

Joseph B. Miles to Lewis Allen Alderson

Several letters written by Joseph B. Miles to his brother-in-law, Lewis Allen Alderson. Alderson later moved to Atchison, Kansas, in 1858 and was a prominent Baptist minister. He died in Atchison in 1881.

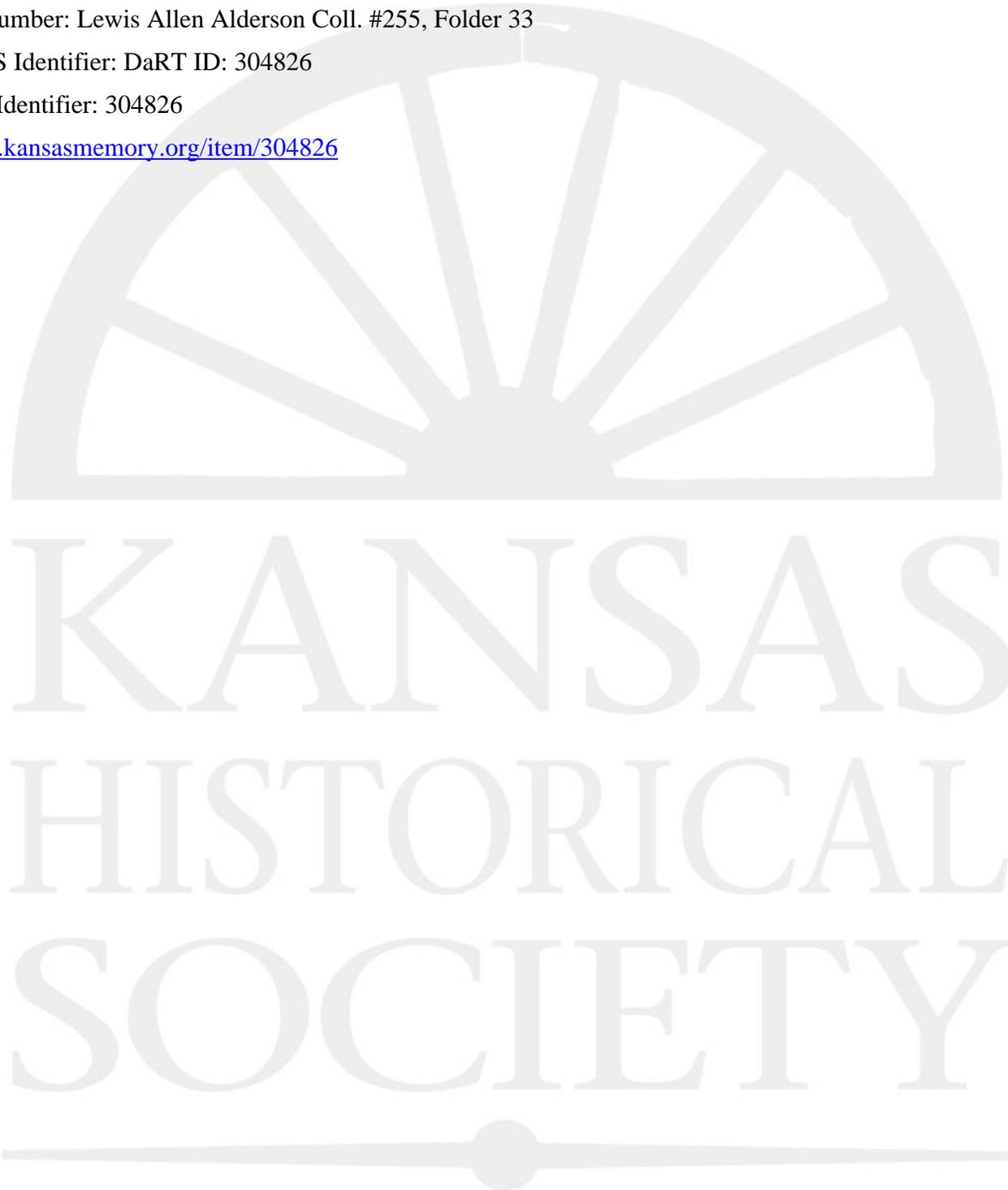
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Joseph B. Miles to Lewis Allen Alderson

