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Finley Letters

James B. Finley Letters

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5-28-1823

## Letter from Alfred Brunson to James B. Finley

Alfred Brunson

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### Recommended Citation

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count of the Local Preachers who cannot conveniently attend the Local conference in Ohio & L<sup>d</sup> by adding strength enough to the ministry here to hold camp or yr meeting with requiring help from Canada. We have preached every Sabbath in this city this year, & my sickness confining me so much to town, I have literally been stationary & about all the support my self or Br Baker has received is from the city. So that they can support a preacher in town & think they ought to have one. However I mention these things not to dictate but to give you all the information I can. There is at present more Methodist in the Territory than all other denominations except the Catholics & we get once in while one of them converted.

Detroit May 28<sup>th</sup> 1823  
 Dear Brother Finley,  
 I sit down once more in this distant & sorrowful land, to communicate to you the affairs of my charge. I wrote you twice & received no answer, & I am fearful my letters were mis-carried. In my first, which was dated in Feb. or March I stated something to you concerning my colleague, which, as matters have turned more favourable, I wish I had have left unsaid, as it may make an unfavourable impression on your mind, which was not my intention, as to his character. He was not at first received very well, but is now received much better.

We expected you here by the 23<sup>d</sup> of this month to our Camp Meeting, but was disappointed, from some cause as yet unknown to us, tho' we are induced to think it was your ill health. Please, Slayter, Parker & Potter from Canada was here, otherwise we should have been destitute of help as I was unable to attend my self. I was confined to my house during the meeting with an inflammation on the Liver. My health has not been good since the last of December last. I was then taken with an inflammation on the lungs, from which I did not recover till April and after two weeks tolerable (not to say sound) health I took another cold which terminated in an inflammation on the Liver, & to cure which I was in a course of Salivation at the time of camp meeting. I am now recovering as fast as I could expect, tho' unable to preach as yet. I have not been round the whole Circuit but once this year being prevented by sickness. Br Baker has traveled principally on the South part of the circuit, & what I have traveled has been on the North, & have filled the appointments in this city every Sabbath (tho' in much bodily weakness) except two weeks in the winter, (one of which was an our quarter meeting day), and camp meeting.

In my second letter to you, I observed that charges were preferred against Br Kent & that I had given him notice that the evidences would be taken ~~in~~ in the case at camp meeting in your presence. I know not but I have exceeded my bounds, but I know of no other way to do the business; as he was not attached to this district, nor preached enough in the Territory to form a committee, & you not in the Territory to call one, I knew of no way to attend to it, <sup>but</sup> to take the evidences here in his presence (if he chose to attend) & take them to conference. If to be truly formal we must have a committee before the conference takes it up, it must be done at conference. I do not wish to bias your mind against him before you fairly hear the case, but still to give you a fair representation of matters. I must observe that, he came to camp meeting, but acts very queerly for an innocent man, and declines every offer that I could possibly make for an amicable settlement.

Rev. James D. Finley  
 Wyandott Mission  
 Upper Canada  
 Ohio



What I  
 since writing & looking the within I have  
 amicably settled the difference mentioned with  
 the Party concerned -  
 Alfred Brown  
 May 28 1823

My wife was confined with a son on the 6<sup>th</sup> of this month. The young man is looking our nephew to you & wife. Br Elliot & wife - As to the state of my own mind, I am as before, I am holding towards young Brown much as before. I am of body & mind; & expect that by & by I shall be out of the reach of pain & sorrow - I am resolved to blow my last breath for good & expect to tumble from the wheels of Zion into the arms of my Master shouting victory to his name. - Yours respectfully Alfred Brown  
 P.S. Br Baker is well. Joseph Knapp is in the only local preacher in my circuit at present, he is an Elder & his conduct is good.



