

Well my dear dear brother I am at last in Cherokee country. It is just six weeks this morning since I bid the loved ones at home farewell and started on my long long journey and that journey is accomplished and I am here. I reiterate it but do not, can not realise it. I wrote you hastily at Memphis fortnight ago last Sabbath. I hope you have received it before now but I think it very doubtful as the rivers are so low the mails are very irregular. The thought of this will make me home sick if anything will but that I do not intend shall be. I will strive against it and be happy if I can. Our journey had been very long and tedious. From Memphis we went to Napoleon at the mouth of the Arkansas with very good speed—reached there Tues morn after I wrote you but there we were detained till Friday monrn and Oh! Such a place. I think Mr. Bond told me he had been there and if so he can give you a better description of it than I. While we were there Mr. Ross came in one day & told me I was going to have a call. A young lady was coming down to the boat to see a real live Yankee. As it proved however the lady was from Mass. Herself & longed to see some one from New England. Mr. R. had given his own version of the story for the sake of a little amusement. We had a pleasant call from the lady and returned it the next morning. We took a

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[start of page 2 main text] little boat at Napoleon and went up the Arkansas as far as Richland where we arrived Sat. afternoon. There we took wagons to “Pine Bluff” I was more unwell that day than I had been any day before and the ride that night of fifteen miles in a wagon without springs was a wearisome one. It was about even when we reached the little town at Pine Bluff. We had a nice supper of fried chicken hot biscuit and coffee—and a comfortable bed. But the night was a sleepless one to me. I was not sick but weary. The next even though the Sabbath, we were obliged to start again. There were about fourteen in the company. Five of us were in one carriage the remainder in another, and in the third was our baggage. The road was very very rough. I never had any idea of rough roads before. We reached a little log tavern at eight that night. Never knew I fatigue before. I could not stand or walk when I left the carriage. It was the first time I had given out at all and then my courage was as good as each. I have received more sympathy than I deserved and all that I could desire. I cannot express my gratitude to Mr. Ross for his kindness to me. Had it been your own dear self you would not have cared for me more tenderly. “Regard me as your brother Miss Whitmore” he says “and never hesitate for one moment to let me know anything that I can do for you.” On Monday morning we started again. I had slept very well the night before and felt much refreshed. We reached Little Rock a little past noon but were sadly disappointed when told that there we must wait till Wednes afternoon. But we found friends there. Dr. Dodge a friend of Mr. R. met us at the hotel and insisted upon our making his house our home while there. We had a pleasant visit there, but were glad to be again [end of page 2 main text]

[start of page 3 main text] on our way “homeward” “homeward” was the cry of Mr. R & Sarah – and I, rather tremblingly responded “homeward” too, for I must make it & call it home. We traveled all night and till two Thurs afternoon—and then the dismal tidings greeted us again that we must wait another two days. Arkansas is a mean state to travel in. There is no hurrying for love or money. We had nice comfortable quarters at Norristown, a little village of a half a dozen log watches (^cabins I mean) (the children are discussing the subject of watches here in the room which will account for the above mistake.) Saturday afternoon at three o’clock there came along a rickety old wagon which they called a stage. In that we packed ourselves away as well as we could but dreaded the night’s work very much. The road was very bad indeed and at each jolt it seemed as though our wagon would twist all to pieces. Mr. Ross was very anxious I know. S and I said nothing but I assure you we were out quite early. It gratified Mr. R to have us so calm.

“driver,” said he, “the only brave men you have in the stage are a couple of ladies” We changed stages at three in the morning and were comfortable again. We travelled through the Sabbath and reached Van Buren in the evening. There we spent the night and started at half past seven in the morn. Now we had left all our traveling companions behind and our little company of three comprised all the passengers. We came thirty miles that day to Evansville where we spent the night. Mr. R & S were happy indeed at thought of being so near home and my heart beat joyfully for them. Yesterday morning we started at sunrise. It was a bright and cheerful morning and our hearts were light and free. Thirty five miles of rough road lay between us and home but we were away. I was happy in watching the cheerful faces of my companions. When about *[end of page 3 main text]*

