

Chapter 3

Bleeding Kansas and the Enduring Struggle for Freedom Themes

“Bleeding Kansas and the Enduring Struggle for Freedom” is the main theme for a proposed National Heritage Area in northern and eastern Kansas. This theme originated in the conflict between Free State and proslavery settlers over the Kansas Question—whether the territory should be admitted to the Union as a state which forbid or allowed slavery within its borders. The territory became the focus of national attention in newspapers and congressional debate during the spring and summer of 1856 when it became known as “Bleeding Kansas.” These events contributed to the birth of a new political party that led the nation through its most dangerous conflict in the enduring struggle for freedom.

Because of the ideas and actions that brought “Bleeding Kansas” to national prominence in the mid-nineteenth century, Kansas Territory became a distinctive landscape characterized by nationally important events, what one historian has called a “militantly sectionalized frontier.”¹ Just as important as the political conflict, the struggle to adapt to the environment of the eastern Great Plains affected the development of agriculture, transportation, trade and business, social and cultural patterns in Kansas. Today the cultural, historic, and natural resources in this area form a cohesive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. Kansas Territory attracted waves of settlers, but they were challenged by the land and weather. Those who came to improve their fortune or shape their destiny had to adapt to the environment they found. What happened as successive waves of settlers tried to remove others and as different groups tried

to change the beliefs of others caused the Kansas Conflict. The struggle during the territorial period set the stage for continued struggle, even today.

In the making of a Free State in Kansas Territory, the Free State leaders articulated and forcefully defended a lasting ideal of freedom and equality. This ideal was expressed in a proposed Topeka constitution drafted in 1855 by the Free State delegate convention. From that time until 1858, there were always two governors, competing congressional delegates, two capitals, and two legislatures.² Then in 1856, the Kansas Conflict turned violent in a series of murders, attacks on Lawrence, Osawatimie, and other Free State settlements, and skirmishes between Free State and proslavery forces. Daily newspaper stories and congressional debate about these events made “Bleeding Kansas” the center of national attention. By making the Kansas Conflict a political issue, the newly formed Republican Party almost won the presidency in its first major election campaign.

Outrage in the North over “Bleeding Kansas” was important to the organization and success of the Republican Party. The Republican movement was a direct response to the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, but the new party faltered for the first two years and experienced electoral defeats at the state level. It seemed less powerful than the other third party, the American or “Know-Nothing” Party. Events in the spring of 1856, particularly the proslavery “Sack of Lawrence” and the assault by Representative Preston Brooks on Senator Charles Sumner

1 Gunja SenGupta, "Bleeding Kansas," *Kansas History* (Winter 2001), 341.

2 Craig Miner, *Kansas: The History of the Sunflower State, 1854-2000* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2002), 55.

in the Senate chamber itself—revived the organization’s political momentum. By opposition to the extension of slavery and sectional loyalty, Republicans attracted thousands of northerners to the party’s cause and their presidential candidate, John C. Fremont, was narrowly defeated.

The Republican movement combined Whigs, antislavery Democrats, and Free Soilers who wanted to make antislavery the dominant element in northern politics. Leaders formulated a party ideology that charged the Slave Power united with the Catholic Church in an alleged assault on the country’s republican heritage. Surprisingly, the party emerged in the 1856 presidential election as the major anti-Democratic party in the country. The Republican argument that there was a conspiracy to destroy liberty gained plausibility with the passage of time and the events of 1856 especially strengthened its emotional power in the northern electorate. As Lincoln himself said, the party’s members were drawn together by a common danger—“the spread and nationalization of slavery.”³ Conducting runaway slaves from Missouri and other southern states on the Underground Railroad through Kansas to the North challenged this danger through covert action. John Brown’s radical commitment to armed insurrection in Kansas Territory and his execution in 1859 as an anti-slavery martyr helped link the violence of Bleeding Kansas to the abolitionist cause and eventually to the outbreak of the Civil War.

Gaining popular support because of the controversy about “Bleeding Kansas,” the Republican Party became the most successful third party in American history. The new party’s strength in 1856 as a major alternative to the Democrats dramatically intensified the sectional conflict. The party’s victory in 1860 began the final rush to civil war.

Proslavery southerners refused to accept the Republican Party as legitimate. As a leading historian of this period concluded, “it is no exaggeration to say that the creation of the Republican Party, and its emergence as a powerful political organization, was one of the more crucial links, if not *the* most crucial link, in the chain of Civil War causation.”⁴

Some historians have seen the armed conflict during this period as a “prelude to the Civil War.”⁵ The violent confrontation in Kansas Territory over the issue of slavery contributed to the rise of the Republican Party, the election of Abraham Lincoln, secession, and the outbreak of the Civil War. Because of that war and emancipation, a new nation-state emerged from the great war of unification. Yet the nature and meaning of that national identity remains contested.⁶

As Governor Lyman Humphrey asserted in 1889, Kansas started on a high social and moral plane, and territorial history was “an influence that runs like a golden thread throughout our later experience.”⁷ Enacted by and for white males, the ideal of a Free State was not universal in 1856 and not without contradictions. After statehood was achieved, the Free State heritage became an ideal grasped by less powerful groups such as women, African Americans, Native Americans, and immigrants to legitimize their own enduring struggle for freedom.

Stories illustrating the theme of “Bleeding Kansas and the Enduring Struggle for Freedom” can be categorized in at least five major sub-themes:

- 1) Kansas Territory: Geography of Rivers, Trails, and Railroad Development
- 2) The Kansas Conflict: Bleeding Kansas

3 William E. Gienapp, *The Origins of the Republican Party, 1852-1856* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 443-448.

4 William Gienapp, "The Crisis of American Democracy: The Political System and the Coming of the Civil War," in Gabor S. Boritt, ed. *Why the Civil War Came* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 94-95.

5 Leverett W. Spring, *Kansas: The Prelude to the War for the Union* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1885, rev. ed. 1907).

6 Brooks D. Simpson, *America's Civil War* (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, 1996), 2-3, 219.

7 Miner, *Kansas*, 54.

- 3) The Underground Railroad
- 4) African Americans and the Enduring Struggle for Freedom
- 5) Native Americans and the Enduring Struggle for Freedom

