

Petition from Leaders of Emigrant Train

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Topeka, Kansas Territory.

October 14th 1856.

His Excellency

John W[.] Geary

Governor of Kansas Territory.

Dear Sir;

We, the undersigned, Conductors of an Emigrant Train who entered the Territory on the 10th instant, beg leave to make the following statements of facts, which, if required, we will attest upon our oaths.

1st. Our party numbered from 200 to 300 persons in two separate companies; the rear company (which has not yet arrived) being principally composed of families with children, who left Mount Pleasant, Iowa, three days after this train which has arrived to-day.

2nd. We are all actual bona-fide settlers, intending, so far as we know, to become permanent inhabitants.

3rd. The blockading of the Missouri River to Free State Emigrants, and the reports which reached us in the early part of September, to the effect that armed men were infesting and marauding the northern portion of Kansas, were the sole reasons why we came in a company and were armed.

4th. We were stopped near the northern line of the Territory by the United States Troops, acting as we understood, under the orders of one Preston,

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deputy U.S. Marshall; and after stating to the Officers who we were and what we had, they commenced searching our wagons, (in some instances breaking open trunks and throwing bedding and wearing apparel upon the ground in the rain,) taking arms from the wagons, wresting some private arms from the hands of men, carrying away a lot of sabres belonging to a gentleman in the Territory, as also 1 1/2 kegs of powder, percussion caps, and some cartridges; in consequence of which we were detained about two-thirds of a day, taken prisoners, and are now presented to you.

All we have to say is that our mission to this Territory is entirely peaceful; we have no organization, save a police organization for our own regulation and defense on the way; and coming in that spirit to this Territory, we claim the rights of American citizens to bear arms, and to be exempt from unlawful search or seizure.

Trusting to your integrity and impartiality, we have confidence to believe that our property will be restored to us, and that all that has been wrong will be righted.

We here subscribe ourselves,  
Cordially and truly  
your friends and fellow-citizens  
S.W. Eldridge Conductor  
Samuel C[.] Pomeroy  
John A. Perry  
Robt. Morrow  
Edward Daniels.  
Richard Reals