

Thou asked in thy last if I was kindly treated by the Agent and his wife. I have no grounds for complaint, they are both very kind hearted and generous people, I have many friends beside Indian friends in this barbarous land, and am known by everybody in the country whether I know them or not. I shall write again from this place or Wichita Agency before leaving. Now Farewell my dear ones, with love to all who may enquire after me. I regret that I could not have been at home when Eds were up, particularly if Henry came with them, but if I come home we must go and see them. With my endeared love to thee my precious heart and to you my dear and tender children, I close. Again, farewell.

Thomas C. Battey

No. 39

6th Mo. 30th, 1874

My Dearly Beloved and Ever Precious Wife and Children:

I take my pen in hand this morning to talk a few words to you by means of its silent yet speaking voice. And may say at the outset that my health is not much improved yet so as to tinker about the shop and yesterday worked in the office all day. My appetite is not very good, and my flesh continues wasting away so that I am quite thin, yet I keep around the most of the time, though I lie upon the lounge a good deal.

I expect to settle with the Agent today, and start for the Wichita Agency about next sixth day where I am in hopes of joining a train to Wichita, which will save me from 20 to 25 dollars from the stage fare, and only takes 4 or 5 days longer, which would by saving four or five dollars a day be the same as earning it, and I have had to spend so much out of this quarter's salary that I feel the need of this retrenchment and on the train I will only travel days so that nights I can rest. I think I shall lay over a day in Wichita, and would be glad for thee to write to me at that place, thy next, direct Witchita, Sedgewick Co., Kansas, care O. Shearon, I shall also be under the necessity of stopping at Lawrence, so that I cannot tell this time when I shall get home but some time before the middle of the month.

There has been a man by the name of Vail, claiming to be well acquainted with me, and to live near me in Iowa, but from his description I am not well acquainted with him, he has the contract of carrying the mail between Wichita and Fort Sill. I have not seen him.

The Cheyennes and Comanches are reported by the friendly Indians to have gone up in the direction of New Mexico and the frontiers of Kansas, where the papers report many murders to be committed by them and the Kiowas, but as the Kiowas are now engaged in their Medicine Dance, about 55 or 60 miles from here they are not guilty of those crimes, as no one dares to absent himself from an annual gathering of the tribe, they having a superstition that no one having attended it and then neglected it will live to the end of the year.

We have received word but know not how true it may be that a large part of the Kiowa young men favor joining the Cheyennes and Comanches after the dance is over, and threaten to kill the horses of all who will not join them, and that in their council, Kicking Bird, Big Bow and some seven other chiefs said "We shall not join any such enterprize, we shall go in to the Agency. You may kill our horses and mules and make us poor. We will ~~not~~ go to the Agency on foot". I know that K. B. and the Apaches expected trouble at this dance, but still the great Medicine Chief was determined not to make any war medicine. Horseback was at the Agency yesterday and stated that their (Comanche) Medicine Man was still leading them away, having made medicine so strong that the white mans gun cannot kill a Comanche, so you may see the implicit faith and confidence they have in their medicine men, and the power of medicine.

I hardly expect to see Kicking Bird any more or his people. It appears strange in the eyes of all the rude frontiersmen of this land that the Kiowas heretofore the foremost in war, raiding and bloodshed should now stand as firmly as they do in the opposition to it, it is really marvelous, within 3 or