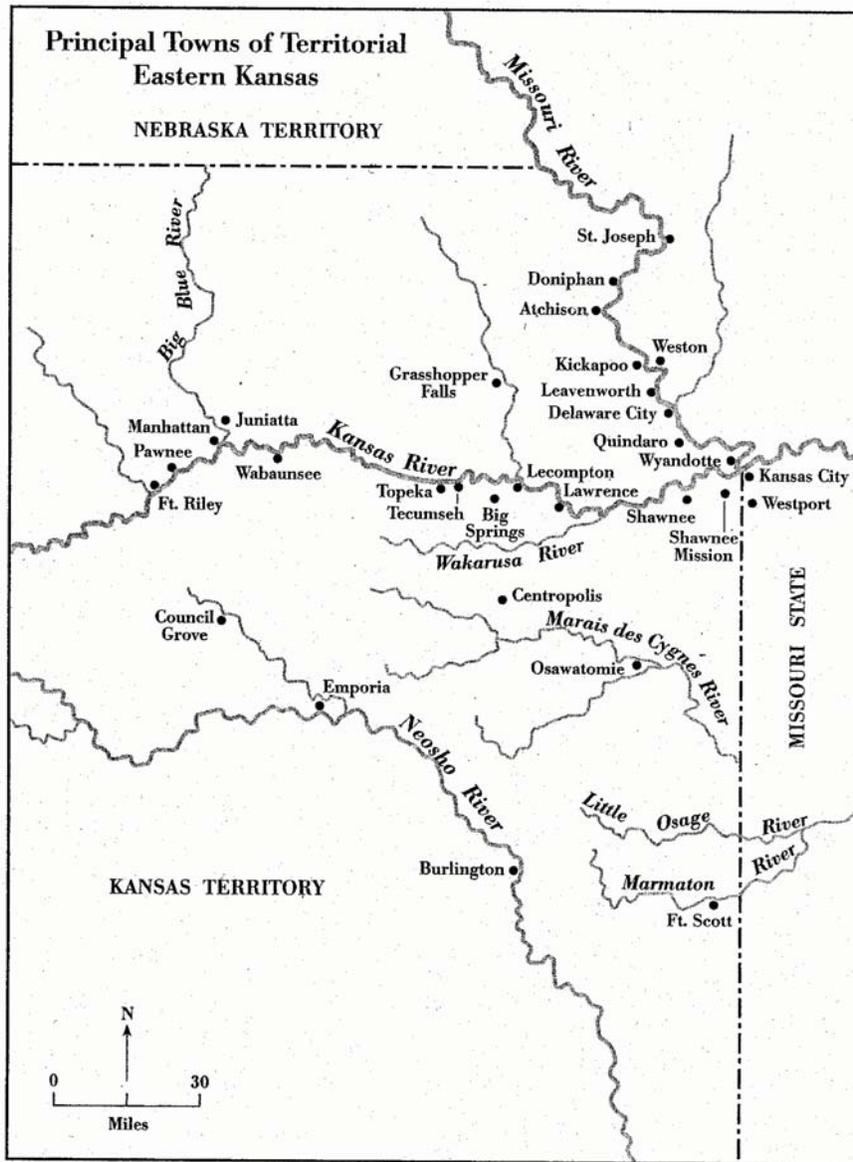
Themes are the organizing framework under

which the interpretation of related natural and cultural resources can be promoted. The overall theme for this study was identified first by the Douglas County Heritage Area Committee, evaluated and refined by the feasibility study team, and reviewed by the Bleeding Kansas National Heritage Area Planning Committee. The theme categories established through this effort cover the

range of stories related to Bleeding Kansas and the Enduring Struggle for Freedom. Sub-themes are incorporated into the main theme. For each sub-theme, the feasibility study has identified important natural and cultural resources that can serve as the basis for interpretive programs (See Chapter 4).

The Bleeding Kansas National Heritage Area was the stage for a nationally important conflict and resolution in which both sides tried to settle the issue of freedom versus slavery by gaining control of this strategic territory. Free State activity was centered in the towns in the Kansas River valley and its tributaries. These settlements were established with the assistance of the New England Emigrant Aid Company—for example, Lawrence, Topeka, Manhattan, and later Quindaro. The area of “Bleeding Kansas” extended to the south with towns along the Missouri border such as Osawatomie, Mound City, Humboldt, and others. Together, these places united a region that was the birthplace of the Free State heritage. (See Figure 3-1, Towns

Figure 3-1, Towns of Territorial Kansas



of Territorial Kansas.)

The “Bleeding Kansas and the Enduring Struggle for Freedom” theme provides an emphasis for future natural resource protection efforts and recreational opportunities in the feasibility study area. Today the Bleeding Kansas National Heritage Area offers a uniquely evocative place for experiencing the dynamic historical interactions “between West and East, between politics and culture, between popular ideology and sectional violence.”⁸

Kansas Territory: The Geography of Rivers, Trails, and Railroad Development

Because of its strategic location, the physical geography of Kansas Territory played an important role in defining the time and place of the Kansas Conflict and its resolution of the national slavery question. This conflict was dramatized as “Bleeding Kansas.” In the early nineteenth century, the central plains region was described as the Great American Desert by explorer Stephen H. Long. After the Mexican War and the discovery of gold in California, the land later known as Kansas became an important central route for the proposed transcontinental railroad. Characteristic elements of the historic landscape from the “Bleeding Kansas” era remain: rivers, overland trails, timber and prairies, and political boundaries still demarcate the landscape of antebellum conflict. This was the stage for “Bleeding Kansas”—the place of beginning for a diverse community where Native Americans, Emigrant Indians, European Americans, and African Americans met because of the intersection of major transportation routes, the search for land, and the expression of social ideals and religious beliefs.

During this period, European American set-

tlers first experienced the challenge of adapting to the relatively treeless landscape and the harshly variable climate of the Great Plains. They joined with Native Americans and African Americans in the work of recreating a landscape of farms and towns like that of the eastern United States. The struggle to adapt to the environment affected the development of agriculture, transportation, trade and business, social and cultural patterns. A substantial number of historic and cultural resources dating from the territorial and Civil War period can be found in eastern Kansas today. Interpretation of these buildings, sites, and geographical features provide a valuable conceptual framework for understanding the territory’s contribution to the history of the United States. Preservation of this distinctive landscape provides an opportunity to portray the physical and mental struggles that tested the character and determination of Kansans during the territorial period and afterward.

The Kansas Conflict: “Bleeding Kansas”

Although opposition to slavery in Kansas Territory “did not imply a modern view of racial equality,” the Kansas Conflict fundamentally was a conflict about the moral issue of slavery.⁹ Land speculation was a factor, but the evidence supports the significance of moral conviction in the conflict for and against slavery and freedom. The history of the Kansas Conflict and Bleeding Kansas was enacted in geographical terms, for example, in the struggle for control of strategic locations within the territory. Because of the challenge to adapt to the relatively treeless landscape and sparse distribution of streams and rivers, conflict erupted over land and other resources. That struggle also can be traced in the movement of the legislatures and the change in territorial capitals.

8 Gunja SenGupta, “Bleeding Kansas,” *Kansas History* (Winter 2001), 341.

9 Miner, 57.

There were four territorial period capitals (Fort Leavenworth, Pawnee, Shawnee Mission, and Lecompton) sanctioned by the proslavery legislature. The Free State settlers and their elected legislature met at their capital, Topeka, until they won a majority in the territorial legislature early in 1858. The legislature also met at Minneola and Lawrence. From 1854 to 1857, territorial politics were complicated by the fraudulent voting by Missourians and the repressive laws adopted by the proslavery legislature. At the same time, drafting a Free State constitution and convening an opposing Free State legislature led to congressional review of territorial government while raising a question for actual settlers of which legal authority they should obey or resist.

Because of its location on the Missouri River across from Missouri, the first town in Kansas Territory, Leavenworth, was a proslavery center at first. Its founders came from Weston, Missouri. Leavenworth played a key role in the territory's commercial development because of its proximity to Fort Leavenworth. The town was the major outfitting place for emigrant wagon trains and supply trains headed west, often with protective military escorts.¹⁰ By 1858, however, Leavenworth had a Free State majority. After the outbreak of the Civil War, the town boomed with new residents from many Union states and refugees and fugitives from the rebel states. To the south, Wyandot City, was considered a proslavery town despite the presence of a number of abolitionist Wyandot Indians.

