Great Salt Lake City

January 29th 1855

Mr. John Tobin,

Sergt. E Troop 1st Dragoons.

Fort Lane, Oregon Territory

Dear Brother,

Your letter to my son dated Dec. 5th, arrived duly to hand on the 28th inst. from which I am happy to learn of your good health and intentions.

I answered your letter to me per last mail which I presume you will get if you have not received it already. The weather is now fine having had a few weeks of very good sleighing and steady winter; it has now dried off about the streets and the upper part of town.

They are now laying stone in the Temple foundation and our Public works are steadily progressing.

The Legislature adjourned on the 19th inst. The Social Hall is occupied with Theatre and parties about as it was last winter. Although quite a number of the last winter stage performers have gone away upon missions.

We also have evening recreations, religious, scientific and other useful associations. The Indians in the Territory are peaceable at present, but the Sioux, Chyennes, Cl---blacks, and it is said the Camanches, are hostile. and refuse to let traines longer pass through their country, the consequence is we have no eastern Mail. A party of four, of which Charles <W.> Kinkead was one, were all killed except himself in November last while going down below Larimia, since when we have received but one mail from that route. The California Mail comes now quite regularly. Adams & Co. Express has also been extended to this place from California.

I feel glad to learn of your prosperity in being advanced to the higest station of trust and honor possible to obtain from the ranks in the U. S. Army, a post I will say of credit as well as responsibility far before many of those holding commissions, and one in which you can improve your natural abilities for systematic business habits. you have a good opportunity to improve as also to test your integrity in overcoming evil with which you are surrounded; the temptations to do wrong are doubtless many, and in youth are very strong; yet inasmuch as you overcome and faithfully discharge the trust reposed in you, It will be a satisfaction to you through life, and prove to your associates and others, that a man can pass through the ordeal of the U. S. Army and still be a man, still be respectable and not fall away into that low degree of dissipation, recklessness and licentiousness, which almost universally prevails among that now unfortunate class. To be a soldier is to be a nothing, say worse than nothing; a some kind of beast of prey; this is the way it is looked upon by the People at large, and the policy of the government is calculated to pruduce just such an influence; this is all wrong and one reason of the service being held in such low estate, how much greater then will be your exaltation when you shall have passed through unscathed by its blightening and withering touch. Again, you are a Saint of the Last days; and it is gratifying to me to know that you have so far honored your calling in this capacity as not to have public confidence withheld from you, it argues to me that you have not only risen above the recklessness of a devil may care soldiers life, but also above the commonly existing prejudice against us as a people. Your corps at least will know that being a Mormon does not disqualify you from being a true & faithful soldier.

A word to the other boys who with yourself have enlisted in the cause of truth and have not moreover had quite so good fortune as yourself in being promoted, consequently not quite so much to encourage them, inasmuch as they hold out faithful and overcome evil they shall in no wise lose their reward. I shall be happy to see them and you when you shall have accomplished your period of enlistment and received an honorable discharge.

Praying God my Heavenly Father that you may be preserved pure and holy in health and strength for the purpose of subserving his cause upon the earth.

I Remain as ever

Your Friend and Brother

In the Gospel of Salvation

Brigham Young