

when
and went ↗

David McCURD
Campbell.

Fayton Adams Co.
2ll. BRO.

William James

S. Jose
San Jose

SONS

David Lee
James

To San Jose 1844
To 2ll. Kansas

James Campbell

Salem
ore.?

Charles

S. F

ONE Thomas P. Campbell 6 yrs - B. Kan.
St Marys Ida. Then Back West.
and Vermont.

(9 children)

Katherine L. Campbell
She married Floyd GORMLEY

BORN 1820. Iowa. San Jose first.
New Illinois

Front.
2da.
San Jose

His Father.
REV. J. F. GORMLEY
Christ Church
Went to Pd = 1890's

Lee GORMLEY
Mrs B. Phil POTT

To My Sister

Katherine Campbell Ghormley
and Her Family

The following letters are copies of those written by our grandfathe , David Lee Campbell, to his father David McCord Campbell, residing at Clayton, Adams county, Illinois at the time David Lee and his brothe James came West and se tled at San Jose Californid during the Gold Rush days. These letters are all dated in the early 1850s. A few of the letters are written by James Campbell, and a few by anothe James Campbell, brother of David McCord Campbell, who had settled in Salem, Marion county, Oregon Territory.

The Martha of whom David Lee speaks quite often was his wife, Martha Fruit, our Grandmother and Elizabeth was the wife of James Campbell. The letters from William Campbell, the Uncle William of whom David Lee speaks, were written to his sister, Jane Campbell, our Great-Grandmother. This is where a Campbell married a Campbell-- Jane to David McCord. The Uncle Thomas I believe was another brother of Jane Campbell while the James Campbell of Salem, Oregon, was a brother of David McCord Campbell.

I have tried to copy the letters as originally written and spelled, with perhaps a little more punctuation and paragraphing than in the original letters to make them a little more easily read.

The letters for the most part are written on quite thin paper, folded to make the envelope , and sealed with sealing wax. Most of them are hand cancelled with no stamps, just a "6cents " or "10 cents" written in the upper right hand corner.

Lillian E. Campbell

December 25, 1935.

To David M. Campbell

Clayton, Ill.

From D.L. Campbell

Payson Ill.

Feb. 2_, A.D. 1849.

Dear Father

I am about well of the sore eyes but Martha is quite sick. I fear she has the winter fever. Charley is well. I wrote a letter home last week but I have received no answer. After considering everything over I concluded that it was best to sell the buggy in order to get a good outfit and to save you expense I partially contracted it and my horse to Miller for his wagon and the balance in goods, and we expected to go to town Saturday to make the arrangement if the buggy came this week, but I have heard nothing from you since so that I do not know what to do next. The fact of the business is just so that we must have pistols and we will have to get them made in Quincy and the sooner the better, and if we could get an order in some of the stores we might pay something that way. We will have to have some other things out of the hardware store and I think we may be able to get an outfit and spend as little money as possible.

There is another thing, Mr. Fruit is very reasonably thinks that it is time that I was making some preparations for starting, but as I am doing nothing they suppose you are fitting out at home which is a conclusion that I did not want them to come to. I wish to turn all the money into your hands that I could and by paying for everything that I got by turning the money into your hands save any hard feelings that may arise. But in order to manage the thing right and get well prepared it will require close calculation in our plans and a little more promptness in executing it.

As it is likely that you have not got the buggy fixed for sale you must try and get it ready next week and be here by Thursday night as I shall quit school by that time which will be the first of March. Mr.

Fruit has his sale on the second and third of March and he has a good buggy to sell and I want to trade mine before his is sold. I think I had better go to ~~Quincy~~ Quincy and engage the making of some pistols anyhow. I want it if we could make any trade for them to get three but we must have two anyhow. You must write so that I can get a letter Friday so as to know what to do. Edward had better go to Adamses, have him at work on his boots and shoes, make some arrangements for some cows and get a yoke for them. Let me know whether you have got the old gun fixed, etc. If Martha does not get better soon I may quit this week. Fix fast, the time is most here. The piece in the Whig written by a farmer(sober second thought) was written by Jesse Fruit. He is going to California. If you have the buggy painted, etc. you can come this week. Nothing more I believe.