Although Leavenworth had a few hardy Free State partisans, the early Free State centers in the territory were Lawrence, Topeka, Osawatimie, and Mound City. Later in 1856, a new town on the Missouri River between Wyandot City and Leavenworth,

Quindaro, was established by abolitionist Wyandot Indians and agents of the New England Emigrant Aid Company.¹¹ Many of the dramatic events of the Kansas Conflict centered in Douglas County on the Kansas River during the period from 1855 to 1857. Establishment of the Free State town of Lawrence and the proslavery town of Lecompton, official capital from 1855 to 1861, just a few miles apart focused the tension. Roving bands of Free State and proslavery settlers also ranged east and west from the Missouri border and south into Linn and Bourbon counties. From 1858 until 1861, most of the violence broke out in the southern counties along the border, while political contests continued in the more northern towns. After the outbreak of the Civil War, both Union and Confederate sympathizers reenacted the pattern of cross-border violence.

In many specific and personal encounters, the controversy over slavery in the United States became a violent conflict between American citizens in Kansas. Thus, the image of "Bleeding Kansas," acted as a force in national politics and American history. According to historian Michael Fellman, "the direct experience of physical contact and competition elicited an antislavery passion in the masses of ordinary northern settlers in Kansas."¹² In that experience, Free State settlers came to define themselves as exemplars of freedom. "As the people of Kansas have been encouraged by the memory of their fathers' heroic struggle for right, so will the struggle in the future be strengthened by the remembrance of the Kansas contest" insisted an editorial in the in the Lawrence Herald of Freedom December 27, 1856.¹³ The immediate reaction to the "Pottawatomie Creek Massacre" by John Brown from the Free State settlers demon-

10 "Leavenworth County Historic Outline." 1.

11 "Wyandotte County Historic Outline," 1.

12 Michael Fellman, "Rehearsal for the Civil War: Antislavery and Proslavery at the Fighting Point in Kansas, 1854-1856," in Lewis Perry and Michael Fellman, eds., *Antislavery Reconsidered: New Perspectives on the Abolitionists* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 290.

13 Cited in Fellman, 298.

strated the growing acceptance of violent means to achieve antislavery ends.¹⁴

Both sides justified their violence as a defensive response to systematic attacks of the others. The presence of federal troops prevented most open engagements of large numbers of proslavery and antislavery fighters, but “wide-ranging, vicious guerrilla actions of small groups were frequent.” Hundreds of northern and southern settlers were compelled, whatever their position to choose sides. One of the consequences of the Kansas Conflict was “the terrible guerrilla conflict in Missouri and Kansas during the Civil War.”¹⁵

While antislavery men such as Eli Thayer and Amos Lawrence were the first to organize migration as a strategy in the conflict over slavery, Missourians were the first to threaten the use of force to remove the Free State “invaders.” Later, when the fraudulently elected territorial legislature met, its proslavery politicians adopted a “uniquely repressive set of statutes for the protection of slavery.” These made it a capital offense to aid a fugitive slave and a felony to question the right to hold slaves in Kansas. The legislature also expelled its few antislavery legislators.¹⁶

Outraged by this undemocratic grab for power, former territorial governor Andrew H. Reeder gave a fiery speech at the Free State political meeting in Big Springs on September 5, 1855, that presaged the violence to come. “Whenever peaceful remedies shall fail and forcible measures shall furnish any reasonable prospect of success, then let our now shrinking and reluctant hostility be pushed to a bloody issue.”¹⁷

Following this meeting, the Free State constitutional convention held in Topeka wrote a

Free State constitution and prepared to apply to Congress for admission of Kansas as a Free State. The conflict in Kansas became well defined and public.

Territorial period reports of the number of people killed for political reasons in territorial Kansas were often vague and present-day historians suggest that the numbers were inflated. Newspaper reports about “Bleeding Kansas” and many later histories generally depicted antislavery settlers as “the victims of proslavery attackers.” As one historian noted, “both sides employed violent tactics and both were adept at focusing blame on their opponents, habitually claiming self-defense in any killings committed by their own men.” But the antislavery settlers who were the ultimate victors, wrote their own history of Kansas Territory.¹⁸ For example, the event that kicked off the so-called “Wakarusa War” was the killing of Charles Dow, a Free State settler, by Franklin Coleman, a proslavery settler at Hickory Point in Douglas County. Neighbors later testified that the two came to a conflict over a disputed land claim, but land claims were a central issue in the conflict over politics. One of Dow’s friends, Jacob Branson, was arrested by a posse led by Samuel Jones, sheriff of Douglas County. Free State men

14 SenGupta, *For God and Mammon*, 115.

15 Fellman, “Rehearsal for the Civil War,” 303-304.

16 David M. Potter *The Impending Crisis, 1848-1861* comp. and ed. By Don E. Fehrenbacher (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 204.

17 Alice Nichols, *Bleeding Kansas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), 44-45.

18 Dale E. Watts, “How Bloody Was Bleeding Kansas: Political Killings in Kansas Territory, 1854-1861), *Kansas History* 18:2 (Summer 1995), 118. According to Watts, both sides “were nearly equally involved in killing their political opponents.” There were 30 proslavery people killed, 24 anti-slavery men, one U.S. soldier, and one man whose political persuasion is obscured by a garbled historical record. See Watts, 125.

rescued Branson from the sheriff, which led to open political conflict. So, the rescue became significant, but the killing itself was not political.¹⁹

Individual murders and threats led to the so-called “Wakarusa War,” the “Sack of Lawrence” on May 21 and the “Pottawatomie Massacre” on May 24, 1856. These incidents made both sides believe that civil war had broken out in the territory. The year 1856 began in January with President Franklin Pierce’s criticism of the Free State legislature and their elected officials in his message to Congress. Charles Robinson, new elected Free State Governor and resident agent for the New England Aid Company, wrote to Amos A. Lawrence on January 25 to say, “we have reliable information that extensive preparations are being made in Missouri for the destruction of Lawrence and all the Free State settlements ... I am doing my utmost to conquer without bloodshed, and I believe that if my suggestions are acted upon promptly in the states we shall avoid a war.”²⁰

In April the House of Representatives sent an investigating committee (Howard Committee) to Kansas Territory. While the committee was holding hearings, the proslavery sheriff Sam Jones was shot and wounded. In retaliation, several Free State leaders, including the Free State Governor Charles Robinson, were indicted for treason and arrested. Proslavery forces then attacked Lawrence on May 21. John Brown’s brutal killings on Pottawatomie Creek aroused even more violence. On June 2, Brown defeated a force intent on capturing him at Black Jack in Douglas County. Federal troops from Fort Leavenworth broke up the meeting of the Free State legislature on July 4 at Constitution Hall in Topeka. The Free State settlers had re-convened to

respond to the rejection of the Free State Topeka Constitution by Congress. In August Free State forces attacked four proslavery fortified cabins around the region. Secretary Woodson, acting as governor, declared the territory to be in rebellion. John Brown and a group of Free State settlers were defeated at Osawatimie at the end of August. Jim Lane led a Free State force to victory in a skirmish at Hickory Point, Jefferson County, on September 13. After a new governor, John Geary, arrived in September and the Democrat, James Buchanan, was elected President, an uneasy peace settled on the Kansas Territory.²¹ In the end, as historian Thomas Goodrich concluded, “the continual stress of the guerilla war, the day-in, day-out uncertainty of life and property, quite simply exhausted the meager resources of the territory not only physically and financially, but emotionally as well.”²²