Athens Oct^r 29th 1832

M^r L A Alderson

I rec^d yours of the 17th Inst^{ant} this evening. I am thankful that you have been so kind as to let us know so often of Lucy's health, when she left here I had some hope that a change of climate &c might have been the means of recovering her health but at the same time I felt as though I was parting with her for the last time & ~~thought~~ ~~it~~ ~~probable~~ ~~that~~ she will not sur-
-vive ~~for~~ her next birth day. But I hope that whether she lives longer or should be called away sooner she may be prepared for the change. This of little importance whether we live short or long if we are prepared to appear before God and enter on a state of never ending happiness, this can only be attained by Repentance towards God & faith in our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ, this present state of existence is nothing but a state of preparation and if we are prepared as we ought to be we shall be willing to go whenever our heavenly Father sees fit to call for us, we should think it very strange for a dutiful child who was from home or on a journey & expected his Father to call her home and had given her notice that he should call ever long to find this dutiful Child unwilling to go when he should call. The Word of God is the only guide we have, the only direction, in this we have the way marked out so plain that the way going man tho' a fool need not err therein. Christ says "Come all ye that are weary & heavy laden & I will give you rest." "Come for all things are now ready" Christ has made an ample provision for all those who will put their trust in him he will never leave nor forsake them tho' they pass through the fire & through the waters they shall not hurt them.

I pray God that you may both be prepared for the dispensation of divine providence whatever it may be and if it should be the will of God that your lives should be spent that you will ~~un-~~
-deavour to live to the glory of God

Joseph B. Miles to Lewis Allen Alderson

We who profess to believe in God ought live more detach-
-ed from the things of the world we ought not to live to ourselves tied
to him who loved us, and gave himself for us, and who gave
us such an example of disinterested benevolence, who went
about doing good, could we only get above the world
and the things of the world we should be better prepared
to leave the world or to meet the trials of life with more
resignation & composure, and we ought to pray constantly
to be prepared for whatever God ~~will~~ ~~sent~~ ~~to~~ ~~test~~ ~~us~~ ~~with~~
I think that there is no time Morning or Evening
but what you are remembered at the throne of grace & your
case in particular, & I still hope that I shall be enabled to
bear you on my heart,

Tuesday Morning 30th

We rec^d a letter from Catherine & her husband written
the 6th of Oct^r in which she urges Lucy to come to Osborn,
she was then in very good health but had lost her hair
by her sickness -- I have no particular news to
relate respecting Athens we are about the same state
of health as when you left -- The Cumberland
Camp Meeting was attended with a great revival,
and the formation of a new church of 110 Members
of which about 30 were from the other churches
five from our church. Mr Steiguer his wife &
sister Miss Jewett & Mr. Hibbard,

