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Finley Letters

James B. Finley Letters

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## Letter from Thomas A. Morris to James B. Finley

Thomas A. Morris

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Write with an old steel pen - fear you can scarcely read it

Mobile January 13 1837

My dear brother:

Though I am far away, and have been long absent, yet have I not forgotten thee, nor my promise to thee an epistle; but have been deferring it until I should finish my round of appointments, and have somewhat to communicate. Since I left your section of country last June, I have travelled about 2000 miles on horse back, and 1000 by public conveyance, and attended six conferences; Of course my time for social correspondence has been quite limited, but now, having fulfilled my engagements, I have time to breathe and attend to my old friends. My wife met me at Nicksburg in Decr in a full state of health; but I trust the soft atmosphere of this country may be a means of restoring her. She has already experienced some relief. And if she can endure the separation from the children, perhaps we may remain in the lower country until Spring. My health is very fine. I got a good start last fall on the Tennessee wild turkey, and eat meat of Arkansas. I traversed extensively thro' that state, and say 400 miles on horse back, amidst slaughter, bayous, cane breakers, bogs, oak flats and pine ridges; and perhaps when we shall spend a few leisure hours together, hereafter, it may afford some entertainment to recite my adventures in that wild region of the earth. I feel much interest for that young but important conference. The South West in general is poorly supplied with preachers. It is true that Tennessee has enough to fill the work; but with a few exceptions they are young men, who tho' promising of their age are quite deficient in experience. Most of their experienced ministers have been induced by the prospect of insolvency to turn aside to other employments. In Arkansas, Mississippi, and Alabama

Miss M. Morris  
Mobile  
Jan 5 / 37

James B. Finley  
Ridgerville,  
Warren County Ohio



there is a great want of labours. This want has been vastly increased by locations, and the necessity for locations has been created chiefly by a total neglect of the rule providing homes, fuel and marketing for the preachers families; and this neglect of this rule on the part of the members may be mostly charged on the preachers themselves. They have not only neglected to enforce the rule, but have in most cases, declined moving their families to their circuits, and hence the people have not seen and felt, as they should have done, the necessity of building passenger. I am however glad to observe that the brethren of the S. W. Conference are now becoming wise and are suitably alarmed at their prospects, and are making a mighty effort to come back to the provisions of the Discipline in these respects. The shallow condition of the itinerancy, neglect of discipline, and the spirit of the world are much against us in these parts; but the recent movements of the Conference, inspire a hope of brighter days. The Lord hasten it in his time!

Of the Country generally, I cannot now speak. The theme is too tedious. Suffice it to say Mobile is the beauty spot of all the South West so far as I have seen it; and if there was less of the spirit of speculation, and more of the spirit of Christ here, it would be a most desirable place to live. The weather is generally pretty good, while the beauties and luxuries of nature, abounding, rendered more desirable by art and ingenuity of man. And all this when the Mercury seldom falls to the freezing point. Yet my wife will insist that Mobile itself is not so handsome as the Queen of the West. And I must acknowledge that when every thing is estimated, there is no country within

my knowledge Superior to the South West part of Ohio.

After all, the earth is peeping away, and the grace of the fashion thereof will soon be changed; but the faithful servants of God will have an abiding place in heaven. Now I expect to live & die a poor wanderer among strangers, but if I can obtain a home in heaven I ask no more.

"No feet if land as I roper,

"No cottage in the wilderness,

A poor wandering man;

"I lead a while in tents below,

"And gladly wander to & fro,

"Till my heaven obtain.

I expect to go from this to New Orleans in a week or two; thence up the Mississippi River to my brethren in La., where there are Allegheny a plenty, and perhaps remain there till winter breaks in the upper Country. Where I shall go next summer I am not fully determined, but have been thinking of visiting thro' Indiana and Ky as far as Cincinnati. Seeing I am not to attend those Conferences soon, brethren however, I shall be governed somewhat by future circumstances. Mr. Morris joins me in love to you and Sister Finley, brother Sister Brook and family. Should be glad to hear from you at Harrisburg La. or Vicksburg Mississippi. Pray for unworthy us

I am dear brother Yours sincerely

Rev. J. B. Finley

Chas. A. Morris