It appears that the earliest explicit reference to “Bleeding Kansas” appeared in a published letter by Free State advocate Julia Louisa Lovejoy. She and her family moved from Manhattan, Kansas, to Lawrence in August 1856, while the Free State town was under siege. Her letter dated August 25 appeared in two Republican newspapers, the Independent Democrat September 11 and the New York Evening Post September 13. Lovejoy proclaimed, “we are in the midst of war—war of the most bloody kind—a war of extermination ... 800 Missourians, it is said, are encamped on the Wakarusa, and our people are preparing to rout them ... If any of the friends of freedom will set apart a day of fasting and prayer for bleeding Kansas, they will confer a favor. Do help us in some way and God will reward you.”²³ The phrase, “Bleeding Kansas,” also has been attributed to Horace Greeley’s New York Tribune which publicized the violence in Kansas in

19 Watts, 120.

20 Quotation from Spring, 104.

21 Miner, 64-66.

22 Thomas Goodrich, *War to the Knife: Bleeding Kansas, 1854-61* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1998), 185.

23 This is one of the earliest published appearances of the term, Bleeding Kansas, which earned national attention in the election campaign of 1856. See Michael D. Pierson, ed., “A War of Extermination”: A Newly Uncovered Letter by Julia Louisa Lovejoy, 1856, *Kansas History* 16:2 (Summer 1993), 122-123.

1856. Criticizing the incumbent Democratic Party for the crime of “Bleeding Kansas” served as an effective Republican Party slogan in the 1856 election. By September 13, 1856, the words of a prize-winning Republican campaign song went, “far in the West rolls the thunder, the tumult of battle is raging where bleeding Kansas is waging warfare with slavery!”²⁴

Many of those who came to Kansas Territory came to fight in the conflict. As Kansas Adjutant General Cyrus Holliday explained in December 1864 “the reputation required by our settlers in our early Kansas troubles aroused the military spirit in sympathizing breasts all over the country, and from that consideration, and the additional fact that Kansas came to be regarded as a dangerous place for settlement, the result was, that the large proportion of the immigration to our State was composed of the most daring and hardy sons of the Republic.”²⁵ For the national antislavery movement, the Kansas Conflict was most important for its publicity value. In this contest for public sympathy, antislavery newspapers and speeches in Congress tended to dominate the production of news about Kansas and proslavery men and their actions were systematically portrayed in the worst possible terms.²⁶

Antislavery advocates believed that the Kansas-Nebraska Act ended a long-standing policy of disapproval of slavery and established a policy that slavery was a local issue. For the Kansas settlers, the Act closed off moderate strategies that antislavery men might have pursued. The Kansas Conflict became so bitter in part because the Kansas-Nebraska Act failed to precisely define “popular sovereignty.” The legislation did not specify when the settlers of a territory could decide the question of slavery. Northerners

held that territorial legislature could act; Southerners asserted that only when applying for statehood could a territory decide the status of slavery.²⁷

Before this debate, the concept of a Slave Power—a tightly knit body of slaveholders united in a design to expand slavery and maintain their control of the nation’s destiny—was not widely accepted. Move to repeal the Missouri Compromise raised this fear. “The Kansas-Nebraska Act was one of the most fateful measures ever approved by Congress. It weakened the Democratic Party throughout the North, disrupted the sectional balance within the parties, gave additional momentum to the ongoing process of party disintegration, and fundamentally altered the nature of the anti-Democratic opposition.”²⁸

The movement for a new national political party began in May, 1854 at a meeting of a group of anti-Nebraska representatives in Washington, D.C. Israel Washburn suggested that the new party take the name *Republican* and that its platform focus on opposition to the extension of slavery. Events in the spring and summer of 1855 provided a new opportunity to build an anti-slavery party. The massive illegal voting in the March 1855 election of the first legislature in Kansas Territory inspired the repudiation of the legislature by Free State men. Proslavery legislators basically enacted the existing laws of Missouri, but also made it a felony to maintain that slavery did not legally exist in the territory; or to circulate any printed material containing such an argument; disqualified all antislavery men from serving as jurors; prohibited opponents of slavery from holding office and prescribed

24 Daniel W. Wilder, *The Annals of Kansas* new edition (Topeka, KS: T. Dwight Thacher, Kansas Publishing House, 1886), 138.

25 Cited in Miner, 58.

26 As historian David Potter characterized the Kansas Conflict, “the war was a propaganda war ... and by 1857 the South and the administration had lost it decisively. The Kansas crusade in particular and the antislavery crusade in general ... represented a struggle for ideals.” See *Impending Crisis*, 217.

27 Gienapp, *Origins of the Republican Party*, 71.

28 Gienapp, *Origins of the Republican Party*, 81.

the death penalty for anyone who assisted fugitive slaves.²⁹ In the northern states, the Republican Party's 1855 platform emphasized the slavery extension issue and the situation in Kansas. The state political conventions and elections in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York were important steps in organizing the new party. Finally, in the spring of 1856, the Republican Party emerged as a major political movement. The Sumner caning and the sack of Lawrence occurred just before the Democratic and Republican conventions when uncommitted voters were beginning to form new party identities or renew old loyalties.

Even before the news of the attack on Lawrence reached the East, Preston Brooks beat Senator Charles Sumner into unconsciousness in the U.S. Senate chamber on May 22, 1856. After reports of the "Sack of Lawrence," Republicans in the North blamed the U.S. Marshal in Kansas, Israel Donaldson, and territorial Chief Justice Samuel Lecompte for the violence, and through them Governor Wilson Shannon and President Franklin Pierce. Even the usually restrained New York *Evening Post* warned on May 23, "Violence has now found its way into the Senate chamber. Violence lies in wait on all the navigable rivers and all the railways of Missouri, to obstruct those who pass from the Free States to Kansas. Violence overhangs the frontier of that territory like a storm-cloud charged with hail and lightning. Violence has carried election after election in that territory... In short, violence is the order of the day; the North is to be pushed to the wall by it, and this plot will succeed if the people of the Free States are as apathetic as the slaveholders are insolent."³⁰

Reports of escalating violence in Kansas

after the sack of Lawrence and the Pottawatomie massacre inspired the movement to the new Republican Party. When the report of the House's Howard Committee to investigate Kansas was published on July 1, the document provided evidence of dishonesty, intimidation, and terror by the proslavery legislators and settlers. The majority report asserted that Missourians had fraudulently controlled elections, that the existing territorial legislature was illegal, and that the Topeka constitution embodied "the will of the people."³¹ This sustained popular excitement in the North, even after Governor Shannon resigned on August 18 and the new governor Geary pacified the warring parties. Republicans kept up the rhetorical message of saving Kansas by electing Fremont until the November election. In Kansas Territory, the election of a Free State dominated legislature in October 1857 finally meant the beginning of an end to "Bleeding Kansas."³²