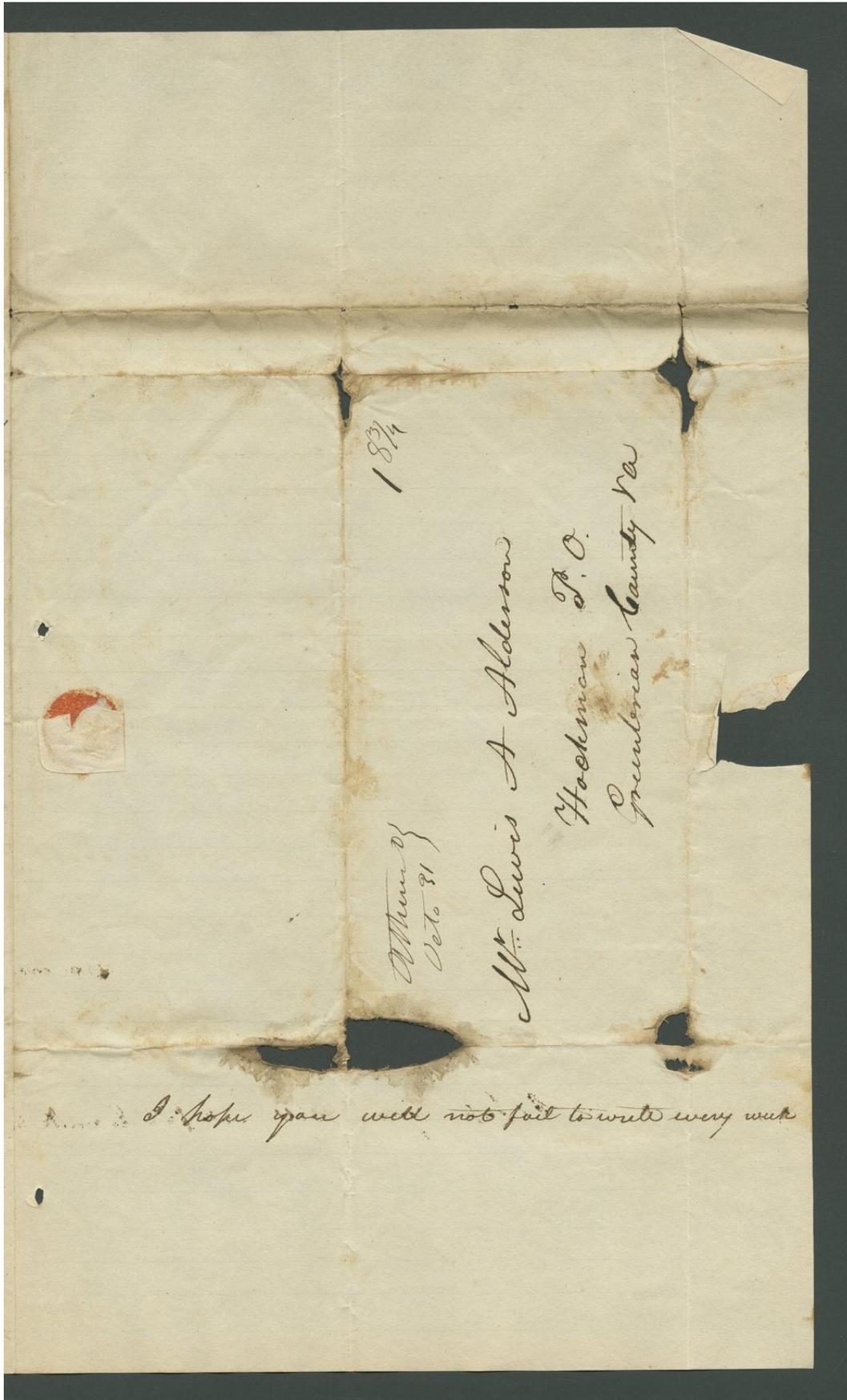
since there has been a protracted meet-
ing in Logan and in proportion to the number of
attendants, a very great work, I cannot give the number.
Mr Hatch & Mr Rochester are among those who profess

Remember me affectionately to your parents,
the whole family join me in love

yours affectionately
Joseph B. Miles

Lewis A & Lucy W Alderson

Joseph B. Miles to Lewis Allen Alderson



Joseph B. Miles to Lewis Allen Alderson

Athens December 13th 1832

Dear Children

Through the goodness of our Covenant God & favour we are yet spared and in tolerable health this evening, though we have not been exempt from sickness since you left us, little Mary has had another very severe turn since I wrote you, but she is now restored to her usual health though her lameness remains as it was.

In your letters to us you complain of not hearing from us and suspecting us of neglecting to write & we had the same complaint to make for indeed your letters were as long in reaching us as those which we receive from New Orleans. The last we heard from you was in yours to Et. B. & the last we heard from Orleans was of Nov 14th. We were exceedingly glad to hear that you were so well & I do entertain some hopes that you may again be restored to health, should this be the case what reason should we have to thank God for his mercies towards us, for although we may be reconciled to all the dispensation of Divine Providence yet life and health are desirable objects and enjoyments for which you may & ought to pray in order that we may glorify God for in the grave there is no work.

Since you left us things remain much as they were when you left the Cumberland preachers are still in this region & next week they have a protracted meeting in Athens when it is said they intend to form a Church in this place. The members of our church as far as I know have got pretty peaceable about the subject, should they form a church how many of our folks will join them I do not know but likely several. Mr Spaulding has been absent most of the time since you left on a mission, and expects to be absent for some time to come. our social meetings are tolerably well attended but times are different from what they were last winter. Father Price is very low & I think that he will not probably continue long. Father Bingham has not been able to attend public worship but few times.

