Letters of Allen T. Ward, 1842-1851, From the Shawnee and Kaw (Methodist) Missions

Edited by Lela Barnes

I. Introduction

The Rev. Thomas Johnson and his bride, Sarah T. Johnson, had established the Shawnee Methodist Mission in its first location near present Turner, Wyandotte county, Kan., by December 1, 1830. This was 24 years before the creation of the territory of Kansas and its opening to white settlement. The Methodists were not the first white persons to reside in "Kansas." For example, Seres and Francis Chouteau had established their "Four Houses" trading post on the Kaw sometime before 1820; the Presbyterians and associated denominations had founded Mission Neosho near present Shaw, Neosho county, in 1824; and Fort Leavenworth had been established as a cantonment in 1827.

Thomas Johnson was not satisfied with the results of his missionary efforts and sought permission to conduct a central Indian manual labor school in conjunction with the mission. Approval was given by the church and the Department of Indian Affairs. In October, 1839, Johnson abandoned the original mission site and moved to what is now northeast Johnson county, where he constructed a large facility with several brick and frame houses, and tilled 500 acres of land which he enclosed with rail fence. Here the operation was conducted until 1862, and the property was eventually delivered into private hands. During its busy life the school provided instruction in English, manual arts, and agriculture for Indian boys and girls, served as the territorial capital of Kansas for a period and was host to many famous travelers, including John C. Fremont and Francis Parkman, as they started or ended long journeys to the West over the Santa Fe and Oregon trails.

Activities at the mission and training school were at their height when Allen T. Ward arrived on the scene in 1843 and recorded his impressions in letters to his family. Ward was born in 1806 and reared at St. Clairsville, Ohio. He led a varied and well-traveled life but was mainly occupied as a teacher. He taught at New Harmony, Ind., a communal colony devoted to social reform.

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Ward was there in 1830 after having accompanied William MacCall, one of the community’s sponsors, on a trip from New York to New Orleans, Vera Cruz, and Mexico in 1828-1829. Late in 1833 Ward went to Louisiana but found the climate harmful to his health and moved to Steubenville, Ohio, to live with his brother David and work in his shoe store.

By August, 1840, he was at Independence, Mo., selling cloth goods, but soon returned to teaching, this time at Rock Creek school in Independence where he taught grammar, geography, and natural philosophy. In March, 1841, he operated a steam mill at Barry, Clay county, Mo., in partnership with B. G. Beadle. The mill failed, was sold, and Ward became bookkeeper for its new owner. By June, 1842, when this published series of his letters commences, he was teaching again.

In March, 1851, after writing the last letter of the series, Allen Ward joined Thomas Johnson in a storage business in Kansas City. This was short lived, however, and Ward moved to Westport in the spring of 1851 and operated a water powered mill at the corner of Mill creek and Westport road. In 1855 he moved to Paola where he opened a general merchandise store and became active, with Baptiste Peoria, in the Paola Town Company. He served as justice of the peace for Lykins, now Miami county, in 1858 and was mayor of Paola in 1860. Ward’s wife, Wahponkequa, died October 11, 1857; he then married Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Edwards sometime before 1860. Ward died on May 10, 1862, and was buried in Elmwood cemetery at Paola.

The Allen T. Ward letters are published here through the cooperation of Mrs. Richard C. Ward, Topeka, and Frank A. Ward, II, Urbana, Ill. Much of the biographical material was supplied by them. Some paragraphing has been supplied, and corrections in punctuation have been made. Spacings have also been resorted to, when Ward’s punctuation—or the lack of it—was not sufficiently clear to permit easy reading. Omission of personal and irrelevant matters is indicated by the usual dots.

II. THE LETTERS

School House Near Duckers Ferry, Jackson Co. Mo.

June 25th—’42

My Dear Sister [Elizabeth]

Tho’ I have written to you since I rec’d any letter from you, yet as you sometimes complain that I am negligent in writing, I shall endeavor to scribble down something as an excuse for a letter, for I
must confess at the very commencement that I have nothing new, or of any great importance to communicate, my secluded situation puts it out of my power to hear much of what is passing even in our own land, but I am inclined to think there has not much occurred since my last, either in a religious, moral, or political point of view— As for myself, I am again engaged in the pleasing, profitable, & ever to be desired occupation of teaching school; not at either of the places where I formerly taught, tho' in the same neighbourhood; I board at Monroe's as formerly, and still think I could not be better situated with respect to a boarding house; they are truly an amiable family; I mostly spend my Saturdays & Sundays, however at Hill's, where I boarded while I taught school on Rock Creek.

Mr. Hill is from Ohio, tho' his wife is a Kentuckian; they have long considered me almost as one of their family, & I believe begin to think I belong to them, they always complain if I stay away more than a week at a time— They are in easy circumstances, & have a great deal of company; I make one of a music party there frequently. Mr. Hill is something of a sportsman himself, keeps a Race track & running Horses— Mrs Hill on the contrary is a member of the Campbellite church, also her sister Miss Susan Moberly, the latter is quite an amiable young lady, possessing quite as many accomplishments as is customary for a lady in the far west; she is quite delighted with your style of writing, especially the political part, as she is a strong whig. She sends you her compliments—

My present school is not just such a one as I could desire, the greater part of my scholars are new beginners, & none of them very far advanced, so I shall not make much improvement myself— While at Rock Creek I had classes in Grammar, Geography, and Natural Philosophy, but that house was occupied at the time I concluded to go to teaching, or I could again [have] got in there— I begin to think I must have some talent for teaching school, or at least for giving satisfaction to my employers, I am confident I could get any situation within five miles of Independence when there is a vacancy, but it is a business I have ever disliked, & yet I have been more successful at it than anything else I ever undertook, you will probably think I am boasting, but it is nevertheless a fact; if I could only make it a little more profitable & could like to follow it a little better, I would not think of doing anything else—
I am entirely clear of the steam mill at Barry, & glad of it; my partner in that concern is at St. Louis, I hear from him frequently; his wife died last spring and I expect he is in low circumstances, I think it doubtful if I ever get anything from him, tho' I think he is an honest man & would pay me if he was able— I was at Barry about four weeks since; Charles Beal handed me a letter he had received from you; it was at the time of a large meeting (Campbellite) several preachers had put up at Beals, he showed them the letter & I can assure you they had their own fun reading it, they told him he had met with his match for once, they all admired your style of writing very much, especially when you told him that you “finally concluded to receive his kind & loving epistle as coming from C Beal Esqr. post Master, Deacon of the Church, Master of the Lodge &c.” It seems Charley had been trying to boast a little of his high standing in his letter to you, or you could not have known his numerous titles; Beal is a fine man & a good citizen— He would not allow me to keep the letter but seemed to set as much store by it as if it had been his commission from a Royal Arch Mason, or one of Joe Smith's gold plates containing some new revelation—

I must confess your letters are written in a more masterly manner than I could have expected; (do not be alarmed I do not mean to flatter you) but I think it my duty to confess that your letters contain more elegance in composition & penmanship, than is often to be found in one of your years, and with the same opportunities you have had; that easy flow of language, and judicious choice in the selection of words to express your ideas, is a talent not possessed by everyone; I can account for it in no other way than by supposing you have (contrary to what is common) learned to think for yourself & to express your ideas in your own language— I have frequently been asked (when reading your letters to my friends here) how old you were, & it is generally admitted that you must be a prodigy indeed; one man said in hearing one of your letters that it could not be excelled by any man in Jackson County whether in a public or private station— Another who is a great enthusiast in everything he undertakes & wants to do every thing on a larger scale than any body else, wanted me to start right off for you, & he would build school houses, & he said we would directly have a school of ten thousand scholars— To be able to write with elegance, is an accomplishment so seldom to be met with in the females of this country, makes it more admired in those who possess it.

I find I have through carelessness commenced my letter on the
wrong side, but it is little difference whether you read it in the
same order I write it or not, as I generally put down whatever
occurs to my mind without any system— I should probably say a
little more with respect to his honor, before I dismiss this subject
entirely— As to health it is nearly as good at present as I could
desire; I feel stronger & better than I have before since I have
been in this state, the fact is, idleness always did agree with me
better than hard work— As to looks or appearance you must
imagine to yourself a gentleman of thirty or thirty-five years of age,
tall, light complexion, middling high forehead, features tolerably
regular, & taken all together might be called reasonably good look-
ing, with a particular attention to the neatness of his dress that
always marks the old bachelor, rather inclined to be distant or
diffident in his manners, among strangers, but when well acquainted,
free & sociable, rides a first rate horse, & plays tolerably well on
the Flute & Clarinet— I have improved some in music since I
came here, not that I have learned many new tunes; but have
learned to play the old ones better— Now you can see about how
it is, having as I said before a good horse, a tolerable good suit of
clothes, and a large circle of acquaintances, how do you think it
possible that I can find time enough to be any thing like a regular
correspondent, especially when I have but two days in the week to
myself; and again, if you have written to me a time or two more
than you have recev'd letters from me, you ought to consider that
you are at home & have but two or three correspondents probably,
whilst I by being away have necessarily many; now you see you
have not so much reason to charge me with neglect—

I visit Anthony ¹ & his lady at the mission pretty often, it is a
pleasant ride of some fifteen miles through a delightful country; in
going the southern route we pass thro' some beautiful prairies— It
is impossible to describe the sensation produced upon the mind in
going for the first time into a large prairie at this season of the year;
there appears to be no boundaries, or nothing to confine the vision,
but as far as the eye can reach, one extended plain or meadow,
generally speckled over with cattle & mules, with not a tree, or
stump, or even big weed to be seen, but one continued sheet of
prairie grass— I have often wished I could have you with me in
some of the rides I take in the prairies— There is however nothing

¹. Anthony Ward, a native of St. Clairsville, Ohio, and a cousin of Allen T. Ward,
came to the Shawnee Methodist Mission in 1840 to work as a wagonmaker. In 1853 he
moved to Uniotown, Shawnee county, and the following year bought a farm located at
what is now the foot of Western avenue in Topeka. A large house, built by Ward in 1870,
has been acquired by the city of Topeka and with the surrounding five acres is a garden
center.
remarkable in the timbered land of this country, more than is to be found in other countries, except the great abundance of wild Roses, which often puts me in mind of T Moore's description of the Valley of Cashmere, in Lallah Rookh. You probably read it—Anthony & Mary-Jane are well pleased with their situation, in fact they could not well be better fixed to live comfortably & Anthony thinks he will be able to save $300 a year in cash— I have been once to the Quaker Mission, since Thos Stanley came out, he & his wife appear to be well pleased— ² They live only four miles from the Shawnee Mission, & among the Shawnee Indians, they have a school of about 30 scholars who have made considerable progress in Reading Writing & Geography— Notwithstanding however all that the Missionaries are doing, in trying to civilize & Christianize the Indians, still their nature remains the same—tho' they have in some instances got fine farms well cultivated, with good buildings. Yet in a general way they prefer their hunting grounds to the cornfield or workshop of the white man—

The Shawnee's would now sell their land if government would give them their price for it, & give them another tract further west, they think by this means they would increase their annuities, which have nearly run out— If their land should ever come into market, I have a piece selected that I will try to have; It is a beautiful piece of prairie, of perhaps seven or eight hundred acres, well watered, & has about a hundred acres of good timber on the East & West of it— You are probably aware that the Indians do not allow white men to settle on their lands, (except their agents, missionaries, &c) unless he marries a squaw, & as I have not yet made choice of any one in particular, I shall have to stay on this side of the line— There is one young lady at the mission, of the Shawnee tribe, that is thought to be beautiful & accomplished—Wawpumpque by name— I have seen her several times, & must confess she is handsome, especially to those who, like myself have always been admirers of dark complexions; but I believe I shall have to do without the land yet a while—³

When I was last at the mission I saw the agent of the Pawnees, they live 350 miles west of this place; he described their country as being beautiful—told me the Pawnees had killed 7000 Buffalo

². The Quakers erected two small log buildings on the Shawnee lands in 1836 and opened a school the following year. Indian students living at the mission received elementary schooling, religious instruction, and training in agriculture and domestic arts. Thomas H. Stanley came to the mission in 1842, acting first as an assistant, later as superintendent.

³. This young woman, who had been reared by the Rev. Thomas Johnson and his wife, was said to be a member of the Pawnee tribe. Her Indian name was Wahonkequa. She became the wife of Allen T. Ward on January 10, 1844.
last season— Anthony’s wives brother went out with him— I believe I am yet well enough satisfied with this country to try it a while longer. I can make a living with less labor here than in Ohio, & if the time should ever arrive when I can get at any thing better than common labor or teaching School, I have a much better chance here for a speculation; this country is not quite as healthy as I could desire, but probably as much so as any of the western States— I have of late a pretty strong notion of confining myself to teaching School for three or four years in the town of Independence & study medicine, but I cannot think I should ever like to practice medicine, or I should not hesitate about going at the study— At other times I think I had better marry, & “settle down & be quiet” But like Omar of Bagdat, “why should I confine myself by marriage while so much yet remains to be seen & learned abroad;” like him I have always contemplated seeing foreign countries, & probably like him I shall put off matrimony till my fiftieth year will make me ashamed even to think of marrying; but in one respect at least I shall differ from him, I shall not always have resided in the same City—

Old Mr. Rider paid me a visit about four or five weeks ago, he had just returned from Ohio, where he had been to try get a Steam Engine to start a saw mill at New Lexington, 40 miles below here on the River, but the old man had been unsuccessful, he could neither get an engine nor money to buy one— he had been to see Camp some place near Cleaveland, but got no money, he has a partner at Lexington, by the name of Whittaker; they had rented a house to start their mill in, & had bought nearly all the machinery of a Saw Mill except the engine, which will now probably be a dead loss on their hands— he wanted me to go in as a partner, but I had just had a pretty severe dose of Steam Mills, & concluded to let that answer for the present—

We have no late news from the adventurers who started to California; the last account was brot by some Trappers from the mountains; they said they did not reach California last summer as they expected to do; that their animals gave out, & that they passed the winter in, or near the mountains, where they came near starving to death, & were compelled to eat their mules & ponies, they are expected back next fall—

Preparations are now being made to celebrate the fourth of July in the Town of Independence, everyone & his wife is expected to be there; especially all the gall’s, big & little are to attend,
be dressed in white with a blue sash, two or three speeches or orations are to be delivered; good music &c &c—

I cannot say when I shall see you, it is a long journey to undertake, without a body had some business of importance it seems too far to go merely on a visit; when I start my wholesale store & go East for goods I will be sure to call; I suppose hardly a day passes but I think of you all, & wonder how you are getting along, what you are at, where you are &c— I often think I should be glad to have you here with me, & think you would be pleased with the country & if you are as well qualified for a Teacher as I think you are, you might do very well, but I expect Father & Mother would not be willing to let you come; however you and Milton might slip over some day; & pay us a visit & see the country and the natives, even if you could not stay; I expect since you have sold the mill you have nothing to do—

I rarely meet with a person here from Ohio, but the tide of emigration still flows copiously from Kentucky, the country is already thickly settled, & in some places they have settled so far out in the prairies that they have to haul their timber five miles— I might here merely mention that in my humble opinion the Kentuckians have more national pride than the natives of any other state in the Union, not that they are more proud of wealth or literary attainments, but they are proud just because they happened to be born in Kentucky— But I must draw to a close, no doubt you are glad of it; I have spun out my letter to a considerable length, considering I had so small a stock of materials to work upon, that could be interesting to you.

