1-6-1855

Letter to John Butler and family from Peter Butler

Peter Butler

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Polk County, Oregon Territory January 1, 1855

Dear son and family,

I have been thinking for a long time that it would be wise for you to think that I want you to help with the work that will do us no good, for I wish you to pay your self out of the money which you collect. I want you to write to me and let me know how much you can get for my shares and also how much you can get for the land that I do not want. That is the land of 25 acres in the town of you. Can sell that place I want you to cut out as I can not take it up. If you can sell it you have the lower from here to make the deal.

Mr. Antiochow has declined selling his part so I take it as a part. He will not sell, if I can sell it I will. I cannot tell what price to ask as I cannot tell what I can sell for in that country. If the price is selling for in that country then it is worth as much as I can make it sell for the best land here. If I can get $50 an acre at least one it I will have them and the house is in the town of you, must close this letter as my pen is full. Once more may I ask that this is the last of the money. I have all my friends with me and they will be happy. My best wishes.

[Signature]

P. Talbot, [Date]
The mules that I bought of William & I have six of them and one set of harness and a pair of yokes for the team at $100. I also bought a pair of mules that I bought of Joseph C. and a pair of yokes and a little wagon that I bought of L. O. Gordon. I paid for the second job of 20 acres of dock land and another 20 acres of vacant land, which is of excellent quality and has been kept under sorghum, but I got a little of it that I bought out which will make me a title to the land. I claim it lies about 20 miles of Eldorado on the main stage road leading through the valley. I shall improve it and may possibly live on it some time in the future. I may sell out and live on the money I have in the bank. That I bought of C. F. Miens. 

The young man that I bought of Miens has a fine mule called Firelight. The mule is almost large enough to ride, and the mare and colt can eat grain, hay, and corn, but she needs fed. She is the little mare that has weak eyes in addition to its good, and has given us a little trouble. I bought a horse that is one of the finest mares in Oregon. There is a young man in the neighborhood who says that if he had his mare at first, I would not have to farm the five hundred dollars for the two. I have but two or three sheep and about twenty head of cattle, and we have plenty to live on, but we need clothing and every thing almost about the house, such as furniture. If I have paid all for the leases, I also have to pay the rent for the land and please negotiate 20 acres of dock land, which I am paying ten percent per annum now. If you can not get that much from the person you sold it to, you should be glad, but you have been kind to me, and I should be glad if you could get it for me. 

I have no one to go to the school, but you may determine to do it yourself. 

Jesse W. Thomas

I have no money now, but it is not likely that I will be able to work like I was in days past and gone. I want your opinion and advice in relation to any particular thing and that is whether we had best try to get back home or we have not yet able to come. Or, if we have not, we have no money at just present to come on and whether we shall have or not. 

I cannot tell when I think of the danger of the trip that the short time which we have six hundred dollars for the two. I must confess that I am at a great loss to know what to do, and to know that the two hundred dollars with the two wells, if we get able to come, or if we do not, we have no means at just present to come on and whether we shall have or not. 

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Butler Family Letters  
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Title: Letter to son [John Butler] and family from Peter Butler (Polk County Oregon Territory)

Date: January 6, 1855

Transcription:

Polk County Oregon Territory January 6, 1855

Dear Son and family,

I have been thinking for a long time that I would receive a letter from you, and then I would know what to write to you, but I have [?] waited in vein, so I thought I would just write a few things to you as it is raining today to let you know that we are in usual health through the mercey of our heavenly father and I do most cinearly hope that when these lines reaches you that you and all your family may be enjoying the like blefsings we have had a very pleasent winter untill last wednesday it commenced snowing and snowed some four or five inches deep but it has been tolerable warm since considering thare was snow on the ground and the snow has melted off in places so that stock has not suffered for grafs any worth naming for we have plenty of green grafs in this country all winter except the snow falls so deep that the stock can't get it, but if we should have such a snow this winter we have hay, oats, and fodder plenty to keep our little stock from suffering for some time, but if the grafs don't get covered up, we shant need it. I have sold all my mules except the old mule that I got from Edly Paul and one that I got from Alfred Brown. I have also sold the young horse which I bought from Elijah I sold him for $175 the little mule that I bought from [?] Haley I sold for $100 the mules that I bought of William & J Means, the little waggon and one set of harnefs went in part pay for the claim at $400, and a span of mules that I bought at Council Bluff and a set of harness and a little waggon that I bought of Ed Ground I gave for 160 acres of deeded land adjoining which thare is 96 acres of vacant land which is of exelent quality that has been kept rather smugled but I got a hint of it and sought it out which will make me a tolerable good little claim it lies in about two miles of Elijahs on the main stage road leading through the valey, if I stay here I shall improve it and may perhaps live on it some time or other or I may sell it and live on the money. I have the big mare that I bought of Carns of green bush she brought me a colt last spring but she has some complaint which renders her of no use to me at preasent though I have some hops that she will get well yet the young mare that I got of Wm I Means had a fine mare colt last spring from Iras house which is almost lage enough to ride the mare and colt can neither be beat easy the little mare that had
weak eyes is as fine as fiddle and her eyes are as well as any horses eyes I have another mare which I bought in Iowa that is one of the finest mares in Oregon thare is a young man in the neighborhood who says that if he had my mare and one that matches her that he would not take five hundred dollars for the two. I have but three cows & three sheep and about twenty head of hogs we have plenty to live on but we need clothing and every thing almost about the house such as furniture etc I have paid all for Isaacs claim except one hundred and seventy dollars which I am paying ten per cent per annum now John if you can get that much from old Griswould and sent it to me I should be glad but you have been put to so much trouble on my account that I hate to ask you to do anything more for me but I have no one to depend upon but you & James in Illinois I hope that Louis Bradley will send me this years rent for I have nothing to help myself with except I got something from home and I am not able to work like I was in days past and gone John I want your opinion and advice in relation to one particular thing and that is whether we had best try to get back home (if we ever get able to come) or not, we have no means at present to come on and whether we ever shall have or not I cant tell and when I think of the dangers of the trip and the short time which we by a course of nature have to live if we should get back I must confess that I am at a greate loss to know what to do I plainly see that our happiness on this Earth is done for if we go back we must leave all our children which are here forever and if we stay we shall be deprived of our living and the society of our dear children in the states, and they are so scattered now that we would not be very likely to ever see them all again, I want you to write to us about Wm tell us all about him as far as you know.

John if you can get any kind of property from old Griswould that will do you any good take it for if I cant get the money you had as well have it as him and you must be paid for your trouble though I dont want you to think that I want to put you off with a bad debt that will do you no good for I wish you to pay your self out of the money which you collect I want you to write to me and let me know how much you could get for my farm and also what you could get for the land that I deeded to Isaac that is the farm & the 25 acres in the timber if you cant sell that place I want you to rent it and expect to take it of Isaac abut if you can sell it you have the power from Isaac to made the deed Thos Hutchinson has decline I selling his part & if I take Isaacs part if I can sell it I will I cant tell what price to ask as I cant tell what land is selling for in that country if the price of land has come down any write to me and let me knew what you can get but if it has raised sell for th best price that you can get have at least one third in hand then suit the purches so that I get ten per cent interest. I must close this letter as my sheet is full One thing more deny me not that is write soon write often and I will do the same. All our friends are as well as usual I remain Your effectionate father.

Peter Butler

John tell Edley Paul that old Kit is as fat as he ever saw him