

ARKANSAS BEFORE STATEHOOD: LITTLE ROCK, JUNE 25, 1831



CENTER FOR ARKANSAS
HISTORY AND CULTURE
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK

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Little Rock, June 25, 1831.

Dear Brother:

You are the most perverse, obstinate, and unbelieving brother, man was ever pestered with. You will neglect writing to me for some six or eight months, whilst I am constantly writing, and wondering that you do not answer some of my letters-- until at last after I have given up all hopes of ever hearing from you again, here comes a letter, when the first thing I see on opening it is a page of complaints and invectives against me for not writing to you oftener, when you know at the time you was penning it, you alone had been negligent. O impudence, what a wonderful convenient thing thou art. It is well we are separated by the Majestic Mississippi as well as by the grand chain Alleghanies.

We have or will receive in a few days a packet of letters by Mr. Greenwood, who left here about a month ago. I requested him to call on you often when he should be in Boston, and I hope you will treat him with all possible courtesy and respect. He will probably return here in the fall, if he does not some person connected with the same concern will.

If you should feel like taking a trip it will be a fine opportunity for you to see some of your country. You wish to know what chance there would be for a book-binder and book-seller in Arkansas, in reply I will say that as there are no books printed here of course there could be not ing for a binder to do. There are some books sold here, such as school books, lawbooks, etc., but not enough to justify a bookstore unless a man could do some-

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Hiram Abiff Whittington to his brother Granville Whittington, Little Rock, June 25, 1831 (Hiram A. Whittington Papers, 1824-1834), p. 1

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thing else. Most any other kind of a mechanic would do better than a bookbinder, still he could get some little work, such as binding up files of newspapers, old lawbooks, novels, etc. If you know of any carpenters, brick masons, or saddlers you may inform them that they could do a good business here, and a silver smith, and a tinner are very much wanted at present. A silver smith came here about three years ago and remained about a year and cleared upwards of a thousand dollars, but he had a wife in New York and must fain go to her. . It is the best place in the world for farmers. If the yankees only knew this country-- that they can purchase the best of land for a dollar and a quarter per acre; that corn grows without hoeing; all you have to do is to plant it, and plow it a little. You can build a good log ^{cabin} ~~shanty~~ for ten dollars, fire wood you never have to buy, and besides, getting a good price for every thing you raise, corn has always, since I have been here brought from fifty cents to one dollar per bushel. We have a most miserable lazy set of farmers. A farmer was to come here and be as industrious as they are in New England, they could not help getting rich. If you are anything of a philanthropist you will advise all persons who wish to turn their attention to farming to come to Arkansas, where they can be independent, no matter how poor they are if they are not lazy. I believe if John J. Lathrop would migrate to this country he would be worth more in five years than he would in Cohasset in a thousand, tell him so.

If you should think seriously of coming to Arkansas and will let me know what your prospects are I will cheerfully give you all the information in my power, not only as regards your

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trade but any thing elses you may wish to know. However much I might wish to have you settled along with me, I cannot advise, for if you should come and anything should happen to you whilst here, I should never forgive myself for being instrumental in your coming; I will however pledge myself that so long as you behave yourself you shall neither be shot, dirked or gouged. The only danger then you would incur will be from the climate, and as regards that I can only say, I have enjoyed as good and perhaps better health here than I did in Mantucket or New York. Be so good as to write me more fully on this subject, I shall be glad to answer as far as I am able, any inquiries you may make on this subject.

You are again in error as regards my marrying. I have the best of feelings for the young ladies, and perhaps I like some well enough to marry them, but there is this about it-- I am too poor, for a woman that I would love well enough to marry I would love too much to see her starve. Whilst I am single and have my health I am not afraid of suffering, but should I encumber myself with a family, heaven knows what might happen. Besides all these objections the education, or rather, the raising of the girls in this country does not suit me. It is not the custom for the women to work in this ever civilized and refined country. Slaves do everything here. The women, (or I should say ladies) get up in the mornings sometimes before breakfast, and sometimes after, spend the forenoon in dressing, and the afternoon in visiting. There are some worthy exceptions to this general character, but they are rare. As I have said before I intend to marry in the

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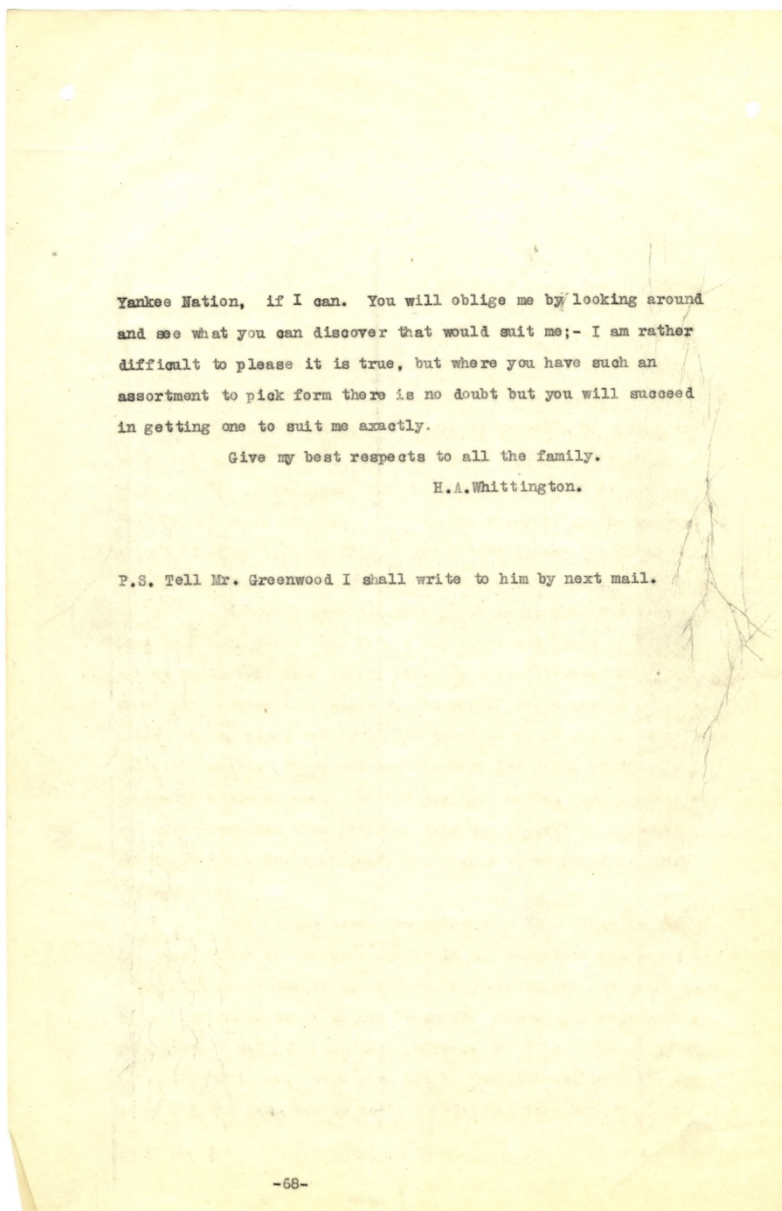
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