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Letter from Squire Gray Eyes to James B. Finley

Squire Gray Eyes

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My dear friend, some time since I received your letter dated December 14th, requesting me to give you answer, and dear brother, I was at that time, with great solicitude of my most complying power, so that I was not able to try and find the number of persons who were members of the church in the Shawnee Nation and Delaware and also the Kickapoos. I can now venture to state to you that there are 120 members of the members of the Shawnee Nation, of whom 80 are of the Shawnee and Delaware, and 20 of the Kickapoos. I am about 100 of the Shawnee and Delaware, and of the Kickapoos I will freely now give you the names of my people, who are leaders of the church: W. Willis, James Bigtree, John I. Clarke, Little Chief (Brothers), Caleb Caro, Reel, David Long, John Holloway, George Pickard, William Pickerill, John Pickman, White, Brown, John Pickel, Cedar, John A. Armstrong (a hunter). Dear brother, I am happy to state to you that once again I have the great privilege to invite in meeting with our brethren from nations to worship our Heavenly Father. My dear brother, thou art that great many of our brethren and sisters with whom I met in the house of our Lord at Upper Sandusky, were exceedingly happy to have from your pen, an acceptable letter was read in the church.
Brother, it is very difficult for me to consider what you are so intimately acquainted with, as I was not living, but I will endeavor to give the Names of the old persons who have since sine 1825 have come to this country or are now living: old Reverend Malphose Brewer, late Mr. Squier the Fort, Dr. Lige, Robert Young, John French, George French, Thomas French, Russel Hicks, Francis Dries, James Davis, Thomas Scott, Henry Jackson, old Mother Walker, Mother Armstrong, Mother Davis, Nathan Medford and Daniel Turnea.

It seems to me that you will be pleased with our lot to tell you of the Cherokee South. I cannot with good grace say that I am altogether satisfied with the reasons that differ from what I have heard before. One thing is this, that the South Missionary do not strictly instruct the Indians with Morality. I find many of our own Preachers of different tribes and doing better than any I have ever seen in any connection. I say this to the Missionary who is sent among them to try to preach the Word and not to try. Another point that I am dissatisfied with the Missionaries here is that they do not regard the duty of the Pastor to visit the sick unless they are sent for by the leaders of the Church. There is a numerous instance that I could mention that is not officially to my name.

In reality, Brother, I would prefer a preacher to Missionary to be a good man. I would be thankful that from the North, My dear brother, I am happy to read in your letter a description of you and pleased of visiting me next fall. I really hope that you may meet with that opportunity. I will pray for it, my last is now slowed with waitth and in thoughts of you more than anything. My old Brother in this lonely world, there are great many of our old friends who would be happy to see you here. Sometimes old Father Hicks and wife, the new. Old Mother Harlow, all you old acquaintances. Brother, I am sorry for our boys who have had the pleasure to go back to Ohio that once not given you a call when passing by my residence. I can assure you you have seen enough friends in our Nation. My dear Brother, I am very proud with the improvement of good health and still trying to preach to the heathen. Living to be good for my own and to them. However, I am now sitting up and feel well which may cause me soon to finish my labors and meet my heavenly reward. My family is all well at this time, and the all give you their offers of love and respect. William Blackman family is well. His mother is still faithful in serving the Lord. There has been some sickness with us during the winter some that served of late. There has come to that state since I wrote to you. I should be glad to hear from you soon, if you will continue to write before, have my respect to family and family, and others.
My dear friend

Some time since I received your letter dated December 24th requesting me to give you answer, soon. Dear Brother I wish to make some apology of my not complying sooner. My only excuse is to try and find the number of persons who are members of the church in the Shawnee Nation and Dellaware and also the Keecuppoos. I can here venture to state to you that there are 43 members Shawnee & 42 of Dellawares & 30 of the Keecuppoos. And my friend there is about 120 yet members in the Wyandott Nation. I will freely now give you the names of our people who are leaders of the church. Old Father Hicks, James Bigtree, Geo ___ Clarke, Little Chief (Preachers) Batese Curly Head, David Young, John Salloman, George Spick Buck, William Jackoo, John Vanmeeter, White Crow, John Pipe (Class Leaders) John M. Armstrong (exhorter)

Dear Brother I am happy to state to you that we have the great privilege to enjoy in meeting with our neighbouring nations to worship our heavenly Father.

My Dear Brother, there were great many of your Old Brothers and Sisters with whom you would meet in the House of our Lord at Upper Sandusky were exceedingly happy to hear from you. Your acceptable letter was read in the church.

Brother it is somewhat difficult for me to remember whom whom you were intimately acquainted that are now not living, but I will endeavor to give the names of the old persons who have died since we have emigrated to this country or short time previous. Old Peacock, Walpole Sirakas, Bare Skin Squindecttee Doct. Grey Eyes, Robbert Grey Eyes, Old Punch, John Punch, George Punch, Thomas Punch, Rusha Hicks, Francis Driver, James Driver, Thomas McKee, Henry Jackoo, Old Mother Walker, Mother Armstrong, Mother Driver, Mother Mudeater and daughter ______.

It seems to me in your letter that you would like to learn how I am pleased of our lot to fall in to the Church South. I cannot with good grace say that I am altogether suited simply from ______ reasons that differ from what I have been taught. One thing is this that the South Missionary do not strictly instruct the Indians with matrimony. I find many of our own Preachers of different tribes are living with their families without being married according to law or disciplines. I lay the blame this to the missionary who is sent among them to teach the good and right way. Another point that I am displeased with the missionaries here is that they do not regard the duty of the Missionary to visit the sick unless they are sent for by the leaders of the church. There is a numerous instance that I could mention that is not agreeable to my feeling.

In reality Brother I would prefer a preacher or missionary to be with us would be that from the North.
My dear brother, I am happy to find in your letter a disposition of you and Elzet of visiting us next fall. I really hope indeede that you may meet with that opportunity. I will pray for it. My hart is now is flowed with gratitudo in thoughs of onse more meeting my Old Brother in this lonely world. There are great meny of our old friends here who would be happy to see you here. For instance Old Father Hicks and wife, Bigtree, Ole Mother __________. All you old acquaintances. Brother I am sorry for our boys who has had the pleasure to go back to Ohio that have not given you a call when passing by you residence. I can assure you you have yet warm friends in our Nation. My Dear Brother I am yet spared with the injoyment of good health and still hoping to preach to the people ______ to be good for my self and to them. However I am now getting old and feeble which may caus me soon to finnish my battle and meet my heavely reward. My famoly is all well at this time, and the all give you and famoly there best respects. William Walkers famaly is well. Mrs. Walker is still faithfull in serving the Lord. There has bin some sickness with us during the winter some that proved fatell. Their has some 12 that dide cince I wrote to you.

I should be glad to her from you soon. If you will come visit us pleas to write before. Give my respect Brook and family, and others. To James Wheeler, Rev. Samuel Allen, Powers and Thompson. I hope you will excuse me of writing short letters. I will try to make it up by writing oftener.

From you friend

Squire Grey Eyes