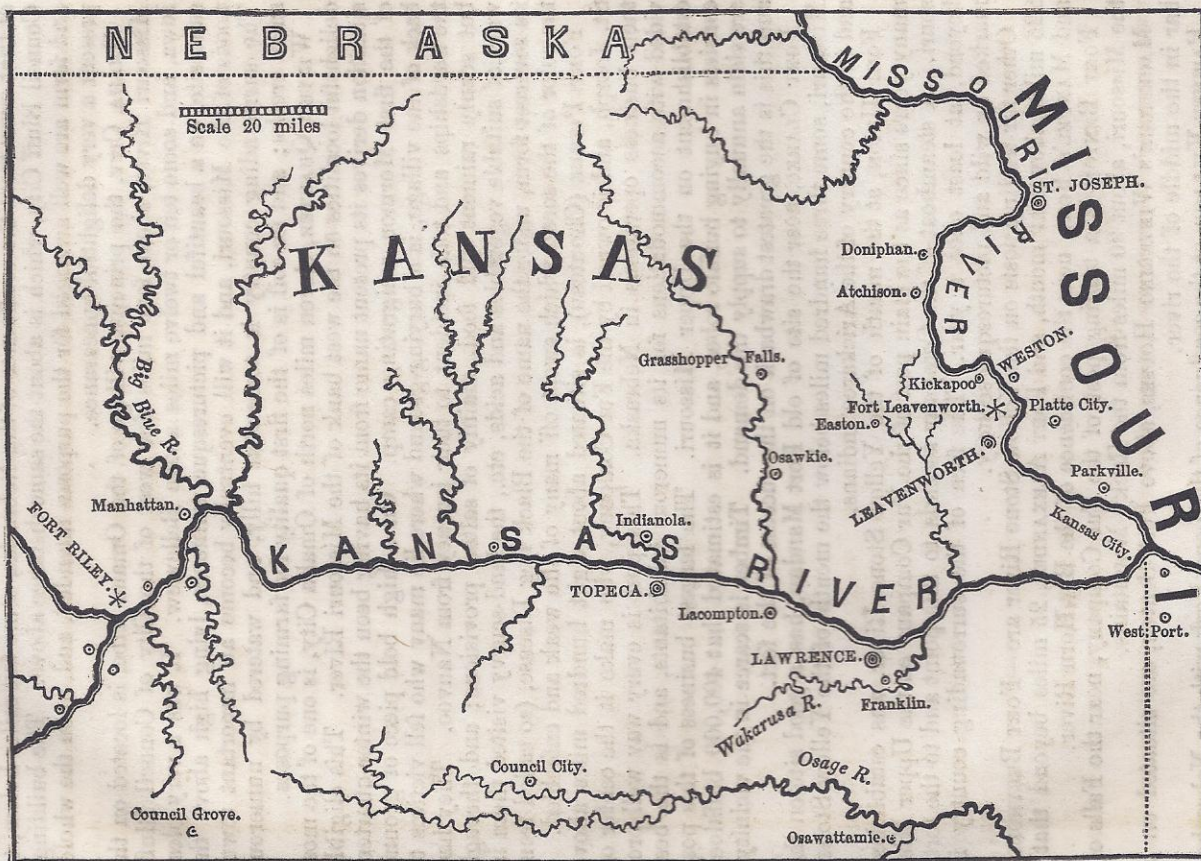


# Kansas Territorial Postal History

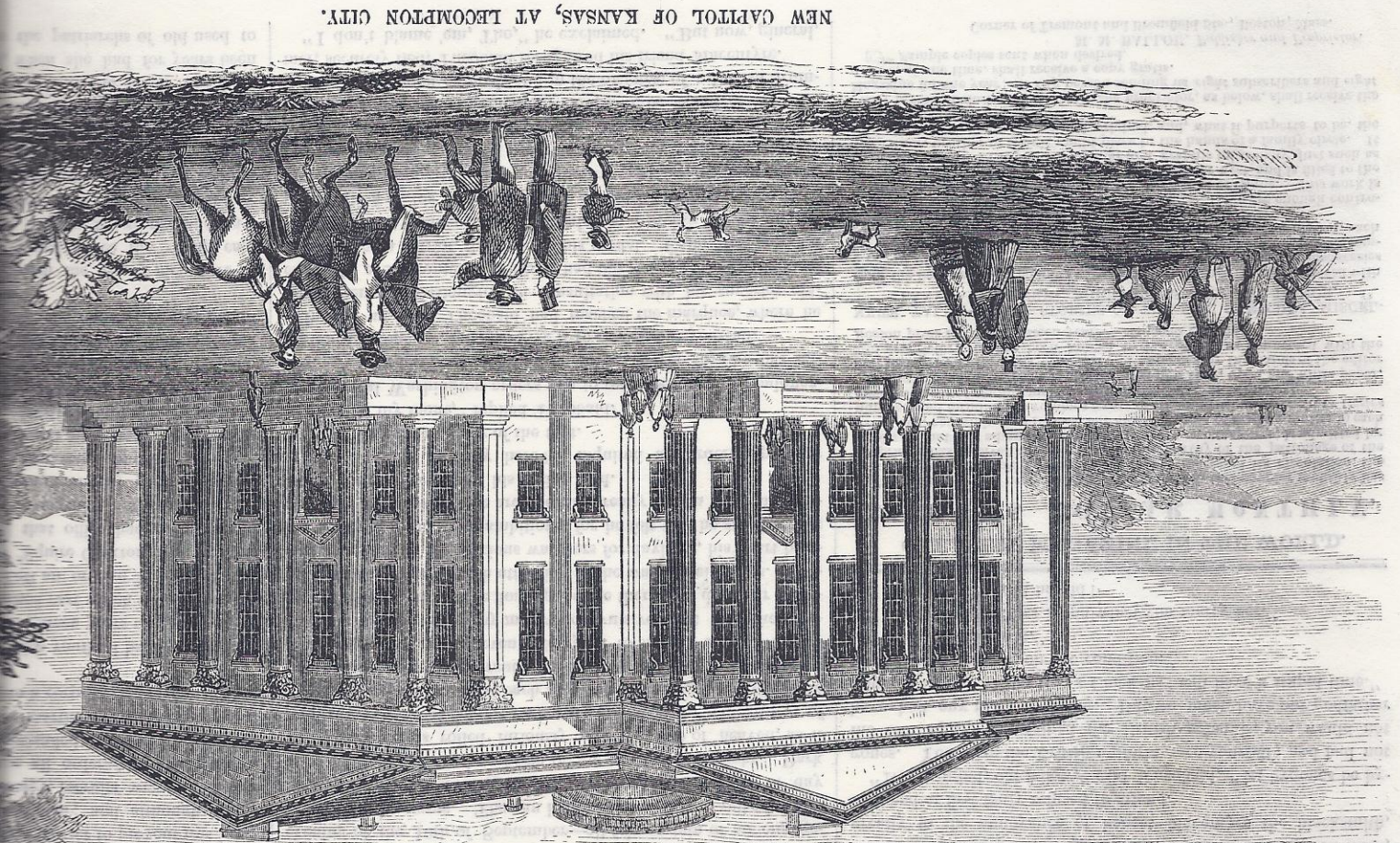
- Purpose of exhibit is to show a sampling of items from Kansas Territory.
- Kansas became a territory on May 30, 1854 as a result of the passage of Kansas-Nebraska Act which opened up a huge area from the Indian Nations (Oklahoma) to the Canadian border for settlement.
- Original territory was much larger than current state, the western border set at the Continental Divide in what is now Central Colorado.
- Kansas admitted as a Free State January 29, 1861 and was one of the causes for the Civil War.
- Era between May 30, 1854 and January 29, 1861 is known as the Territorial Period.
- Settlers flowed into Kansas during this time period and official population by 1860 was 105,000.
- During territorial period there were 324 official post offices established, 21 of which are now in Colorado. Many are extremely rare with less than 5 copies known, and some have no known examples.
- One of best sources for Kansas Territorial postal history is the James W. Denver correspondence. He was the Territorial Governor from late 1857 thru late 1858. Several pages in this exhibit come from my current exhibit based on his life and times.