Joseph B. Miles to Lewis Allen Alderson

this long time, yet we have to record the mercies of God, in sparing us and exempting us from the pestilence which is visiting many other places in our country.

as it is natural for young folks to like to hear all the news I just mention that Miss Delilas Jones is married to Eldon Walker & Martin Fulton to Cassia Greene

I hope that this will find you enjoying better health than you have for this long time, and however you may be unhealthy in body that you may enjoy health of soul and be prepared to rejoice at all times in the dispensations of divine providence, God has promised never leave nor forsake those who put their trust in him, and that although we pass through the fire and the water it shall not hurt us, and that all things shall work together for good to them that love God, and if we are afflicted and suffer pain in this life yet our heavenly Father intends it for our good and that sanctified afflictions are the greatest mercies and if we are the children of God when we get to Heaven we shall be permitted to look back and see how our afflictions and deprivations tended to humble us and wear us from the world and prepare us to take our flight above the things of time and decay and fix our hopes on heaven.

I presume you know something about the propensity there is in us to have our affections placed on things earthly to want something which we have not got which in reality we do not need but which we think would make us more happy yet we in mercy are denied, and so with afflictions we think we should be more happy were we delivered from them yet if we are the children of God they are intended for our good, and if we are not they are sent in mercy to show us our state & condition, and at any rate let what will befall us there is nothing but what is from the hand & under the controul of our divine Saviour, & let us then while we live endeavour to live to the glory of God that whether living or dying we may be the Lords — for whether in sickness or health it will be but a short time and we shall all appear before the Judgment seat of Christ

