

Robert Simerwell to Maria Lyman

In this letter to Mrs. Maria T. Lyman, Robert Simerwell discusses the activities of Isaac McCoy who was tasked to "proceed into the wilderness west of the Missouri State and to learn it fitness or unfitness for an Indian Colony." Simerwell explains that McCoy and his party had deemed the land to be suitable and, therefore, they hoped to start moving Native Indians to that area by the next season.

Creator: Simerwell, Robert, 1786-1868

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Robert Simerwell to Maria Lyman

Simerwell, R.

[Letter] to Lyman

Carey Michigan Territory July 28th 1829.

Dear Madam I haste to answer your kind favour of 29 of may, and am sorry it has been so long on the way, you say you have received information from me, through the Baptist Register, which gives you considerable uneasiness, to remove which I must give you a short account of our proceedings prospects.

Last summer B^r McLeay left this station with instructions from Government to proceed to St Louis there to join a company from the South and to proceed into the wilderness west of the Missouris state and to learn its fitness or its unfitness for an Indian colony, the report of this company to the war department is quite favourable and we hope by the next session our government will be in readiness to do something for these despised and suffering people B^r McLeay is now on his way to that country to look out a site for a mission and to make some arrangements for erecting a few necessary buildings we expect to return here next spring on a visit at which time it is more than likely that some of these Indians will want to go with them, But we intend to continue our labors here as usual till the Indians move in a body which I think cannot be short of two years. our school consists of 36 present in a good state of improvement affectionate and dutiful

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we hope to keep up this number untill we are about to move and then take them and their parents along and continue the school there without the necessity of dismissing the scholars. Dr. McLeay will in the mean while make some preparations for our reception.

We do believe that Indians will not prosper in this or in any other place, pined up as a small reserve with whiskey dealers all around, further they are more apt to copy bad examples than good ones, now it is a fact that Indians cannot use a blasphemous word in their own language, and we find from the short time they have been neighbours to the whites they use these words in the English language though they know nothing else of that language, again we teach them to observe the sabbath but they could point to our white neighbours and say they work on the sabbath. &c. and we cannot deny it.

The state of the Indians now at this place is desperate many suffer, not having the necessaries of life and many I fear will starve next winter their sufferings have increased these four years past for this reason that whiskey is sold at so low a price and they keep drunk in the spring when they should work their plots and plant corn but we trust the time will come when they will be separated from the whites and be allowed to improve their condition. let me say we feel thankful to you for your ^m worth of feeling for this mission.

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When B^r McLeay was last with us he baptized two of
our hired ~~men~~ ^{fast improvers} both of whom professed to have received their
in our family it is three weeks since B^r McLeay left us
for the west and we feel ourselves again left alone without
the preached gospel as it regards clothing we will be happy
to receive any kind but especially such as is suitable
for youth from 5. to 15 years old and that of a strong and
coarse kind tow linen for summer is an excellent wear
for boys if you be so good as to send you donation to us you
would do well to direct them to Dorr & Jones Detroit
or to F. R. Browning Detroit box marked for Carey
Mepian M. T. I have touched briefly on some points
you wish to know and would give you a more full acct
of our concerns but time will not admit for this
season of the year much is to be done on the farm
and there is but myself and wife to attend to the concerns
of so large a family so that you see I have but little time
to write and indeed I can do but that that is indispensable

Now let me commit you and the deliberations of
your worthy society to God who cannot see as suffer me

To remain your
Humble servant

Mrs Maria F Lyman

Robert Simerwell

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