Kansas Territory was officially organized by the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 authored by Senator Stephen Douglas of Illinois. This set the stage for a bloody conflict in Kansas Territory between pro-slavery and free state rivals. This original map was printed in 1857 and illustrated the Northeast portion of Kansas Territory & a portion of Northwestern Missouri along with a small section of Southeastern Nebraska Territory.



Territorial Capital Building circa 1858 in Leecompton, Kansas Territory. Building not finished, Topeka be capital of state in 1861. Original lithograph published in Ballou's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion

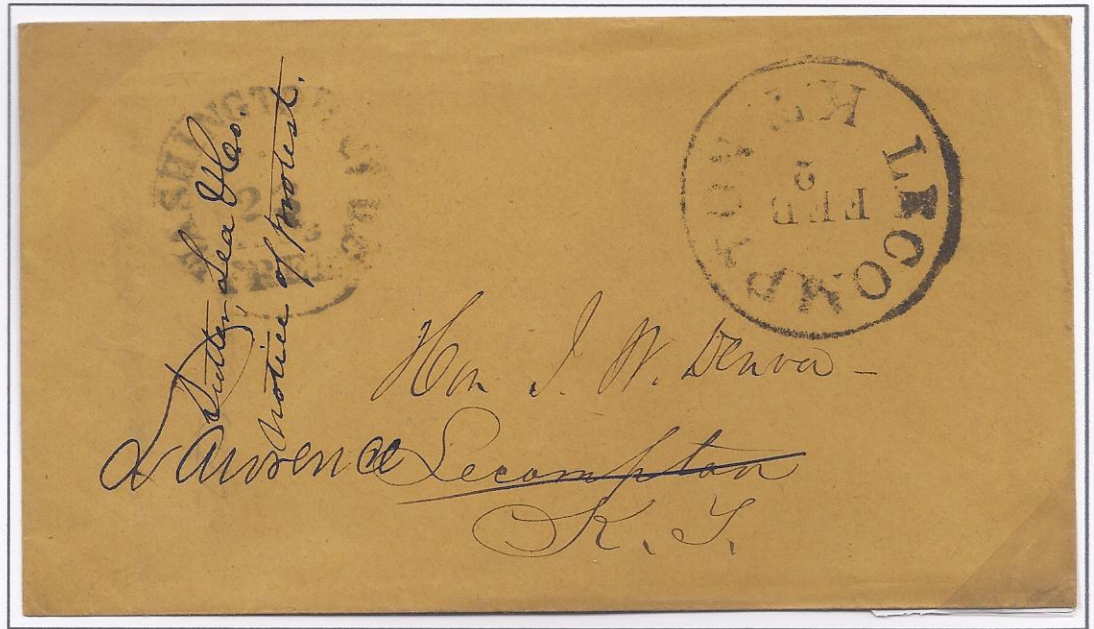


NEW CAPITOL OF KANSAS, AT LECOMPTON CITY.