Farewell

D.L. Campbell.

To David M. Campbell
From D.L. and J. Campbell

Marion City Mo.

April 7th, A.D. 1850.

Dear Fathe :

We at last got on the road and in good spirits and health. The day we left Mr. Fruits we went to Mr. Cadwell's but he thought it would be useless to go to the river as the wind was blowing very hard and it was very disagreeable so we stayed there that day and made us a tent frame all in good style.

The next morning we went to the river but the wind was so high that we could not cross; so we crossed next morning about ten o'clock, which was Saturday. We got about three miles past Palmyra. Corn scarce and hay ditto. We paid 50 cts a bushel for corn. We started from there this morning to get corn and hay. We have not found corn plenty at 35 cts per bushel. We are now about three and one-half miles west of Warren on the Shelbyville road. We got here about 3 o'clock. The road has been very muddy in places. The oxen does pretty well.

Corn will be generally between 40 and 75 cents per bushel and hay from 40 to \$1.00 per hundred lbs. I think we will get along quite safe. It takes about 50 lbs hay to do all the oxen. We shall start and get through Shelbyville tomorrow, it is 13 miles from here. We forgot to say that we got stuck before we got to the river, but it was soon out. We have had nothing like sticking since.

I believe we have nothing more of interest. Yes, the people here says it is 200 miles to St Joseph. We say to all, farewell

D.L. and J. Campbell.

P.S. Send word down to Elizabeth that all is well, tell her to be contented and she will hear from James in a few days.

Monday 8th 2 o'clock

P.S. We are near Shelbyville, the road is tolerable good. I have just met Esquire Beebe. He says corn is from 30 to 50 cts a bushel

until we get within 50 miles of St Joseph, then \$1.50 per bushel.

Tell Elizabeth to write son & you also

Linneus , Linn Co. Mo.

April 13, A.D. 1850.

Dear Father etc.:

We have got about 125 miles from Quincy. We have got along better than I expected. We have all been quite well and have enjoyed ourselves very well. The following is a sort of a journal.

Saturday, April 6th: Cross the river, stayed over night at Dearborn, West of Palmyra, corn 50 cts.

Sunday, 7th: Stayed 3 miles West from Warren.

Monday, 8th: Stayed near Shelbyville at Jacobs. Corn 35 cts.

Tuesday, 9th: Stayed at Mr. Griffons, corn 30 cts.

Wednesday, 10th: Stayed at Bloomington, corn 40 cts., hay 60 per cws.

Thursday 11th: Stayed at the Charitin river, corn 40 cts.

Friday, 12th: Stayed at Mr. Hacklets, corn 40 cts, hay 1.00 per cwt.

Saturday 13th: Stayed at Linndeus, corn 50 cts.

The people of this country are the greatest cheats I have ever seen, almost every man has tried to make us believe that there is any corn ahead short of \$1.00 per bushel, when at the same time we often find it within one mile of the same place. In fact we cannot believe a word they say. We have generally got hay at from 25 cts to 50 cts per cwt. 50 lbs make a pretty good feed. We have spent about \$17 thus far which leaves us about one hundred dollars in all the company. From the best information I can get I think it is likely that corn is worth from 50 to 75 cts at St Joseph.

Sunday morning: We are in this town and did intend to stay here all day but we have to pay too much for corn and it is snowing so we will go on till we come to corn & hay and stay a few days. We have been in company with a mule team from Monroe County this state for several

days. They are very friendly, they have 8 mules to one wagon.

One of them and me are going to ride off the road to find a place to stay.

From D.L. & James Campbell
To: D.M. Campbell, their father

Livingston County, Mo.

7

April 19th 1850

Dear Father:

James and I are well, better than usual. I am in a great hurry, the mail is waiting. At Bloomington I got in company with a mule team headed by Robt. Blackburn. I have been with him ever since

Corn has been scarce for several days so Mr. Blackburn left the road 8 miles and put up at his uncle's. He brought us with him and we got here last Tuesday noon. They are as kind as Mr. Kimrans. We have plenty of hay given to us for nothing; corn cost me 50 cts. I have bought 20 bushels. There is scarcely any corn here. It generally sells at 75 cts to \$1.00.

