

**A Calendar of
the papers of
Benjamin and Harriett Carr
a holding of
the Library of the State Historical Society of Colorado**

**processed by
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1. 10-10-70

Foreword

Significance - This small collection consists of letters written by Benjamin and Harriett Carr who settled in Lawrence, Kansas in the late 1850's. It is of interest for the insight these letters give into the life led by such early settlers both on the prairie and in the mountains. They give details of daily life, home as well as business, of travel, of social life, and descriptions of Lawrence and Denver, of the landscape, and of the weather. There is also some description and discussion of the Indians.

Provenance - This collection was donated to the Colorado State Historical Society by Richard Loomis Carr of Ryderwood, Washington. It consists of letters written by Mr. Carr's grandparents to various members of the Carr family; the majority of them were written to the family after their departure for Kansas. It should be noted that most of these letters are in poor condition and should be handled with care. This collection is accessioned with the number **32475** entered in the **1970** Accession Book of the Library, State Historical Society of Colorado, approximately 24 pieces.

32475

Biography of Benjamin F. Carr

b. /Still River, Mass/

d.

m..

Harriett

b.

d.

son: Paul

b.

d.

daughter: Molly

b.

d.

Little biographical data is available. It would appear that both Harriett and Benjamin were born in the east: Harriett in /Ogden, N.Y./ and Benjamin in /Massachusetts/. Sometime in the fall of 1857 they began their journey west, settling first in Lawrence, Kansas. Around 1860 they went to Denver, then to Central City and, finally, around 1861 they moved to Empire. Benjamin operated a store in both Lawrence and Empire and, it would seem, did some investing in mines in the Central City area. By 1865 the family was back in New York City and a letter dated 2-1866 from Norfolk, Virginia indicates that Benjamin was considering renting a farm there and working it. Paul Carr's son, Richard Loomis Carr, donor of this collection, was born in Landsford, North Dakota.

CORRESPONDENCE

FF	NO.	TO	FROM	PLACE	DATE	FORM	DESCRIPTION
1	1	"Friends- Relatives- kin- Father..."	B[enjamin] F. Carr	Lancaster, Mass.	9-12-1857 9-14-1857	ALS 8p.	Gives personal news. Begs for a letter in reply.
1	2	Sister	Harriett [M. Carr]		n.d.	ALS 7p.	Describes in detail the spiritual joy Autumn gives her. Discusses personal and family matters. Mentions the possibility of their moving to Kansas.
2	1	Father [Lyman Carr]	Benjamin	Lyons, NY	11-25-1857	ALS 3p. env.	Describes their activities on their arrival in NYC en route to Kansas. Mentions hearing H. W. Beecher. Gives vague itinerary.
2	2	Father	Benjamin	St. Louis, Mo.	12-17-1857	ALS 4p.	Discusses some observations and feelings regarding their trip to St. Louis. Describes and discusses the boat trip from St. Louis to Kansas City.
3	1	Sister	Harriett	Lawrence, [Kan.]	7-11-1858	ALS 11p.	Describes their home and discusses life in Lawrence. Gives directions re. making ice cream. Describes Leavenworth.
3	2	Father & Mother	Harriett	Lawrence	7-4-1858	ALS 4p.	Describes the prairie in detail. Describes her memories of Mass and her longing for her family. Briefly discusses their present manner of living.

