



Augusta's Journal: A Biography

Ralph E. Crump

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In 1857 Augusta, indeed the originator of this book through her three bound journals, which I inherited, met Sara Robinson, the plucky abolitionist wife of the first elected Governor of Kansas Territory. She had written a book, while in a P.O.W. camp with her husband. It so impressed Augusta that after Eldorado was founded and she settled down there, she began planning a book about their pre Civil War adventures traveling to the Kansas Territory. Arriving there in the summer of 1856 at the height of the abolitionist immigration, they met General Jim Lane, and John Brown, who gave each girl a Bowie knife, helped organize and defend these early abolitionists' settlements. Shortly after arriving her father joined Jim Lane's militia and fought several battles against proslavery companies. His company was captured by the U.S. Army and put into a P.O.W. camp for several months. In the spring of '57 Sam Stewart, Augusta's father, organized a small group of abolitionists to go west into the territory to form some new settlements and a new voting district. By June they had founded Eldorado and planted the first crops. The girls joined him that fall. That winter Augusta and her sister Adda were entertaining some friends in Eldorado in their tent. Among the guests from Lawrence was Captain Joe Cracklin, who had named the town and was a cofounder, asked Augusta what she intended to do with all of her notes and journal entries. She said she intended to follow Sara Robinson's example and write her own book on these early years of the Kansas Territory. However the business of running a household, which often included board and room for prospective settlers, building a saw mill and a sorghum mill, the distractions caused by her father's murder, her husband's death, her move to the Gold Fields of Kansas and finally settling down with her new husband (a co owner of a gold mine in Colorado Territory) in another new territory, Montana

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