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Letter to John Butler from Peter Butler (unsigned)

Peter Butler

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Carroll County, Georgia, October 17, 1823

Dear Father,

Our great distance from each other and long deatimes cause great anxiety on my mind concerning your welfare. It has been a long time since I heard from you and I would be glad to hear from you any frequent news. I have heard what is said of the disease that is so prevalent.

Since I heard from you last, I have not seen you at least hearing from you but I was in good health to do it would be a source of much pleasure to me and to thank you for the letter you sent me.

I hope you are in good health and that you are doing well. I was in good health last year but last year they suffered in a great extent on those who emigrated across the plains thousands died and many who lived suffered considerably and we have not heard that there has been any cattle driven on the plains since.

I am in good health and hope to hear from you soon. I remain your affectionate son,

[Signature]
and some ten or twelve men though the supply of goods was not as good as it would be out west. I was about to leave, but the yard was so full of sacks of flour that I was obliged to wait. I was old friends and left every thing until one of them got all the flour sent through and some we lost not one of all that situation that we gained one bag. There had a horse been the 27th day of August on the road from Peoria to Potosi, but the horse was not Irish, and the Irish were taken by the roadmen and sold miles from Peoria. I was aware an old man was sold in the same as my longest more one of those that got up with us on the west. We left the road and went to a long distance under water and then we got to the river. We crossed the river and got to the cove. We were not.SwingConstants
Polk County Oregon Territory Oct., 30th, 1853

Dear Children

Our great distance from each other and long absence cases great anxiety in my mind concerning your welfare. It has been a long time since I heard anything from any of you. You must be aware that I feel much anxiety for you and would be glad to hear from you very frequently.

We never knew what it was to be so long without seeing or at least hearing from you but we never was half so far apart before so if you can share the time to write to us it would be a source of much pleasure to us in our lone and destitute situation you cannot imagine how glad we are to hear from you. These lines leaves us all enjoying good health except Isaac he has the chills I suppose the dregs of his last year's sickness which he had on the plains he and Elijah both was quite sick on the plains and neither of them has got entirely over it yet last year was very fatal indeed on those who emigrated across the plains thousands died and many who lived suffered considerably not so this season there has been but few deaths and very little sickness as far as I have heard. There has a great many cattle died on Snake River. [P.R. Haley?] lost all his cows and some ten or twelve oxen though the family enjoyed as good health as could be expected. They was about two months longer on the road than we was. Old friend Cramer lost everything except one ox, though all the family got through safe. I must tell you how we got along all our company got through safe and sound we lost not one of all that started, but we gained one Elizabeth had a fine son the 3rd day of August on the cascade two days before we got to Fosters at the foot of the cascade. Edward Ground had one mare stolen by the Indians five miles from Fort Laramie and one drowned on the river I also had one mule drowned in the same river my largest mule one of them that I got of Alfred Brown, the way they got drowned was through carelessness. The day was warm and we had to drive a long distance without water and when we got to the river the horses rushed into the water just above the falls and the current being extremely swift they was presently forced over the rocks with such violence that two out of fourteen was so disabled...
that they drowned before they could reach the shore. the only wonder is that no more of them got 
drowned, with there exceptions we got every thing through which we started with that is all the 
stock and indeed all the wagons except the one that Baldwin made for Edward which broke 
down before we got halfway

Our stock is all thriving very finely indeed we have as good grass here now as you have in the 
states in June, it is indeed of much better quality than grass you have at any time in the summer. 
You would like to now how I am pleased with the country, I will just tell you in a few words that 
the country is very and small indeed but all that has or can get good situations in this country can 
live with one third of the labor that they can in Illinois or Iowa. it costs less to raise a horse or an 
ox here than it does to raise a chicken in the states. this may seem strange to you, but one man 
told me that he came here about seven years ago with 25 head of cown he says he has sold eight 
thousand dollars worth of cattle and has three hundred on hand and he has never fed them five 
dollars worth since he has been here you all recollect Mc Timmons the man who moved the old 
man Kelly from Ohio to our house in Illinois. he came here six or seven years ago with Eleven 
cows. he told Isaac Smith that he had sold four thousand dollars worth of cattle and has a large 
stock on hand. he is said to be rich though I have not yet seen him this is not a corn country and 
consequently not a pork country, but the finest beef and mutton in the world, we can raise some 
corn but to no great extent. upon the whole if my children was only all here and was all as well 
satisfied with the country as I am I should be perfectly contented. I have bought a clame and 
have let Isaac have it in as much as he had to take his clame by the first of Dec and I will have 
two years to take mine Isaac Smith has got a fine clame, and Ira has got a tolerable good clame 
though he is not as well pleased as he would like to be, though he will not loose any thing I 
think by buying it as he can sell it for as much or more than he give. Edward and Hutchinson has 
no claimes Yet John I want you to attend to the collection of my money as soon as it becomes 
due tell the people that I must have it for I am indebt here and no way to make money. if you 
can get it pay yourself for all your trouble and then buy a draft from E. W. Clark and brothers in 
St Louis on Adams & Co at Portland and Oregon City and send it to me and if you find that you 
cannot get the money from those that owe me if William Murphy will bring the cattle on the 
halves you may take some young cows or heiffers if they are in good order and send them to me. 
If Griswould dont comply strictly with the Articles between us if Quinby thinks you can succeed 
turn him off

[The rest of this letter by Peter Butler is missing]