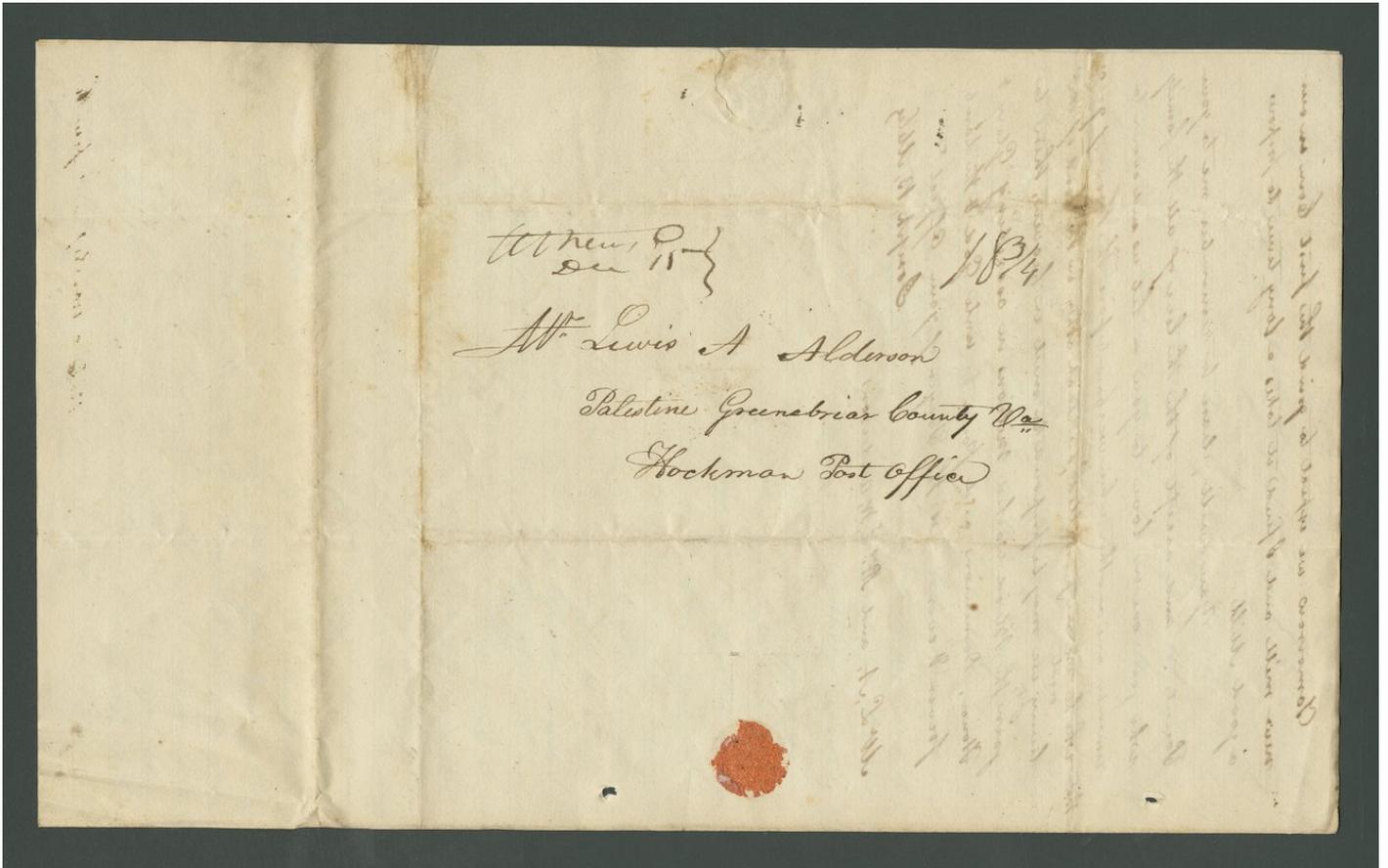
Joseph B. Miles to Lewis Allen Alderson

Tomorrow we expect to grind the first Corn on our
new mill and I find it takes a long time to prepare
a good Mill.

You will please to remember me to your
Parents. and accept of the the love of all the family
who join me in love to you - let us endeavour to
remember one another when we bow before the throne of grace
that whether we are permitted ^{to} see each other in the land of the
living ^{or not} we may be prepared to meet in heavens, then to
join the Blood washed millions in ascribing Glory &
Honor, Dominion and Power ~~to~~ unto God & the Lamb
forever & ever is the Prayer of your Affection
Joseph B. Miles

M^r L. A. and M^r L. W. Alderson

Joseph B. Miles to Lewis Allen Alderson



Joseph B. Miles to Lewis Allen Alderson

Athens January 15th 1833

Dear Sir,

Your kind letter of the 3rd instont
 come to hand last evening giving us the painful in-
 =teligence of Lucy's declining health, it would be a
 source of great satisfaction was it so that we could
 see and converse with her in her declining days, but
 in the midst of all our afflictions we have great reason
 of gratitude to God for his great kindness in so ordering
 things that yourself & Lucy as we humbly trust have been
 brought to see your entire dependance, your sinfulness and
 to rely alone on Christ Jesus for pardon & eternal life,
 and as you have both publickly devoted yourselves to God,
 I hope that you will both be enabled, realise that you
 are not your own, that your Heavenly Father has a right
 to do with you and all his creatures as he sees fit —
 and this being the case that you will be entirely resigned to his
 will, that you will have no concern but to do your duty,
 and having done your duty to be satisfied.

I know from experience that no one
 can realise trials but those who suffer them, and I also
 know what it is to part with the wife of my youth this
 wound none can heal but God, go to him therefore with all
 your afflictions, he will not leave you comfortless

And I would say to Lucy if she is able
 to hear or read this, Meditate much on the love and suffer-
 =ings of our dear Redeemer and try to realise that it was
 all for sinners, he came not to call the righteous but sinners
 to repentance, realise that it by faith we are saved, that
 the provision is sufficient for the chiefest of sinners, and give
 yourself entirely into the hands of Christ, pray to him & try to praise
 him continually, tell him all your pains and all your fears if
 you have any. & cast yourself entirely upon him

I do not know but some of us may be
 to see you soon. Write often

Your affectionate
 Joseph B. Miles

M^r L A Alderson

Joseph B. Miles to Lewis Allen Alderson

Athens Jan 15th, 1839.

