

January 10th 1838

Dear Parents This is to inform you that the boys and myself are unusually well, and hope this may find you and the neighbours enjoying the same bliss. I wrote to you the first of December from Orleans. At that time I was quite sick and somewhat alarmed as the yellow fever had not long subsided, but I took some medicine and soon recovered. Consequently, I gave you but a short account of my journey. We left Orleans on the 7th of December and thru 2½ days saw a storm arise and we were totally demasted. We cast anchor though twenty miles from land & rode out the gale 48 hours. There was not a person hurt nor a life lost. The wind shifted again in our favour and we rigged a jury mast of our fore boom & made sail with our fore sail, which was all the rigging or sail that was saved, & after all the narrow escapes which we encountered, we arrived safely at Galveston on the 17th. We were detained there more than three days in the custom house & then took passage on the steamboat Sam Houston & arrived at the Capitol on the 23rd. I found everything here in quite a prosperous situation. The city has improved surprisingly. Congress adjourned the day before I arrived. The boys and myself commenced working the 25th at \$2.50 per day each & boarded. We worked two days during which time we built a house from the ground up. Now comes the news of war. Our hopes then were blasted. All kinds of business stopped, nothing but confusion and preparation for war was the cry (the report was that there was 8000 Mexicans on the frontier). I refused volunteering myself until the report was confirmed and the same was done. I then concluded as I had an interest in the country it was my duty to defend it. Accordingly I gave in my name as volunteer & began to equip for myself for a march, when news arrived the next day the alarm was false. The company was then disbanded except one, which was organized & took up their line of march thru 2 of this int. for the western frontier and there to be stationed to guard it against either against Mexicans or Indians. I can't say that there was much alarm amongst the inhabitants, for the report was not generally believed - though there had to be some preparation made out of respect to the Gentlemen who informed them, though it turned out to be false. The boys and myself all the while doing nothing and paying \$8.00 per week board which made them very uneasy & myself also. I advised them to go to Washington and I gave them a letter to Mr. Morrell & they left on the 28 of December. Mr. Morrell arrived here yesterday & informed me that William stopped at Grocery retreat 15 miles this side of Washington & engaged there with a farmer at \$25.00 per month. Richard pursued his journey to Washington & gave my letter to Morrell & he employed him until I go up myself. I have remained here waiting for a waggon to take our trunks to Washington - distance of 70 miles - When I left Baltimore I bought Sundary of articles to the amount of \$100. which I did not inform you of as I thought it was time when I sold them. I also bought provisions in Orleans to the amount of \$100. which I have sold at 100 percent - after I sold my provisions, which consisted of Butter & Cheese they became low - I then laid out my money in the same articles provisions are now getting high again. After all narrow escapes & misfortunes we have been fortunate, with what money we have now & putting the things I have now on hand at the lowest price we shall have \$100 more than the day we left home clear of passage to this place & other expenses on the way which was \$200 -

I shall send the trunks tomorrow in Mr. Jordens Waggonry & from the present prospects I shall sell out & leave for Washington on Saturday. William herd from Charly Leveirs and he was quite oneary when he herd I had left for the States as I had his bond for his head Eighty. Mr. Jordan informed him that he had received a letter from me & that I intended to return to the County and clear his land out of office. he was then perfectly sattisfide - he has also been informed that I am in the Country - I have subscribed for this paper for you, knowing that you would like to hare of the affairs of the Country. I have also sent you the land law by which you can see who is entitled to land in this Country & who is not, also when headrights stopped in this Country. I shall be entitled to my headright but - you will see in this act - the boys will get nothing., I had your paper directed to Boston not knowing whether thare was any postoffice at Hunting Creek, but if the office is permanent thare you can inform me and I will change the arrangement. its not worth while to inform you anything about the location of land inasmuch as you can see the whole precidings in the law which I hope you may receive. The Editor informed me that his Subscribers in the United States received thare papers regular, you are the Second Subscriber in the States & the first on the Eastern shore. I have arranged the transportation of this paper to Orleans for twelve months. You will have to pay from thence to Boston - I have presented my discharge to the Secretary of War & have received my land scrip for the same. I have all my business arranged for the opening of the land office. agreeable to the act past June last \$500000 has been ishued which are called promisyary notes the money is passing dollar for dollar all over the Country & she is paying off her soldiers and all other public debts - this money is also redeemable in 12 months with 10 per cent interest. further no other shall be received for duties except gold and silver. I have seen nor herd nothing from Dr. Clow since we parted at Baltimore. William Burgy is here & informed me he arrived here in August. You will direct your letter to Washington Washington County. When I go to Washington I shall write to you again, & shall expect you answer this amediately. I have taken up the most of my letter in informing you of my own affairs & the affairs of the country & have said nothing about the boys. I can only say in this, that that they are very much pleased with thare exchange. I will attend to thare writing to you as well as myself. I have nothing more at present, but read this to My dear Mother and tell her the boys have listened to my advice as a father, been obedient as brothers & when we talked of her we shed tears of affection together. in short my soul has been a pleasure given but wishing to my only brother & little sister & to all my enquiring frineds as to if we should ever meet again I hope we may never part in a flood of tears as we did at Arthur Johns, which I never, never, never never never shall forget. I remain your son Peter J. Willys

Envelope: Mr. Short A. Willys
& Family
Caroline County
Maryland

Houston, TR
January 10/38

Boston post.

Received 10th Mar
1838