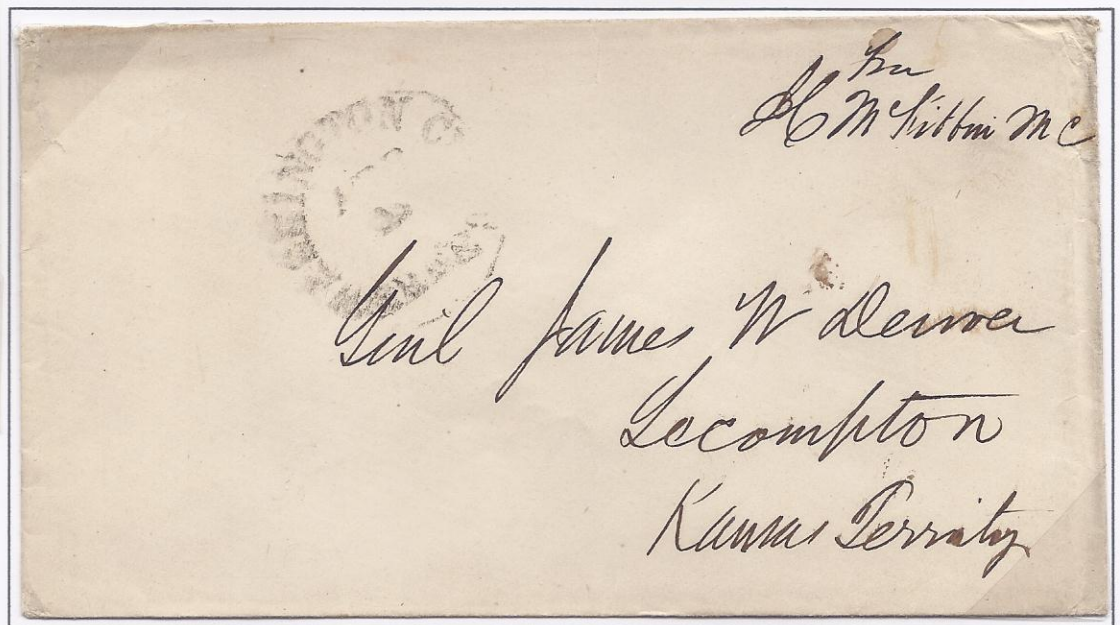




became  
magazine.



Official business free frank postmarked Washington DC Jan. 23, 1858 to Denver in Lecompton, KT, forwarded to Lawrence, Lecompton KT Feb. postmark. Denver had been appointed Acting Territorial Governor in December 1857 and Governor in March 1858.



Congressional free frank endorsed by Joseph C. McKibbin who was elected to fill Denver's previous California Congressional seat. Sent to Denver in April 1858 Washington DC Free post mark. McKibbin was a good friend of Denver's and fellow Democrat who served in the Civil War as a cavalry colonel.





THE GOVERNOR'S MANSION, LECOMPTON, KANSAS TERRITORY.

Territorial "Governor's Mansion" located in Leecompton. This lithograph was published in the June 6, edition of Harper's Weekly, a very popular magazine during the mid nineteenth century. Denver's w did not join him in these less than luxurious accommodations.



[JUNE 6, 1857.]



Wilmington O. Aug 3 (1858) to Lecompton, Kansas Territory. Letter from Denver's sister Mary, embossed ladies envelope. Mary and her twin sister Jane were very close to their older brother J. W. Denver. Jane had died in 1847, and Mary died just two years after this letter was written. Denver published a book of their poetry.



Quindaro K.T. Aug 28 (1858) to Williamsburgh, Massachusetts. Franked with 1857 Type II three cent stamp. Postmark was possibly handmade and the alphabet Unique to this and a rimless type, both used in Quindaro. Quindaro was located on the Missouri River about six miles upstream of the Kansas (Kaw) River. It was founded in 1855 and became a main entryway into Kansas Territory. Denver passed thru Quindaro on several occasions in both his Indian Affairs and Kansas Territorial positions.



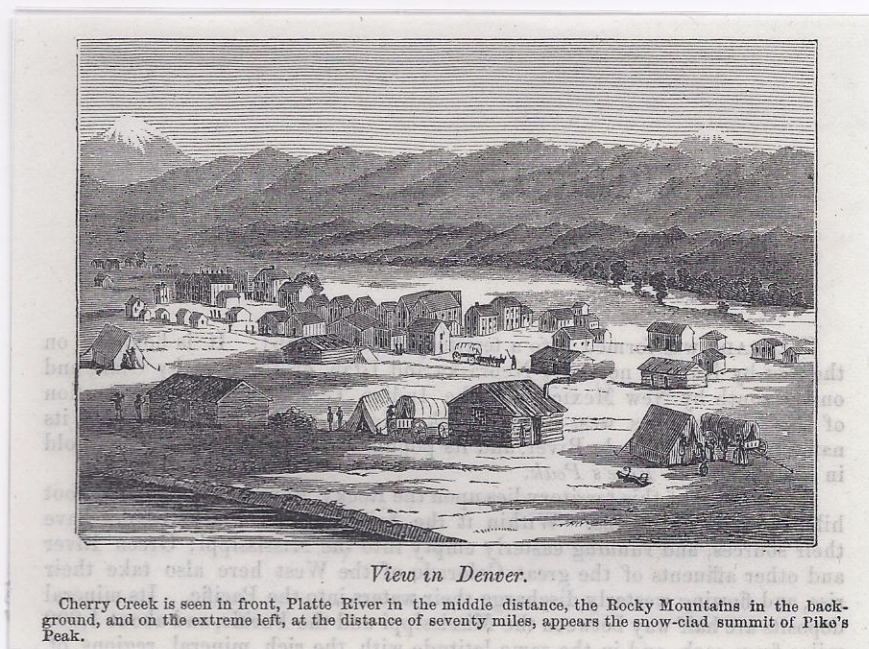
## V. Kansas Territory Years

St. Louis MO. Jul 12, 1860  
to Denver City, K.T., postage  
paid with 1857 series Type II  
three cent stamp.



