surrounding area because Lawrence was a well-known refuge that

welcomed the ex-slave community. This aid immediately helped the citizens of Lawrence survive the catastrophe following Quantrill's raid.<sup>83</sup>

After the raid, some residents of Lawrence felt that Lawrence should not be rebuilt. The proximity of the settlement to the Missouri border meant that Quantrill could potentially come back overnight and cause more destruction to Lawrence. However, the majority of the residents of Lawrence felt that the rebuilding of their town was a political and righteous act against the values of the Confederacy and specifically against the strong Missourian raider groups and the proslavery views that these raiders represented. Therefore the residents of Lawrence did not scatter with the winds. Lawrence was "a phoenix who should one day rise again". Citizens who felt strongly about rebuilding felt that abandoning Lawrence would be another defeat of the abolitionist values Lawrence championed.<sup>84</sup> Therefore rebuilding a strong community was seen as the righteous course of action: rebuilding was taking a stance for the liberal values Lawrence continued to stand for.

Women played an instrumental role in the rebuilding of Lawrence. As the mothers of the couple hundred fatherless children of post-raid Lawrence, they inevitably had a deep influence on the future of the town through their influence on their children. Many of the widows of the raid took on new roles as they had become the primary breadwinners in their families. The last survivors of the raid, those who were children during the raid itself, often recollected the great strength of their mothers to maintain their household while taking on the responsibilities previously held by their deceased husbands. Mrs. B. Brechtlesbauer's three children, for example, recalled in an interview for a newspaper article for the Lawrence Journal World on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the raid how their strong German mother supported them after their father was

shot during the raid. Through working odd jobs and selling of self-made goods, Mrs. B Brechtlesbauer was able to support a family of four.<sup>85</sup>

Women also partook in the economical rebuilding of Lawrence. From political leaders before the raid, women acted as civic leaders after the raid. One example of this phenomenon was Annie Marie Bell, whose husband died in the raid and was a mother to five children. Bell opened and managed a restaurant to support her family. Later she additionally opened a boarding house.<sup>86</sup> Bell remarried after the raid but did not need to rely on her husband for monetary support.<sup>87</sup> Another survivor, Annie Prentiss, also opened as a small business from her home.<sup>88</sup> Women took on the roles traditionally taken by men out of necessity to feed their families. However, the women's leadership in these roles was a lesser transition than it might have been in another community as women in pre-raid Lawrence were already familiar with taking authoritative positions. As Quantrill's raid had demolished Lawrence's business district, the establishment of new businesses by women, besides being an efficient way for widows to support their children, was a key element in the economic revival of the town.

Germans continued to be an important political and economic group in Lawrence. Three social and political organizations, including the Turnverein, a political organization that arose to contest American nativism, were formed by Lawrence's German community soon after the raid. Germans were owners of many businesses including grocery stores, a toystore, a confectionary, harness shops, tobacco shops, clothing stores, a jewelry store, saloons, boarding houses, restaurants, a watchmaking shop, a carpentry business and more.<sup>89</sup> The only brewery in early Lawrence, originally named Waldruff Brewery, was opened in 1867 and owned by a German named C. J. Waldruff.<sup>90</sup> The brewery was a successful enterprise and was even able to survive

“though advent of prohibition amendment to the state constitution necessitated that the organization be called “Lawrence Chemical Company””.

In another specific instance, Frederick Barteldes, a German-born resident of Lawrence “was left penniless and homeless” on account of Quantrill’s raid. However, he stayed in Lawrence to reopen his Barteldes’ Groceries, Provisions and Seed Store which thrived while supplying much need goods to the community.<sup>91</sup> With the help of German entrepreneurs, Lawrence was able to build back an economy after the devastation of the raid. Germans also managed to keep their culture and language. A German newspaper, Die Germania was published in German, and German was taught in public schools starting in 1872.<sup>92</sup> The German population in Lawrence, a group that was targeted by Quantrill’s raiders due to anti-immigrant sentiment, proved to be an important group in the economic revival of Lawrence as well as a part of society that continued to give Lawrence a distinct multicultural dimension.

African Americans also played a critical role in the revival of Lawrence. As mentioned above, the participation of African American farmers in supplying Lawrence with immediate food aid from the countryside abetted in the immediate disaster-relief efforts that followed Quantrill’s raid. Furthermore, the newly freed slave population that had come to the Lawrence area for freedom and opportunity, helped to rebuild and manage Lawrence’s new post-raid businesses. Following the raid there was a great shortage of labor in Lawrence as many of the members of the previous population of adult men died in the raid. One exception to this statement however, was that many of Lawrence’s ex-slave population survived the raid because they knew they would be the Bushwhacker’s first targets and therefore hid immediately upon warning of the arrival of the Bushwhackers. The newly emigrated slave population therefore played an important role in the physical rebuilding of Lawrence. African Americans who previously had only been able to find

seasonal work in the fields found fulltime work in the rebuilding efforts. Peter Ridneour was a prominent Lawrence businessman both before and following the raid. In Ridneour's account, one of the few primary sources from Quantrill's raid that continues to describe the events of Lawrence not just during but also after the massacre, Ridneour describes how he employed "colored labors" to assist him in the rebuilding of Ridneour and Baker's, one of the largest grocery stores in post-raid Lawrence. Militia units, some containing African American soldiers, also helped in maintaining self-defense squads that were formed after the raid in an effort to patrol the streets of Lawrence at night to remain vigilant against the threat of another Bushwhacker-led raid.<sup>93</sup>

