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Letter from Wesley Browning to James B. Finley

Wesley Browning

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Mr
Wm Browning



Rev. James B. Finley
Cincinnati
Ohio

Pittsburgh Apl. 26th 1831

My Dear Bro.

Being straightened for time to write sooner I now sit down to write hastily a few lines. The ejectment case of the Methodist Church of Pittsburgh against Remington & others was taken up in the Circuit Court last Tuesday afternoon and continued until Thursday night. The trial excited a great degree of interest not only among the parties, but a large portion of the publick. A mass of important testimony was given on the part of the plaintiffs, especially by Bro. Waterman, by which it appeared pretty plainly that a design had been systematically operating for several years before the secession to get a firm hold on the property and wrest it from the Church. The Court, after patiently hearing the investigation, directed the jury to find a verdict for the plaintiffs, and they did so, without going out of the box. Next morning the defendants counsel filed their objections to the verdict, & appealed the case to the Supreme Court. This Court will sit in September, and if it should be reached it may possibly be settled. Or on account of some error it may be remanded back for a new trial. Thus, though there is some probability of getting possession of it in Sept.

yet they may keep us out of it for a year or two. You will observe that this case involves the question of the right of property. There are two other suits pending, one for forcible entry, and one for damages. The investigation of this case has placed reform in a different light before the public. And reports say that there is much confusion in the Camp. Last night they had a meeting at which their principal lawyer was present, and I hear advised them not to give up the property yet. I do not like to say much about other folks, but I think it not too much to say they are not prospering. Brown and both the Ragans are still here.

We have just finished the cellar of our new Church, and shall begin the stone work tomorrow. I am sometimes afraid we shall not be able to finish it; but if we can get it on so far as to use the upper part, we shall be thankful. I feel a great degree of solicitude about it, and most earnestly pray that the Lord may grant us success. I am sorry to hear of Sister Finley's affliction, but hope the Saviour will be her support. If my body could pass as rapidly as my thoughts, I should often visit you. I rejoice to hear of your general prosperity. And pray that the Lord may abundantly enlarge your Zion. I should like to visit you. And possible I may, during

the course of the summer. If you have another camp meeting I should like to know the time at least, and should be much pleased to get to it. My foolish heart almost sighs to get back to Ohio sometimes, and on a circuit. but I am not fit to be any where in the Lord's vineyard without I had more religion. My soul is humbled before the Lord when I consider his goodness and my ingratitude and unfaithfulness. God be merciful to me a sinner! I should be glad to get a letter from you now: but especially after the Supreme Court in May.

If you meet with Bro. Brooks, please inform him of this. Please present my love to the preachers and all friends, especially your worthy host and family, and their near neighbours, Mr. and Mrs. Bakewell. I speak understandingly when I say, I remember with gratitude the year I spent with you, the kindness of yourself & family, and especially the support you once gave me. If God should ever cast my lot with you again I hope I should improve the privilege more to his glory. May he pardon me, and save us both.

Yours affectionately

W. Browning