When the city of Denver was founded in 1858 it was named after the current Territorial Governor, James W. Denver. From 1854 to January 1861 the western boundary of Kansas Territory was the Continental Divide. During the mid 1850s until March 1861 there were no formal mail contracts for transporting letters to the Colorado gold fields. Letters were either carried by favor or by one of the private express companies. This letter, which originated at Saint Louis, Missouri in July 1860 most likely traveled via train and steamboat to either Leavenworth, Kansas Territory or St. Joseph, Missouri, thence over one of the overland trails to Denver. The Post Office had no choice to use an express company since there was no contract route established until the Postal Act of March 2, 1861.

Original lithograph of Denver, Kansas Territory circa 1860. The city was named in honor of James W. Denver, who was the Kansas Territorial Governor at the time of the city's founding in 1858. **Denver did not see the city until 1874 and visited again briefly in 1882.** On both occasions the local citizens ignored him and he "felt humiliated".





V. Kansas Territory Years

Lawrence, KT June 30 (1857)  
to Barre, Vermont. 1853 series  
Nesbitt postal stationary pays  
first class letter rate



Letter sent from Free State settler in Lawrence to a relative in the East.

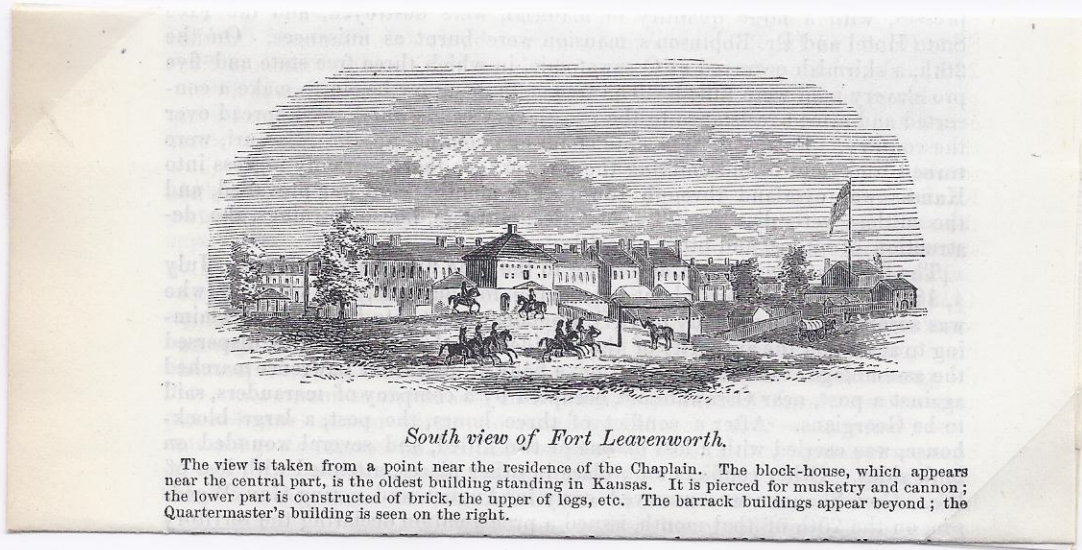


Wyandott K.T. May 20  
(1858) postmark, three  
cent perforated Type II  
stamp.

This letter was mailed from Wyandott, which eventually became Kansas City, Kansas. Item can conclusively be dated as 1858 by the post mark type and the fact that Denver was not in Kansas Territory in May 1857 or 1859. **Unusual use of territorial corner card for a banking and real estate brokerage firm.**



V. Kansas Territory Years



Original lithograph of Fort Leavenworth as it appeared when Denver was the Territorial Governor



Kansas Territory Executive Department official business corner card envelope from circa 1857-1860.