Dear Brother

The intelligence which your letter gave us last evening, was truly painful. Never before have I felt what it was, to be forever separated from a dear sister. I had all along entertained a hope that she would yet recover, but from the situation in which she was when you wrote, I can no longer entertain such a hope. I thought there was a prospect that she would live until the weather became so that I could go and see her, but should we set out immediately, she may be in her grave before we could get there. It appears to me that I cannot remain at home oh! that I were with you! It would be a great comfort to be with, and converse with her in her dying moments. We received a letter from Catharine last evening she says she cannot bear the thought of never more seeing her. She thinks if she could only have the privilege of speaking with her she would be satisfied. She expects to come home in April. Her death will be a severe trial to you and to us all but if it is the Lords will to remove her from pain and suffering to a heaven of joy and peace why should we mourn. Our loss will be to her unspeakable gain. Or to think of her situation in comparison with that of one who is without God and without hope, it causes us to rejoice. I cannot tell whether any of us will be able to go to Va or not I am very anxious to go if it is possible. Perhaps we all will. Farewell dear brother, and sister.

Your very unworthy sister,

Elizabeth is present and says give my love to them.

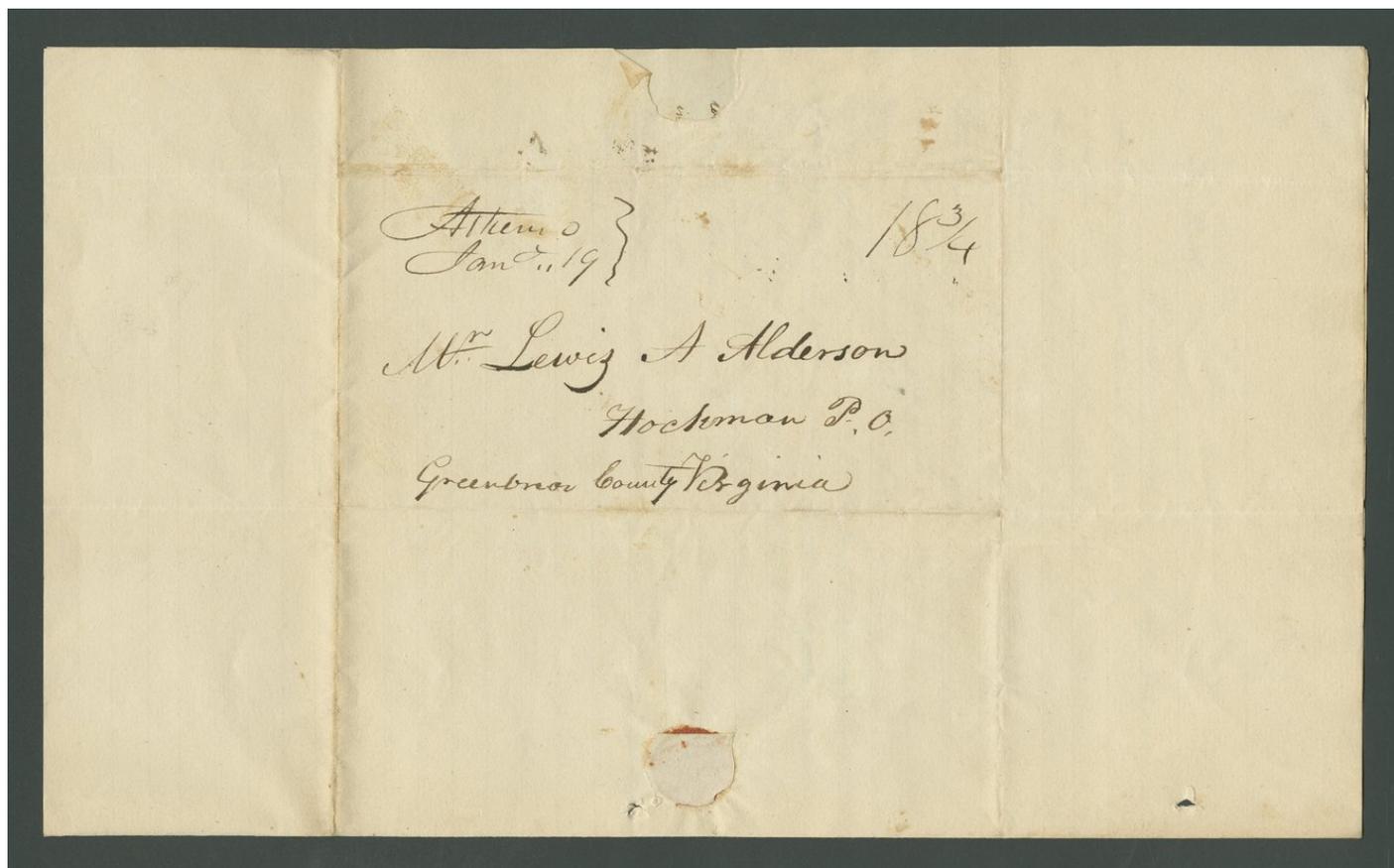
Balinda.