FF NO.	TO	FROM	PLACE	DATE	FORM	DESCRIPTION
4:1a-e	Father	Benjamin	Lawrence	7-1-1858 7-4-1858 7-11-1858	ALS 18p.	Briefly philosophizes on men's attitudes towards life and death in that part of the country. Discusses Gen. Jim Lane and his success in freeing Kansas from [domination by "the slave power"]. Discusses his grocery business. Describes his trip to Leavenworth by stage and the geography of Kansas. Discusses the indians.
4 2	Father	Harriett	Lawrence	12-26-1858	ALS 4p.	Describes, in detail her "camping" expedition to Leavenworth.
5 1		Benjamin	Lawrence	3-2-1859	ALS 4p.	Describes the weather and the physical appearance of Lawrence; discusses land speculation in Kansas. Also discusses a lawsuit he has against the proprietor of a Lawrence hotel. Comments on western justice.
6 1		[Benjamin]	Denver	6-24-1860	[ALS] 8p. inc.	Briefly discusses life in Denver. Describes his journey from Lawrence to Denver. Briefly describes and discusses the Pony Express.

fragile!

FF	NO.	TO	FROM	PLACE	DATE	FORM	DESCRIPTION
6	2a-2c		Benjamin	[Denver]	7-1-1860 7 15-1860 8-6-1860	ALS 12p. inc.	Describes high wind that blew one night during their trip from [Kansas] to [Denver]. Describes [Denver] on their arrival. Discusses prices of supplies at the Arkansas mines and his optimism re. a supply business. Mentions mining & plans to go to Mountain City. Also mentions having seen a desperado shot from his horse and its being strange that no one has been killed for 4 or 5 days. (Is probably a continuation of 3-2.)
							<i>fragile!</i>
7	1	Father Carr	Harriett	Denver	8-21-1860	ALS 2p.	Discusses family matters. Mentions that Benjamin starts the next day for the mountains with goods
7 7	2a-b 3	Father	Benjamin	Central City, Colo.	11-12-1860 11-13-1860	8p. ALS 4p.	Describes Central City. Discusses meeting Ellison, an acquaintance from Stillwater. Mentions having received news of Lincoln's election. Also discusses financial matters and the supply business.
18	1	Father	Benjamin	Empire, Colo.	11-14-1861	ALS 4p.	Describes and discusses Gen. Jim Lane. Announces his return from Montgomery and Buckskin Joe. Discusses a big strike in Buckskin Joe and his own plans re. prospecting.

FF	NO.	TO	FROM	PLACE	DATE	FORM	DESCRIPTION
8	2	Father Carr	Harriett	Empire	1-6-1862	ALS 4p.	Describes the climate, "society", "market", and schools of Empire. Discusses her family and the "western expressions" Ben has picked up. Mentions Lyman's enlistment. Discusses other personal and family matters.
8	3a-b	Father	Benjamin	Empire	8-11-1863	ALS 6p. EWS	Discusses his business activities. Explains why he and his family don't return to Mass. for a visit. Mentions plans to go to the "new mines" and his reluctance (because of indians) to have Harriett go east alone. Mentions that the war has little effect on people there. Presents list of questions re. old acquaintances.
9	1	Father Carr	Harriett	Empire	2-1864	ALS 4p.	Discusses her children's illness and, briefly, other personal and family matters.
9	2	Brother & Sister	Benjamin	New York, N.Y.	3-27-1865 4-12-1865	ALS 4p.	Discusses his children, his future plans, and other personal and family matters.
9	3	Sister	Benjamin	Norfolk, Va.	2-17-1866	ALS 4p.	Describes the weather. Briefly discusses a Mrs. Gardner and people who are ready with advice but never help. Discusses plans to rent some land there. Inquires about his children and whether Harriett gave her the \$10 he sent.

FF	NO.	TO	FROM	PLACE	DATE	FORM	DESCRIPTION
	10	4a-b Mrs.	Harriett		-20-	ALS 8p.	Discusses recent illnesses, and domestic and family matters.
	10	2a-d	Benjamin		n.d.	ALS 14p. inc.	Describes, in detail, a "five days journey over the snowy range to the middle fork and back...". Briefly discusses the area's "swindling scoundrels". Mentions intention to leave for Montgomery the following day.
	61	1					Envelope.
	61	2					Envelope.
	62	1					Notes (brief) on the Carr family by R. L. Carr, donor of the collection.

FRAGILE!