

**REMINISCENCES OF GOV.
R.J. WALKER; WITH TRUE
STORY OF THE RESCUE
KANSAS FROM SLAVERY**

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Reminiscences of Gov. R.J. Walker; with true story of the rescue Kansas from Slavery by
George W. Brown

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GEORGE W. BROWN

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GOV. ROBERT J. WALKER.

REMINISCENCES
OF
GOV. R. J. WALKER;
WITH THE TRUE STORY OF
THE RESCUE OF KANSAS FROM SLAVERY.

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TO YMDU
ASSOCIATION

ANNALS OF KANSAS

DEDICATION.

To Mrs. SARA T. D. ROBINSON,

Oakridge, LAWRENCE, KANSAS—

MADAM:—Permit me to dedicate these humble pages, relating to the pioneer history of your great and prosperous State, to your kindly care. You were identified with all the early settlers who came from the free North and located in and around Lawrence, to whom your hospitality was always cordially extended.

You saw a bald prairie, converted by well-directed toil and genius into the homes of an opulent and free people. You witnessed the aggressions of the slave power, shared in all the hardships and dangers which environed us. Your home was often the council chamber of the Free State leaders. That home with all its valuable contents, was fired by pro-slavery hands, and wholly consumed, May 21, 1856, when my own *Herald of Freedom* office, with all its presses, type, and fixtures, Miller & Elliot's Free State office, the Emigrant Aid Company's Hotel, were destroyed.

Following this terrible outrage on private rights your husband Charles Robinson, G. W. Smith, G. W. Deitzler, Gaius Jenkins and myself were indicted, by direction of a partisan Court, for high treason; our only offence was laboring by peaceful means to make Kansas free. Held as prisoners for nearly four months, guarded much of the time by a regiment of United States troops you shared the captivity with your husband, and wrote while thus environed, the fullest and most authentic history yet published of those border troubles and pioneer days.

You were also familiar with nearly every transpiring event connected with the great contest, to rescue Kansas from slavery, and were frequently advisory to lines of policy.

While all this is true of yourself, your late husband, by his consummate coolness, courage, careful consideration, and practical good judgment, was recognized as the head of the Free State party in all its trials, adversities and triumphs. He was made the first Governor by the suffrages of a free people, on the admission of the State into the Union, because of his political, social and moral worth. He wisely directed the policy of the State during the major part of the War of the Rebellion. In more pacific times he laid the foundation of the schools of learning for the Commonwealth, and contributed largely for their support during their infancy, donating the domain on which the State University stands, providing by will that his large estate on your demise, shall inure to that University for its endowment. Honored and loved by all classes of a free people, therefore, to you, Mrs. ROBINSON, to the memory of your departed husband, to the few survivors of that great struggle for freedom, and to the descendants of those who are gone, to the press, the libraries of your State, and to all in every clime who, by word or deed, aided in rescuing Kansas from the curse of slavery, this volume is respectfully inscribed.

PREFACE.

THE SUBSTANCE of these pages was written in 1851, and was published in the Rockford, Ill., *Gazette* where it had a large reading. Many prominent actors in the Kansas strife during its pioneer days, were readers of the paper, while two copies were subscribed for, and are now on file in the Kansas Historical Society. To date, now over twenty years, not a single statement herein made, has been called in question so far as the author has information, yet numerous indorsements have been received from those who had personal knowledge of the subjects treated. Some of these letters will be quoted as notes, else in our closing pages, while their originals in due time will be filed for preservation with the Kansas Historical Society. Many other letters from less prominent persons, indorsing this narrative, are also on file.

At the suggestion of some of the actors, a few points have been elaborated, and new ones in the way of notes have been added, which will make the work more valuable to a new generation and to youthful readers.

The information herein contained could not be given the public, with propriety, at the time of its occurrence. For the want of this information, many pages of what was designed for truthful history, have been distorted, while actors in the exciting incidents, have been misrepresented and frequently maligned. Even recent writers have taken their cue from early press correspondents, ignorant of the truth, or the motive of the actors, and continue to falsify and mislead their readers, giving credit for results to those whose belligerent policy retarded, and sometimes threatened to defeat the grand result of making Kansas a free State.

Having been a personal actor throughout that exciting period

in history, the editor and publisher of the *HERALD OF FREEDOM*, the first and leading free state paper in the territory from the beginning to the end of the contest, with intimate relations with all its men of prominence, and as our Kansas success was the real incentive of the South to Secession, ultimating in the extinction of American Slavery, and by reflex action in the principal kingdoms of the world, so while others have placed themselves on record, it seems just that I, too, shall be heard in explanation of many events wherein myself, and those acting with me have been misunderstood and bitterly censured.

I greatly regret I was unable to give a wider circulation to the truth, before so many of the real heroes in the strife had passed away.

"Hear all sides before deciding," is the substance of a Latin proverb with an English rendering. Mine is the "other side" not heretofore so fully told. So much as is contained in this little volume may induce the re-writing of some pages of tangled Kansas history to make them better agree with truth. The whole is submitted in all kindness to the honest and thoughtful consideration of a new generation, in whose hands is the correction of the false in history.

THE AUTHOR.

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