You are differently situated, everything you could mention that has taken place in your neighborhood, either with respect to persons or things would be interesting to me— And notwithstanding your letters are generally filled up pretty well, & give me a great deal of news, yet they are always too short to inform me of all I want to know— I should have written to Milton before now but think from the tenor of his last letter he has left Ohio; I did not get his letter for more than a month after it was written, or I should have answered it immediately— Tis now the middle of the wheat harvest, crops tolerably good; wheat worth 50 cts, corn 20 cts, Flour $4.50 to $5 per Bbl, bacon nothing & dull at that, & no money to buy it with— Mrs. Monroe sends her respects— please send a braid of your hair for Miss S. M.— But above all things do not neglect to write soon— I hope you do not fail to give my re-
speects to all my friends I cannot write to all of them— From your affectionate brother

ALLEN WARD

SHAWNEE M. E. MISSION  MISSOURI TERY  March 18th, 1843 4

DEAR BROTHER [HILL]

Your letter of the 29th Jany I recvd about one week ago and as you talk of leaving Smithfield I have concluded to write soon or you may have left before my letter reaches you. When I last wrote I think I mentioned that I expected to be engaged at this place (Mission) We agreed upon the terms & I commenced here about the 6th of Jany. I am only employed to superintend the building of the Mill & have no interest at all in the concern, as it is expected by the Superintendent of the Institution that the board of Missions will receive it as Missionary property. I had my choice take $450 a year & board myself or $385 & board in the institution the latter of which I chose, but I now think I would a little rather board myself as the family is so large (at least 150 persons) four fifths of which are Indians, that makes it to me rather disagreeable— we always have plenty to eat, altho' we have none of the luxuries such as sweetmeats &c &c still as the people here say we have plenty of roughness— We have employed a good many hands & are driving on as fast as we can but the weather has been & still continues so cold that it interferes very much with our operations, but still I think we will get it started in July or August: at present we are starting two pair of 4 feet French Burrs, but intend to start carding machines afterwards probably next Spring— Before your letter arrived we had purchased the Engine & Flouring machinery in St. Louis— Nine inch cylinder, 3½ feet stroke, two single flue Boilers 18 ft long &c for $1175 including governor— I believe we could have got them cheaper in Wheeling according to your statement, but the freight would have been more & we were in such a hurry we thought it better to get them where they could be had soonest.

My duties here are generally not very hard, except that I have but little leisure time to visit my acquaintances. I have however been twice to Independence since I came—notwithstanding we

4. When Missouri joined the Union with definite boundaries in 1821, those lands lying west of it were without actual government for many years. On June 30, 1834, all this land (including Kansas) was given the anomalous title of “Indian Country” and for the purpose of administration was placed under the jurisdiction of Missouri. It remained this way for another two decades.—William Frank Zornow, Kansas, a History of the Jayhawk State (Norman, Okla., 1937), p. 42. Ward probably had this circumstance in mind, and considered the adjacent lands west of the state as Missouri territory.

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are out of the U States and among the Indians yet it is a beautiful country & a pleasant place to live, but how long I may stay depends on circumstances. If after a longer trial I feel as well satisfied as I do at present I shall most likely remain a good while: but as to getting married (since you mentioned it) I don’t know so much about that, it has heretofore been entirely out of my line of business, if I stay here it will most likely not take place soon if ever, unless I take an Indian girl— I cannot in the limits of a letter give you much of a history of this establishment, but shall leave you to judge for yourself when you see it, as I think from your letter that I may hope to see you in the spring.

As to coming to this country I do not feel at liberty to give you much advice, lest you should come here & then be dissatisfied, but as to myself I feel satisfied that I can live here with much less labor than in Ohio. You are yet single & have nothing to confine you to one place, it might be worth while to come here & see this country & then judge for yourself. But most probably you are not like me in one respect; I have been so long a wanderer that with the exception of my near relatives I feel no ties to bind me to any place; but you would feel lost for a while without your friends and associates— The times are probably now at the worst here, in fact they cant get worse unless we have a famine or pestilence; money is so scarce that all kinds of business is at a stand still. Property offered continually for sale by the officers but no bidders. Store keepers cant make collections consequently cant replenish their stock of goods, so that there is hardly any store goods in the country— a person that has money to lay out in land could find some good bargains at this time, but land in this country has always before been too high in proportion to other things— but there is yet plenty of land can now be got at 1.25 cts pr acre 20 or 30 miles from here.\textsuperscript{5} Wheat is worth from 25 to 30 cts. Flour 3½ to 4 dolls pr bbl other things in proportion, but little or no demand for any kind of produce in cash—

I am trying to put these people in the way of manufacturing their own clothing. They have had 8 or 9 wheels going spinning wool. I have rigged out one loom since I came & expect to fix up 2 or 3 more, and set some of the Indian girls to weaving, and for that purpose we stand greatly in need of Fly Shuttles &c, which I should be glad you would forward here as soon as you can if you dont come & bring them yourself. If you come yourself with an expecta-

\textsuperscript{5.} The reference is doubtless to land in Missouri inasmuch as Kansas was not opened to settlement until the creation of the territory in 1854.
tion of remaining here you should bring drafts of Fulling stock, looms, &c &c and a Dye book, and all the information you can conveniently get on Cloth Manufacturing. I mean coarse cloth, Jeans, blankets &c— A nursery of fruit trees would be a good business here to one who understood it, & would like such occupation— It occurs to my mind that I owe some money to Father how much I do not recollect. If there should remain any in your hands after settling my affairs I wish you would pay it for it should have been done long ago—

I am taking lessons in music three times a week from an excellent teacher— the Indians boys and girls learn to sing without much difficulty, they are taught to sing by round notes which is much the better way— if you come bring all your music— It is now the 22nd of March & the weather remains extremely cold, freezing hard every night & snowing frequently— A comet with a tremendous long tail has been visible in the west for a week or two which will soon be visible to you as its course appears to be East— I am at a loss for books to read bring all you can get. Anthony & family are well & sattisfied, they send their respects— also Wah-ponkaque and Kishee Wahcumshe (two pretty Indian girls) send their compliments & hope to see you soon. I must come to a close as the mail is ready to start. You will direct to Westport Jackson Co. Mo. With my best wishes for your welfare I remain your affectionate brother,

A. T. Ward

Dear Sister [Elizabeth]

Your last letter of which I now forget the date, reached me something like two months ago, but as I had in contemplation a trip to the south, I deferred writing until I should decide whether I was going or not. I have now come to the conclusion to go & expect to start in a few days— I am not leaving this country because I am dissatisfied with it by any means, but one principal object is to try to get my money from Mr. Beadle who was my partner in the Steam Mill in Clay Co. I learn from letters that I frequently receive from him that he now resides in Lamar, in Marshall Co. Mississippi. It is most likely that I shall spend the winter in the south as I expect the navigation will be closed before I can get ready to return. I also hope to benefit my health by the trip as I have not enjoyed as good health for the last two or three months as I could wish— My
duties at the Mission as teacher & Superintendent of the Mill has been rather too hard for me, and in addition this has proved to be one of the most unhealthy seasons ever known in Missouri, the overflowing of the low lands last spring has produced fever, & fever & ague throughout the whole country. Many have died & very many are yet sick. I have had the fever & ague but I am getting better. The Steam Mill at the Mission is completed and has been rcv’d by the Missionary board as Missionary property, therefore of course I could not take any share in it as was once contemplated, however the superintendent (Mr Berryman)\(^6\) insisted very hard that I should stay & manage it for them & take a share of the profits & I believe I could do well if my other circumstances would admit of my staying, however if I can get the same situation when I return next spring it will suit me better—and as the wheat crops entirely failed the last year in Missouri, the grinding will not be so good as it generally is, or has been—

As a Teacher while at the Mission I think I can say without boasting that I gave as good satsisfaction as any who had preceeded me, and could have kept the place & indeed was strongly solicited to remain, but the salary of Teachers in that Institution is by far too low, considering the duties they have to perform; tho’ if I had no other duties than those of a teacher alone I would much rather teach Indians than whites. I am much pleased with many traits in the Indian character but cannot enter into any minute account of them in the limits of a letter, especially such a letter as I am now writing, neither can I at present pretend to answer your last in some particulars, as I have not your letter now present but shall take it more fully into consideration & give you my views in detail from my first stopping place in the south—I am yet single & do not know to a certainty that I shall be married soon though it possibly may take place in the spring. The lady in contemplation is one that I have mentioned to you before. S. Moberley by name. The only objection appears to be a brother-in-law with whom she lives. She has inherited some little property from her fathers estate. This is in her brotherinlaws hands he being her guardian, he does not wish her to marry for in these hard times he thinks it would ruin him to pay her what he owes—all the rest of her connections are anxious for the match, as for myself I care but little about it, they may fix it as they please & I’ll agree to anything—by the bye I

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\(^6\) Because of ill health, Thomas Johnson, superintendent of Shawnee Methodist Mission, was forced to give up his work in 1841. He was replaced by the Rev. Jerome C. Berryman who had established a Methodist mission and school for the Kickapoo Indians in 1833.
must say she is an amiable & good girl, & I expect I would never do
better but since I have lived so long single I might most as well
spend my few remaining days in the same manner— Miss Susan
is now here at Hills, sends her respects and a braid of her hair, of
course I gave her one of yours.

If I had room & time I have many things I could write with re-
spect to Missionaries Indians &c, but shall have to leave it till I have
a better opportunity. I must merely say however that your old
neighbors the Wyandotts are here among us, & have located them-
selves among the Delawares of whom they bought lands, they
have been very unhealthy since their arrival— Anthony & family
are all well & I think doing well he still continues at the Mis-
sion they have another son not yet named. I can see but little
change in times for the better. Money remains very scarce & but
little business going on. I must draw to a close but must first insist
on you keeping this letter from any persons eyes but your own, &
read only such parts to any person as you think proper. I have
written in great haste I remain your affectionate brother

A. T. Ward

FAYETTEVILLE  WASHINGTON COUNTY, ARKANSAS
Feb 6th 1844

MY DEAR SISTER [ELIZABETH]

Well really Allen what upon earth are you doing away there? why
just nothing at all, but thinking you might feel some anxiety to
know what had become of me I shall endeavor to give you a little
history of my travels since I left the Shawnee Mission— But you
will probably ask why I left the Mission? when I appeared to be so
well satisfied & was doing well? this question I will answer in its
proper place if I dont forget it; which will be most likely towards
the close of my letter—

After leaving Independence I made no stop at any place till I
arrived at Memphis. I remained there one day & started for
Lamar—Marshall Co Mississippi. I there met my old friend &
partner B. G. Beadle, we made a settlement but he was not pre-
pared to pay me but gave me his note payable next Spring. He

7. The Wyandotte Indians had left their lands in Ohio and Michigan under terms of a
treaty of March 17, 1842. The tribe set out for Kansas, arriving in the summer and fall
of 1843, and purchased land from the Delawares in what is now Wyandotte county.
8. “Death began its work early among the [Wyandotte] tribe. While still in camp on
the east bank of the Kansas river an epidemic carried away 66 members of the tribe and
they were buried on what was then Delaware soil . . . the hill overlooking the Kansas
river, about a half mile from its junction with the Missouri.”—Grant W. Harrington,
_Historic Spots . . . in Wyandotte County, Kansas_ (1935), pp. 113, 114.
has remained single since the death of his wife, (which I mentioned in some of my former letters) he is at work at his trade of Millwrighting & I think doing well. I made some little effort to get a school in Marshall Co but not succeeding to my mind, I concluded to try country further south— This part of Mississippi is a rolling uneven or hilly country, well watered & looks as if it ought to be healthy; the land looks poor tho produces well— Cotton is the principal crop raised in this part— Thinking it useless expense to carry a horse about with me on a Steam Boat, & not being able to sell my beautiful Seraphina Angelina Laura Matilda for what I considered her worth I left her with my friend Beadle to sell her if he could, & I took a Boat to Bayou Plackmine [Plaquemine], intending to go out the Bayou to Attakapas 9 near the sea shore in the South West part of Louisiana—

But the Bayou being too low for S Boats, I went on to Donaldsonville lower down the river, thinking to accomplish my object by going out Bayou Lafourche; while waiting here for a boat I became acquainted with Judge McKune who is a citizen of the country I wished to visit, but he told me I need not think of finding a situation as Teacher in that country, that the rich sent all their children to the North to be educated & the poor could not pay for it; he seemed however to be very friendly, invited me to go home with him & stay a month or two or as long as I pleased & it should cost me nothing; he had lately traveled all through Texas & had kept a journal which he gave me to read; he thinks there is no such country in the world, & advised me to go there saying that he intende to go himself if he could make sale of his Sugar plantations in Attakapas—