We have been very luck as all civile men may be. We will stay here till Monday, if the weather is bad we will stay longer. We are within 75 miles of St Joseph. We will take corn with us to feed on. Our team is of the best quality. Although the weather is cold the grass is growing so that we will be able to get along very well.

We will not stop long in St Joseph. We may possibly go up on this side of the river to Old Ft Carney to cross, don't know certain. Write to St Joseph and Old Ft Carney in case we should go there.

I will write again in a day or two in full. We are in good spirits, putting our trust in God who is able to deliver us at all times. Pray for us continually.

Be easy, write soon. Tell Elizabeth to write, James wants to hear.

Farewell

D.L. and J. Campbell

We are between the East and West fork of Grand.

To David M. Campbell

St Joseph Mo.

From D.L. and J. Campbell
(Written by DL.)

Monday, April 29, 1850

Dear Father:

James and I are well and enjoying ourselves reasonably well. I wrote to you from "Levingston county" at Mr. Blackburns where we stayed from Tuesday the 16th until Wednesday and 24th of April. We were as well treated at Mr. Blackburns as we could desire. He furnished us with hay, a comfortable house, done our washing and baked bread enough to last to this place and never charged us one cent. When we left there we had bought corn and he gave us hay enough to last three days. We got within seven miles of this place Saturday where we bought a little corn at a dollar a bushel. We had paid that price on Friday, having no corn we drove into St Joseph on Sunday morning.

We this day passed Mr. Craig , Roberts , etc. about Payson. They were all well and in good spirits except some of E.L. Craigs men who turned back. They turned back before they got within one hundred miles of St Joseph. Mr. Robert Blackburn , a man who had been with us for some time, took mules and rode into town on Saturday where he met a Mr. Williams who was interested in his company. Williams had procured tickets some days before for Blackburn to cross and through the ferry was very much crowded Williams managed to get us both across the river the same evening, so you see we are now out of the United States. James and myself have been over in St Jo most of the day getting what little things we wanted though one thing with another things are very dear here.

But the town and the people and the country:

Taking the last first, I will say that the country from the Mississippi to the town of Linnacres is but very little account. There it begins to get better but more broken. After we crossed Grand River we found some very good country but there is very large quarries of stone

out in the prairie which is a very unusual sight to an Illinoian. There is but little corn or anything else along the road. People say that it was very wet last year, but near St Jo the country looks nearly as rich as it does in Illinois but more broken.

The town of St Joseph has about three times as many houses as Columbus and but few good ones; there is a good deal of business doing here and things are about twice as high as in Quincy; and if you do not stand right over your things and look both ways they will be stole from you. They have stole one of our pick axes. We now keep one fellow on top of our goods all the time. We have got along tolerable well as yet.

Wednesday, May 1st, 1850

When I wrote the above on Monday but we were on the shore where we had no grass so we moved three miles yesterday and camped, stretched our tent, unloaded our wagon and went back to town to buy corn and flower. Corn is very scarce but we managed to get hold of 25 bushels and for which we paid for 20 bu \$1.00 per bushel and 5 bu. \$1.20 per bushel, so we think we have plenty to do us. The grass in this bottom in places is sufficient for cattle to live on where we are now camped. The cattle are feeding on rushes. They are from one to four feet high and as thick as oats.

James has just started out to the bluff where we can get grass and better water than we have here. It is two miles farther from town. We will probably go out tomorrow. We are going into town this evening to get some few little things.

Now the people:

I suppose you have heard that there is fifty thousand people here. Well we were told that before we came into town as well as of the awful ravages of the Cholera, small pox, starvation and the like, but when we

here we could not find the people and was glad that we could neither see nor hear of sickness of any kind but some few drunk men.

On Sunday night there was a man died in his wagon in town of delirium tremens, he had his empty bottle by his side. This is the only death that I have heard of. It is very healthy here.

From the best information I can get there has been about two thousand persons here this spring and seven or eight hundred of them started on the plains, but I have heard that those that started some two weeks since are suffering for the want of grass. Most that are going ~~now~~ are horses and mule teams. Some of the oxen and horses here are in miserable ~~condition~~ order on account of the owners having run out of money before the bottoms were good for grazing. There is plenty of room in the bottom here for all. Another word about the people of St Joseph, they are the greatest liars and scoundrals that I have met with for some time. They go in for the money at all hazards, but they have got all out of men that they will get out of me if no bad luck happens me.