The Republican national convention began on June 17, 1856, in Philadelphia. The platform that was written included several important points related to the Kansas Conflict. The platform denied "the authority of Congress, of a Territorial Legislature, of any individual, or association of individuals, to give legal existence to Slavery in any Territory of the United States," under the Constitution. Other sections recited violations of the rights of the Free State settlers in Kansas and censured the Pierce administration for condoning these acts. The Republican platform called for the immediate admission of Kansas under the Topeka constitution. Although the Republican candidate, John C. Fremont, was politically inexperienced, the delegates wanted a resolute candidate who would stand up to the South. Many Republican leaders believed that the party had little chance of victory in

29 Gienapp, *Origins of the Republican Party*, 89, 168-171.

30 Cited in Gienapp, *Origins of the Republican Party*, 301.

31 Gienapp, *Origins of the Republican Party*, 351.

32 Miner, 72.

its first national election, but they hoped to establish a national organization and take the American Party's place as the only significant party opposed to the Democrats. In the November election, the Fremont plurality in the North greatly exceeded popular expectations and made the Republicans the main opposition party.³³

The Republican ideology included several sometimes contradictory elements, but the party members were less concerned about slavery than the Slave Power. Most of the Northerners who joined the party hated white slaveholders, not black slaves, and most feared the growing threat to white liberties, not black. For Republicans, the fundamental issue was whether the North or the South would exercise political power in the nation. This was based on the assumption that the South had long dominated the national government and dictated federal policy. From the Mexican War to the Kansas-Nebraska Act, each demand by Southerners increased until the rights of Northerners were in danger. Events in Kansas converted thousands to this Republican viewpoint. For example, proslavery settlers had trampled on the freedom of speech, press, and Free State voting rights in Kansas. Thus, the symbols of Bleeding Sumner and Bleeding Kansas enabled Republicans to attack the South without attacking slavery directly.³⁴

Contemporary historians now study the evidence of this time and place by placing "Bleeding Kansas" not only in the context of the slavery debate and political realignment of the 1850s but also in the broader cultural context of Victorian America.³⁵ Integrating the significant categories of race, class, and gender into a revised political history of the Kansas Conflict will enrich the meaning of

"Bleeding Kansas." The Kansas Conflict dramatized the failure of the political system to resolve the sectional conflict over slavery and the future of the United States as a nation. The controversy over "Bleeding Kansas" contributed to a significant change in the political party system—the emergence of the Republican Party, the most successful third party movement in U.S. history. The Kansas Conflict ensured that slavery would remain the central political issue in the United States until resolved by the Civil War. But even after the Civil War ended in 1865, the struggle for freedom was far from over. "Bleeding Kansas" gave birth to both a political ideal and a political tradition that has inspired the struggle for equality up to the present.

33 Gienapp, *Origins of the Republican Party*, 335.

34 This discussion of Republican ideology is based on Gienapp, *Origins of the Republican Party*, 353-365.

35 SenGupta, 340.

Underground Railroad in Kansas

An important sub-theme of Bleeding Kansas and the Enduring Struggle for Freedom is the story of the Underground Railroad in Kansas. This activity was significant, but not well documented. Activity in Kansas has hardly been mentioned in most histories of the Underground Railroad. Following the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, both Northern and Southern states battled to occupy Kansas Territory. Many Northern political and religious leaders believed that the expansion of slavery would destroy the rapidly developing Union of states. Southern leaders feared that the loss of Kansas would lead inevitably to the end of slavery in Missouri and on to the rest of the Southern states.

After the Free State movement in Kansas gained national attention, word spread throughout the South. Runaway slaves or “freedom seekers” began to make their way to Kansas Territory. Resident “conductors” and their supporters established secret networks that passed escaping African American men, women, and children northward over a regional system of trails and then to freedom in the North.

A frustrated slave hunter is said to have remarked that his prey had “disappeared into thin air ... taken a ride on some sort of railroad ... silently ... as if they were underground.” Traveling by foot in the night and transported hidden in wagons and crates, escaping slaves were protected in houses, barns, cellars, and caves. These sites were “stations” along the famous Underground Railroad. Free State emigrants from New England and the Ohio River Valley states operated many historic stations in Kansas Territory. A Lawrence resident, for example, claimed that his town was “the best-advertised antislavery town in the world.”³⁶ On

the eastern border near Missouri, settlers of Osawatimie and vicinity supported John Brown’s men as they directed slaves toward escape through Douglas, Shawnee, and Wabaunsee County conductors and stations.

The Underground Railroad was “a system of receiving, concealing, and forwarding fugitive slaves on their flight from bondage in the American South to freedom in the North and Canada.”³⁷ The loosely organized network of stations extended from the eastern states north of the Mason-Dixon line to the states of the Old Northwest, and from 1854 to 1861 to Kansas Territory. Those active in the Underground Railroad in Kansas Territory faced particular danger because of the conflict between antislavery and proslavery settlers for control of Kansas Territory and the lawlessness that characterized that struggle. The enemies of the Underground Railroad in Kansas Territory included Missouri slave-owners and politicians; the proslavery Territorial government and federal law officers; the lawless men, operating singly or in gangs, who kidnapped both free blacks and fugitive slaves to sell or return them to their masters for a ransom or bounty.³⁸

Only parts of the full story of the Underground Railroad in Kansas Territory were documented because of the strict secrecy in its operation. Much of the available information is based on oral tradition and the published recollections of those who were active in aiding and protecting fugitive slaves. Despite these challenges for historians, it is accepted that the Underground Railroad was significant in the evolution of the national civil rights movement and its interpretation is relevant to foster the spirit of racial harmony and national reconciliation.³⁹

36 Cited in Territorial Kansas Heritage Alliance, "The Underground Railroad in Kansas, 1854-1861," Draft Brochure (October 2003).

37 Richard B. Sheridan, ed. *Freedom's Crucible: The Underground Railroad in Lawrence and Douglas County, Kansas, 1854-1865: A Reader* (Lawrence, KS: Continuing Education, University of Kansas, 1998), vii.

38 Sheridan, vii.

39 In 1997 the "Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act of 1997" was passed to recognize the importance of the Underground Railroad and to authorize the National Park Service to coordinate activities to interpret the history of the Underground Railroad. See House Resolution 1635, 105th Congress, 1st Session.