Donaldsonville is a very pretty place on the Mississippi River a short distance above Orleans, the citizens are nearly all French & the village built in the French style, cottages generally only one story high, separated from each other by beautiful gardens, & groves of Orange, Fig & China trees— The country back from the river is a perfectly level plain as far as the eye can reach, cultivated entirely in sugar cane— I could see the steam rising from seven or eight sugar houses from the vilage— There was but one School of any note in this place it was conducted & taught by a Frenchman & an American, their prices for tuition were three dollars pr

9. An extensive and fertile district in the southern part of Louisiana. It produces great quantities of sugar and molasses. The section called Attakapas comprises, according to the old maps, several parishes; but although often named in conversation and in commercial reports, it has no legal existence and is not mentioned in the census.—

month for the Elementary branches & Six dollars pr month for the languages—

I next concluded to take a voyage up Red River, and so took the first Boat to Orleans in order to get one bound to Alexandria, (as they frequently pass Donaldsonville without stopping) I arrived in Orleans just in time to get on board the Star bound up Red River, & in about four days I was in Alexandria— The country along this river is low & marshy frequently overflowed & inhabited only by geese, Ducks, Buzzards, carrian crows & Alligators of enormous size; yes & a few musquetoes galinippers &c &c.— Alexandria is a handsome town some three hundred miles from the mouth of the river, (by water I mean) it is seat of government of Rapides Parish— I at first had a great desire to locate myself here but I changed my mind when I found it was so sickly that the citizens nearly all moved out to the pine hills in the Summer— The soil here is of reddish brown & suits either cotton or sugar— Two schools in this village, one for males, the other for females, prices about as at Donaldsonville; it is customary through this part of the state for each planter to employ a private tutor who resides in his house, they are so aristocratic that a man who owns a hundred slaves will not allow his children to associate with the children of his neighbor who only owns fifty, neither will he send them to the same school—

After spending about a week in Alexandria, I took a boat to the mouth of the river, waited one day for a boat & started for Natchez, where I staid one week, but not finding business that suited me, I took another boat to Napoleon at the mouth of the Arkansas, waited five days for a boat, & then got on a little crazy old thing commanded by an exiled Hungarian Count, we were five days in getting to Little Rock— On the second night of our voyage at 10 o'clock I had formed a little music party & was playing on the clarinette, some were singing, some playing cards &c when the boat struck a snag & broke a hole through the bottom as large as a hat, as soon as it was ascertained that the water was rushing in & the boat sinking rapidly, the women fell to screaming the sailors to swearing, & the passengers to buckling on their life preservers, (such as had them) some gathered pieces of plank others a trunk & were preparing to make the best of their way to shore— The captain ordered the pilot to run the boat hard on a sand bar which was immediately done, while the crew were engaged in throwing

10. Colloquial for a large mosquito or other stinging insect.
the freight overboard; we soon however found we were on a sand bar where the boat could not sink any lower, then by stuffing in bed quilts we soon stopped the water, then removed the remaining freight all on one side, turned up the broken side out of the water got it mended & all things put to rights by day light—

I was not as well pleased with Little Rock as I had expected, it is one of those mushroom places that grew rapidly while times were good & money plenty, but is now as rapidly on the decline, the fact is it has nothing to support it except that it is the Capitol of the state. The country around it is very poor broken & rocky, with only here & there a valley that is tolerably fertile— This, like Red River overflows it banks frequently and there are but few places from the mouth of the river to L Rock that can ever be settled until there are levies built along its banks— I remained but a short time at L Rock, but took another boat to Van-buren, some six hundred miles (by water) from the mouth— found this a thriving village & a place of considerable business, it is only four miles from Fort Smith, & 24 from Fort Coffee—

Staid two days at Van-buren, & started for Fayetteville, this place is sixty-five miles north of Van-buren, the road bad, the country broken & in many places rocky, if you look for this place on the map you will find it among the ozark mountains, after getting into this (Washington County) the country begins to have a better appearance, in fact this country is considered the garden of the state, & I must confess is much the best part I have seen, tho not as pretty a country as Jackson County Missouri, still it has some advantages in climate, being 240 miles south of Independence— This County is settled almost entirely with Tennesseans, & being the best part of the state, it has drawn the attention of wealthiest & best citizens, therefore the society is better here than any place I have found in the west— while in Van-buren I heard that they had it in contemplation to build a College here, & thinking there might be some chance to get a situation among them, I concluded to make the trial— Education here is much encouraged, they have a great many schools, & I could obtain a situation in two or three different places, but I find that to get a good school here, the teacher must be qualified to teach latin & Greek— They have commenced the new college, but it will be long before it will be finished, they intend however to finish one building next summer the whole affair when completed will cost 25 or 30 thousand dollars—
Letters of Allen T. Ward

Soon after my arrival here & finding the state of affairs, I concluded to visit the Indian countries again. The Cherokees country joins this county on the west, the Creeks lie immediately west of them & the Choctaws & Chicasaws on the South of them— I went one days journey into the Cherokee country, to Tahlequah the council ground, which is now laid off in town lots, & is to be the seat of government— I find the Cherokees far in advance of most other Indians in civilization; many of them very intelligent & well educated— I staid all night with Judge Carter the Superintendent of public schools, he is an Indian or at least part, was educated in one of the New England states, & is a man of very good sense— he informed me that they have had nine public schools in operation for some time & that they were now about starting seven more; he seemed well pleased with my letters of recommendation, & told me that he thought he could give me a situation as teacher as soon as they could get houses prepared— The salary of teachers has heretofore been $500 but the council now in session have put it down to $400— I am still waiting to hear from him & I am in hopes I shall do so before I close my letter—

After my return from the Cherokee Nation, I addressed a letter to Maj. Armstrong Agent of the Choctaws & another to Revd W. H. Goode superintendent of the Choctaw academy at Fort Coffee to see the prospects in their Nation— I recv’d Mr. Goode’s answer two day ago, stating that they have at present a supply of teachers, the academy is only just going into operation, they commence with 100 scholars—so you see I expect I am doomed to go again & live among the Indians, as for myself it suits me very well & I am perfectly satisfied among them but [ms. illegible] an acquaintance of mine has now gone there to take a contract of building them a printing office, I wrote by him, he will be back in two or three days, I expect to be able to tell you then whether I go or not & will not close my letter till his return— I am not entirely idle, while at Alexandria I purchased a lot of Medical books which I peruse occasionally as I can get time—but I must confess a great part of my time is spent in another manner; I said some 40 lines back that the society here was good, & so it is, the young people are generally well informed, & being wealthy they have but little to do but make parties, but as they are all religious, they have no dancing, but quiltings, music parties &c and as I perform tolerably well on the flute & clarinett & living at a house where there are several young people, I think I have attended about three parties a week
& the last one I was at lasted two days, it was a partridge hunt, we went in pairs on horseback, gentleman & lady or (gal & boy if you like the phrase better) & when we found a flock, set a nett & drove the poor innocent foolish things into it—

Altho the people here are wealthy, yet money is very scarce, hardly a dollar to be seen in circulation; this is one reason why I wish to go among the Indians, as they always have money, in fact they have a considerable school fund, which is paid them by government, & which is used only to pay teachers— This country is not as handsome as upper Missouri, altho there are prairies here yet they are small in comparison to those in Missouri, & generally grown up with brush & weeds— The streams here afford good water privileges but they are not yet very well improved; there is however a cotton spinning factory just going into operation on Cane hill between here & Van buren— . . .

[Ms. illegible] think strange at my leaving my situation at the Shawnee Mission; but I will endeavor to give you the reasons— You may recollect that I have sometimes mentioned in my letters an individual by the name of Susan A Moberley; by some strange freak of the imagination we both came to the conclusion that we were pretty well calculated to make each other happy, or at least as much so as generally falls to the lot of persons in our circumstances, & finally came to the determination that we would be married— Susan is Sister to Mrs. Hill whom I have sometimes mentioned; her & her husband Mr. Hill are both well pleased with the arrangement & also another sister & brotherinlaw by the name of Rhodes are perfectly willing but Mr John Oldham the brotherinlaw with whom she lives & who is her guardian is very much opposed to her marrying, knowing that in case of her marrying he will have to pay her her share of her fathers estate, which may possibly amount to $1500 or $1800, and which he has had the use of for several years—

Now in case of her marrying without his consent it is thought she will never get much of her money, as she has nothing to show how much she is entitled to or whether any thing at all, & if he should be contrary & charge her with board, clothing, keeping of horse & she will not be likely to have much left— I proposed that we should be married, at all events & then if J Oldham could not be brot to an equitable settlement let him keep it & we would get along as we could; but Mrs Hill was opposed to that, & says
Susan shall have her rights; so it was finally concluded between Susan & myself that I should take a trip off South, & try to find some comfortable home for us where I could get some employment by which I could make a living, & during my absence she would endeavor to bring J Oldham to a settlement & either get her money or something to show for it & then on my return in April we would be married & come to the home I might have selected for us.

Since I left I have not heard from them, to know how they have arranged matters— I have had very poor success so far in either finding employment or a home among white folks & I believe Susan is somewhat opposed to living among Indians, at least she had some objections to living among the Shawnees— As for myself I am perfectly easy about the matter; if things can be arranged agreeably to all parties I am willing that we should be spliced, but if there should be too many difficulties in the way, why I shall neither hang nor drown myself in consequence— You would no doubt like that I should give you a description of her person, disposition mental acquirements &c— As to education, hers is but limited, as is generally the case with all females in that part of the country; she reads & writes however very well— she is twenty-two years of age, rather under the medium size, light complexion, not beautiful, but I think good looking— as to disposition of course I think it agreeable; she is thought to be quite good enough for an old Bach— So you see how the matter stands, whether we will ever be married I do not pretend to say, I leave it entirely with themselves, for I have plenty of time, & girls plenty.

I have just heard from the Cherokee country. I have not yet got any appointment but the prospect tolerably good. I shall go over there in about two days— If I should get a situation among them I cannot leave before my first session will be out, which will be in Augt— & what will Susan say?— Well Elizabeth I have scratched down a long but very imperfect letter; I have written where there was talk & confusion all the time, but this last page of course no person will see but yourself— I shall be very glad to hear from you, but cannot tell you where to direct to yet; if you direct to Fayetteville a friend will forward my letters to me; I shall write to Milton as soon as I find employment— please give my love & respects to all my friends & acquaintances—

I remain your affectionate brother

Allen T. Ward
Dear Brother [Hill]

It appears that I have so many letters to write that I forget who I have written to or who I ought to write to next— but I believe I have not yet written to you since I have been in this country; I have however written a good many letters since I have been here but have receiv'd none till yesterday. I got three; two from Missouri, & the other from Beadle in Miss.— In my letter to Elizabeth some two months ago (which likely you have seen) I gave a pretty general history of my travels since I left Missouri, so I think it unnecessary to repeat that part— at the time I wrote to E I believe I had not then obtained, but had a prospect of getting a school in this, the Cherokee Nation; altho' there were many applicants, yet I happened to be the fortunate one; having provided myself pretty well with letters of recommendation, being something of a musician; and having taught in the Shawnee Nation previously were all in my favor— From what I can learn I find I am located in the best part of the Nation, that is the citizens are more intelligent & generally wealthier than in any other part— My school consists of 60 scholars, 35 speak the English language well, about 20 speak only Cherokee, a few speak both languages. Many of them can hardly be told from white children, tho' none of them are entirely so— altho' my scholars are generally not far advanced, yet I have a fine class of young women who have been a good while at Dwight Mission, who are studying Grammar geography & Arithmetic—

I am pleasantly situated as to a boarding house, I board with Col. Walter Adair, a man of wealth & intelligence, & in high standing in the Nation— only one eighth Indian, his wife a little more, tho' were you to see them you would think them white folks— The Col. is engaged in the mercantile business by which I should suppose he was making money, he also has a large farm & a good many slaves; the same man is mentioned in a novel called Horseshoe Robinson. He is there called Watt Adair; he is here called Wattee or Red Wattee— I have nothing to complain of only that my school is too large, my duties are too laborious. My contract however only calls for five days in the week & 6 hours a day, but I often teach 7 hours— I engaged for only one session of 5 months which will be out the first of Augt when I expect to return to Mis-

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11. Dwight Mission, a Presbyterian station established for the Arkansas Cherokees in 1831, was moved into the new Cherokee Nation eight years later.—Edwin C. McReynolds, Oklahoma, a History of the Sooner State (Norman, Okla., 1954), p. 75.

12. John Pendleton Kennedy (1795-1870), writer and statesman, was the author of Horseshoe Robinson: A Tale of Tory Ascendency (Philadelphia, 1835). The book went through several editions, one having been issued as recently as 1937.
souri & whether I shall come back here or not I am not prepared to say, tho, I think it very probable, unless they should offer me a good salary at the Shawnee Mission, which is not likely as long as they can get the services of Methodist preachers for the same that they get on the circuit viz $150. I expect I can have my situation here as long as I want it; but the members of the council are beginning to study economy. Last year Teachers got $500, this year but $400—I know not what it may be next— The Cherokees have a school fund (the Int of $70,000) which is kept separate from their other annuity & applied to Education alone— besides this they have an Orphan fund of $36.00 pr annum which is now divided among the different districts for the education of the Orphans—

I have laid them down a plan of Manual Labor School such as the Shawnee Mission, for the benefit of the orphans. They seem much pleased with the project. The Col. intends to try to get a Bill passed the next council to establish such an Institution, if he should succeed I can get a good situation in it if I want it— but if I continue a teacher among the Indians I shall try to get a situation among the Choctaws. They are certainly the best Indians now living; they occupy all the country from Fort Smith to Fort Towson 13 on Red River— The Creeks & Seminoles are our neighbors on the west, the creeks are pretty well civilized & are establishing schools; the Seminoles are tolerably wild, their principle chiefs are Tiger-tail, Alligator & Wildcat. One principal object I had in leaving Missouri was to try to get my money from B. G. Beadle. I did not however succeed, he gave me his note payable this spring & promised to pay me on my return to Missouri. I also left my horse & saddle with him as I came down for which I have not got my pay; was it not for seeing him I think I should return by land, it is only 275 miles due north to Independence or a little east of north— This is a tolerable fine country some very fertile land, but in many places too much flint, the face of the country is broken, in many places hilly, as you will see on the map that it is among the Ozark mountains, it is generally well watered & I should suppose healthy. They raise some cotton but not in abundance— wheat & corn does well & nearly all kinds of vegetables— Some of the natives live well some of the poorer classes live principally on canahaine, a kind of hominy— I was about two months at Fayetteville in Washington Co Arks. previous to

13. Fort Towson, founded in 1824 by Col. Matthew Arbuckle, was near the mouth of the Kiamichi, 120 miles south of Fort Gibson. It was named for Nathan Towson, a hero of the War of 1812.—Edwin C. McReynolds, Oklahoma: A History of the Sooner State (Norman, Okla., 1854), p. 75.
coming here. Arkansas bears a bad name generally at a distance, & it deserves it in the most parts I believe, but I must confess I was much pleased both with the country & citizens in Washington Co. It is I suppose much the best part of the state & is settled with the best citizens of Tennessee. They are building a large college near Fayetteville.