[beginning of page 4 main text] three miles from Park Hill we met Mr & Mrs. Worcester. They had heard that we were coming and came to meet their long absent daughter. She sprang out of the carriage and ran to meet them. I turned my head away. I could not see the meeting. Presently we came in sight of Mr. R’s father’s. We had heard that his wife and little boy were there waiting for him. They started to come down the hill. The carriage stopped and there was another scene too sweet for a stranger to witness. The tears would come in spite of myself. I never saw such happiness in all my life. Mr. R. had been from home ever since January and for the last three months they have expected him home daily. He has talked to me so much of his “Molly and little Will” that I felt as if I knew them before I saw them. She is very beautiful indeed and highly educated. They live in Talequah and when they are settled at home again I shall go there for a while at least.

When we reached Sarah’s home there was another joy ful meeting with her brothers and sisters but in all their happiness the stranger has not been forgotten. She was cordially welcomed to her Cherokee home and at the family altar last evening was tenderly remembered. The little room where I am writing & which they call mine is unfurnished. Has neither paint or plastering but it has a nice comfortable bed, a nice rocking chair, and a bright blazing fire in the corner and its occupant is very cheerful & happy. Notwithstanding her bitter disappointment in finding no letters. Sarah found one but there was none for me. I am not disposed to murmur for I know you have written. And when the next mail comes I have no doubt it will bring me a heap of letters, as they say here. Three thousand miles! O it is well that I do not realise it. I hope I shall not be homesick. I shall think of you all. Only too often. I know you will think of me and dear Alden do not fail to pray for me that I may do much good among the people with whom I dwell. Two of my pupils are here now. They are studying in preparation to enter the Seminary. I can see the building from the piazza of this house--with your eye glass I can see it very well. Tis a beautiful brick building with pillars on three sides of it. Presents a fine appearance from here. I shall go as soon as I can to see it. I look at it with a great deal of interest. The future is hidden from me. Whether happiness or sorrow is in store for me in that school I cannot tell. If I can only see plainly that I am in the path of duty tis all that I would ask.*[end of page 4 main text]*

(Margin writing on page 1) Fortnight from tomorrow is Thanksgiving day. I shall have much to be thankful for though for one away from home. When I think of the dangers through which I have passed and all without the slightest accident and with perfect health I am ready to exclaim Truly, God is kind to the undeserving. The rivers are very dangerous and so low--full of sand bars and snags. We have been in the vicinity of the cholera several times when were aground in the Ohio several boats were near us on which the terrible disease was raging but there was but a single case on our boat. But I have felt the danger more since we left the boats and were coming over

these terrible roads—but we are safe and as Mr. Ross remarked yesterday the trials and dangers of our journey will soon be forgotten. I do not yet know how soon the school will open. The building is not quite completed and probably will not be for some weeks. I shall have to rest and become acquainted with the people. Give much love to Cousin Lanny and his mother and to the friends at the Avenue. I shall write Marianne very soon. My pen must be busy for a few days. Another mail goes out Friday and it must carry a bundle for me.

(Margin writing on left side of page 2) [edge of page cut off] How much I want to hear from you and of your hopes and plans. Many questions crowd my mind. You can imagine them better than I can write them. When your letters come they will answer the questions I doubt not. Our wandering brother-- O where is he? Shall I ever hear from him again?

(Margin writing on left side of page 3) Thurs eve—Yesterday afternoon I received a call from the great chief of the Cherokee Nation. The renowned John Ross. He came to invite me to his house. I am going with Sarah tomorrow to spend the day and next week shall go to remain for a while at least. I confess I trembled a little when told that he was wanting to see me in the parlor but I assumed composure however agitated I felt. His wife and sister were with him. He is a small man but very dignified and sedate. I will tell you more about him when I know him better. Went to ride horseback this afternoon *[end of margin writing on page 3]*

[Margin writing on left side of page 4] and succeeded very well (they say). This evening made a pleasant call on an interesting Cherokee family. I am delighted with the warm welcome I received. It is particularly gratifying to my health in this land of strangers to be received as one whom they had looked for with interest & greeted with pleasure--I shout of this *[continues upside down above top line of regular text]* to you Alden for I know you will be glad to know it. But I must leave you now. It is always so hard for me to say the last word to you. Goodnight. Goodnight. Yr
Ellen