Although not a railroad, the network had to be secret, thus “underground,” and railway terms were used to describe the elements of the system. Routes were known as “lines,” the houses giving protection to runaways were called “stations.” Those who aided the slaves along the route were “conductors.” And the fugitive slaves were referred to as “passengers,” “packages,” or “freight.” A party of slaves was known as a “train.” Estimates of the total number of slaves who reached freedom through the underground network during the period from 1790 to 1860 vary from 40,000 to 100,000.⁴⁰ While occasional stories told of people who had walked from Texas, Mississippi, or Alabama to Iowa, Indiana, or Ohio, most of the fugitives came from the upper South and were young men in good health. Most of those slaves east of the Appalachian Mountains who escaped tended to go directly north, by land or water, to Pennsylvania, New York, or the Boston area. Those on the other side of the mountains had to cross the Ohio River to leave Virginia or Kentucky or Tennessee. Slaves from Arkansas and Texas might cross the contested areas of Missouri and Kansas to bear east for aid in Indiana or Illinois. These are just some of the possible routes to freedom.⁴¹

Runaways who lived near the Missouri River crossed into Kansas Territory by swimming or on rafts, boats, and ferries. However, most runaways who entered Kansas from Missouri came over the land border south of the Missouri River. There were Free State communities established at Mound City, Osawatimie, Lawrence, Topeka, and other settlements. From 1857 to 1861, activity on the Underground Railroad in Kansas increased as new stations were established at Quindaro, Sumner, Clinton, Oskaloosa, Holton, and other communities.

At the height of the armed conflict in “Bleeding Kansas,” Missourians blockaded steamboats ascending the Missouri River to turn back passengers and freight intended to aid Free State settlers in Kansas. Free State leader James H. Lane then popularized a trail that crossed Iowa and the Missouri River to Nebraska City and ran south to Holton and Topeka with branches to Oskaloosa and Lawrence. After the blockade of the Missouri River was lifted, the Lane Trail became a major route on the Underground Railroad. Runaway slaves moved north and east through Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Michigan, and finally reached freedom in Canada.⁴² (See Figure 3-2, Lane Trail.)

According to proslavery newspapers, Lawrence became an active station on the Underground Railroad by April 1855. The Leavenworth Herald, reprinted in the Lawrence Herald of Freedom on May 26, 1855, said “we learn from a reliable source that a secret association in now in existence at Lawrence, the object of which is to abduct and run off all negro slaves in the territory.” Later the Herald of Freedom reprinted an article on June 16 from the Westport News, “there is an Underground Railroad leading out of western Missouri.” The editor denied the charge insisting that the people of Lawrence had no “Secret Association” and had carried out no conspiracy. In fact, any activities to liberate slaves had to be subordinated to the need to strengthen and defend Lawrence against Missourians and their Southern allies. These opponents most resented the repudiation of the so-called “bogus” legislature and the challenge from Free State leaders who opposed the proslavery territorial government.⁴³ Other Free State towns faced similar charges and many did have secret associations to assist in the transport of runaway slaves.

40 Sheridan, xiii-xiv; National Park Service, National Register, "Underground Railroad Resources in the United States," E. Statement of Historic Context: "The Underground Railroad in American History," 13.

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel/underground/themee.htm>

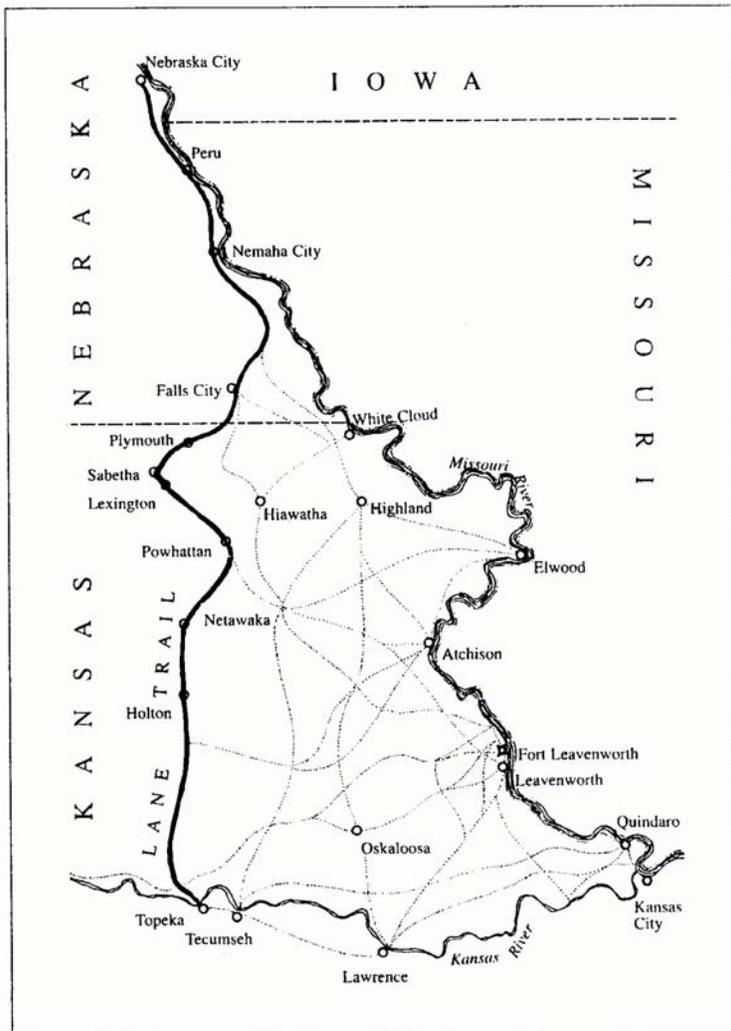
41 NPS, NR, "Underground Railroad in American History," 21.

42 Sheridan, *Freedom's Crucible*, xv-xvii.

43 Sheridan, xxiii, xxv.

Figure 3-2, Lane Trail

Editor's Commentary



The Lane Trail played a prominent part in Kansas history. Initially it enabled free-state immigrants to bypass hostile antislavery forces in Missouri. Later, it facilitated the movement of fugitive slaves north from Lawrence and Topeka to Nebraska and Iowa with greater security and access to support services.

Activity on the Underground Railroad in Kansas Territory paralleled the course of political and military events from 1854 to 1865. From November 1855 until September 1856, proslavery forces threatened Lawrence and the other Free State settlements. From 1857 until the outbreak of

war in 1861, the tension lessened as more Free State settlers entered the territory. Beginning in 1857, the underlying conditions for a successful Underground Railroad improved as a result of victories gained by antislavery militia, increased immigration of Free State settlers, and political victories for Free State legislative candidates.⁴⁴

The Civil War brought newly enlisted troops, then wounded soldiers, and pro-Union refugees from western Missouri and other Southern states to Kansas. One of the most unique movements was the influx of African American slaves. Wherever Union soldiers were stationed, slaves would leave their masters and run to the military camps. Most were protected as “contrabands of war.” Many of these contrabands found their way to Lawrence, the most famous Free State town.⁴⁵

The Underground Railroad crossed the Missouri border at whatever point was most quickly reached by runaway slaves, usually somewhere south of Kansas City. These runaways followed no definite route, but according to one interpretation, there were two Underground Railroad divisions in Kansas with Lawrence as the northern headquarters and Mound City, the southern. The traffic manager of the

Lawrence division was Reverend John E. Stewart, who had a log fort near his farm on the Wakarusa River four miles south of Lawrence. He was assisted by Dr. John Doy. In the south, James Montgomery who had a cabin on a farm near Mound City, Linn County, was the manager assisted by C.R. Jennison and, at times, John Brown. The

44 Sheridan, vii.

45 Sheridan, xxxiii-xxv. In Sheridan's compilation of Underground Railroad narratives concerned with Lawrence and Douglas County, most concentrated on events from 1857 to 1865 which led to his hypothesis that the Underground Railroad became more active after 1856.