And seems to be bent on clearing himself, not on the ground of his innocence, but on some point of law; I cannot say that I have done every thing in due form of law, & my inexperience must be my apology if I have not; but I think I have taken such steps as will bring the matter so fairly & clearly to light, that a body of candid & enlightened men can discover whether he has done right or wrong. As you are not here & as Bro Baker is the only preacher belonging to our conference that is here & who is disinterested in the matter, I have requested him to take the evidence in the matter. But if you did not get my second letter you may by this time wonder what is the matter? The thing is this, it has been represented to me that Bro Went Promised to marry Caroline M. Starks & now denies it. As to the truth of the matter you must judge when you see the evidence -

Another thing I wish to write to you about is, that Elias Patte a Local Elder from Canada is about to move into this Territory & wishes to travel; he was once a member of the Geneva Conference & located on account of his health & family concerns. His health is now restored & his family concerns in a favourable situation. And as he has traveled all through Upper Canada he thinks that he could be more useful on this side of the River. He has a wife & seven children, the oldest of which is over 14 years of age, & he says that they make his & their own clothing, that he has about a years provision on hand & crops coming in next fall; he is willing to take a circuit in this Territory, he is enured to the climate & will not in all probability be affected by those complaints common to our Ohio Boys. He is an acceptable preacher & I believe generally very useful. He wishes to make application to our next conference; and to this end wished me to write to you on the subject, & to ascertain from you the steps necessary to be taken in the case, & when and where the Local Conference meets as he intended to attend both it and our annual conference. What I have told concerning him self & family, is from his parchments & his own word, & what I have said concerning his abilities & usefulness is from hearing him, & the statements of others. As to the affairs of our circuit they are generally prosperous, we have more than doubled our numbers in this city and considerably increased them in the circuit. We have commenced the meeting house & expect to get it up this summer. There was a few converted at camp meeting & the brethren generally quickened. But the weather was so unfavourable that it hindered many of our friends from attending, & your absence with my sickness and absence seemed to damp the spirits of our people. I am however it would not <sup>with</sup> victory on the Lord's side -

Brother Saul Henkle owes me up word 50 Dollars and he has written to me that Bro James Montgomery of Geneva owes him the money & wishes me to take his note instead of his own. & it would be doing me a favour if you would or could see Bro Montgomery & ascertain whether or not he can pay it & when, so that if there is any more probability of getting it of him <sup>than</sup> of Bro Henkle I will take his note.

I have seen Gov. Coss on the Subject of Indian Missions & he states that government has appropriated 2000 Dollars annually towards teaching the Sagane Indians to work their lands, & that if the Methodist would establish a Mission or Missions among them, that this money should be applied to the agricultural part of these Missions, & that you had the Superintendence of the Missions in this quarter, & that I expected you at the Camp Meeting when he said he would talk with you on the subject - but your not coming of course disappointed us in our calculation. I leave it therefore with you do as you please. If the means of our connection would admit of establishing a mission in this direction, this 2000 \$ per annum would do it very much -

The affairs of this Territory I think demand more attention than has hitherto been paid to it, the population of the country is fast increasing, up word of 300 men <sup>besides</sup> women & children has arrived here this spring & there will probably be some thousands in before fall - This increase of population demand an increase of laborers - Many of the emigrants are Methodist & 3 or 4 Local Preachers are expected here in the course of the season. And you know that as soon as the settlements of this Territory will admit of it, the N. England Missionaries will flock <sup>here</sup> like Pigeons, as they did in New Connecticut. If we therefore can get, by the blessing of God, Methodism established here before they come, we might prevent their pious speculations & save many souls. To prove this I need only refer you, to the lower part of Ohio where the Missionaries were scarce. Under this view of the subject I venture to suggest the following plan to your consideration; & if you approve of it, you can state it to the Bishop if you please. Viz. That this Territory be made a district with one Station & 2 circuits - that the preacher in the City be a D. E. or that the D. E. be also on a Mission. This Territory <sup>might</sup> be benefitted by its being a district 1<sup>st</sup> on all