The Correspondence of the Rev. Samuel Bissell, 1820-1885: A Documentary Editing Project

In the middle decades of the nineteenth century, the Rev. Samuel Bissell ran a school, the Twinsburg Institute, in Ohio for young Indigenous men of the Great Lakes region. This project involves transcription of his correspondence with his former students, government officials, and clergy, and other members of the Benevolent Empire. I have collected a run of about one hundred letters and other documents from the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland. These letters form part of a larger inquiry into Protestant missionizing among Indigenous peoples in the Great Lakes region on both sides of the international border. This is an editing/transcription project leading to a social history of the Twinburg Institute.

Research assistant's duties:
The research assistant would be responsible for creating a digitized transcription of Bissell’s correspondence according editorial guidelines established by me. I have formal training in documentary editing and considerable experience in teaching the procedures to both graduate and undergraduate students.

Required skills or qualifications:
Close attention to detail; ability to follow guidelines; patience with peculiar spelling and handwriting; enough imagination to become involved in the story the documents tell.

Skills student will acquire:
The student would learn the basic skill set for documentary editing as taught at the annual National Historical Publications and Records Commission Institute for the Editing of Historical Documents.