There are no northern countries however that ever I have seen that can compare in beauty with the south, I mean the far south say lat. 28 or 30, there being no winter to destroy vegetation; the great variety of evergreen trees & shrubs, with the extensive plantations of Sugar is delightful to look at. I was some time at Donaldsonville a short distance above Orleans & much pleased with the country & had I got there a month sooner I most likely should have staid a while & tended an engine in a sugar house—My intention was to go on to Attakapas in the S West part of La on the sea coast, but owing in part to the low water in the Bayou’s & to the advice of judge McKune, I took a different course & went up Red River to Alexandria. I there found a pretty country, soil good for cotton & sugar but unhealthy. Alexandria is a pretty town on the river built mostly in the French style, but lies too low. They have raised a considerable levey along the river, but I have understood that the river has been over it since I left there & overflowed the country— I have had no letter from the Mission since I left, but I have heard from another person who had been there lately. Anthony & family were well & expected to leave the Mission this fall or next spring. I suppose he is going to his land. I understood they wanted me back there very much I expect they cannot get along well with their looms without somebody to keep them in order—The shuttles & gears I wrote to you for so long ago had not arrived when I left, I told them at the Mission that if the[y] should arrive in my absence to make use of them. Let me know if you ever sent them?— I never had changed my opinion with respect to the Manfre of Blankets any place along on this western frontier. They should be made in this manner. Fix to the condenser of a carding machine an affair like a thrustle, merely to twist the condensing, which will be plenty fine enough for Blankets. Weave 10 or 11 quarters wide & full in to about seven quarters, so as to give a firm body like cloth. Color them of different colors but especially red—blankets of this description made of tolerably good wool that will weigh 6 or 7 or 8 lbs will sell for 8 or 9 or 10 dollars; they are in indispensable article throughout the whole western country for all classes—The Indian wraps himself in a blanket, the
dragoon cannot encamp without one, no white man is dressed suitably for the winter without a blanket coat, and people who live in houses spread them on their beds— I have had two propositions to go into partnership & start something of that kind in Washington Co Arks but I do not know that I shall do it, if I was able to go into something of that kind myself I believe I should do it, but I am not very fond of Co business— I don’t know that I need to bother & enslave myself much about striving to make a fortune when I can make a living by teaching school about half the time, & can go from place to place & be always finding something new to see and learn— and seems to suit me so well— I am still engaged in reading medicine, and have bought a lot of medical books since I left Missouri, altho I do not expect ever to make a practitioner, yet I am much pleased with the study. A Doctor Davis who sends to my school, is one of the most learned & talented men I have met with, he is a white man; his wife a little of the Cherokee tincture; he has a large medical library. I think I shall gain considerable information from him. My paper is done & many things yet to write. They hanged a Cherokee in this district yesterday. This makes the 3rd or 4th execution here in two months. Cherokee laws are very severe & prompt. There is no delay. They take up a man try & hang him in three or four days if found guilty— please write to me soon— direct to Evansville Washington Co Arkansas— Your affectionate brother

A. T. Ward

SHAWNEE MISSION INDIAN TERY NEAR WESTPORT Oct 8th 44

Dear Sister [Elizabeth]

Your very welcome letter of June 11th or I should say yours & Milton’s together I receiv’d some few weeks before I left the Cherokee Nation, but as I expected to return to this country in a short time, & as I knew not what changes might take place in this ever changing world I concluded not to write until my return— I think I mentioned in a former letter that it was my expectation to be married directly after my return to Miss S. A. Moberly; in fact the arrangements were all made & agreed on— My principal object of my going south was to find us a home far away from some of her connections who were always opposed to our union. I found the object of my search in the Cherokee Nation, where I thought we could live in peace & quietness in good society, & where I could have constant employment at a salary of $400 a year; this I immediately communicated to her ladyship which appeared to meet with
her entire approbation; she had no objections to living among the Indians, neither did she appear to have any to leave her relatives— Time passed on till the 4th of Augt when my session was out & I got leave of absence for six weeks; on my arrival here I went immediately to the house of her Brother-in-law where she resided to make the necessary arrangements, have the business despached & start on our journey as soon as possible.

I was received by her sister (Mrs. Oldham) in quite a friendly manner & after chatting with her a while I asked if Susan was at home, she answered in a laughing manner that she was but said no more; in the course of half an hour I again asked if Susan was sick that she did not show herself; I was answered no that she was not sick but that she was not in a condition to be seen as she was to be married that evening— I was of course somewhat surprised at this information. I knew that girls were sometimes subject to change their minds, but I had thought Susan such a paragon of excellence that it was impossible for her to change— It seems that when her connections found out that it was our intentions to go off & leave them, they all set to work to persuade her to abandon the idea & to receive the addresses of a young man of Jackson County who was nearer her equal in point of wealth; she at last listened to their advice; this all took place so suddenly & so short a time before I left the Cherokees that her letter containing her recantation or change of mind had not reached there when I left, & so I was in ignorance of the whole matter until I went to her place of residence on the evening of her marriage— It often puts me in mind of the words of the poet— I met a wedding— stept aside—

It passed— my Susan was the bride— Altho' I confess that I was amazed & shocked when I was first informed of the change in her mind, yet as soon as I had a moments time to reflect I felt perfectly reconciled, & the more I think of the matter the better I am pleased that it has been broken off, it has to be sure made a great talk in the neighborhood for she had kept our engagement no secret; my friends are generally well pleased that we were not married as they think she would not suit me— I am not sure that I want a wife, and if I did there is lots that can be got by asking, I am young yet you know & may wait & see what time may bring forth— I should not however have left the Cherokee Nation had it not been for my expected marriage. I was well pleased to live among them, & they appeared equally as pleased to keep me as a teacher, but on my arrival here my friends of the Mission seemed very anxious
Allen T. Ward
1806-1862

East building, Shawnee Methodist Mission
I should remain with them, and offered to pay me as much as I could get among the Cherokees; I have made up my mind to stay at least this winter; as the only relatives I have in the far west are here it appears more like home than any place else tho' I like to live among the Cherokees better than the Shawnees—

While I was here before I had started two looms & put them in the way of manufacturing (in part) their own clothing. This business has went on but badly in my absence for want of somebody to manage the business that knew something about it, this together with teaching the girls is I suppose to be my occupation— Milton mentions in his letter that he expects to visit this country this fall. I shall be delighted to see him; can you not come with him? In fact Milton’s intended visit has been an inducement for me to stay here this winter that I may see him— I should write to him now but expect he will have left before my letter gets there, if he should not I would be glad that he would bring with him everything that he can about weaving, such as shuttles, gears, reeds, bobbins &c &c, he will find the Mission 15 miles west of Independence— Tell him to bring all the music he can hear of— I have not seen your friend & correspondent C Beal since my return but have heard that he is well—

My own health has been generally good since I last wrote with the exception of two or three shakes of the Ague— I often feel a strong inclination to see you all once more & think I will ere long pay you a visit, particularly as I find myself still a single man & unincumbered with a wife, but I must first get my missionary labors in such a condition that I can leave without inconvenience, then you may expect to see me come stepping in to attend one of your Scientific lectures that you speak of in your letter— I am now pretty well prepared to resume my medical studies as I have supplied myself with books, and there is an excellent physician employed at this institution by the year, but I do not expect to have much time to study— Write the very first hour you can spare— I remain your affete. brother

A. T. Ward

Anthony & family are well and still live at the mission

Ind. Manl Lab. School—March 19th 47.

My Dear Sister [Elizabeth]

Your very acceptable letter of the 22nd Feb. I recd a few days ago, & altho I found it impossible to comply with your request “to answer it the same hour I recd it” still I intend you shall not have
much cause of complaint this time— You complain that I never write to you now-a-days— why E you are certainly mistaken, for I find I have written to you five or six times since I rec'd any letter from you except the last; but in looking over my stand drawer I find them all here yet— Most singularly & unfortunately it has always so happened for the last six months that whenever I attempted to write to you I have always been interrupted before I had time to finish, so that I have got quite a little vol of unfinished letters on hand, but in reading them over they appear so flat & tasteless that I think they wont do at all—I find in all cases when I write a letter & leave it unsealed till the ink dries & then read it over that I have never in one instance sent it to the office— but this time just as much as I happen to get written I will send before it gets out of date—

You may see from my first line that I still hail from the same old place, and it is uncertain how long I may stay. it may be a long time, & I may leave in a few days— Rev. E. T. Peery (our former Superindendant) & myself have long had a project in view of building a Steam flouring mill, & most likely if we can get a suitable place donated to us in the town of Kansas 14 that we will commence this spring, should we not go on with our mill I will most likely continue— I have again been teaching the female school since Nov. & feel well satisfied with my situation & should not think of leaving did I not think I could make more in some other way, & as I now have a family to provide for it seems my duty to do as well as I can for them— But as I have made two or three attempts to move but have always been persuaded to stay another, & then another session that I do not know that I will get off— My long experience in teaching, & especially in teaching Indians of course qualifies me much better for this place than any strange teacher whose acquirements in other respects might be far superior— But why dont you come out & see us? You who have never been further from home than down to the Big bridge, or up the big hill to Hurfords, or across the meadow to Penrose's or may be up to the mouth of Flat run to Murry's— why la me, if you & Milt would jump on a Steam boat & steer your course right towards Sun set, a little this side, I mean south side, I tell you you would see sights at least you would see sights after you got here—

You would I think see the prettiest country you have ever seen, & by going a little south you would see the largest prairies that you

14. Town of Kansas was an early name for present Kansas City, Mo. It was also called City of Kansas and Kansas before the present designation was adopted. Westport was the original settlement.—Kansas Historical Collections, v. 11, pp. 588, 589.
ever will see, for I believe there is but one all the way to Santa fe— You would also see a great variety of the animal called human, from the wildest tribes of the red men to the more polished but less generous tribes of the pale faces— And what can only be seen in our almost boundless prairies, the wind wagon 15 or prairie schooner, booming along at the rate of 15 or 20 miles pr hour— The inventor has yet tried but one, which run on eight wheels with a platform of 20 by 40 feet for passengers, the Mast upwards of 40 ft high; I am told he has in view the establishing of a line from here to Santa fe for freight & passengers & proposes to carry freight at $6 pr hundred the present price being $12— thinks he can make the trip there & back (900 miles) or 1800 both ways in 20 days & carry 100 tons of freight, but for my own part I think it will never be any thing more than a wind machine and should not be disappointed if it would all blow over—

My little family & myself continue to enjoy excellent health, in fact our country never has been known as healthy as it has been for the last six or eight months, so much so that the doctors say it is distressingly healthy— Our little Mary E or Coon as we generally call her is certainly one of the finest children in the world, she is just beginning to talk a little, has been running about for two months & is constantly in mischief from morning till night, I wish you could see her cutting up her capers— but to lay all jesting aside she is allowed to be the prettiest child that was ever seen in the whole country; her complexion is the fairest imaginable, while her eyes are as black and sparkling as those of the red men of the prairies, her first hair which was black or nearly so came out & her present hair is not so dark, about as dark as mine but is growing darker & I suppose will be black. Nuf sed for Coon. Wahponkequa thinks you might step out & see us & spend the summer with us, we have two large pleasant rooms in a brick building, the principal part of the first story of which is occupied as the Chapel, the upper part for two of the schools, the ends as dwellings, the building is 110 ft by 34. 16—

With respect to a beau answering your description I can suit

15. A novel device of early Kansas was the wind wagon, sometimes called a sailing wagon. Several were built, and the Kansas press gave each considerable attention. They were described in 1860 as being similar to an ordinary light wagon. They weighed 350 pounds, had a bed about three feet wide, eight feet long, and six inches deep, and were propelled by a sail raised over the center of the front axle. When the breeze blew in the right direction these wagons were reported to skin over the prairies at about 15 miles an hour—at times even at 40—and at least one wagon is said to have traveled all the way from Kansas City to Denver in a little more than 20 days.—Nyle H. Miller, Edgar Langdon, and Robert W. Richmond, Kansas: A Pictorial History (Topeka, 1961), p. 65.