As to money matters we will have about thirty dollars to start with but I have had to keep my self stirring to save as much as possible but now we are about through buying (all but tar) and ~~have~~ plenty to do us as we will have no chance to spend after we leave this.

I don't want you to tell Pemb and Waddell anything about how we are doing inasmuch as I don't think they done right by me when I started. They went to the river with us~~e~~ and we heard some very unfavorable accounts about feed so I asked them to make up our expence money to \$120 but they could not be persuaded that we could make use of it in any way at all so I left them. We have had to throw away their ox bows and make new ones for them as their oxen's necks were very sore

and old Ball and Lion would pull as much as both of theirs, but the oxen are doing very well now and I think we will be among the foremost teams on the road. We do not expect to leave here for a week at any rate till we think the grass has a good start on the plains. We will have a little corn along for a few days.

We overtook Roses & Taylor a few days before we got to town and I expect we will go in company with them. However, we are nearly done looking around and tomorrow we will begin to lookout for a company. I will write again before we start and I think from every appearance that we will be apt to get along well.

I have not had a letter from you but I expect that there is some at the office though it is so much crowded that a man can scarcely get to the office. I received a letter from Mr. Fruit and he said that he had heard from you and you were all well. Our company all are doing very well.

Dear Father, Mother, Brothers and Sisters, we are not alone. Our Father in Heaven has been with us and blessed us so that our path has been quite smoothe and by you and us putting our trust in Him we will find Him ever ready to help in time of need. Write to Sacramento.

Farewell,

D.L. and J. Campbell.

To D.M. Campbell

From D.L. Campbell

Plains
May A.D. 1850

Dear Father:

We are well and on our journey in good spirits.
Grass is plenty, more than we had any idea of finding. We are forty
five miles from St Joseph. We are in a civle company from F_ulton and
other counties in Ill.

The officers are:

James Johnson, captain.

David L. Campbell, presiding officer in camps

J. Johnson, secretary.

Everything is doing better than you have any expectation of.
It is six A.M. and a man is passing for St J_oseph. He will overtake us.
We have sent by him for letters. Do you send word to Martha &
Elizab_heth .

Farewell

D.L. & J. Campbell.

I was a minute writing as you can see

To David M. Campbell
Clayton, Adams county, Ill.

Nebraska District
Monday, May 6 A.D. 1850

From D.L. & J. Campbell
(Written by D.L.)

Dear Father, Mother, Brothers & Sisters:

We are still in good health. I am in better health than I have been for a year and I think that I will in all probability soon be entirely well. We have now got over the worst part of the road and have not found it as difficult as we expected. What difficulties there are come one at a time so that we do not find them hard as one would think. The thing that has given us most trouble has been the bad reports we heard before we came to town but generally when we come to the worst place all has vanished. But I expect we will start from here on the 8th of this month. There has been teams starting ever since we came here and some went four weeks ago but they have suffered by it. There has been several men gone from here out 20 or 30 miles and they say that the grass is sufficient for cattle to live on when they don't work. If we start day after tomorrow we will take about ten days feed with us.

We do not know certain what company we will go with but we are going to go this evening to attend a meeting of emigrants and they have invited us to join them. They are mostly professors of religion and all temperate moral men and I think likely we will go but I will tell you how it comes out.

We are now camped six miles from St Joseph at the bluff on a beautiful stream of clear water where our cattle are doing well on grass and rushes. If you will look on the map at the word Buchanan near the last (a) on that small neck I think you will have our location. It is a nice place to camp and the people are generally civil and friendly.

About St Joseph there is a rough crowd of gamblers and drunkards but many of them will have to go back they having lost all their money.

Our cattle do not eat much corn the last few days so we will have plenty of corn to take along for ten days without buying. I made a mistake about my cows in the letter I wrote the other day, it should have been one gallon each per day. They have mended very fast since and now give from three to four gallons a day.