Lawrence route crossed the Kansas River at Lawrence and continued north through Oskaloosa to Holton, Kansas. The Mound City route ran north through Topeka to Holton.

The most publicized route was the one taken by John Brown and the twelve slaves he took from Missouri through Kansas Territory, Nebraska, Iowa, and other states to Canada in the winter of 1858-59. This route took them from the Wattles, Mendenhall, and Adair farms to a cabin near Garnett, then to the home of Ottawa Jones, Abbot's farm, Joel Grover's barn near Lawrence, and the farm of Daniel Sheridan near Topeka. In winter 1857, the Lane Trail became the Underground Railroad out of Kansas to Canada. This route ran from Topeka to Holton, Netawaka, Sabetha, Kansas, then on to Falls City and Nebraska City, Nebraska.⁴⁶

Known abolitionists who ran the Underground Railroad in Kansas—John Stewart, John Doy, Sam Tappan, and James Blood of Lawrence, Walter Oakley of Topeka, Sam C. Smith of Quindaro, and John Brown of Osawatomie—called on their supporters in New England and the Ohio River Valley for advice, financial assistance, and even the famous Sharps' rifles. The leaders worked to maintain the Underground Railroad network in Kansas Territory. Correspondents for Eastern newspapers used these calls for assistance to keep up interest in the Kansas Conflict and the efforts of the Underground Railroad. In a letter of January 24, 1858, for example, Samuel Tappan, one of the original settlers of Lawrence, wrote to Thomas Higginson in Worcester, Massachusetts, "I am happy to inform you that a certain Rail Road has been and is in full blast . . . Our funds in these hard times have nearly run out, and we need some help, for the present is attended with considerable

expense. If you know of any one desirous of helping the cause, just mention our case to him, and ask him to communicate with Walter Oakley at Topeka, James Blood and myself at Lawrence, or Sam C. Smith at Quindaro."⁴⁷ The Kansas abolitionists also maintained relationships with the Quaker settlements of Springdale and Tabor, Iowa, as well as settlements in Ontario, Canada.⁴⁸

Only a select group of anti-slavery sympathizers knew about the activities of the Underground Railroad. Since aiding a runaway slave was a federal offense punishable by a sentence of six months imprisonment, for most settlers, it was better not to know about the escaped slaves and the network that aided them. There were several levels of involvement: radical abolitionists who actually rescued and conducted slaves to freedom; station masters who regularly offered their homes as hiding places for runaways but were unaware of other participants and stations; spontaneous participants who believed slavery was wrong but was not involved until a conductor brought a runaway to his door in the summer of 1858.⁴⁹ Other strategic counselors planned, coordinated, considered the political implications of the traffic in runaways, and sought favorable press reports in Eastern newspapers. There is some evidence that Walter Oakley, Samuel Tappan, Sam C. Smith, and others guided the long-term strategy of the Underground Railroad in Kansas and that this leadership used Quindaro as a strategic base after 1857.⁵⁰

Nearly eighty places in twenty-two present-day counties in Kansas meet the criteria for association with the historic "Underground Railroad." In addition to Lawrence and Mound City, other places associated with important activity were Bloomington,

46 Sheridan, 123-125, 151-153.

47 Sheridan, 50.

48 Territorial Kansas Heritage Alliance, "Underground Railroad of Kansas, 1854-1861," 1.

49 Territorial Kansas Heritage Alliance, "Underground Railroad of Kansas," 1.

50 For information on the significance of Quindaro, see "The Border Storm," a publication of the Quindaro Ruins Archaeological Park Project.

Topeka, Auburn, Holton, Wabaunsee, Sabetha, Leavenworth, and Quindaro. Douglas County had a number of Underground Railroad sites. Other counties with at least one presently known Underground Railroad site include: northern counties—Brown, Doniphan, Nemaha; western counties—Jackson, Riley, Wabaunsee; eastern counties—Douglas, Jefferson, Johnson, Shawnee, Wyandotte; southern counties—Allen, Anderson, Bourbon, Franklin, Linn, and Miami.⁵¹ The Underground Railroad network in Kansas Territory had north-south routes that reached from the south around Mound City, north to Lawrence, and beyond. An east-west route ran from the east gate at Quindaro through the crossroads of Lawrence to safer western stations in the Topeka vicinity. This geographical distribution demonstrates the significance of the Underground Railroad in the Bleeding Kansas National Heritage Area.

In a letter to Franklin B. Sanborn from Lawrence dated April 4, 1859, Kansas settler John Bowles explained, “I am expected to give you some information as to the present condition of the U.G.R.R. in Kansas or more particularly at the Lawrence depot.” Bowles proudly recalled that “Lawrence has been (from the first settlement of Kansas) known and cursed by all slave holders in and out of Mo. [Missouri] for being an abolition town. Missourians have a peculiar faculty for embracing every opportunity to denounce, curse and *blow* every thing they dislike. This peculiar faculty of theirs gave Lawrence great notoriety in Mo. especially among the negroes to whom the principal part of their denunciations were directed and on whom they were intended to have great effect.” Summarizing the activity at this important Free State town, Bowles concluded that in the last four years, he knew “of nearly three hundred fugitives having passed

through and received assistance from the abolitionists here at Lawrence.”⁵²

Once the Civil War broke out, Missouri slaves ran away to Lawrence. The problem of so-called “contrabands” was described by Reverend Richard Cordley in his book, *Pioneer Days in Kansas* (1903). Lawrence had been settled as a Free State town. As a result, “it was the center of proslavery hate, and at the same time the center of hope to the slaves across the border.” As Reverend Cordley pointed out, “the colored people of Missouri looked to it as a sort of ‘city of refuge,’ and when any of them made a ‘dash for freedom,’ they usually made Lawrence their first point.” After the Civil War broke out, the slaves on the border took advantage of it to gain their freedom. Cordley reported, “they did not wait for any proclamation nor did they ask whether their liberation was a war measure or a civil process.” Many of the escaped Missouri slaves found their way to Lawrence. Reverend Cordley recalled, “they came by scores and hundreds, and for a time it seemed as if they would overwhelm us with their numbers and their needs.”⁵³

Compared to the whole slave population, not many fugitives passed through Kansas Territory during the years from 1854 to 1861, but they were significant. These African Americans asserted their right to freedom by running away and the Kansas abolitionists disobeyed the fugitive slave laws that they considered unjust. These actions helped define the Kansas Conflict. Larger numbers of contrabands came to Kansas during the Civil War. Many African American men volunteered for service in First and Second Kansas Colored Infantry Regiments. They also worked as both skilled and unskilled labor and had an important role in maintaining agricultural production.⁵⁴ These African American

51 Territorial Kansas Heritage Alliance, "Underground Railroad of Kansas," 2.

52 Sheridan, 52-53.

53 Sheridan, 98-99.

54 Sheridan, "From Slavery in Missouri to Freedom in Kansas: The Influx of Black Fugitives and Contrabands into Kansas, 1854-65," Kansas History Sheridan

played a role in creating the landscape of farms and towns. In this wave of migration, they came to seek their freedom and shape their own destiny, but they had to adapt to the natural environment and the society that developed after the Civil War. Like the other settlers, they learned to live with different groups. In time African American runaways, refugees, and migrants became part of a settled and growing community that made important contributions to the state.