16. This building is now referred to as the East building of the Shawnee Methodist Mission group, and houses a museum and restored suites.
you exactly— I can find one tall & making a dignified appearance— black hair & eyes is very common here especially on this side the state line. They are generally frank & courteous & conversation[al] but you might have to study Shawnee, Delaware Kickapoo or Pottawattamie before you would know much about his conversation— "good teeth" why girl you dont know any thing about teeth in your country; I could show you teeth here that the very sight of them would make an old tough Buffalo Bull scamper off as tho' he'd been shot at by a regement of unkle Sam's dragoons— as you prefer one who either smokes or chews there is no difficulty in that requisite, & as [you] did not say that it must be the fashionable weed that the dandies in your country use I suppose Ken-ne ke-nick 17 would answer— as to him having a change of shirts & wearing his own coat, if you happen to come in the Buffalo season you will be suited on that score, so I think you have no excuse come along—

A. C. Farnham for whom you enquire left here last fall with Rev. J. C. Berryman to establish a high school or academy at the Iron Mountain 18 in the southern part of this state,— I could also have went at a salary of $400 pr amm but prefered to stay here— Our new Superintendant Rev Wm Patton, is not yet liked very well, rather too austere & overbearing in his manners to suit the free born sons of this land of freedom— Our school continues about as usual in numbers, requiring three teachers & cooks & seamstresses in abundance— Anthony is still here, he has had a tolerable severe attack of pneumonia this winter but is now convaliscent, his family are well; their youngest child which is about two months old they call Melinda Jane— You say you take no newspaper now, I would send you the Courier if you think it worth the postage it would to be sure be a good deal out of date by the time it would reach you. I think I had better send you a number now & then of the St. Louis Republican as it might be new to you— I take also the Scientific American pub in New York and have been deeply engaged in Scientific studies, particularly mechnical

Now Liz I am going to get this letter done, I have but these two little white spots to daub over & it will be done— & now will you pay me back in my own coin? I hope not you have nothing to interrupt you & you can write often, so write soon & often—

17. Kinnikinnick was a mixture of dried leaves and bark smoked by the Indians and pioneers in the Ohio valley and Great Lakes area. Commonly, sumac leaves and inner dogwood bark were used.
18. Iron Mountain, St. Francois county, Mo.
have not yet found time or space to say any thing about the Mexican War— the fact is I am ashamed of the whole proceedings. Positively I am ashamed that American citizens should be so lost to every sense of justice & honor as to wage war upon a poor defenceless nation who had never wronged them in word or deed— I do most sincerely think it will leave a stain upon the American character that will not be easily wiped off— We recd last night verbal news by a steam boat that Gen. Taylor had achieved another great victory near Saltillo in which 2000 Mexicans were killed— why in my opinion the slaughter of a few more Mexicans will be enough to ensure his election to the highest office in the union, but let the war go— I hate it— but tell me have you got any magnetic telegraph passing by the factory yet? or any of those Drummond lights that is going to enlighten the whole universe? if so, tell me in your next how they operate—

My studies since in this country have been various, I dabbled a while in Medicine, particularly physiology & have a little smattering of several of the ologies & ominies & iefficks, but I am almost ready like the wise man of old to say “its all vanity” folly to be storing away knowledge when our sojourn here is so short, I think he is the wisest man who chooses that course in life that will render him most happy here, & I often seriously think of retiring from the bustle & confusion of the world by going to live with the remnant of Peoria Indians who are still left, they number now but 55 souls of a once powerful tribe— they own a beautiful country 50 miles south. Mrs. Ward however has entirely lost her native language, but as she speaks Shawnee fluently she could soon be able to speak Peoria again— But I find I must come to a close— you may tell the folks that our country is in as fine circumstances as it has ever been known— provisions of all kinds plenty & cheap— wheat 50 cts flour $4 pr bbl corn 20 cts pork $2 pr hundred, other things in proportion & at present perfectly healthy— it is incredible to see how rapidly the towns & villages improve along the river particularly above & up as far as St. Joseph— Wahponkequa joins me in love to you all— she says you must come & see us but be sure & write often anyhow— Your affectionate brother

A T Ward

Ind. M. L. School. Aug 29th 1847

My dear sister [ElizaBeth]

“Nothing so hard as a beginning, except it is the end” says Byron, which with me is a fact; I appoint time after time to write but still
find it very hard to get at it, & then about three times out of four have to stop before I come to the end, but as postage is now moderate 19 I must send you just such a scrap both in quality & quantity as I may happen to get forged out— Your acceptable letter of July 13th came safe to hand in regular time, but not until I had begun to think you almost as negligent in writing as myself, but I suppose I must make some allowance as I know that young ladies frequently have more interesting correspondents than relatives, and it may be possible you may have had a physiological essay to make out for Dr. what d’ye call him, or an Editorial article for Mr. Editor, be that as it may your letter was gladly read and had to be read over several times before it was disposed of, or laid by. We continue to enjoy a reasonable share of health, & I suppose as many of this worlds blessings as we have any reason to expect. Our little Coon however has not been very well for two months, but nothing of a more serious or alarming nature than is common to children of her age, except that her mother says she is a little the worst spoiled child in the world, but she will soon get over that—

We still continue at the mission & I cannot tell how long we may stay; I wanted to leave last Spring but the Supt persuaded me to stay till the session was out, & when the session was out he wanted me to take the management of the Steam Mill & proposed to give me $500 pr ann, so on the first day of this month (Aug) I took charge of the Mill for one year, I have had a pretty good rest having taught the female school for ten months— I have in contemplation to build for myself a small Steam Mill with one pair of Burrs & think to have some of the work going on this fall, so that it will not be long after my time is out here till I can have it in operation. I am offered a donation of a suitable lot for the purpose in the town of Westport. If I should succeed in my project I intend yourself & father & Mother to come out and live with us— I still think this the prettiest country I have seen, not perfectly healthy, but I think not more unhealthy than the greater part of the western country— The people all say they are very healthy only they have the “Agar” 20— I like the Indian country however better than the white settlements, it is a more quiet peaceable place to live, we

19. Ward’s letter of this date, which had been folded and sealed, shows payment of 10 cents in postage, the amount affixed in ink. The first issue of postage stamps by the United States government was authorized by the act of March 3, 1847, which took effect July 1, 1847. A great many stampless covers were used after this date, however, with postage costs marked in pen and ink.

20. Early travelers and settlers in the territory were greatly plagued by ague, a common form of malarial fever. Journals and letters of the period contain frequent references to the disease which was marked by chills and fever occurring at intervals.
hear nothing of the contentions and troubles that distract the white people— The papers here are filled with war! war! war!— poor oppressed & much injured Mexico I fear the "heretic's" of the north will never be satisfied till they have taken possession of the greater part of your country—

Our school, workshops farm &c are prospering about as usual our numbers much the same as in years gone by; generally about 100 pupils— The Friends mission four miles nearer the setting sun is in a healthy & prosperous condition, they keep a school of about 50 pupils, who make rapid progress in civilization— James Stanly left them a few days ago for your country— Anthony Ward & family are at present in tolerable health his children have had some sickness this summer, & John Allen had the misfortune to get his leg broke, but that is now entirely well. But why in the world did not Milton come out to see us when he was so near? I think if he had paid us a visit first he would not have bought land on Rock River; a pleasant season of the year is now coming on for traveling, suppose you & Milt should jump on a Boat & come out & see us & our fine prairies, & if you could only stay a month or two it would be better than no visit at all. I had promised myself all last winter, that this fall I would spend in visiting my friends & parents, but school was not out till I was called on to go into the Mill, now I do not expect to be at liberty till I leave the Mission entirely—

The emigration to Oregon & California appears to be increasing. I think something over 500 wagons left here for those parts last spring, also a good many for Texas— But as I have only a few minutes more to spare I must close. Be sure to write soon this time, dont put it off a long time & then not write, recollect that every little event that takes place in your neighbourhood is interesting to me— I shall direct to Bridgeport as I think your school may be out by the time this gets there— Wahponkequa joins me in love to yourself & all the rest of our friends & relatives. I remain your affectionate brother

A. T. Ward

We pay 50 cts for wheat— Flour $5 pr Bbl— The Harvest not so good as last year— corn looks well, worth 25 cts pr Bush—

Ind. Manual Labor School  Nov. 7th 1847

Dear Father [Asahel Ward]

Thy letter of Oct 15th came safe to hand a few days ago, which I hasten to answer, not knowing when I could again find leisure
time— As thee asks some questions respecting my situation in thy letter I shall devote a part of this letter to the answering of these enquiries— With respect to the part I have acted since I came to this institution it has been frequently changed, as seemed most judicious to the Superintendent— At first I was employed to superintend the building of the steam mill, then for want of teachers I was placed in one of the schools, after that for want of a miller & engineer I was sent to manage that, they then sent to Canada & got a regular miller & I was again sent to teach the female school, where I remained until the 1st of last Augt that being the end of the session— But our Supt not being well pleased with his Canadian miller, or as he seems to think that nobody can manage the mills as well as myself he proposed to me to go back, but as I had got a project in my head of building a mill for myself, or in Co with another person I did not at first agree to his proposal, but at last by persuasion, and the addition to my salary of $100 pr anm, I concluded to stay another year in the mill— my wages are $500 a year with house, stable, & garden furnished free of rent, I also have the privilege of selecting such logs as I want & sawing all the lumber I may need in the mill project I have in view, me paying of course the regular price for the lumber; the only advantage there is in this part of my contract is that I can select better lumber than I could otherwise get—

But our present Supt is about to leave us, the last conference saw or thought they saw that he was not in all particulars qualified to fill the office, & have appointed another in his place, that we are now looking for every day; whether he will think it advisable to keep me in the mill at my present wages is uncertain, if I choose however he cannot discharge me till my year is out, as one Supt cannot annul the agreement of another, but I have little choice whether I stay in the mill at my present wages or go back to school at $400, or whether I do either of them, for I have been offered a higher salary than I now get to take management of another mill where my duties will not be any harder than they are here— or I can get employment in the Cherokee Nation as teacher at $400— But I have the project in view of building a mill for myself, or in part for myself, another person furnishing part of the means— Since it has become known that I have such a notion several men of wealth have offered to go in as partners, but I prefer owning as much of the concern myself as I can & having but one in with me—
The mill I propose building will be for flour only & that on the merchant principle of buying wheat & selling flour— to have only one pr of 4½ feet Burrs— Estimated cost $4000. I believe however it will not be an easy matter to get off from this place, having been here so long & being not only acquainted with all the business of the institution, but also with both the white and red population for many miles around, I am better qualified to fill the station of either miller or teacher than any other could be without an apprenticeship— therefore I shall not be surprised if another attempt is made to buy me over, especially as the mill I contemplate building being only three miles from this one will operate very much against this one—

The manufacture of flour here in the Indian country, or near the line & in reach of the Indian market is pretty good, take for instance this Mission Mill, with one pair of 4 feet Burrs for wheat, one pr 3½ feet for corn, and a very indifferent saw mill— the expenses are, myself $500, Mr. Adams the Canadian miller of whom I before spoke, is still with us at $400, an assistant miller at $250, a black fireman at $280, wood at $2. per cord & burning 2 cords pr day or 4 in 24 hours— this seems like pretty heavy expenses, yet we can clear from three to four thousand dollars a year— yet I would not accept a good steam mill as a present out 30 or 40 miles from the Indian line & be compelled to run it on custom work— But probably I have said enough on the subject of steam mills for this time, a few days will bring our new Supt then I shall determine what I shall do— The goods (fulled jeans) of which thee speaks I am not prepared to say much about, as it is a kind of goods I am unacquainted with, but most all kinds of clothing here is very low, there are so many traders along the line all in hopes to get a share of the Indians money, & they bring on such large lots of goods that we can frequently buy very reasonable. I am wearing a suit of blue mixt jeans of good quality say 9 or 10 hundred that cost but 39 cts per yard— the only way in my opinion that a person could make anything on such goods would be to retail it out by the pattern, or have it made up into garments & keep them for sale—

This country is the most delightful to look at of any I have seen in all my rambles, fine rich rolling prairies with groves of good timber along the streams, & the land produces very well, it is perhaps almost the greatest corn country in the world— wheat is not so certain a crop, some years it is very good but it often gets froze out in the winter as we have not here much snow— but like
all, or nearly all the western country it is not healthy— tho’ I have generally enjoyed good health yet I think about one half the population have one year with another a spell of ague or intermittent fever—

Thus far I had written about a week ago when I was interrupted & could never find time to finish till the present— and even yet I have nothing more definite to write with respect to my mill project. Rev. T. Johnson our new Supt 21 has not yet made his appearance; the people here think he will have nothing to do with the mill but will give it up entirely to me at a certain yearly rent, or sell it— Anthony Ward is still here & carries on the wagon making for the institution— he has the reputation of being the best workman at his business in this country, he is a very steady man & a good citizen & has done very well for himself & family since he has been here, his family consists of his wife & two children, they have buried two children; their youngest (Melinda Jane) died about two months ago—

Myself & family continue to enjoy as good health as falls to the lot of most persons in “these diggins”, I am however sometimes in the winter afflicted with a pain in the right shoulder which I have occasionally felt ever since I first began to spin— Our little Mary Elizabeth or “Coon” as we mostly call her is a fine healthy child, & can do as much mischief as any other of her size & age. Some person sent me a St Clairsville news paper by which I saw the result of the Election and that Milton was re elected— I take regularly two papers— The Saturday Courrier & the Scientific American published in New York, the last I esteem very highly. I think it the most useful paper published in the United States especially to the mechanic & machinist. It gives engravings & descriptions of all useful inventions with the weekly list of patents issued &c &c—

I cannot say just when I shall see you all, but it is possible if I go on with my mill I may be up that way to get the engine made, that is if it can be got on better terms than in St Louis — please inform me what one of the following description would cost in wheeling. I want about 30 horse power or to be more particular— say 10 inch cylinder three feet stroke— ½ or ½ cut off— two single flued Boilers say 20 ft long 32 in diam, with everything complete, & ready to set up & of the best material & workmanship and to be finished by the 1st of June 1848. . . .

But I must close, I intended to finish on the other side but I kept writing on till I had not room enough to stop— Please remember me to all my friends & acquaintances & let us hear from some of you soon— I remain thy affectionate son—

Allen T. Ward

Ind M. L. School May 21st 1848

My Dear Sister [Elizabeth]

It is a long time since I have written to you. I know not how long. I only know that I have been trying to find time & favorable opportunity for two or three months, & now I had thought I had slipped into the counting room of the store unperceived, but no, I had hardly got hold of the pen when here comes “Coon” “pa give coon sugar” “pa put on panta” &c but I will write this time, if I cannot write whole sentences I will write even a word at a time— I do not now recollect the date of your last letter but it was recd a long time since I have written any to you— My situation at this Institution has been subject to change frequently even from the first. I have been moved from place to place as circumstances might require, & the one I now fill, tho’ less laborious, still occupies my time & mind more than any other in which I have been placed.