African Americans in Lawrence also developed and maintained a strong presence in Lawrence politics and culture. More ex-slaves, known as the exodusters, were attracted to Lawrence and assisted in post-raid development. In 1860, there only 627 African American residents counted in the census for all of Kansas. By 1870 this figure had jumped to 17,108 and by 1880 43,107 African Americans were counted in the census.<sup>94</sup> This influx of exodusters to Kansas was partially a result of the push of the "economic depression, the sharecropping system, and the racial inequalities of the Reconstruction South". However, the pull toward Kansas also helps to explain this migration. At one gathering of exodusters heading for Kansas from Nashville, Tennessee in the 1870s, for example, the group whose gathering was recorded by an eyewitness account in the *Topeka Commonwealth* is said to have exclaimed at the top of their lungs in unison that Kansas was where "the colored man in America, is the grandest, greatest, and freest of all the States of the Union."<sup>95</sup>

Many of these exodusters specifically to settled in Lawrence. The presence and work of these new citizens helped to better firmly reestablish a town in the Kaw River Valley. The African



American community continued to thrive in Lawrence. Many great nationally famous African American figures, such as the writer and poet Langston Hughes, came out of the growing African American community in Lawrence.<sup>96</sup> As Lawrence following the raid was in need of more inhabitants to repopulate and rebuild the city, this influx of people helped to reestablish Lawrence as an urban area and continue to strengthen Lawrence's community of diversity.

Lawrence maintained its status of being first in progressive fronts when the Kansas State Teachers Association, a Lawrence-based group, was the only dissenter of a state ban on "mixed-education" and declared "we, as teachers, use our best endeavors to overcome the unreasonable prejudice existing in certain localities against the admission of colored children upon equal terms with white children." An organized State Convention of Colored Men "met in Lawrence in 1872 and demanded that the state repeal all laws "making distinction of race, nationality, or color among its citizens in regard to among other things education.""<sup>97</sup> The value Lawrence placed on equality in education and equality in general was no doubt part of the attraction that pulled ex-slaves to relocate to Lawrence.

Lawrence's progressive standards of valuing higher education also survived the raid. One of the main objectives of the community of Lawrence directly following the raid was the establishment of the new state university, the University of Kansas. Community members felt that through education Lawrence could build a stronger society than before the raid. The city government of Lawrence paid \$100,000 to insure the position of KU while the Kansas government covered the remaining \$40,000 initial expenses.<sup>98</sup> The Lawrence City Council voted to give all of the fatherless children of the raid a free university education.<sup>99</sup> Building a large institution for higher learning also cemented Lawrence's restoration following Quantrill's raid. With the establishment of the institution of a state university, an extension and podium for

Lawrence's progressive values, Lawrence was unquestionably a strong community with a future as fertile as a freshly burned prairie.

The education offered by the new University of Kansas in Lawrence was also not exclusive to white males. When the proposal of a state university in Kansas was first drawn up in the Kansas legislature, a Lawrence representative, Solon O. Thacher, proposed that the new university make "no distinction between the rights and privileges of males and females". This proposal was disparaged by Johnson county representative John T. Burris but Thacher's motion eventually triumphed after much debate and a 22-19 vote.<sup>100</sup> By adding this stature of equality of the sexes at the University of Kansas, higher education was available to double the amount of Lawrence's citizens as compared to many other male-only contemporary colleges. African Americans also attended the University of Kansas. The well-respected African American family, the Harvey's, that owned a farm in Douglas County not far from Lawrence, sent their son Sherman Brooks Harvey to the University of Kansas in the 1880s. S. B. Harvey played on the University of Kansas basketball team and graduated with a law degree.<sup>101</sup> By ensuring equality amongst all of the students that attended the University of Kansas, the community of Lawrence benefited by the continued creation of leaders from all groups of Lawrence's citizens and the increased quantity of higher-educated leadership.

Lawrence has always been a community that has been one step ahead of the contemporary United States in promoting political and social equality. From the Lawrence's inception, progressive values have been held by the majority of Lawrence's community members as pillars of local society. Early Lawrencians practiced progressive values by being key participants in the Underground Railroad network, allowing African Americans to join the local military, allowing women contemporarily outstanding political rights, and also welcoming communities such as

German immigrants and Native Americans that were shunned in other areas of the United States at the time. Allowing these groups to live in Lawrence added to Lawrence's population and diversity. Permitting these groups to hold political and social rights gave these groups leadership skills that helped to pull Lawrence through the disaster of Quantrill's infamous raid. The leadership of women and African American helped to save many lives and protect property during the raid. The Native Americans Pelathe and White Turkey will forever be remembered for their contributions to the resistance of Lawrence during the raid.