Dear Brother

I can say no more than has been said, but may the Lord support us under this our affliction, may He attend her thro' the dark valley is the prayer of your unworthy sister.

J. B. Miles.

Joseph B. Miles to Lewis Allen Alderson



Joseph B. Miles to Lewis Allen Alderson

Athens March 12th 1833

Dear Sir,

Both your letters and Belindas have come to hand since the death of your dear companion & our dear relative, and we have to mourn and rejoice with you under the dispensations of Divine Providence, but I think that we have abundant more reason for gratitude than for grief. It would indeed have been a source of comfort if Lucy could have been with us in her last hours and satisfaction to have had her body by the side of her Mother, but this is only a selfish desire of our earthly part. Providence has clearly demonstrated that we must go to our graves and that they will not come to us. — Yours is at present a lonely and no doubt in many respects a gloomy situation, ^{the} ~~small~~ ^{it} is you the companion of your youth and changed your from the core of the sick bed to the silent hour of meditation. — I know how you feel and can sympathize with you, but let us not complain, we are not left to mourn as those that have no hope. — Lucy thought she is parted from her earthly friends yet it is but for a season and she has gone to enjoy the company of her Heavenly Friends who have gone before her. I can contemplate her seated with Abraham, Isaac & Jacob, the Patriarchs, & Prophets, the Apostles & Saints, many of her Ancestors and her Grandparents in the presence of Holy Angels. Beholding her Father God & Saviour, Lingering the Chorus of the Skies. If she is indeed worthy she is in Heaven where she is removed from every pain & complete in every bliss.



Joseph B. Miles to Lewis Allen Alderson

2nd
I hope that you will be enabled to see clearly the hand of
Divine Providence in your affliction, and that it may be some-
=tified not only to you but to us all. I feel as though we have
more reason to discern for ourselves than for her.

In your last letter you mention
prospect of engaging in a School, and propose to have Belinda
engage in the Female department provided Scholars can be
procured, and ask my leave for her to stay (or something
like it) Belinda has come to that age that she is expected to
judge and act for herself. When I look back about a year
and a half I behold my Children all at home, and about
a year ago I did anticipate once more seeing them all
again under the paternal roof but how different has
been the dispensation of Providence, one in Orleans
one dead, two Married and one in Virginia, should
I consult my own selfish disposition I should say to
Belinda, I want you, to come home, but no I hope she
will prayerfully consult her duty and if she thinks it
her duty to continue in Virginia stay, I want my
Children to learn to live not to themselves but to the glory
of God, I want her to be where she can do the most good,
and if that is the place then she ought to stay.

You say something about Catharine
the last we heard from ^{her} was by a letter directed to B.
dated Feby 8 I think we shall forward it to Belinda.
Catharine speaks of coming home this summer but
I think that should she come you will have to come
here & see her, for I think she will think it too far out
of her road to go to your place, I do not know that I
have any thing of importance to relate to you at this
time my engagements are the same from day to day



Joseph B. Miles to Lewis Allen Alderson

that they have been for almost a year & I expect to be kept to
it until July — It is a general time of heat in Athens
to night Miss Eliza Porter is to be married.

I hope you will be able to read my
scrawl, I do not often make the same mistake in writing
that I have in this letter. I find it somewhat troublesome
to write by candle light and this is all the time I get.
The difficulty or the greatest trouble is making a good pen.

I have not said all that I perhaps ought
to say relative to Belinda's staying. I hope she will not
be a burden to her friends, that she will so conduct herself
as not to be a reproach to any of us, that in all things she
will be enabled to look to God for direction and at all
times realize that she is under his eye.