The annual conference last fall found it necessary to remove our superintendent, and the one appointed in his place could not move here till this spring, so they concluded to make a kind of sub. of me, & once fairly harnessed in I cant tell when I may get out— Tho’ our superintendent Rev. T Johnson is now here, yet he feels unwilling to take the whole duty upon himself— The conference therefore concluded to divide the duties of the office, & let the Superintendent proper attend to the religious duties, and the other all the financial & business transactions of the Institution. This is a situation of some responsibility for one no better qualified for such business than I am, yet from the appearance of things for the last few months I think I can get along— My duties require me to report to government quarterly & yearly, giving an account of the condition of the schools, the number of students, from what Tribe, age, when entered school, studies, progress &c &c with an account of all disbursements, accompanied by vouchers. I also keep all the acccts of the Ins[titution] receive & pay out all money, tend the store, superintend the work shops Mills &c &c—

The farm (some six or seven hundred acres) Mr Johnson thinks he will mostly attend to himself when he is here as his inclination leads him naturally to that kind of life. The schools, work shops,
&c are carried on about as I have described in former letters at a yearly expense of about $23,000.00 but the expenses over the income from the farm shops mills &c has been only $9,000.00 a year, and it is expected now that all the necessary building are erected that about $5000.00 will be sufficient, which amount is furnished by the government— I have often thought of leaving the school, & trying to get into some business for myself as I have frequently informed you, but I am not sure that I could do any better than I have been & am still doing, at least I see none doing better without capital to begin with.

Now I have nothing at risque and as we board in the school we have no trouble in housekeeping; as I am much pleased with Mr Johnson as superintendent it is probable I may stay some time — Mr and Mrs. Johnson, were missionaries here fifteen years ago. It was them who first established this Mission, but owing to Mr Johnson's poor state of health he left about six years ago expecting never to return again, but after regaining his health he agreed to come again & take charge of the Ins. which he labored so hard to build up— Wakponkequa was raised from a child by them & they seem to look upon her with the affection of parents for one of their children— But Liz I cant write any further till I tell you what a fine boy we have, second only to Coon in all this country. He was born on the 5th of Feb last, but as I think I have not written to you since that time of course you had not heard of it; as yet we have found no name for him. I ransacked all the names over I can think of but I cant find any but what are all in use. The fact is Liz there are not many names would answer for such a boy as he is. Can you give us one? but I fear it will be too long to wait unless you write soon—but dont you call him Dombey— Coon has but one fault, she is a little too smart, & so many here to spoil her, why she would shake her fist at James K Polk if he would cross her in the least, she is rather young yet to start to school but I think next summer she must try it—

Our country is now in all its beauty & could you now give your eyes one feast of these beautiful prairies I think you would say you had never seen the like before. Hundreds of teams have started & are starting for Santa fee, California & Oregon, besides what U. S. has to carry feed to her warriors in N Mexico—

Doctor Jesse Harvey Supt of Friends Mission departed this life some ten days ago,\textsuperscript{22} a man highly esteemed for his many virtues and amiable qualities, he came from Ohio near Cincinnati, it will

\textsuperscript{22} Jesse Harvey had been placed in charge of the Friends mission in 1847.
be hard to supply his place with one in every way as well qualified for the office as he was— their school is doing well—

Well I find I cant get to finish, this is the fifth day since I commenced, I must give it up & finish some other time as I start for the post office in a few minutes— Anthony Ward and family are well & still with us; I can now think of many things to write had I time. Washington Well's friends are all well; I read that part of your last letter to them in which you spoke of him they were much pleased to hear that he was getting along so well— please write soon, tell father & Milton to write also— From Your Affectionate Brother

A. T. Ward

IND. M. L. SCHOOL Oct. 29th 1848

DEAR BROTHER [HILL]

Your letter of Sept 9th came safe to hand in due time which brot the joyful tidings of your health and happiness. You mention that Father's health was better than it had been and that he was able to walk & ride about, which you say is more than you once expected. I suppose from this that he has had a very severe spell of sickness, & should have been glad to have heard the particulars; to one separated as I am far from all relatives and former acquaintances & friends, all little scraps of news of any of them is a source of great pleasure, but far more interesting when there is any thing particularly in reference to parents or brothers & sisters.

Your letter found us all enjoying our usual health, in fact our country has been very healthy for the last year or two, & I do not think we have any reason to complain on that head, nor for lack of the good things of this world to live on. Our little "Coon" is about the smartest, most mischievous, & a little the worst spoiled girl in all upper Missouri; the youngest, a coarse rough stout boy, and is yet without a name. I wrote to Elizabeth long ago for a name but she has never sent it on; Wakponkequa has long since however decided to call him Milton, she wishes to couple it with that of the Supt of Ind. Affs Maj [Thomas H.] Harvey, & to call our boy Milton Harvey, to this I have had some objections but as to the name it matters little whether it be Tom Dick or Harry— We continue to board at the public table, or as somebody has said "we are fed at the public crib." My occupation is the same as when I last wrote, that is a kind of Sub Supt. book keeper, store keeper, financier, agent &c &c.

Since I last wrote to you I have bought a lot in the town of
Kansas and am now having built a brick house on it of suitable size for two business rooms, (store rooms) below & the second story for residence for one or two families, the brick work is nearly finished & I think it likely I will get it all completed and ready to rent this fall. I expect to be able to rent it for $350.00 or $400 pr year. I did not in the first place contemplate building as large a building, but the workmen kept changing the plan till they settled down on a scale considerably beyond my means, but it was said that it would be so much more valuable & rent so much higher that I had better go ahead on a large scale. According to the best estimate I can make it will cost me about $2000 including the lot which will be about $400 more than the size of my pile; I had therefore thought that if after settling up my little affairs in Ohio and should be anything remaining even little tho it may be it would still help me a little if I could get it in time— Or if you should happen to have a hundred or two that is not employed I would pay you good interest on it for a short time; my salary is $400. a year of which I can save the most as myself and family are boarded, so that by sometime next summer I can have it all clear or if you had rather suppose you take an interest in the house, my friends all tell me that it is a first rate speculation. The property is certain to advance a hundred per cent in value in the next two years beside the rent is a very good interest on money.

The town of Kansas is on the Missouri river one mile below the mouth of the Kansas river, it now contains I think upwards of 300 houses & is rapidly improving. It is one of the best landings on the river, and the town is founded on a ledge of rocks that are as permanent as gibralter; it is also destined to be the starting point to Santa fee California Oregon &c. A considerable portion of the goods for the Santa fee market are now landed at Kansas, besides all this it is as good a point for the Indian trade as can be found in this country— Mr. T. Johnson bot an old log house on the same street & only a few doors from the place I am building for $1500, and he finds no difficulty in renting it for $400 per year — One of the objects however I had in building was in consideration of father & Mother. They are getting old & helpless, and as you do not seem to incline to settle down & be quiet I thought possibly they might sometime choose to come out to this country & live with us— Again, notwithstanding I seem to be permanently settled at least for the time being, still I know not what changes may take place even in a short time; the Indians may conclude to sell out all this beautiful country to government & then away goes
all this Institution, or in case of a change of Supt, another may not require my services, & in all these cases I think it best to have some place to flee to.

Our schools are progressing about as usual. The classical school (Western Academy) of which I spoke in a former letter went into operation on the 25th Sept. last & promises fair to be one of the best Institutions of learning in the west; the principal has few equals & I think no superior as a teacher in this country. The students board in this Ins. or as I said before at the public crib & are charged $1.25 per week, tuition costs from 6 to 12 dollars per session according to the studies of the student—

Wahponkequa the children & myself paid a visit to our Peoria friends about three weeks ago. Wahs Mother was a Peoria, but she was so young when she left her nation that she had not only forgotten her native language but also the road back to the place she once lived. We took however an interpreter & guide, one who proved to know but little more of the road than we did ourselves— to one unacquainted with these large prairies it is a very easy thing to get lost— The Peoria's live but 50 miles from us & we expected to reach it the first day, but we drove on & on till some time after night till I was convinced we had travelled far enough to be there & found that our guide knew nothing of the road, we finally concluded to snake off a piece of ground & encamp for the night— we were well prepared with provisions & bedding, in the morning we moved on & the first place we found ourselves was in the Pottawatomie nation. We made a short visit among them, & then visited the Wea tribe where we staid the second night & on the third day reached the Peorias. They are but a small tribe and rapidly wasting away. They seemed very desirous we should go & live with them. They have a fine scope of country on the Osage river, a few sections of which I suppose Wahponkequa & her children are entitled to, or to its value if they should ever sell out—

But I must soon draw to a close, to sum up all I think I can say this country seems to be improving rapidly. The soil produces well and our markets are generally good. Independence has been filled with the returning volunteers for the last month which seems to liven up the business there very much. The rail road from the river to Independence will be completed in March— Anthony

23. The opening of a classical department in connection with the Indian Manual Labor school was announced by the Rev. Thomas Johnson on August 17, 1848. It was to be called the Western Academy and the course of instruction embraced "all the branches of a complete English education together with the Latin and Greek languages." The Rev. Nathan Searlilt was engaged as principal.—*Annals of Shawnee Methodist Mission* (Topeka, 1859).
Ward is yet with us & carries on his business. He is a fine workman and a steady industrious man. He seems well satisfied, but I think has a little touch of the California fever since the reports of such vast quantities of gold being found there has been circulated— please write directly on receipt of this & let me know how you are all getting along— Your affectionate brother

A. T. Ward

IND M. L. SCHOOL Feb. 4th 1849
or one week later

Dear Brother [Hill],

You will no doubt be somewhat surprised to hear from me again so soon after my last, but the great excitement that prevails here concerning the gold diggings may be a sufficient apology— Since my last Anthony Ward has fully made up his mind to go, & is now making his outfit. His company consists of two Shawnee men & himself, the Indians are brothers, one of them now an apprentice of Anthony's, the other a man of great experience in hunting Buffalo & travelling on the plains, both good mechanics— They take a wagon & four yoke of oxen, three ponies & a horse for Buffalo. They think of taking provisions & clothing sufficient for a year or eighteen months— Anthony will leave his family here in my care during his absence—

Thinking it possible from the excitement that prevails that you among the rest may have taken the fever I thought it best to advise you of Anthony's determination that in case you think of going you could make one of his mess— I will not persuade any person to go, but if I was single & not situated just as I am I believe I should go— If we can believe the accounts from the diggins there seems to be a chance for a young man of industrious habits to better his condition, tho' he will most likely have to endure some hardships & privations that he has not been accustomed to at home. If it should so happen that you have made up your mind for the trip & to go by land I should be glad you would make one of Anthony's company & in that case it would [be] necessary to let us or him know it immediately & further, if you go I would be glad if you could get here by the middle of April, so as to have some time to spend with us. The mass of the emigration will start about the first of May if the grass will permit. Some company's will start sooner & haul feed—

I reed a letter yesterday from Elizabeth, when she wrote she was at uncle Robert Brown's, she expected soon to go to Wilmington &
visit round awhile among our relatives then return to Baltimore & stay till spring. She was in good health & found our relatives mostly so. Aunt Hannah Wilson departed this life while E was at Philadelphia—

I feel no disposition to trouble you with a long letter as I write so often of late & I must try to write to E today. We are all well — write to me immediately & let me know how the fever rages in your country— Your affectionate brother

A. T. Ward

IND. M. L. SCHOOL & WESTERN ACADEMY Feb 11th/49

My Dear Sister [ELIZABETH]

Your very acceptable letter of the last day of 48 I recd one week ago, with the perusal of which I was much pleased, as it brot the glad tidings of your own health & happiness & also of so many of our relatives & friends in the east; I am compelled to say however that I think you treated me with some degree of neglect in not writing sooner but I suppose I must excuse you, as I expect you had so much that was new to see & admire that you had no time to write letters— Your letter found us all in the enjoyment of excellent health, which I put down first as being first in importance, our whole community of near two hundred persons have all been very healthy for the last year or eighteen months, so that our physician has had little to do. Our High School, (Western Academy) which commenced its first session on the 25 Sepr last, has gone on prosperously, & we have as many students as we can accommodate; this high school you will understand is for both white & red; I think the facilities now for getting an education both in the primary department, & in the higher branches of literature as good as can be found in the Western country— I still continue to occupy the place I held when I wrote last, a kind of Sub. or Major Domo financier, book keeper &c. I am always at a loss for a name for my office but as to my duties they consist in about all the business transactions of the Institution; the burthen is heavy, but still I feel well satisfied with the place, it is a kind of life that seems to suit be better than almost any other—

You say in your last that “you are afraid to hear from me for fear I have the yellow fever” but no I have not got it, it is a kind of epidemic that has spread to an alarming extent in this country, still I have escaped its ravages, & as yet feel no symptoms of the disease— I am poor & needy to be sure, & possibly might better my condition by going, but I cannot think of leaving my family for so

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long a time & I could not conveniently take them along, neither would I give up my peace of mind & endure the hardships & privations of the journey for any small compensation, life is short at best & very uncertain & if I had ever so much I might not live long to enjoy it. I have by economy been able to save something of my wages ever since I came to this country, & I have no fears but I can always do so while I have good health.

I have frequently of late felt very desirous of knowing the circumstances of our parents, & whether they are as comfortable in their old age as they ought to be; I feel it incumbent on us to render them all the assistance they require & I feel it not only a duty, but to me it will be a pleasure to do my part as far as I have means to render them comfortable and happy; I should be glad to hear from you on this subject when convenient.