The feelings of righteousness of Lawrence's citizens, feelings that abolitionism and equality were causes that Lawrence was a symbol of and were worth fighting for, helped to invigorate Lawrence's citizen to rebuild directly following the raid. To rebuild was to take a stance for the progressive values of Lawrence, even in the face of danger. Immediate aid came from nearby progressive communities including African American farmers. The following revival was much aided by the civic leadership of women, African Americans and Germans. If Lawrence had not been welcoming to African American and German groups before the raid, they would simply not have been there to help support Lawrence's revival after the raid. The welcoming continued. Due to Lawrence's progressive reputation, minority groups continued to flock to Lawrence in hopes of a life where they would not be discriminated against. Finally, due to the emphasis the citizens of Lawrence placed on progressive values, they ensured that their community was chosen as the location of the state university, the University of Kansas. The founding of the university guaranteed Lawrence a stable future and promised continuation of the propagation of Lawrence's progressive values, especially since women and African Americans were included in those allowed to enroll. Through the leadership of the diverse community of Lawrence and the

progressive measures the city took after Quantrill's raid, Lawrence rose and grew from the ashes.

Diversity and equality are the values that gave back flight to the bird of Lawrence.

## Endnotes

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<sup>3</sup> Samuel A. Johnson "The Genesis of the New England Emigrant Aid Company." *The New England Quarterly* 3, no. 1 (Jan., 1930): 95-122. 95-100.

<sup>4</sup> James R. Shortridge and Barbara G. Shortridge. "Yankee Town on the Kaw: A Geographical and Historical Perspective on Lawrence and its Environment." In *Embattled Lawrence: Conflict and Community*, edited by Dennis Domer and Barbara Watkins, 5-19. Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas, 2001. 10.

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<sup>6</sup> Joseph Savage. "Recollections of 1854." in "Lawrence in 1854." Shelley Hickman Clark and James W. Clark. *Kansas History* 27, no. 1 (Spring, 2004): 30-43.

<sup>7</sup> Charles Richard Denton. "The Unitarian Church and 'Kansas Territory,' 1854-1861." *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 30, no. 3 (Aug., 1964): 307-338. 317.

<sup>8</sup> Denton. 318-328.

<sup>9</sup> Richard Cordley. *Pioneer Days in Kansas*. (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1903), 124-135.

<sup>10</sup> Cordley, 183.

<sup>11</sup> *Leavenworth Daily Conservative*, June 12, 1862. Quoted in Sheridan, Richard B., ed. *Freedom's Crucible: The Underground Railroad in Lawrence and Douglas County, Kansas, 1854-1865: A Reader*. (Lawrence, KS: Division of Continuing Education, University of Kansas, 1998), 36.

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- <sup>16</sup> *The Lawrence State Journal*. Quoted in Cordley, Richard. *Pioneer Days in Kansas*. (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1903.), 141.
- <sup>17</sup> Richard Cordley. *Pioneer Days in Kansas*. (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1903), 139.
- <sup>18</sup> Cordley, 147.
- <sup>19</sup> Richard B. Sheridan, ed. *Freedom's Crucible: The Underground Railroad in Lawrence and Douglas County, Kansas, 1854-1865: A Reader*. (Lawrence, KS: Division of Continuing Education, University of Kansas, 1998), 39.
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- <sup>26</sup> "Kansas Affairs." *New York Times (1857-1922)*, May 7, 1858.
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- <sup>30</sup> James B. O' Barr. "Impressions of Ethnicity: The German Community in Lawrence Kansas, 1867-1917." 1980.

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- <sup>32</sup> Barton, 151.
- <sup>33</sup> David Dary. *Lawrence: Douglas County Kansas, an Informal History*. (Lawrence, KS: Allen Books, 1982), 71.
- <sup>34</sup> Joanna L. Stratton. *Pioneer Women : Voices from the Kansas Frontier*. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981. 254.
- <sup>35</sup> Hugh Dunn Fisher. *The Gun and the Gospel: Early Kansas and Chaplain Fisher*. (Chicago: Kenwood Press, 1896), 225.
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<sup>53</sup> "87th Anniversary of Raid on Lawrence by Quantrill's Men." *Lawrence Journal World*, Aug. 21, 1950.

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<sup>61</sup> Cordley, 12.

<sup>62</sup> Cordley, 13-14.

<sup>63</sup> Cordley, 17.

<sup>64</sup> Cordley, 20.

<sup>65</sup> Cordley, 23.

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<sup>77</sup> John C. Shea, ed. *Reminiscences of Quantrell's Raid*. (Kansas City, Mo.: Isaac P. Moore, 1897), 27.

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<sup>87</sup> Armitage, 52.

<sup>88</sup> Armitage, 56.

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