



William W. Bristow (1826-1874)

William W. Bristow was born in Kentucky and migrated to the Oregon Territory in 1848. He taught in the first school located in Lane County in 1850 or 1851. Bristow was a lawyer and served as Justice of the Peace and postmaster. Bristow was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention in 1857. He was elected a State Senator in 1858, 1870 and 1874. Bristow was a Mason and in 1865 owned a mercantile business, Bristow & Company, in Eugene, Oregon. He was also a co-founder of the University of Oregon.²

Letters to Bush from 1855 to 1862

Bristow's letters express his opinions on the tension between settlers and local tribes. Bristow wanted to force the resignation of Governor Lane and kept Bush apprised of local political factions, structure and gossip. Boyd wrote about a candidate's complaints about Bush and the resignation of a senator that both favored. Bristow asked Bush to use his influence and political maneuvering to defeat Governor Lane and Delazon Smith. Bristow commented on the difficulty of rebuilding the Democratic Party after the Civil War.