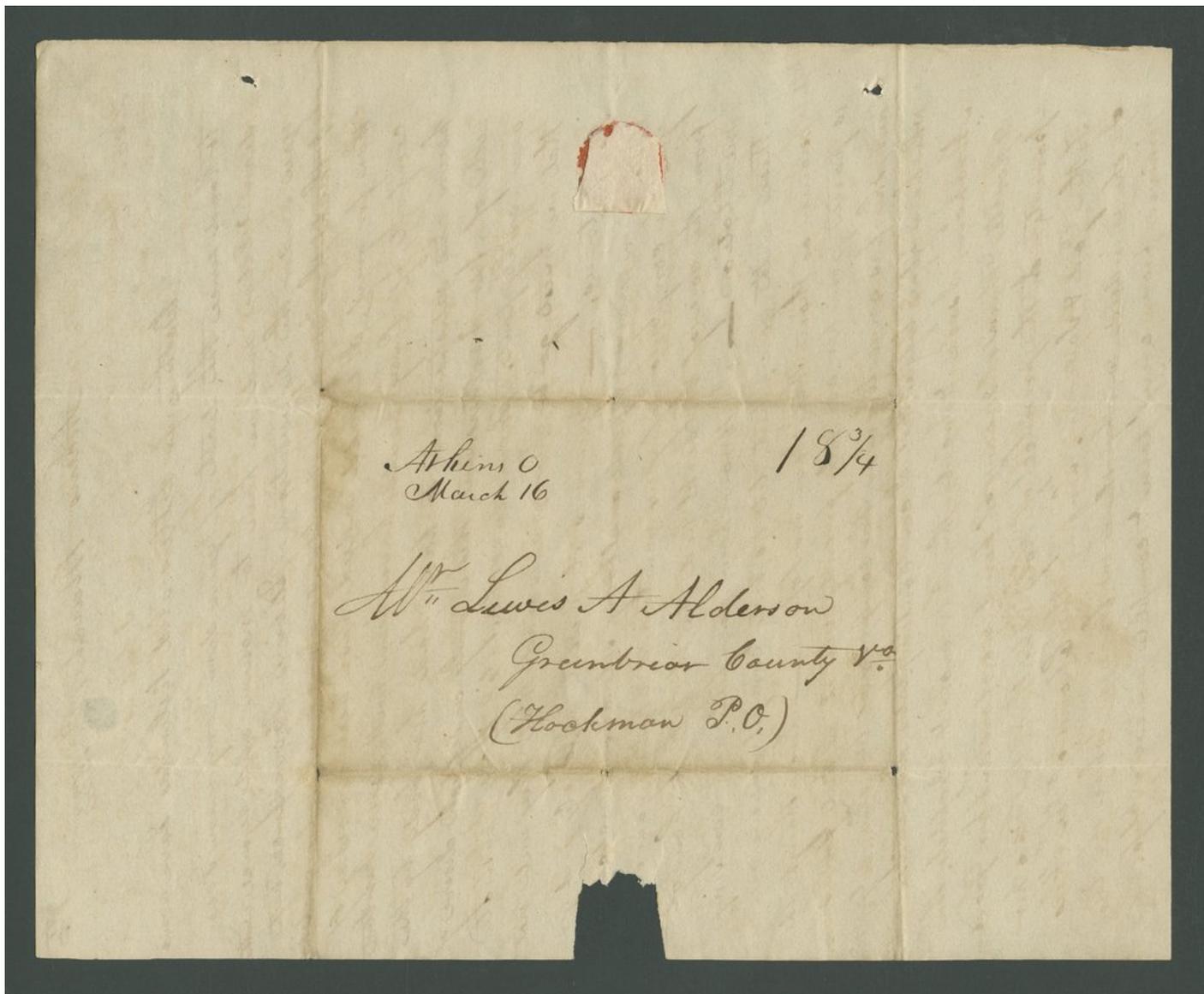
I hope to be remembered by you in your
Prayers — The Family all send me in love.

Remember me affectionately to your dear
Parents

Yours affectionately
Joseph B Miles

W L A Alderson

Joseph B. Miles to Lewis Allen Alderson



Athens O
March 16

18³/₄

W^m Lewis A Alderson
Greene County Va.
(Hockman P.O.)