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Finley Letters

James B. Finley Letters

1-6-1849

Letter from James Gurley to James B. Finley

James Gurley

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Wm. W. Miller

July 2

Rev. Jas. B. Finley

Columbus

Ohio

James Finley
James
Jan 4

Wyandotta Indian Territory
Jan'y 6th 1849

Rev. J. B. Finley

Dear Brother, It was with much
much regret that I had to pass through Columbus
and even leave Ohio, without either seeing
you or receiving any communication from you
although for that purpose I waited in Cincinnati
a few days longer than I otherwise should.

Your letter however, ^{to} the Brethren here which
was duly received before my arrival answered all
necessary purposes. And I met with a most cor-
dial reception from them, you will have learned be-
fore this time, that a division had taken place in
the society. Nearly all the old officiating adheres
with us, and we may now count in round numbers
one hundred, embracing as I am told the most pious
of the membership. While our Leaders say the southern
division cannot possibly have more than fifty
although they claim to have more, I have received
the most courteous treatment from all, except the
southern preachers, who are determined to extend none
of an official character. And as the ground of
all their repulsive measures they refer to the
"ill treatment" of their Delegate by the late General
Conference, and our "outrage upon their rights," by
violating the conditions of the Plan, in sending, oppe-
ratives, into their limits. They have possession of
the Mission property and are not willing that

that we should even occupy the Meeting house alter-
nately so that we have been compelled to hold our
meetings in private houses, and then we are some
times disturbed by drunken men, who seem to be
provided for the occasion, It is the undoubted op-
inion of our most intelligent Brethren here that
the whole Society would have adhered with us if
it had not been for the Slavery influence that
has been created in the Nation since it has been
under the religious supervision of the Church
South, And if it had not been for the firm stand ta-
ken by our friends, against it, The proslavery influ-
ence would have been more extensive, This party
sustained by the Southern preachers will seek to ef-
fect if possible my removal, through the Local
Authorities of the Nation, which under its present
organization may carry a majority against us
But they seem fearful of the result of such
a movement, The Government Agents too have been
led to take ground in opposition to us, and will no
doubt make such representations to the Department
at Washington as will be conformable to the views
and wishes of the Church South. I have just forwar-
ded to Bishop Morris, as extended a view of the whole
case with the facts and prominent arguments con-
nected with it as time and circumstances would
allow, leaving it with him to say whether I shall
remain or retire, As regards the adjacent tribes
from all that I can learn the days of Southern

domination is numbered amongst them, The pious
Indians have been much discouraged, There has not
been much religious prosperity, It seems that true
missionary work has been much neglected, While
intemperance has been fearfully on the increase

The Shawnees have sent me a pressing invitation
to visit them, but I have thought it most prudent
to decline for the present, The greatest obstacle
to a permanent establishment of a Mission here will
be the expense, Rents and subsistence for a family
will exceed the Cincinnati prices, While this point
will be the great rendezvous for the Santa Fee, and
Oregon trains, The Mission will be an object of
attraction to all Eastern and Northern travellers
which will involve a Mission family in una-
voidable extra expense, As for myself I be-
lieve I should like the work and could do it, And am
willing to continue or go home, as our authorities may
judge best, The sky here looks quite equally just
now, I think we have not reached the crisis though
I had thought it was passed, Power all ways dies
hard and there are indications of a powerful death
struggle here yet, I improve every opportunity to ex-
hort our people to be calm and prudent and to put their
trust in the Lord, Your old friends here speak of
you with much affectionate regard, Pray for us
Yours Respectfully &c
Jas Gurley

Probably Gurley