Tuesday May 7

It rained last night and spit snow this morning and wound up by raining but it has now the appearance of clearing off. The grass looks better since the rain and I think that we need not fear much to start as there is several good bottoms to feed on on either side of the road. James and myself attended ~~to~~ a meeting of emigrants last night. They are mostly from Pike and Fulton counties, Illinois. Their constitution is pretty tite, they prohibit gambling, drinking, quarling, fighting, carrying loaded guns except by the guarda and resolve to keep the Sabbath day by resting and attending worship when convenient. There is a res~~cond~~ and Mr. Johnson, a lawyer and senator from Fulton along and several men who have the appearance of respectability; and I think that it is not very hard to find out men here for they generally show immediately for far as their morals are concerned.

I have joined them and I expect will start tomorrow. We will not travel for several days. The company will be known by the name of "The Mutual protection company of California emigrants."

James and me ar going into town today to look for letters and send these on. We are getting along first rate and have a great deal of encouragement about gold ahead. Our oxen do well except one that has a sore neck but he is about well. It is one of the oxen that Waddell put in but don't say anything to Waddell and Pemberton how we are doing for I have written them a letter giving them some hints that they may take to themselves.

I have written 5 letters to you and Thomas and four to Martha and Mr. Fruit and I don't think of any more to write just now, only to say to Mother not to work too hard but take care of yourself and so of the rest.

I believe that I have not told you that while I was at Mr. Blackburn's I had iron hinges made and hung the hind gate of my wagon and fixed it with shelves so that we have a nice press for our cooking things and we hold up the hind gate with straps at the sides which makes a nice table that enables us to pack our load in before and it does much better and is more convenient.

We will send money back as soon as we get it. Be courageous and don't pay any attention to peoples' mischievous stories for they seem to take great delight in vexing one another. I want you all to put your trust in the Lord for he can and will take care of us at all times. We have enjoyed ourselves quite well since we left home. I commit all things into his hands and am contented.

As to sickness here I have not yet seen a sick man here except with a cold. People are very healthy and I have not yet seen a man in real trouble but what he would swear. Believing that we will all live in the narrow path that leads to life and finally meet to bless each other in the flesh. We bid you all.

Farewell D.L. and J. Campbell

to D.M. Campbell

May 14th A.D. 1850.

From D.L and J. Campbell

Dear Father:

We are well. I sent a few lines back to you the other day by a man who was going to St Jo to get his wagon mended. I also sent by him for letters. He arrived this evening with a letter from you dated April 24th. We are very glad to hear from you so far from home, but we do not get discouraged because we do not hear oftener. We made up our minds before we left home to bear it with fortitude. We are now 115 miles as we suppose from St. Jo. We stayed last night at the Nemila river. It is a beautiful little stream. We have had a tolerable plenty of grass all along. Our cattle have mended considerable since we left St Jo. We have about six bushels of corn yet. We feed a little along to keep them from taking sick. They are doing fine.

We have seen 14 dead horses since we left St. Jo. They are passing us more or less every day but I think we will be to California as soon as they will. We have worked out cows in the lede since we left the river and they are first rate. They pull as true as oxen, they give plenty of milk, say from 2 to 4 gallons per day. As to Mother wanting to see us in camp an hour, we would like to see her very much, but as to ~~the~~ cooking viz baking bread etc. we can turn it off quick clean and of first rate quality. Hickreson is first rate at washing etc. and so we all can be if we try.

I expect to hear some miserable stories at home but in all sincerity I ask you not to give yourself trouble about them for there is 20 falsehoods to one truth told where people think they can do mischief.

We lay by last Sunday. We have an excellent company of civil men. I wrote to you that James Johnson our captain, was a Senator from Fulton. I was mistaken, he was only a lawyer that lived in Vermont,

Fulton City. You see I believed that story too soon. Still I am well pleased.

I will send this letter by a man going back who started to soon and injured his team. He is camped near this. Brother James sent one back yesterday to Elizabeth. It is now late at night and I must close. I will try to write every opportunity and be more full about the country etc. I have written to Martha. I want you to go and see her.

