

## Chapter 254 – Buchanan Sacks Kansas Governor Robert Walker



**Dates:**  
December 15, 1857

**Sections:**  
• Walker Exits But Not Quietly

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### Walker Exits But Not Quietly



The Capitol In Washington, DC

Soon after the Lecompton delegates conclude their work, Governor Walker decides to travel to Washington to meet with Buchanan. His purpose is to explain, and defend, his decision to exclude the fraudulent votes cast on October 5 which has resulted in the election of an “official” legislature controlled by Free Staters.

His arguments, however, will fall upon the deaf ears of a President more than ever intent on discrediting the Free-State movement and supporting the legitimacy of the Lecompton Constitution and process.

Buchanan feels that Walker has let him down, and asks for his resignation, effective December 15, 1857.

But given a very distinguished reputation in the capital, Walker is not so easily brushed aside.

His exit is accompanied by a tirade against the President for betraying the popular sovereignty principles that were central to Walker’s acceptance of the post in the first place.

Worse yet, both he and ex-Governor Stanton will go on to appear at northern rallies against Lecompton, accusing Buchanan of “tyranny” for denying Kansans their right to a fair election.

<b>Key Events In Kansas During Robert Walker’s Term As Governor</b>	
<b>1857</b>	<b>Milestone</b>
January 7	Topeka legislature reconvenes in defiance of prior shutdown
March 4	James Buchanan is inaugurated
March 10	Topeka members reinstate Charles Robinson as Governor
March 20	Governor Geary resigns
May 27	New Governor Robert J. Walker arrives in Kansas
June 6	Walker urges Free-Staters to abandon Topeka movement
Mid-June	Election of delegates for Lecompton Constitutional convention Free-Staters boycott and Pro-Slavery left in charge
July 15	Walker declares Lawrence in rebellion for re-opening legislature
August 20	Charles Robinson finally acquitted of treason charges
September 7	Constitutional Convention opens at Lecompton packed with Pro-Slavers
September 11	Lecompton Convention adjourns
October 5	Annual election of Kansas legislators, with Free-Staters participating. Walker throws out fraudulent Pro-Slavery ballots Free- Staters win majority of seats and now control the legislature
October 19	Lecompton Convention reconvenes to write a Constitution
November 7	Lecompton adopts a pro-slavery document & sets Dec 21 vote date Vote on “with slavery vs. without slavery,” not on full Constitution
November 16	Walker goes to DC to explain the October 5 election results to Buchanan. Acting Governor Frederick Stanton fills in for him in Kansas
December 7	Free State Party calls for 3 <sup>rd</sup> option – on full Constitution Set January 4, 1858 as date to vote on Lecompton Constitution
December 8	Buchanan supports Lecompton in message to Congress
December 9	Stephen Douglas announces his opposition to Lecompton
December 15	Walker resigns; blames B-tyranny; Lecompton was not real popsov submission; violates right of self-government