

## B. S. Judd to William Chatfield

Source: David Bowman, et al., *Judd/Sewanee: A Tennessee Photographic Dynasty* (LaGrange Books, 2009), pp. 1-3

Burritt S. Judd was born in Connecticut and had lived there and in Arkansas, Ohio, and Minnesota before settling in Franklin County in 1859. Trained as a carpenter, he had developed skills as an architect, building one of the first Episcopal churches in the diocese of Minnesota. While in that territory, he was ordained to the Episcopal diaconate. His move to the area near University Place seems to have been propelled by a mixture of motives: to connect to the Episcopal Church's projected seminary, to develop his skills as an architect and builder, and to re-unite with Bishop Leonidas Polk (who he first met in 1840 in Little Rock). In this letter to an old friend and fellow craftsman in Ohio, Judd was evaluating the University's prospects, generally, as well as the openings available to craftsmen who might relocate to the area. Most specifically, he was writing Chatfield about the prospects that his son might work with Judd to learn carpentry. You will notice Judd's clear critique of Southern craftsmen, as well as his views on the sectional crisis following John Brown's failed raid on the Federal armory & arsenal at Harper's Ferry, Virginia.

Subsequent correspondence between the two men indicates that Chatfield's son did join Judd in Tennessee.

~~~~~  
Winchester, Franklin Co., Tenn.  
Feb. 22nd 1860

Mr. Wm. Chatfield

Dear Sir:

Yours of the 11th inst. is before me. In reply I would say that at the present time I hardly know what to write you in regard to your son. I think quite favorably about having him come here to work with me, but at this time I am not certain about the work, that is, how much of it will be ready the coming season. There is to be a great amount of work done but I do not know as they will get fairly started for a while yet.

The Trustees of the University are now in session in New Orleans[. A]fter their adjournment . . . I shall probably know how much of the University work will be commenced this year. There will be work enough to last a life time. It will be several years before any of the principal buildings will be completed.

There are to be some 15 or 20 of them[,] quite large & in the best stile [sic] of architecture, to be of stone & iron, fireproof. In addition to the school buildings, Church, & public hall, there will be residences for the Professors, & some residences for the Southern Planters & others, who will come here to spend the summers with their families. Then the Trustees have already had about

five hundred applications for lots to build on. They have plenty of ground (about ten thousand acres), but it is not surveyed (into lots to lease) yet. So, you see what their plans are, but it takes time to develop them.

They have already obtained nearly one million dollars. They expect to get three million without difficulty. The interest only is to be used, which at 7 per ct., makes quite a nice sum, semiannually.

There is an abundance of pure soft water. I think it is as healthy a place as can be found on the Continent. We have some cold weather, some little snow, & considerable rain during the winter. The coldest morning this winter the mercury stood at 4 deg. above zero. There has [sic] been verry few days to [sic] cold work out without a coat.

There is a Rail Road through the grounds of the University. The cars run every day (except Sunday). They ascend the mountain (from the Nashville & Chattanooga R. R. which passes at the base of the mountain) on a grade of 130 ft to the mile. After they reach the summit (a distance of 7 miles) the road is continued about 20 miles farther to an excellent coal mine which appears to be inexhaustable [sic].

The principal timber we use here is pine (hard) and poplar. Some of the poplar is verry good. I think the University buildings will be finished with oak. There is plenty of it growing on their grounds. They will build a steam mill and saw it.

I am working here in Winchester now. I have some jobs to finish which commenced last summer, some porticos. The carpenters here are quite jealous of me. They don't like me to come to town to work. I do my work different from theirs. I think I shall get more work here this spring. I expect also to get a cheap house to build on the mountain & perhaps more. I think other workers will come on as the season advances.

Winchester is the county seat. It is about 4 miles from University Place. It is a pleasant healthy town, of about 2,000 inhabitants, verry few good buildings & verry few good mechanics. They have no regular sistem [sic] of prices, but they have a regular stile [sic] of work, and that is a very rough stile, without symmetry or tast[e]. (But I must stop talking about my neighbors.)

If you think best to send your son to me, I will do the best I can by him. Some of my work for present will be rough & I have to work quite low. I have to compete with their men who can do rough work in their way, but the time will come when they will not interfere with good workmen. I think I can give your son 75 cents per day, furnish him with tools, board, & washing[;] perhaps I can do better after a trial. If we are suited with each other, I will pay him more as he advances in the business.

As to yourself, I can't advise you to come yet. There may be a chance in the course of the coming season. If I should have a good job I should be much pleased to have you with me. The time will come when good workmen will be needed here & they must come from the North. The South can't produce them. Journeyman Carpenters get from \$1.50 to \$2 per day, & board

themselves at \$3 per week. It is hard to tell now what the prices will be when the work is fairly commenced.

The most direct rout[e] from Cincinnati is via Louisville, Ky, & Nashville, Tenn. From Louisville there is Rail Road all the way to my house on the mountain (some 15 to 20 rods [from the depot]). There [are] but 2 changes, one at Nashville & one at Cowan Depot in the N & C RR, about 90 miles from Nashville.

I think the fare from Louisville to Nashville is \$8, from N--onto the mountain is \$4. From Cincinnati to Louisville I am unable to tell you. If there is a night train from Louisville to connect with the 8 o'clock morning train from Nashville, a person will land on the mountain at 1/2 past 2 the same afternoon.

I find that I have been quite lengthy. Perhaps I shall weary you. But one word more. Persons coming from the North must recolect [sic] that they are coming to a Slave State & will be looked upon with suspicion, more so since the disgraceful outrage at Harper's Ferry. It will not do to express any simpathy [sic] for the Northern abolition fanatics.

Please write me on the receipt of this & I will reply.

Yours Truly,

B. S. Judd