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Letter from George S. Houston to James B. Finley

George S. Houston

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I am in receipt of yours of the 20th ult. informing me of your change of station to Whitingford, I have many things to say, and many circumstances of life to attend to, that I have little leisure to write. I must patiently wait events and hope things will be better. I hope the Lord will be with you on the way, and that you may arrive at your destination in health and safety. I send you my warmest wishes and a cordial handshake. May the Lord bless you and your work and give you strength and wisdom. I remain your affectionate friend.

[Signature]
As the state of religious affairs here, I see, may very little.

It is true many are among the Baptist, and I hope

with them, we will find according to the increase of this

particular branch to which we belong, 

though others appear to be favoring, neglect may not try

at this time the Baptist who have a

place here stationed in the places, the New light

house St. Moritz near Oaeo's, W.H. in the near

two men who have not done and designs

ting to get up something nearer in Mason. New

near here and last little. The very true we have

Bro. William Atkinson, but I doubt not my more

than these particular instructions given to these living

Bible. I have thought much on the subject,

The license if any that can do this time be

promised to a shepherd it would be the best plan

many many in and out of society are singular methods

the Bong. Here home, more light want the places

with his license stationed here, and after the

last evening I have no doubt me and show able to support him, could the be lie without for

one year or two, to set things in order, to see

the main here, get more acquainted with them,

visit from house to house, see the children

and engaged to the mission, I have not a doubt

that me should see less this same, the present is

mostly an important times and first lease, the new

meeting house can to some he free to preach and

churches believe a large can go going on and thank

it would have been better, yet it will be worse

consequent then the others. D.G. and
give the same acceptable. D.J. and me in God's

free, strong hopes, yes I think the same would

like the slang of our want brother G.o.t, the

two parts some objection in given to

section, which is the thing I do not know one that would

care all in, so many have before the days

he was strong before he could be seen the

I can but mind of the B. B. John P. July 1858

while here, his wife's appearance and conversation

in these is pleasing, but while he presented the team

in finding for his eyes, while the way came from

the heart, they want to the hire, yet my brother

his own sight, feeling and affecting manner will

never be forgotten, it was he that was affectionate

and kind. B. D. we are each other, wherever is

there one so near, B. D. love as B. D. I am near

where is there one who main has the affections

of the people so strongly as he has. It was

my uncle. When I do not mean so many one aspiring

to give their time to the among us poor reason.

My dear Brother, I shall be at all important

one should have some good man among us

in which the people be deeply settled at the friend

times I thought I knew where I was not the

spare of Conference when I don't the decades

age our society is peace, but they know I am

as a sets of helps for now that the Church's and those

and who will help will be advanced. And and
Dear Brother,

I am so confined that it is out my power to meet you at Ridgeville. I have many things to say and my business takes up my time so closely that I have, but little leisure to write. If my life is spared I must patiently await events and hope things will be better. I hope the Lord will see me on the way, guide and direct me, grant that my latter days may be my best days and save me at last, that amid the trials afflictions and difficulties of life we and ours may meet on the banks of everlasting deliverance and together sing the song of Moses and the Lambs.

I need say nothing on distant subjects or I would fill my letter alone with it. I shall therefore confine myself to our own part of the Vineyard. The meeting house is going on and will soon be enclosed, though I am dissatisfied with its plan. Yet as it has been begun I should like to see it finished. It will be better than the old one.

Of the state of religion here, I can say very little. It is true many are joining the Baptists, and but few with us. We will feel anxious for the increase of the particular branch to which we belong, and when others appear to be prospering, regret ours is not so. At this time the Presbyterians and Baptist have a preacher stationed in the place. The New Lights have _____ near Dayton. ________, the German Reformed minister, resides here and designs trying to get up a meeting house in town. Our preachers are but little with us. True, we have Bro Sullivan & Ashton, but I need not say more than their particular situation prevents their being useful. I have thought much on the subject and believe if Dayton could at this time be formed to a station it would be the best plan. Very many in and out of society are anxious we should get Bro Raper here. None but would be pleased with his being stationed here, and after the best inquiry, I have no doubt we should be able to support him, could he be with us for one year or two, to set things in order, to see the members, get well acquainted with them, visit from house to house, see the children and enforce old Methodism. I have not a doubt but we should see better things. The present is truly an important time with us here. The new meeting house could soon be fit to preach in, would hold a large congregation, and though it could have been better, yet it will be more convenient than the old one, and by opening it, by an able, acceptable and pious preacher, I would feel strong hopes. Yes I think the Lord would bless the labors of our worthy Brother Raper here. The times require some affectionate influential person, which is he, and I know no one that would equally suit. So many have expressed the desire that I have strong hopes he could be servicable. I can but remind you of the good John P. Finley did while here. His life, his conduct and conversation had their influence, but while he preached with the tears flowing from his eyes, while the words came from the heart, they went to the heavens. Yes my brother, his solemn feeling and affecting manner will never be forgotten. It was blessed, was effectual. And where could we get such another, where is there one so near like him as Bro Raper. Where is there one who now has the affections of the people so strongly as he has. I know of no one. Then I do not wonder so many are anxious to get him to reside among us for a season.
My dear Brother, I consider it all important we should have some good men among us in whom the
people have confidence. At the same time I should be ashamed myself to ask the favor of Conference
when I consider the Quarterage our society pays in, but they have assurances of help from out the
Church, and those out who will help will assuredly attend and good may be done them. But as the
prospect of the population of Dayton increasing is considerable and its importance being greater, I do
think it worthy of giving Methodism a fair trial. I am no advocate for a settled ministry, but at this
time and for two to three years, I consider it worth the trial. I should not ask for a married preacher,
but the society consider no one will answer but Brother Raper at this time. And certain I am no one so
well. But your long acquaintance with the Church, your willingness to do all in your power to serve us,
will enable you to judge for the best in this matter and let us know your ____ and opinion on the
subject before any motion is made respecting such arrangement. And should you think it advisable,
we can pursue such course as you may recommend in the matter.

May the Lord direct all things for the best, bless the present Camp Meeting, bless the good cause and
prosper his work, bless his ______ and you and yours. Yours in Christian affection.

G.S. Houston