10-22-1854

Letter to Brother and Sisters from Isaac Smith

Isaac Smith

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Bridgeport Oct. 22, 1854

Dear Brother & Sister,

It has been some time since I wrote to anyone of you, it was not because I had forgotten you. The reason is I had to write that I thought would interest you. We are all well at present as far as health is concerned. Everyone is not well yet though uncommon of it. The girls don't complain of it. Hunting has been round all the time as though it wasn't snow. The connection are all well as far as I know. I understand that your Margaret was sick but getting better. Your father is very well and is not home sick. I received the sketch you sent me and got the money without any trouble. I don't care if you want to send it presently every mail I had to go to Portland to draw the money. It was the first time that I ever was there. It is quite a self-governed place. It is near the side of buildings on a sandy place for a small town as general thing said. I have plenty of sugar and groceries are very high. I paid for sugar corn.
I bought a cow and skiff of April I paid him $45.00, but Lay he sold the skiffing that he got Williamson for $47.00; the boys are both gone to the mine.

Bell Winslow was so up, he was a short time since he took a claim last winter and worked it for a winter half he got 30 acres of open and one horse to boot. Well says he Mad a pretty good claim. He is making brothers about 20 miles a line southeast him and some of the other boys that came through when he took a job last winter of chopping wood and making nails when he camps out he says he took at that time a large and had not felt well since he thinks he is getting better now. The rest of the boys are in the mining I believe. I do not know what there are doing John Brown died out there I am informed that he killed himself a drinking.

This is last week. I am on the grand jury. I am also a witness as a witness for grand juryman get $4 per day but $12 per day. This is good wages but I promise you no man has to stay the bill. I was on the first jury last court. So you can see that I am also of the office of Oregon as it is in Illinois of a dry season, but it was cool and sandy last
Bridgeport Oct the 22 1854

Dear Brother & Sister

It has bin some time since I wrote to any of you, it was not because I had forgoten you the reson
is I had nothing to write that I thought wold interest you - we are all well at presant as fare as
health is concerned Berrymans leg is not well yet there is a runing sore on it and no prospect of it
geting better he dont complain of it hurting him any he runs round all the time as though it
wasent sore the connexion are all well as fare as I know I understood that Iras Margaret was sick
but getting better, your Father & Mother styed all night heare a short time since your Father has
had a hard spell of the tooth ache, but has got well your Mother is some home sick - I received
the drafts you sent me and got the money with out any trouble wouldnt care if you wold send me
such presants every mail I had to go to Portland to draw the money it was the first time that I
ever was there it is qite a buissness place it is neare the size of Burlington its a verry pirty place
for a town goods as general thing sell about like thay did in Monmouth when we left thing that
are bulky and grocerizes are very high I paid for sugar coman article 10 cts per pound coffee 20
nails 8 iron 8 the country back of Portland, and up the river for 20 miles is broken and very
heavey timber, the timber is better than you could immagine timber to be it is mostly fir some
hemlock & seder it is not all claimed the soil is verry good and thay have the finest vegetables I
ever saw it is not as big a job to clear land heare as one mite supose, thay do the most of it with
fire thay can burn up the green timber roots and all.

I was sorry when I heard you had sold my land from the fact that buissness is so unsettled that I
do not know what to invest it in I shall be afraid to loane it or lay it out fore stock or land prices
of evry thing is very changeable and money scarce, the scarcity of money is the main cause of
our hard times, the fact of the matter is this the money is sent to the states to buy goods &
grcercys farming materials stock of all kinds pork butter & when the people of Oregon learn to
work more and buy less money will be plenty, stock as a general thing is about half what it was
last fall good cows is worth about 50 dollars each beef 6 to 7 cts on foot hogs 8 cts gross, wheat $1.00 per bushel

Wm Murphy gotin in good time and had good luck thay did not loose but one cow I believe I bought a cow and heiffer of Meril I paid him $50.00 Bob Raglin sold the heiffers that he got Williams for $42.00, the boys are both gone to the mines. - Calvin Wallace was to see us short time since he took a claime last winter and swaped it for another lately he got 3 yoke of oxen and one horse to boot he says he still has a pirty good claime he is neare his brothers about 80 miles above heare, him and some of the other boys that came through with us took a job last winter of choping wood and making rails thay had to camp out he says he took at that time a diare and has not felt well since he thinks he is geting better now, the rest of the boys are in the mines I believe I do not know what thare are doing Jorge Bruner died out thare, I am informed that he killed himself a drinking.

this is cort week I am on the grand jury I am also summonds as a witness grand jury men get $4.00 per day witnesses $1.50 this is good wages but no difference Uncle Sam has to foot the bill I was on the pet jury last cort so you can see that I am of the Behays of Oregon.

it has bin raining off and on for two days and knights its hardly time for the wet season to set in yet it has bin about as seasonable heare this sumer as it is in Illinois of dry season, but it was cool and cloudy last spring that crops aint hardly as good as usial so the old setlers say, thare is plenty raised heare so thare is no need of sending to the states for anything pork not excepted. people are very buisy heare a seeding, I have ten acres of wheat sowed and up I want to sow 4 more I have 5 acres broke up for oats. I killed a panther the other day one of our neighbors dogs treed it close to my house thare is a good many in this country I seldom ever heare of them doing any mischief, I have not heared of them attacking any person big or little. - if you have any of my money I want you to pay for the atlas one more yeare, not that I like the paper so well but because I can heare regular about the thing that are going on about Monmouth dont forget the post office (Bridgeport) dont forget to pay yourself for all the trouble you have bin at for me, and finally dont forget to write often to your old Father it does him a great eal of good to get a letter from any of you, he seldom fails going to the post office the day the mail come in from the states thats every two weeks, you must write to me as often as you can.

Your loving brother

Isaac Smith