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Letter to Sisters from Isaac Smith

Isaac Smith

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Dear Sister,

I take the present opportunity of sending you a few lines to let you know that I have received a letter from your husband, in which he says that he is in good health and doing well. He also tells me that he has heard from Oregon and that he now travels over the country in good health. He says that he has considerable about the health of this country through your letters, and that he hopes to hear from you again soon.

I hear that the wagons are in good order, and I am sure that you are all enjoying the country. He also mentions that he has seen some Indians, and that they are friendly and peaceful. He says that he is looking forward to seeing you again.

If I can write as much as I want to, I will make my own. I have some business to attend to, and I will write more as soon as I can. I hope you are all well and happy, and that you are enjoying the country.

Yours truly,
[Signature]
There is a stream of a mountain near my house and out of it runs a small spring of water. I found about 250 yards off, I could lead the water into a deep hole in the earth. I plant potatoes in it. I don’t know how the farmer got to know of the spring before. So, about the river, your father has taught about half a mile between. The bank is also very good land. I have set up trees to protect it from destruction. I have made a fence around it. There is a fence of 100 acres more in cultivation around the river. I have some suitable building near the river. I have taken a house on the river and good rich land. I think too near the river to be healthy. Mr. Edward has rented it. I suppose you are going to move how I am satisfied. I have not been long enough to tell you my mind. That I have not reported in this place. The other is, that the rock water is not as healthy, because I expected though there is plenty of soil that runs but not there. If it is a good money clearing that has not yet improvement enough to live in a pasture we can get. I have never seen anything odd of the railroad. But it is a fact living there are many houses here. But the river and mountains are very lovely. On both sides of the river I have seen the first bottom of the creek, the second bottom, and where all covered with good timber of various kinds. The second bottom is brave and under land
This is the best land that I have.
OT September 26, 1853

Dear Sisters,

I take the present opportunity of writing you a few lines to let know that are all well at this time hoping those few lines will reach you safe [and] find you all enjoying the same blessing the conesion and friends are all well as far as I know except Hutchenson Elisabeth & Isaac Thry all have the chills this is the most sickness I have heard of in Oregon and I have traveled over the country considerable since I landed here I cannot speak particular about the health of this country though I will endeavor to learn all of the facts in this particular as well as all others that will interest you the old sisters represent as very healthy though they say it is subject to the ague in some places on the river one thing I feel safe in saying the people looks healthier here than in Illinois.

I have made a purchase of claim of 320 acres of land it feels very comfortable to me to have a home after being camped out for five months we camped on the premises two weeks before we got possession I had two thousand dollars for said claim at is situated on the north branch of the Luckamute there is about 200 acres of bottom prairie there is a small creek running through it which serves for a good crop fence there is about 40 acres of high prairie the balance is oak timber and fir, there is a spur of a mountain near my house and out of it runs a small stream of water if I had about 250 yards of led pipe I could lead it into my house into the upper chamber if I wished the former I intend to do at some future time I am about ten miles west of Elijah your father has bought about half way between he paid 2000 also it's a good claim of land I forgot to tell you what improvement I had there is a pasture of 100 acres 10 acres in cultivation a haus 16 by 18 and shed borded up for a citchin I have very suitable building places Hutchinson has taken a claim up the river 35 miles good rich land but I think two near the river to be healthy Ira & Edward has rented houses, I suppose you are anxious to hear how I am satisfied I have not bin heare long enough to tell yet I can say this much that I have not repented coming heare yiet I feel disappointed in two things one is land is better than I expected and the other is that stock
watter is not as plenty in places as I expected though thare is plenty for stock that runs out but thare is a good many claims that has not got it convenint annough to fence in a pasture we can get water hear amost anywhare by diging as for depth it about like Illinois thare are some places here betwine the riveer and mountains that rail tiber is little on handy those places lay between the river and mountain and between the creeks the first bottom of the creeks and river are coverd with good timber of various kinds the second bottom are prairie and cold valley land this is the kind of land that I have thare are also high roling prairie heare simular to that neare Alington I sold the Vanhorn Mules today at 400 dollars I took it in trade, one cow at $100 wheat at $250 per busell oats $100 potatoes $100 sheep $10 a piece one sow at $12 this looks like high prices but it is as good as I could have done with the money I bought some wheat when I first came in at $200 it cant be had now for less than $250 some ask $300 I let the mules that I got from you for part pay for my claim at $280 If you know of any safe way of sending me the money for my land sell it if you meet with a suitable chance the timber at $20 per acre and the prairie at $10 per acre if land has raised as much as some say it has it ort to bring more get more if you can if the purchaser will take a qit claim deed for the prairie you may take $9 per acre if I can get the worth of my land sent me in cattle I woud like it very well thats the very thing we kneed in this country I know of some men heare that got rich raising cattle that had but two or three to start on. I will make one proposition if you can sell my Inad and find a suitable person that will undertake my proposial is this you may take my money and buy fore yoke of oxen and one good wagon the balance in cows mostly heifers dont buy any unless thay are in good order get the best stock you can I want a portian of the best in the country the price be what it may I will bare the expences of the team and loose stock you can reserve money for this purpose to pay you for all your trouble the undertaker on this part must leave the Missour RIver before the 27th of April and not have more than 12 hundred on the wagon and keep an acount of all the expences and deliver to me the wagon and stock that gets through and to use due diligence to get my teams and stock through dont impol any person that you dont believe to be onest industerous and persevering if Harry Hart still wishes to come tell him that the objections he had last spring is ungrounded thare is no trouble to get company large annough to travel together thare is no objection on the account of loose stock 100 will do as well together as a half dsen they ant half the trouble to drive that I expected thay incline to go forwards insted of back if any person undertakes urge them to start amongst the first trains I had rather go the trip twice with a early start than once with a late start and thare ant half the danger of loosing if William Murphy lacks any of making a full drove you mite get him to bring some for me if he can I will divide the stock as pay for his trouble what custom or justice says is right if he could only bring me one or two derum heifers I would think it a great favor I will leave this matter for you to act as you think best

I received you letter dated in July I was glad to heare you was all well but sory to heare you complain of working so hard that fare from being the case heare thay hardly work at all still the old setlers are building fine houses thare stock maks the money for them I feare you will be bothered to read this account of my paper being so thin give my respect to all write often

so no more at present

Isaac Smith