



Collection Information:

Item: Hancock, Maria Houghton, Red Wing, Minnesota to Henry Oscar Houghton, Cambridge, Massachusetts, June 20, 1849. ALS.

Series: Original Documents.

Collection: Ford, Allyn K., collector. Allyn Kellogg Ford collection of historical manuscripts.

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Red Wing June 20 49

Dear Brother Oscar

It is one week to day ~~since~~
since we reached our Indian home. Our journey was very long
between five and six weeks some parts of it very pleas-
ant and other parts very tedious. We visited Daniel William
and Marilla and then from Buffalo took a boat for
Detroit the wind was very high and made us a very
sea sick. We arrived at Detroit about two hours after
the cars had left so we were under the necessity of stay-
ing until the next day morning. We arrived at Chicago on
Saturday morning, remained until Monday Mr Hancock
purchased a horse and wagon at Chicago and we left there
in fine spirits thinking of the pleasure we should have
in riding over the country in our own wagon but we
had not got out of sight of the city before a cloud passed
over our countenances a shade of disappointment we were
set fast in the mud we could look behind and see the
spires of the churches and hear the hum of the city but
before us we could only see one vast field of mud, mud.
The first day we rode ten miles we had a mouse for
a bed fellow besides other gentry too numerous to mention.
The next morning we started before breakfast went
about three miles when we became snarled fast in a deep

bed of mud Mr Hancock got out and his first step ~~as~~ was
over his boots he succeeded in getting a pole on which for us
to stand or walk having unloaded the wagon the next step
was to help the ~~at~~ horse out with the wagon I think you
would have laughed to have seen us and felt a little sym-
pathy too Mr Hancock was plastered with mud from his
chin to his feet about noon we got some breakfast every-
thing looked nice and tidy and we were favored with
good appetites having started again we went about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile and
were firmly set again we rode fifteen miles the second
day some days we were more fortunate than others would
fall in company with other teams and could help each
other out of difficulty The distance from Chicago to Galena
is one hundred and sixty miles we started on Monday
and reached Galena one week from the next Tuesday
Every day we were mixed more or less excepting the
last day we rode 24 miles without getting sunk deeply
in the mud I could do but little but take care of Harrier
sometimes would hold the file up when he was getting
the wagon out, perhaps you ask why we chose this mode
of travelling? We were not aware of the state of roads
supposing them to be good so late in the season we were
wishing to get a horse & us to take up to our Indian
home In the Stage ^{we} should be under the necessity of
riding two or perhaps three nights and they were not wil-
ling to take all of our baggage without an extra charge
We frequently met the Stages and after ^{it} had been tipped
over and some ^{of them} broken We spent nearly a week at
Galena purchased a cow and some house hold furniture
provisions &c &c shipped them on board a Steam boat

together with ourselves. The Captain was a fine man and a very good man too. He carried us and our freighting for half price. We fell in company at Galena with six other Missionaries going among the Chipewags. Some had been laboring among them for years others were ^{just} joining them in their good work. Minnesota is fast filling up the tide of emigration. This season is very great and a fine time for pleasure parties. Two weeks before we came up there was a pleasure party from Galena to St. Peters. Ex-Gov. Wade was in company and some of his teachers they remain at St. Peters. There were some on board when we came ~~up~~ who were only coming to see the country. The scenery upon the Mississippi ~~river~~ is perfectly beautiful and even the village of Red Wing where we are located we see nature exhibited in her loveliest form. High hills and plains ~~and~~ ~~beautiful~~ winding river and a beautiful lake a short distance from us. ~~But~~ notwithstanding all that nature has done we see heathenism in some of its worst forms although the Indians appear kind to us. ^{They} come and go from school just when they please between sun rise and sunset. The men and children go almost entirely naked they have something tied around them and a blanket over their shoulders. A few rods from the house is a coffin containing the body of a child hanging upon the branches of a tree it was there when we came to day they have buried it. This morning we noticed a number of pieces of calico and a variety of other things as ~~present~~ ^{gifts} to the child. How long before they will be induced to give up such practices we cannot tell. O may the Lord soon remove the veil from their eyes that they may see the truth and the light as it is in Jesus and be led to embrace it.

Now are very comfortable Situated

The boat is coming and I must close yours in hast Maria
love to Harriet tell her to write to me

[Handwritten signature]

J. C. Houghton Esq

Cambridge Mass

