

KANSAS.

DETAILS OF THE FIGHT AT FORT SAUNDERS.

Correspondence of The N. Y. Tribune.

WALKER'S CAMP ON ROCK CREEK, }
KANSAS, Aug. 15, 1856. }

The brutal murder of Major Hoyt has caused an intensity of hatred to ruffianism and a desire to rid the Territory of ruffians, never, perhaps, equaled in the history of our difficulties. The aggravated and savage-like circumstances of the murder, seemed to arouse even the peaceful and conservative portion of our citizens, who heretofore had taken a grin-and-bear-it position, so that on Thursday last it was evident to all that nothing less than hanging the murderers would satisfy the people. Accordingly, about fifty men, armed to the teeth, marched from Lawrence to this place as a reinforcement to the citizens already assembled there for the same purpose. It will be remembered that Fort Saunders is the title given to the den of the desperados who have been robbing and insulting the Free-State settlers on Washington Creek, a branch of the Wakarusa.

When the reinforcement arrived here from Lawrence, a council was held, which resulted in the appointment of a committee to visit Major Sedgwick, the commandant of three companies of dragoons, near Lecompton. The committee was directed to inform the Major of the brutal murder of Mr. Hoyt, who had been riding along peaceably and unarmed, in the vicinity of Fort Saunders on Washington Creek; that when his body was found by some Free State men, it was pierced through with ten balls, his throat cut, and a paper plastered on his face to prevent his being recognized by his friends. The committee was also directed to tell him of the murder, on the Santa Fé road, of Mr. George Williams, another Free State man, and to ask him to drive the gang from the Territory. The committee returned here to-day, about noon, and stated that Major Sedgwick was acting under orders, and that he had no orders to disband any company unless required to do so by his superior officer, or by the Governor, or something to that effect.

In the meantime rumors reached us that about thirty of the Kickapoo Rangers under command of Stringfellow, had passed over Blanton's Bridge in the direction of Fort Saunders on Washington Creek, and the number of Ruffians there was variously estimated at from 150 to 300 men. In the morning a scouting party of forty horsemen had been sent from our camp to reconnoiter, and to ascertain if possible the best method of attack. They soon returned and reported, and at 1 o'clock this afternoon about 300 men under command of Gen. Cook took up the line of march from this camp to Fort Saunders.

The distance between the two camps is about six miles, and as the long file of men marched over the high grounds which form one side of the valley of Washington Creek, they presented a rather imposing appearance. From this point, at a distance of four miles, we could see the fort as it stood on a high bluff on the south side of the creek.

Crossing the creek about two miles below the fort, the Free-State men marched up a high hill or rather a continuation of bluffs, common to most of the streams of Kansas. At last we came in sight of the fort, which looked a great deal more formidable at a distance than it did when near to it. Still the ground was well selected, and no better place exists in Kansas than that to make a successful defense. On each side of the fort were

two or three large tents, and everything looked, externally, as if the Russians took comfort.

A company of infantry was drawn up in front of and within rifle-shot of the fort, while two companies of cavalry were drawn up at right angles to the line of infantry, thus closing three sides. About this time, a single horseman was seen riding from the fort toward the ravine in the rear; but no effort was made to intercept him. It was now generally believed that the fort was either deserted, or else they were laying in ambush to encourage the closer approach of our forces. The order was given, and a company from Lawrence known as the "Stubbs," charged through the fort and down into a steep ravine where it was supposed the Russians had hid in the low brush and timber. Not a soul could be seen, and the Chivalry, who figured so bravely at the destruction of Lawrence were, on this occasion, not so chivalrous. On scanning the prairie with a telescope, a few straggling horsemen were seen riding at full gallop. A negro slave-boy, about eighteen years of age, crawled out of the brush somewhere, and reported that some sixty men had been there about an hour ago, but when they saw us coming they mounted, and rode away. As the case was reversed and as his master had run away from him instead of he from his master, I told him he was free. I did not see him afterward, but I suppose he went to some of the cabins of the Pro-Slavery settlers, close by, with whom he was probably acquainted.

A great many interesting relics were taken from the fort before it was destroyed; some of them indicative enough of the character of its inmates. For instance, there was any quantity of "yaller-livered" literature; a copy of "The Laws of Kansas," bound in calf; several silk parasols and other articles of dress belonging to the Lawrence ladies, taken during the sack on the 21st of May; and some United States muskets. But the best trophy of all—one which exhibited the appreciation and taste of its designers to the best advantage—was a flag with a white ground, in one corner of which were thirteen black stars. Across it were three black stripes, each about six inches wide, and in another corner were the words, "Enforce the Laws, '76," with the names of two ladies, supposed to be the donors. The fort, built of logs, squared and hewed, with its port-holes, barricades and entrenchments, was soon demolished, and we returned to this camp tired enough. The camp-fires are now burning, the Chicago Company and Gen. Cook feel fine, and "all goes merrily as a marriage-bell." POTTER.