

Yoncalla O.T.
16th Feb. 1852

Dear Sir:

Your letter of _____ has been received. I am pleased and flattered by its tenor, Terrible as you have made yourself to some of the Whigs of Oregon I have no fears that there will ever be any bitterness or asperity in any difference that may exist between us.

I do not consider your youth a crime as it has been charged against you, but in your writings and conduct you betray both the faults and follies of youth as well as the good qualities common to our "days of poetry."

You perceive by this beginning I intend giving you a lecture and had as well make a "clean breast" of it at once. It is a "folly" to charge me with the letters of that excellent old gentleman Peter Plout as you plainly see he is an old man, a French man and lives in the French Prairie - and it is a "fault" to suppose that I should delight to worry my good friend the Sur. Genl. that most urbane, devoted, disinterested, and efficient Whig officer, for to me he has evinced the highest appreciation of my ability as a surveyor, as well as of my patriotism as a citizen, for both I have proofs the most undoubted, for upon our first acquaintance before he was fully aware of my ability, he proposed to give me a contract in the valley including my former residence in Polk, it being open country and "plain sailing" any fool could survey it and make money at it. But in the mountains west of Portland and Oregon City the case is different. There it will require the greatest care and attention to make correct surveys, and the operations must be so slow and laborious that it will be next to impossible for the work to be done without top to the deputy. In these mountains Gen. Preston makes me a standing offer of surveying - while the district promised me is given to some of his less skilled or more needy friends who came out with him. Could he give stronger proof of his confidence in my skill as a surveyor or than to give me the most difficult to do, or in my patriotism than to suppose I would do it at my own expense? Having convicted you of a fault and a folly I have next to charge you with an indiscretion. You tell me you are a friend of the Sur. Gen. and I had been hoping to establish that relation with you myself but if you serve all your friends as you have him, I would much rather remain as I am only an acquaintance. For as an acquaintance you have taken the pains to polish up the little articles I have sent you for publication until they shine in all the bright effulgence of orthography, syntax and prosody, and if by chance I have written a silly or improper thing you carefully leave it out so that I have actually become famous by your labor, but for your friend you have printed in your last paper two proclamations, that will do him more injury in the esteem of the public than the worst Phillipic Pierre Plout or even yourself could have against him. I ask you to give them an attentive perusal and tell me in your next letter or more properly paper for others are at a loss as well as myself what Gen. Preston means in his explanation of the survey's? If he means anything or explains any thing it is entirely too subtle for my understanding - to me it is all jumble, jumble, jumble, simple men think more simply and plainly, than the great is perhaps the reason to such his meaning is hidden.

But the following sentences are as pregnant with wrong to the people of Oregon as they do violence to the language in which they are written.

"To prevent loss of time on the part of the settlers I would suggest that when they fill their notifications they be prepared to make proof of citizenship if citizens by birth.

"If naturalized" &c. this and the next sentence are proper in intention had they been properly expressed, but "If married, furnish a marriage certificate or make proof of marriage." Now sit, I would wish to know (and this I ask in the most serious and earnest manner) what kind of proof will be required to prove citizenship by birth? or of marriage? Now you know the people of Oregon are all emigrants from distant states, many of them entire strangers, to the rest of the inhabitants. The register of their births if any were ever kept are in a distant land, and many of them ore than half a century old. How are these to be obtained? Or if obtained in the absence of witnesses. How is it to be established that it is the register of the birth of the individual who presents it? and the same difficulties obtain in the case of marriage certificates. If positive evidence of these facts are required the foreigners are on a footing infinitely better than native citizens for they have their papers while we have not. To take my own case unless I could myself like Falstaff testify that "I was born about 3 o'clock in the morning" in old Kentuck I fear it would go hard with me (as my mother is dead) to prove that I was born at all, and as to marriage my old wife God bless her after living with me for 20 years and being the mother of a baker's dozen of children must at this be called upon to prove she is an honest woman! The Sur. Genl had better look out for broomsticks in his next tour through the country. I insist that on this subject you should not be silent - if positive evidence is required on these subjects which I think has never heretofore been required it is not only odious but oppressive to the people, if such evidence is not required the people have a right to know the kind that is. You must call upon your friend for this explanation yourself for you have offended Pierre Piout and I think the old gentleman will be heard of no more in this country. Excuse me for writing on half sheets I did not know I was doing so until I went to turn over - be a good boy and for God sake print no extracts from this letter.

Very much your acquaintance,

Jesse Applegate.

Young
Asahel Bush esq.
(Editor of the Statesman.

P.S. I shall be mortified by being obliged to forward you the names of several new subscribers. I much fear Unpqua too is going the "way of all mankind" the crazy wretches.

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possible for the work to be done without loss to the
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