African Americans and the Struggle for Freedom

The struggle for freedom that developed in Kansas during the Territorial Period remained a dynamic and ongoing struggle. As the stories of “Bleeding Kansas,” Civil War Kansas, and the Underground Railroad in Kansas illustrate, African Americans and Native Americans in the state continued to raise questions of sovereignty and freedom that were unresolved even by the Civil War. African Americans and their white allies continued to press for voting rights and equality, but that struggle was de-emphasized in the greater process of nation-building. Racism was too ingrained and institutionalized in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to permit the progress that seemed within reach in 1865.

At this time, the detailed research and cultural asset inventory to support the comprehensive interpretation of the sub-themes of the African American and Native American struggles for freedom in Kansas is not available. Nevertheless, the development of interpretation for both of these significant sub-themes has increased greatly since the 1960s. Interpreting the post-Civil War periods and sub-themes is an important area of work to be investigated and implemented in the management plan for the Bleeding

Kansas National Heritage Area.

Because of the Free State heritage and the state’s geographical proximity to Missouri, Kansas became a refuge and site of opportunity for African Americans. During the Civil War, the African American population in Kansas increased from 627 in 1860 to 12,527 in 1865 (8.8 per cent of total population). This influx raised the black population to its highest level in comparison to whites and Indians. African Americans came to Kansas in significant numbers after the war and again in the late 1870s and early 1880s, but the white population increased even more. Thus, African Americans gradually declined as a percentage of the state’s population—to 4.7 in 1870, 4.3 in 1880, and 3.5 in both 1890 and 1900.⁵⁵

African Americans were highly concentrated in certain towns and counties. This choice was a consequence of territorial and Civil War migration. In 1865, the three leading counties—Leavenworth, Douglas, and Wyandotte—contained 55.5 percent of the blacks in Kansas. Wyandotte County, where the short-lived abolitionist river town of Quindaro was located, had nearly half as many blacks as whites. There was one black to every three whites in Fort Scott, one to four in Osawatimie, one to five in Leavenworth, Lawrence, and Mound City, and one to seven in Atchison and Topeka. Four of those leading towns—Lawrence, Topeka, Mound City, and Osawatimie—had been stations on the Underground Railroad. In addition to these abolitionist centers, Forts Leavenworth and Fort Scott offered protection to contrabands during the Civil War.⁵⁶

For years after the end of the Civil War, Kansas retained its power as a symbol of freedom and equality. Many individual African Americans, along with an even larg-

55 Sheridan, *Freedom's Crucible*, 37.

56 Sheridan, *Freedom's Crucible*

er number of whites, migrated to the developing state after the war. This movement culminated in the late 1870s with the organized migration of thousands of Exodusters from the South. Many of these migrants came to Kansas to acquire farm land under the Homestead Act; others came to practice their trades and to establish businesses. The African American farmers in Douglas County and the black-operated businesses in Lawrence were examples of this trend. As noted earlier, opportunities for economic and social equality diminished in the late nineteenth century. During the so-called Jim Crow era, distinct minority communities developed in Kansas, as in the rest of the United States. This pattern of social segregation was demonstrated in the story of Langston Hughes, a talented African American youth growing up in Lawrence, Kansas.

The Free State heritage of “Bleeding Kansas” influenced the history of African American rights at the University of Kansas in Lawrence. Established in 1865, the state’s premier educational institution accepted African American students, but subjected them to discrimination. Following decades of informal discrimination in the early twentieth century, African American and white students and faculty renewed the enduring struggle for civil rights in Lawrence with small steps toward equal treatment beginning in 1942. Those efforts continued into the 1960s. Just a few miles away in Topeka, another Free State stronghold, the Sumner and Monroe Schools are buildings associated with a key event in the modern history of the civil rights movement—the lawsuit and Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education, Topeka* (1954). Because of the association with the enduring struggle for freedom, these sites are nationally significant and serve as models for the interpretation of

other properties that illustrate the African American struggle for freedom in the Bleeding Kansas National Heritage Area.

Native Americans and the Struggle for Freedom

In the dramatic social and political change leading up to and culminating in the Civil War, Native Americans struggled for freedom. They resisted the expropriation of their land reserves and many threats to their cultural identity. For the indigenous Kansa and Osage tribes in the study area, that struggle eventually led to a retreat to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma).

For the Emigrant Indians, there were some different consequences. Like the European American settlers, these immigrants to Kansas had to adapt to the environment they found. Although their contribution has not been acknowledged, these tribes learned to live in a different kind of landscape and to live with different groups in building the nation. During the territorial period, for example, the Delaware, Shawnee, and Wyandot who lived near the border with Missouri and the Kansas River were threatened by land grabs and their lives were disrupted by territorial and Civil War violence. During the lawlessness of “Bleeding Kansas” and the Civil War, these relatively acculturated tribes were raided and robbed by both proslavery and Free State forces. Because of this history, for example, some of the important territorial period sites associated with the Native American Struggle for Freedom sub-theme are now located in urbanized areas. To the south, the pro-Union Creek, Cherokee, and Seminoles refugees from Indian Territory experienced terrible suffering when they fled to Kansas. Yet both groups contributed men who fought for the Union in Indian regiments.

While most of the Indian tribes in Kansas moved to Indian Territory after the end of the Civil War, the Pottawatomie, Kickapoo, Iowa and Sac-Fox tribes retained reservations in the northeast part of the state. Since the 1880s, the history of Haskell Institute, Lawrence, in the center of the study area, has exemplified the interaction between government policy and Native American cultural politics. The purpose of government-administered boarding schools like Haskell was to replace native language, teach Christianity, promote individualism, and teach practical skills and trades. The boarding school experience, however, did not eradicate traditional cultures and even facilitated cultural persistence in some ways. Resistance to assimilation in boarding schools instead created a pan-Indian identity that encouraged Native Americans to work together for political and cultural self determination. From a manual training school, Haskell has become a university with diverse student population representing many of the federally recognized tribes from all over the United States. In the present day, Haskell Indian Nations University has become a vital institution for Native American education and leadership training.

Conclusion

This study has documented that the Bleeding Kansas Heritage Area in eastern and southern Kansas has a distinctive assemblage of natural, historic, and cultural resources worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and continuing use. These resources reflect traditions that are a valuable part of the national story and retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation. Taken together, the suggested themes for Bleeding Kansas and the Enduring Struggle for Freedom provide for the understanding and appreciation of Kansas's criti-

cal role in the conflict leading to the American Civil War. These themes express the views generated by public discussion of the heritage area study and are supported by a variety of closely related natural and cultural resources that remain in Kansas today.

This outline of the stories that illustrate the theme of “Bleeding Kansas and the Enduring Struggle for Freedom” is based on available information and is subject to change and revision as further research provides additional information. For example, the history of other groups such as women and Mexican Americans (see Chapter 2) is undoubtedly relevant to the “Enduring Struggle for Freedom.” These themes will be investigated in the development of a detailed management plan for the Bleeding Kansas National Heritage Area.