

*Letter by John Hemsley written January 26, 1868 to William and Jane Hemsley  
(Transcribed as it was written)*

*Dear Brother and Sister,*

*It is a long time since I heard from you until to day I heard through Mr. Thomas Potts who gave me your address. Mr. John Douglass went back to the states two years ago I told him then to inquire for you. He done so and wrote me he could not find you or your whereabouts. Now I should like to know all about you what you are doing and how you are doing? How many of a family you have what their names are and how old they are? I should like all your likeness if it's possible to get them I would send you mine now if I thought you would get my letter all safe. How I long to hear from you once more. I did not know what had become of you since the War. I suppose you know of my loss long before this but thinking you do not I will now proceed to tell you. In January 1865 I went alone up to the Gold Mines of Idaho territory leaving my wife and boy in this City in June of the same year I sent for them to come to me. They started on the 27<sup>th</sup> of July from San Francisco to come by sea to Portland, Oregon and thence to Idaho to me. On the 30<sup>th</sup> the Steamer went down and all hands but 19 were lost. All that was near and dear to me on this earth was lost to me forever. On how I do miss them my boy was over six years old when he was lost. I cannot now tell you how lonely I feel. Oh how I do miss them. I do not think I ever was made to live alone. I am almost crazy now when I think of it. I lost a true and loving wife and an idolized and worshipped little boy. Now Dear Brother and Sister I want you to write to me of course you know our beloved and good brother Thomas Hemsley died January 26 1866 the has gone to the land of rest. I want to know all our ages both you and the children. I want to know how old Robert is. I think I can see him now as he was when I was with you. Also Franney how is she? She must be over twenty years old now. Tell me all the news you have. How you got along in war times. In 1863 & 4 I was Sergeant at Arms in the Senate of this State. This winter I am employed about the Legislature. About one month from now I go up to Idaho again where you must address your letters to me. My address is John Hemsley Placerville Boise County Idaho Territory. I expect to receive a letter from you as soon as I arrive there which will be about the middle of March. John Dougless is married again he is now living in Virginia State of Nevada. Anthony Clark's daughter came out here over one year ago. She got married and has a fine son. Clark is unmarried yet. Women are very scarce out here yet is very hard to find a good wife if you do want one. I suppose you have plenty of widows there since the war. I have little more that I can say to interest you. Till I hear from you and see all your pictures Oh do send them as soon as you can. I wish they were here now so that I could see them and relieve me from my loneliness. Is it healthy where you live? Do you like the country? Have you lived there long? I do not know that I will ever come back to the States again or not. Till they get the railroad done. I would like to see you before you die though.*

*So Good By and God bless you, Your Brother John Hemsley*