8-14-1853

Letter to John Butler and Joseph Butler from Peter Butler

Peter Butler

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It will be hard to stand the trip, but if they can feel satisfied to sit down in the snow or wait, they will have a chance to rest.

Do something for me.

County of Oregon, Secretary, August 9th, 1853

Dear children,

It is with great pleasure that I now write you. The fine morning I wrote last that I saw you all and graduated in the Willamette Valley, and this one after a long tedious journey, we found all our friends all well and doing well, and I am sure that all our friends will be glad to hear from us.

The news from the Missouri river to this valley is in great abundance; we had but little sickness in our train. The most of us have a light attack of what is called the mountain fever, but it is not very contagious. The people who had it all had it except me, and I was not well enough to go to the mountains. I will write you some things which you will find at your advantage, my health is not good.

Do not be afraid to take advantage of this letter. I must close this letter. Your Father,

[Signature]
unable to travel yet she and the baby are both doing well, you will likely want to know how the country is. I will just tell you that I saw no
enough of the country to form an opinion yet. Though I can say that what I have seen is as good on letters than I expected to find it. It will cost me a good deal of money to live the first year but after that I believe that I can live as well as I could in Illinois, thought I will write my opinions of the country as well as I can form.

Now if it would not be too much trouble I would be glad if you would write to me and make a memorandum of the names and amount of each of my notes which I left with you.

One thing more if you have not made any expectations of our cattle keep them till you hear from me again.

I presume you would like to know how we did our journey. Your mother was considerably ill and were not but I stood the trip as well as any of the young men.

I drove my team nearly all the way myself.

After all there is more depending on the disposition of a person to stand that trip than the Constitution, for it a person cannot accommodate themselves to their situation.
Polk County Oregon Territory August 14th 1853

Dear children,

It is with great pleasure that I seat myself this fine morning to inform you by letter that we all arrived safe in the Willamette valley on the 5th Aug. after a long tedious journey, we found our friends all well and doing well, and I am sure that we all ought to feel exceeding thankful to our heavenly father for his protecting care over us, for of all our friends notwithstanding so many has crossed the plains, not one of them has died it has not been the case with a great many others. for we have been where they have been buried along the road from the Missouri river to this valley in great abundance, we had but little sickness in in our train The most of us had a light attack of what is called the mountain fever, but in most cases it only lasted a week or two and even then we could generally go about. I consider that I have been much benefited in praise of health for I have not had an attack of my complaint with which I have suffered so much since I started from home, and if my health continues as it has been since I started *[written along the side] Your mother wishes you all to write often and tell all about all the children and grandchildren and neighbours* I shall feel myself amply compensated for all my trouble and expence which has been considerable I wrote to you at Fort Laramie that Edward Ground had one of his mares stolen by the Indians he never got her, he also had one of his best mares drowned in fall river, my best mule got drowned at the same time and place, I will just tell you how it hapened our loose horses and mules was driven till they got very dry and when they got to the river about fourteen of them rushed into the water just above the falls teh hindmost pressing on those before and in an instant they was all swimming and the water ran very swist which very soon forced them over the falls, my mule and Edward's mare was both forced over a large rock. I believe Edward mare sunk amediately, my mule sunk and rose frequently till it got below all the brakers it then swam about a minute and sunk. Edward lost one waggon the one that Bolden made for him it just broke to peaces it was a greate cheat. the above constituted our losses we started with 47 persons in the train and when we reached the valley we had 48 Elizabeth had a fine son on the Cascade Mountains, and although we had to hall her over ten thousand rocks which you
would have thought a waggon *[written on the side of the page] Tell us whether your uncle Isaac
died in his sences and if so what he said about dying* unable to stand, yet she and the babe are
both doing well. You will likely want to know how I like the country. I will just tell you that I
have not seen enough of the country to form an opinion yet though I can say that what I have
seen is as good or better than I expected to find it. It will cost me a good deal of money to live
the first year but after that I believe that I can live as well as I could in Illinois, though I will
write my opinion of the country in full as soon as it is formed.

John if it would not be too much trouble I would be glad if you would write to me and make a
memorandum of the names and amount of each of my notes which I left with you. One thing
more if you have not made any disposition of our cattle keep them till you hear from me again.

I presume you would like to know how we old folks stood the journey Your mother was
considerably fatiagued and worn out but I stood the trip as well as any of the young men. I drove
my buggy nearly all the way myself. After all thare is more depending on the disposition of a
person to stand that trip than the Constitution, for if a person cannot accommodate themselves to
their situation it will be hard to stand the trip but if they can feel sattisfied to sit down in the mud
or dust sunshine or rain and eat what ever they have, then sleep on the ground or in the waggon
or any other place which they can get, then the trip will be easy and half the dificuties
surmounted.

I write this letter to you all for the reason that I have a very poor chance to write I will send it to
Joseph with the request to have him send it on to the rest of the boys in Illinois, Joseph I intended
to have came by your house but was prevented by Hutchinson having to return to Oquawka
which left me to take care of every thing and it was out of my power to come Thomas went by
and did not get to the train untill noon next day in consequence of the high water, which we
supposed prevented you from coming atall. You must write to me as soon as you receive this
letter and let me know what you intend to do in relation to mooving to this country and if you do
come I will write you some things which you will find to your advantage my sheet is full so I
must close *[written on the side of the page] give our best love and respects to all our old friends
and kneighbours*

Your Father

Peter Butler