Well, I told you I had felt no symptoms of the “Yaller fever,” still I cannot say as much for Anthony, he has it in its very worst & most dangerous form, so severe is his illness that I have no doubt but it will carry him off, that is to the “diggins”— he is now making his outfit intending to join that great throng that will leave here about the first of May. He has selected two Shawnee men as his companions, or as part of his mess, & in my opinion he could not select persons more suitable for the journey, they are both good mechanics, men of some education, capable of bearing any hardship, acquainted with that kind of life, & have worked with Anthony a great deal at this place— They will take them a strong wagon & four yoke of oxen, a pony for each, with provisions for twelve or eighteen months after they get there— I think what has had the greatest influence on Anthony’s mind is that his wife’s brother who has been in California for three years has lately written to his mother that since the gold was first discovered he has got upwards of a hundred thousand dollars & intends to come home next spring. Such accounts have a tendency to start thousands to that country & no doubt many will return as poor as they went; from what we hear we expect to see a hundred thousand persons start from this point for the El Dorado next May.

Thinking that as Milton has nothing in particular to confine him at home, & from the accounts in circulation that he might think of going, I have written to him on the subject, not to advise him any way, either to go or stay, but that in case he had made up his mind to go, to come this way & join Anthony— Four men will go from this Inst. I am glad to see by your letter that you enjoy your visit
so well, & there is no doubt but you will be benefited by it, & I think you will do well to stay as long as father & Mother can do without your assistance, but not so long as to be burdensome on any of our relatives; it is a pleasure I hardly ever expect to enjoy to see all my relations in that part of the world, but I would be glad you would remember me to all our friends & let them know they have some little kinsfolks away here almost at the setting sun. Our “Coon” is a little the finest girl in this country, she will start to school in the spring—Asahel Milton is a fine healthy boy one year old. You did not send us a name, & your last letter came to late for us to adopt your advice in the choice of one—his Indian name is Na-qua-bian or tall tree—

And so Uncle Allen & Aunt are again alone in the world, when I last saw them they had all their children with them; what changes take place in a few years. I have often felt regret that I ever went to live with Uncle, my disposition by nature is such that I think I have had as little difficulty in my intercourse with mankind as mostly falls to the lot of any, yet there was certain traits in uncles character that always rendered me miserable, he was wealthy, yet oppressed the poor & needy, he had thousands more than he could ever use as a living, yet would lecture me an hour because I would not jow down a poor old woman a half penny in the price of a cabbage. Many things in uncle I much admired, and had it not been for what I considered a parsimonious disposition I might have been with him yet, but that I could not bear, neither could I yet, & now I would not exchange the feelings of the Indian when he divides his last leg of venison, or last pint of hominy with his friend for those of Uncle when he contemplates the thousands he has accumulated, but enough. . . .

Well Liz if when you get tired of city life you could only be transported here by telegraph, & get a mouthful of fresh air as it blows over the prairies how you would enjoy it— I hope you have kept a journal since you left home, both for your own improvement & for my edification when I visit you in Ohio. But I must close, I have five children playing round me while I write & they keep the house in a constant uproar; I know my letter under all the circumstances cannot be interesting & I have probably written more than you will take time to read, but I cannot throw it way & wait to write another or you may leave Baltimore before it reaches you—The winter here has been unusually severe, we have now good sleighing & have had for three months, the like has not been
known here for forty years. Write to me soon & let me know when you will be in Ohio, & give me all the news— Wahponkequa joins me in love to yourself and all our relatives in the East who are willing to acknowledge us as kindred— Your affectionate brother
A. T. Ward

IND M. L. SCHOOL, July 8th 1849

Dear Father & Mother [Asahel and Mary Ward]

Knowing that you must feel some solicitude for us in this distant land, especially as that dreadful epidemic the Cholera is still sweeping off its scores and hundreds in our country, I feel it both a duty & a pleasure to inform you that so far, we have escaped its ravages & are all in the enjoyment of good health— Singular as it may appear we have not yet had one real case of Cholera in this numerous family of 150 or more persons, while all round us in every direction, in towns & country the disease has been, and still is, prevailing to an alarming extent— After the first outbreak of this disease in the towns along the river some two months ago, it appeared gradually to subside, became less violent in its attacks, & would yield to medicine; people began to think the worst was over, had returned to their homes & occupations, and business of all kinds was going on as usual; but about ten days or two week ago it broke out again in the town of Kansas, with as much virulence in its character as at first— One man lost his three children (all he had) in one day; many, very many since it first made its appearance in Kansas & Westport have fallen victims, & we do not venture a hope that it will abate much while it rages with so much violence in St Louis & the Eastern cities. Neither is it confined to the river nor the towns along the river, but people far out in the open prairie in the most healthy situations are almost as liable to be attacked as those in the towns on the river; the physicians have yet found no specific, no remedies that can be relied on, one nostrum or prescription after another gains the ascendancy but all fail about alike in the worst cases. Neither is there any class of people that are not liable to its attack, at first it was supposed it was only the intemperate in drinking or eating that would fall victims to cholera, but this is not the case, the most temperate & regular in their habits have to yield to the grim monster as often as others— The inhabitants of Kansas are flying in all directions, & it soon no doubt will be almost entirely depopulated. The tenant that occupied my house when the cholera first broke out left it &
I hardly expect another till the disease has entirely disappeared from our country.

I mentioned in some of my letters to Milt perhaps, or Elizabeth that Anthony had gone to the “placers” in search of “yellow dirt” but as he is not so avaricious as many of the worshipers of the mammon of unrighteousness he returned a few days ago perfectly satisfied with his speculation. He had toiled on thro’ unexpected difficulties & hardships with his companions some six or seven hundred miles into the neighborhood of fort Laremie, where he was informed by men who live in the mountains that out of the 8000 or 9000 wagons now on the road not more than 1500 could possibly cross the mountains this fall for want of grass, that in the mountain “passes” the grass at no time would support a fourth of the teams now bound for the gold “diggins.” Anthony was very sanguine in his expectations when he started of realizing a large fortune in a very short time, but since his return he seems perfectly reconciled to take the slower but quite as sure a way to wealth by making wagons for others to haul their gold home in. The Cholera had been very severe among the emigrants, in their exposed condition nearly all who take it die— I think I will wait till Tom. Benton gets his rail road made to the pacific so that I can go in four days, if it is not then too late to get a little of the “root of all evil” I may go.

Our schools are in operation as usual, tho’ all small, in fact we have made no effort to collect the children since the cholera came among us. So great was the alarm among the Indians that some whole tribes abandoned their homes & moved back many miles from the settlements, they have not suffered as much yet as the white people in the state. I am still here at my old post keeping the accounts & helping to keep all matters & things as straight as possible and in regular order; I feel well satisfied with my situation & and at present make no calculations on leaving while the present Supt retains his office, but we know not what changes time may bring about. I have other offers that might be thought good, such as taking the management of the new steam mill in Westport, or I could buy it on good terms, but, I think I am doing well enough for the present. Mary Elizabeth or Coon as she is mostly called goes regularly to school, is doing well, but I fear will soon get too smart for her teacher, she has been pretty badly spoiled. Asahel Milton is a fine fellow, can talk a little, run every where, & is now out of doors making the mud fly about right; they both continue very healthy & grow fast. I did not expect when I com-
menced to write more than a few lines & let you know we were well, & get some of you to answer it & let us know how you are all getting along, but it seems I have already spun out my letter to a pretty good length & without giving much of the news of the country—

Last summer the weather was extremely dry, the winter uncommonly cold, but this summer on the other hand it rains almost constantly; not only rains, but it pours down in torrents & that too almost every day. I fear the farmers will loose a great part of their wheat, we have lost entirely forty acres of hay, & without a change in the weather we must loose a great deal more with all our crop of oats. It is thought so much wet weather makes the Cholera worse than it would be in dry weather.

But I must draw to a close, & first let me insist on some of you writing to me immediately— please let John & Edgar Ward of Loydsville know that Anthony has returned from his gold expedition, that is if you have an opportunity— the probability is that he will rent the wagon shop for five years & carry on for himself, & if Edgar & John Brown should come on this fall he will most likely rent the smith shop also & carry both on together; the object in having these mechanical branches carried on in this institution is to instruct the boys which Anthony can do as well when he rents the shops as the way they are now conducted. Wahponkequa joins me in love to you all—

I remain your affectionate son

ALLEN T. WARD

IND. M. L. SCHOOL  Decr 9th 1849

My Dear Sister [Mrs. S. T. Roberts]

Your very acceptable letter of the 18th Nov found its way to us in safety one week ago, bearing the sad news of the loss we have all sustained in the death of brother Israel— It is however a source of great consolation to have the assurance that, not withstanding we must all, and yourself particularly, deeply feel & mourn our loss, the change to him was great gain; to exchange a life of pain & suffering for one of rest. We had heard of Israels death a week or two previous to the receipt of your letter by cousin's Edgar Ward & John Brown they arrived here in safety & good health between two & three weeks ago. They appear to be very worthy & respectable young men & such as I feel proud to acknowledge as connections; they have gone to work at their respective occupations & seem well pleased with the country & people; they think how-
ever that probbably they will return to Ohio next spring, & will then make their arrangements for a permanent settlement in this country. They say they can do much better here than there, but still I know it is a severe trial for young men to leave all their friends & associates, altho’ their circumstances may be better in pecuniary matters.

I am very glad to hear that father & mother continue to enjoy good health & are content & happy, hardly a day passes that I do not think of them, & wonder whether I will ever again have the pleasure of seeing them before they are called hence. This pleasure possibly I may never enjoy, but the next greatest source of enjoyment is to hear that they are well & that their wants are all supplied. As to myself & family we continue to enjoy excellent health, still reside at our old home in the Shawnee nation with which we feel well satisfied. Wahponkequa has scarcely any recollection of any other home, & I too have been here so long that I expect even my old home in Ohio would feel & look strange to me now. I have filled various places & offices since I first came here, till having become well acquainted with all the various busines of the Institution. I have for the last two years had a good deal the management of all the financial concerns appertaining thereto, especially in the absence of the Superintendent—

We occupy very comfortable & pleasant apartments in one of the Missionary buildings, board at the public table, & have no expense at all but our clothing. My salary has been but four hundred dollars a year for the last two years till this fall, the Supt with the consent of the Indian Conference were good enough to add a hundred dollars more to it & allow me the same priviliges as before. Altho’ this addition to my salary was not asked for, still it will not be refused. I could now have a great deal more, even a thousand dollars a year, to take charge of a steam mill in Westport, but I shall not do it; I am so well situated where I am, so comfortable & my occupation seems to suit me so well, besides I feel that my home is a permanent one if I choose to remain, that I think I am doing better than to go even at double my present salary — We have two children Mary Elizabeth or (Coon) as we call her, is near four years old, a fine sprightly girl, but excessively mischievous. She is going to school and learns fast, she has just enquired who I was writing to, & she says I must take her to see you & her grandmother tomorrow. Our youngest Asahel Milton is near two years old also a fine healthy boy, he differs from his
sister by having light hair & blue eyes, but his resemblance is strong in his propensity to mischief. Nevertheless he is a fine lad.

Anthony Ward still lives here and is doing well, he has lately rented the Shop & carries on the wagon making business on his own account, Edgar works with him & both E. & J Brown board with him. Anthony has three children living. He had a slight attack of the gold fever last spring & actually started for the 'El Dorado' but a journey or six or seven hundred miles across the plains seemed to wear off the gold Mania & he returned perfectly convalescent. It would no doubt have been well for thousands, had they become discouraged & returned when he did—

Our schools are prospering I think as well as at any former period; besides the two Indian schools which are full, we have a high school (Western Academy) for the education of young gentlemen & ladies of the pale faces, & such of the Indian youth as are prepared for that department. That school is also full & we have had to refuse many— Boarding & tuition in that department is from $35. to $40 pr session. The teacher of that school has few equals as a teacher in this country.

This country continues to attract almost every stranger who visits it, by its beautiful appearance & fertility of soil; I myself have wandered about a good deal, & I must say I give this the preference as a fine country to any I have seen. The society and morals of the people have vastly improved also in the last few years: the pioneers, bee hunters 24 &c have all passed away, & their places have been filled with the more respectable citizens from the older states— The surrounding tribes of Indians all appear to be making some progress in civilization, many of the Shawnees and delawares are good farmers, & are comfortably situated, our nearest neighbor a Shawnee Chief the 3rd or 4th in rank is worth not less than fifteen or twenty thousand dollars, he is the wealthiest however in the nation, some others comfortable & others miserably poor.

I do not know that I ought to make any positive promise or set any time when I can pay you that long contemplated visit, no

24. "The bee hunter is generally some settler on the verge of the prairies; a long, lank fellow, of fever and ague complexion, acqurred from living on new soil, and in a hut built of green logs. In the autumn, when the harvest is over, these frontier settlers form parties of two or three, and prepare for a bee hunt. Having provided themselves with a wagon, and a number of empty casks, they sally off, armed with their rifles, into the wilderness. . . . The belts of woodland that traverse the lower prairies, and border the rivers, are peopled by innumerable swarms of wild bees, which make their hives in hollow trees, and fill them with honey trolled from the rich flowers of the prairies. The bees, according to popular assertion, are migrating like the settlers, to the west. An Indian trader, well experienced in the country, informs us that within ten years that he has passed in the Far West, the bee has advanced westward about a hundred miles."—Washington Irving, The Adventures of Captain Bonneville in . . . the Far West (author's revised edition, New York, 1859), p. 96.
doubt tho' that my desire to visit you all once more is as great as yours possibly can be to see me, but of late it seems almost impossible to leave my post without great inconvenience to the Institution that I am serving, the Supt. is absent a good deal, & at such times all the care & responsibility rests on me, but I still think and hope that an opportunity will soon offer in which I can visit you in connection with some business for the Institution. I shall certainly avail myself of any such opportunity that may offer— I had flattered myself with the hope of seeing Milton here some time ago until he made his visit to Illinois & returned without coming. I have now gave him up— I have not yet set any limit to my sojourn here, or what I should do in case of leaving, sometimes I think we would move out to the Peoria country, & I could find employment by collecting together the remnant of that once powerful tribe & imparting to them such scraps of the ways of civilized life as might be useful to them. It is to the Peoria tribe that Wahponkequa claims kindred; they own a fine country about 50 miles south west of this place, but since the death of their old chief Wop-Shock-a-naw (an excellent old man) the remainder of the tribe have become scattered & do not appear to be doing much good— Myself & family went out there something more than a year ago; we spent a day or two with a son of the old chief, he seemed to regret very much that they had now no chief & that their people were getting scattered & uniting with other tribes, till they could no longer be considered as a tribe or nation.