Farewell

D.L. & J. Campbell.

to: D.M. Campbell
From D.L. & J. Campbell

Scotts Bluffs
June 9, A.D. 1850

Dear Father:

James and myself are in good health. We are now at this place laying by for the day. We have had a very pleasant trip this far; but it is pleasant to what people had last year. I wrote a letter to you on the 26th of May '50. I was then near Ft Kearney on Platte river. I passed there on Monday the 28th. At Ft Kearney there is three large framed houses for officers and besides several large sod houses for barracks, storehouses, etc. I should have stated that on Sunday night we had a very hard rain which was the first rain there for sometime. Consequently the grass was not as good as usual for Platte bottoms but still we have by being careful been able to keep our oxen improving ever since we left St. Jo. Dan is in first rate order, and all are doing well. After leaving the fort we came up Platte Bottom and generally found tolerable accommodations by finding good spring water and either some sort of wood or Buffalo chips, which by the way were very plentiful and by having some little dry sticks to start them make a very hot fire, good for baking, boiling etc.

On Friday the 31st of May, being in command at that time, while out hunting grass on a horse I hemed an antelope and runed it into the company so that we succeeded in killing it; it was as nice meas as I ever ate. On Saturday June 1st we crossed the South fork of Platte river, 123 miles from Fort Kearney. It is about a half mile wide.

We forded it in 24 minutes, we all waded. It did not touch the bolster. Nothing more happened for sometime except we had some buffalo meat that other men killed. On the 7th of June we passed the Courthouse Rock which is quite a curiosity; it is very much resembles a large house; viewing it from the road. On yesterday morning we passed the celebrated Chimney Rock. I went up to it

something like 180 feet. I felt tall certain it is probably between 3 and 400 feet high. Last night we reached this place called Scott's Bluff. They are very high and viewed at a distance they appear like a city having beautiful houses with heavy cornice. There is a small store and trading house here.

We have seen a great many new and novel things to us. Brother James and I ascended a bluff today 300 feet above a common level. We could see Mt Laramie 150 miles from here. We have also seen some large pine trees on the bluffs. We have seen some Indians but they are all peaceable. When I see you all I will then be able to tell you of a great many things I had never seen before

Ft Kearney is 325 miles from St Jo and Ft. Laramie 337 from Ft. Kearney. We are in advance of nearly all the ox teams.; What are ahead are very scattering. I have heard by the express trains that there have been a great many crossed the river at various points after we left and there is a heavy crowd behind. Some are rushing to get ahead & thereby killing their teams.

We don't travel on Sunday but some do; we are now ahead of a great many that started when we did and they travel all the time; traders here say that we will be able to land in California in less than 100 days. Our teams need no whipping and yet on such road as we have had they travel 25 miles without the least trouble. You have no idea how fast they can walk. Our whole company have the best of teams.

We spare no pains to assist our cattle to everything possible, our cows have been of great service to us. We milk them in the morning and have plenty for dinner and some left, so at night we milk, put it together and have something new. We boil it and make a kind of thickened milk with corn meal and then eat it with butter. We have about a peck of meal yet, it is first rate, 4 or 5 pounds of butter that mother made for us, it is very good, our preserves are good yet.

All is doing well, we are perhaps very considerable cooks. We stew peaches and ~~potatoes~~ then put some of the preserves into them and make excellent pies and then have them for a dinner. We have everything that could be expected on such a journey and besides all we have just such an appetite as would surprise you; yet we try to keep it in the bounds of reason. Added to that we are in good spirits and have high hopes. I have noticed when wood was scarce James and I always got our share and I think it will be so in California.

We are now 50 miles from Ft Laramie and will reach there Tuesday night or Wednesday morning. Horse Creek is twelve miles from here, we will noon there if nothing happens. You can find Chimney Rock, Scotts Bluffs, Horse Creek & Ft Laramie on the map. Be of good cheer, do the best you can and be assured we will not be found wanting. Finally live religious and God will help us.

Farewell dear relations

D.L & J. Campbell.

P.S. Tuesday 11th: We are now within six miles of Ft Laramie, all doing very well. We have passed about 75 teams yesterday & today. I will leave this at the Fort. We will pass there this evening. I will write every opportunity. Write often to us. From all we hear the probability is that we will make a very quick trip. Farewell

D.L and J.C.