I have built a house in the town of Kansas on the Missouri river but owing to the ravages of the Cholera there last summer I have not been able to rent it—except the upper part, which is rented at $100 a year, I am now offering the lower part for $200 a year but hardly expect to find a tenant before spring— But I must draw to a close, I have had to write in a great hurry & in noise & confusion, & no doubt have made many blunders, but I begun with a full determination to finish or at least to send what I could get written; I have been trying to write to Elizabeth for the last month & have commenced several letters, would then be interrupted or called off & let them get out of date & so begin another. I have at least scraps enough to make two or three long letters, I must enclose a line of apology— all our relatives here wish to be remembered— please write to me often Wahponkequa joins me in love to you all— I remain your affectionate brother

ALLEN T. WARD
Dear Sister [Elizabeth]

Yours of the 11th Augt came to hand three or four days ago the receipt of which I have only time to acknowledge without at present answering it; suffice it to say however that it contained a vast amount of information which to me was highly gratifying— "And what" I hear you ask "is your great hurry at present that you cannot take time to write a letter"— I'll tell you, the fact is since I have filled my present post I have been kept almost constantly engaged, but just at this time I am employing men (mechanics & laborers) to go out West 125 miles to council grove to build a School house & Missionary Station for the Kansas tribe of Indians; as all the tools, & provisions have to be taken from here it is no small business to make the outfit— Tomorrow is the day appointed to start with 25 men & a number of wagons loaded with lumber &c—

The building 25 is to be stone sufficiently large to accommodate 50 students as regular boarders, besides teachers, missionaries, farmers &c &c— I will be gone probably between two & three months— As I shall have some spare time I will try & write to you from the grove if I can find a conveyance to the State line— I feel some reluctance to quit my comfortable quarters here & undertake such a job where I will be exposed to many hardships & privations, but I see no way to excuse myself from going. Mr. Johnson our Supt had intended to go himself & leave me to manage the business here, but his health not being very good of late he is afraid to undertake it— As to health we are tolerably well, our children had the measles & whooping cough in the Spring, but are nearly as well as before— We had named our little girl before your letter arrived, we call her Irene Roberts. I must stop for this time but may find a few minutes more before I leave, to write some more scraps

Tomorrow the winter session of our schools will commence, there will be four departments this session all of which I think will be full— Edgar Ward & John Brown are yet here, they will most likely return to Ohio this fall, Edgar to remain & John on a visit to his dulcinea in Loydsville. I understand he has met with a disappointment in his expectations. He has failed to fulfill his promises

25. This building, known as the Kaw Methodist mission, was completed in February, 1851, and classes for Indian children began three months later. These were continued until 1854. The building was then used for a time as a school for white children and it later passed into private ownership. In 1931 the Kansas legislature authorized the purchase of the mission property and the building is now a state museum administered by the Kansas State Historical Society.
in so many instances that his intended, Miss Turner has discarded him & refuses to correspond with him any longer whether they will make it up remains to be seen: unfortunately for John he has had a slight attack of a very prevalent disease in this country known as the "big head", as he is young & has a vigorous constitution I hope he will soon be able to overcome the disease, at present it is a great injury to him— Edgar is much esteemed by all his acquaintance— Anthony & family are well—Anthony's brother in law of whom I spoke in a former letter, is yet in California tho' expected home this fall he is said to be rich in gold— Our country remains as beautiful as ever, it is admired by all who pass through it. It has also been perfectly healthy this summer, except some Belgians who settled two miles below Kansas were attacked with Cholera & some 15 or 20 died, the physician that attended them also died of the same disease, it is supposed they were infected with the disease before they landed—

It is probable that I shall not get to experiment much more on Wind Mills for some time tho' my last model was very satisfactory & proved that it is the proper power for this country, you can state to father that it is on the self adjusting principle, it turns itself to face the wind, & the sails are so arranged with springs that they yield to the force of the wind when it blows hard, so that it will not run much faster in a hurricane than in a light breeze, if I was going to build a mill for grinding grain or sawing lumber, I would use wind power.

Mr Johnson our Supt wishes me to join him in the commission & Storage business in Kansas, if he should succeed in buying a large warehouse this fall which he has in view we will go into the business as soon as we get the house, but if the house cannot be bought, he will build one next summer, he is to furnish the house & I to manage the business & go equal— this however is yet a good way off— but I must again stop—I find I can say no more now I send the postage enclosed— Your affectionate Brother

A T Ward

Ind. M. L. School Dec 21, 1850

Dear Father, Mother & Sister—

I arrived at home a few days ago after an absence of a little more than three months which I spent in the country of the Kansas Indians. I think I mentioned in a letter to some of you a short time before I left that I had been appointed to go out there and put up a building for a mission and school— I started on the 4th of Sep-
tember with a force of about 25 hands expecting to get through the job in two months, but owing to sickness we were nearly three months in getting done the mason work; I then left the carpenters to finish their work; let out contracts for fencing and breaking two hundred acres of prairie and making some other improvements and with the rest of the workmen started for home as the winter had set in and the weather very cold and snowing when we left Council Grove, we had some doubt whether we could make the trip across the plains without freezing, the snow had drifted in some places that took all our forces at the wagon to get through but after five days of hard labor and severe suffering with cold we arrived at home. A person unacquainted with a prairie country can hardly form an idea of the danger in being caught in a snow storm on the large prairie. On the day we traveled from 110 Creek to Willow Spring, a distance of 26 miles without a stick of timber or a drop of water, the snow in many places very deep, it was so very cold that we could only keep from freezing by exercise of walking and running. We encamped however every night in the timber where we could have a large fire—

I accomplished the work I had to do, build a large substantial stone house, with eight rooms and two halls or passages, besides two log houses and dug a well. This improvement is on the Ne-o-sho at Council Grove on a tract of land lately ceded to the Kansas Indians 125 miles west of this place and on the road heading to New Mexico and Santefe. The Kansas Indians or (Kaw) as they are called are a wild uncivilized tribe, generally peaceable with the whites but at present waging a bloody war with the Pawnees, they treated us well, and indeed seemed glad to have white people live among them thinking they will help to protect them from the Pawnees—two war parties left the Grove while we were there with the pretence of going to fight the Pawnees and returned with 66 stolen horses, they confessed however that they did not get the horses from the Pawnees but stole them from the Omaha’s a peaceable tribe living near Council Bluff—The Kaws need a missionary among them, or else a good threshing from Uncle Sam. They have become of late very mischievous. We had to keep a herdsman with our cattle and horses all the time at the Grove till the Indians started on a Buffalo Hunt; whether the Government with the assistance of missionaries will be able to do much in civilizing this wild nation of people is a problem yet to be solved.

I found my family all well “Coon” going to school and learning
fast. Irene a fine healthy child and Milt as full of mischief as ever. I had not been at home many minutes when he went thro all of the mimicry of getting his gun, shooting a prairie chicken, giving it to the cook and then ringing the bell for dinner and inviting me to eat— The doctor learns him all such tricks. The schools are in about as good condition as formerly, the high school (Western Academy) full and the Indian schools with about as many pupils as can be conveniently accommodated— As regards myself I have dropped back into my old situation that I have had for some years, and expect to continue till about the first of April next when I move to Kansas to take charge of the warehouse now about being built by Rev. T. Johnson, this agreement was made some time ago, but whether I go for a stated salary, or share of the profits had not been decided on. I expect a very large business will be done in storage commission, and many articles kept on hand to sell at wholesale— Expect my duties will be much harder than they have been here. The gold hunters are beginning to return from California not more than one in ten of whom has made his circumstances any better by going and they report that there are many there unable to get home— So much for the gold mania—

I have not changed my opinion in respect [to] this upper Missouri country, I still think it the best country I have found for the poor man whether laborer or mechanic or a man with a small capital can generally invest it in such a manner here that he can realize more profits from it than in most other places— Edgar Ward left here while I was at the Grove, but I learn by letter from him since he got home that he expects to come back next spring, and probably bring S. Cavender and some others with him— J. Brown is still here and I think doing well. Anthony & family are all well and continue to reside at this place— A report has lately arrived from California that J. Foster a brother to Anthony Ward's wife has been murdered, and robbed of $20,000. He was supposed to be worth $40,000.

I cannot say when I can pay you that long contemplated visit, but possibly when I get into the warehousing business I can find more time to spare— I have been at home so short a time that I have not yet collected items enough to have much to communicate but by the time I get a letter from each of you which I hope will not be long I may be better prepared with news— I remain your affectionate son and brother

A. T. Ward
DEAR BROTHER [HILL],

As a long time has elapsed since I have heard anything directly from you, I conclude to drop you a line, hoping in this way to be able to stir you up to report yourself more frequently in future.

... I am as yet at the old "diggins," but am now about winding up my business to leave & take a fresh start. I have entered into a copartnership with Rev Thomas Johnson (Supt of this institution) and we are going into the Commission, Forwarding & Storage business in the town of Kansas M— We expect also to connect with the above that of a wholesale & retail grocery. Mr. Johnson is now having completed a large building for the purpose, to be finished by the 1st April; he is to furnish the building & capital to the Amt of $10,000 against my services and we divide the profits equally (if there should be any) we are also about contracting for another large warehouse in the same place belonging to P. M. Chouteau which we can rent for $800 a year, or take in the said Chouteau with a like amt of capital, which we will do is not yet decided, our object is to be able to monopolize the whole Storing business— I cannot say that I am going into this business with the expectation of realizing a large fortune right away, but still I think with good management & close attention we can make some money. The Santefe trade now nearly all passes thro' Kansas, & that trade is rapidly increasing— I sometimes think I had rather be out on some high prairie & there build a Wind Mill, & thereby avoid all that care & perplexity of mind attendant on the business we are going into: but Mr Johnson seems anxious to have me associated with him in business in some shape, & that is the kind he thinks it most prudent to invest his capital in.

This country is rapidly improving in wealth & population; it has so many local advantages, besides its fine soil & climate, that at no very distant period it is bound to be the greatest country of the West— A railroad will directly be commenced from St Louis to the State line, exactly where it will terminate is not yet known, but the survey which has been made intersects the State line about six miles south of this place— The magnetic telegraph from St Louis to St Joseph it is expected will be completed early next summer, it passes through Kansas where we are to have an office—26

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26. A telegraph line paralleling the Missouri river from St. Louis to Kansas City, then north along the east bank to St. Joseph, was completed in 1851. The line fell into disrepair, however, and when rebuilt in 1859, the link above Kansas City was discarded. A line connecting St. Joseph with Hannibal was completed in 1839, and the following year a line was extended from Elwood, Kan., to St. Joseph.—John E. Sudder, "Telegraph Beginnings in Kansas," Kansas Historical Quarterly, v. 15, pp. 32-38.
Since I wrote to you last I have been to Council Grove & put up a large stone building intended for a Mission house & School among the Kansas, or (Kaw) Indians; the place selected for the improvements was the bank of the Ne-o-sho, 125 miles west of this & near the Santafe road— I started out about the first of last September, with 25 hands & finished the mason work in about three months, I then came home leaving the carpenters to finish their work. They have just got back & report the house ready to be occupied. Business of all kinds continues to flourish, wages of mechanics & laborers is as high as at any former period, & produce bears a very fair price— We sold thirteen yoke of oxen a few days ago for $50. a yoke, they were mostly young unbroke cattle & without yokes— I consider well broke cattle with yokes worth $60. Wheat is worth from 80 to 90 cts a bushel, & corn 35 to 40. Our schools here are progressing much as usual, there are a little over a hundred students in attendance at present; in the high school (Western Academy) about forty—

Anthony Ward continues to live here with us, he has not enjoyed very good health this winter, he was several weeks unable to work, but is now better, & able to attend to business again, the rest of his family are well. He has three children living— John W Brown is also still here, & carries on the Blacksmithing, he was married about a month ago to a Miss Perkins, a young lady with whom I had not much acquaintance, but one I presume from what I have heard, every way calculated to make him a suitable companion. John I think is doing tolerable well. I think it likely that if S. Cavender & Edgar come out this spring, that they & Anthony & J Brown will all join & start a large wagon Shop in Westport, some arrangement of that kind is now talked of— Jesse Michiner was at work with Anthony till within a few days, he & four students of the high School were expelled for what was considered disorderly conduct, or a breach of the rules of the institution. J Brown too, I am sorry to say does not possess a very enviable position in the esteem of the Supt merely from the fact that at the time of his first settlement after working a few months he demanded pay for considerably more time than he had worked, & because he could not get it, he became very wrathly, asked a letter of dismissal from the church &c by all such conduct there is nothing to be gained but a great deal lost at this place: John lost more by that one act alone than he would have gained if he could have got paid for a whole year more than he had worked. Such is the folly of Man, by his eagerness he entirely defeats the object he
has in view, & at the same time looses the esteem of those with whom he has dealings. . .

But really I think it time to draw to a close, recollect this is a large paper & I am at the 4th page, I know however that I have not said much to interest you, for I had not much to say, my principle object being to send something in the form of a letter so that I can justly claim one from you in answer which if not forthcoming in due time I you put down as a delinquent— As I expect to move to Kansas about the middle of March you will direct any communications to that place, it is in Jackson County— Myself & family are all in the enjoyment of good health— please let father & Mother & Elizabeth know when you have an opportunity that you have heard from us. I shall write to them as soon as I conveniently can—

When I commenced on this sheet I expected to transcribe it onto another, but I have spun it out to such a length that I cant do it, it would be more than it is all worth so you must take it as it is— Write soon— I remain your affectionate brother

A T Ward

We have had a warm pleasant winter & little snow