



Dunvegan. Peace River N.W.S.
Sept 2. 1879

Dear Father,

I now date, as you see, from Dunvegan, having arrived here via the Peace River Pass on August 16. Since that date I have been a round of nearly 300 miles to the southward. The journey from Ft. McLeod through the Pine Pass was pleasant enough, though slow, owing to the heavily wooded character of the country. We travelled for some ~~more~~ days down the Peace River in the water, but it became too deep to ford, when we again took to the banks. We found Dunvegan about a degree of longitude too far west as compared to Peace River, which made our journey so much the longer. Captain McLeod & Gordon came down the Peace River, arriving here about the first of August. I met McLeod travelling west on the trail toward Pine R., & heard from him what was going on. Arrived at Dunvegan on Saturday evening, & knowing that I could not meet Captain & McLeod here for final arrangements till the end of the month. I got all preparations for two small expeditions made, McConnell, with Mr Gordon, who

was waiting here, going to the north; myself southward, where, as already stated I had found a good piece of country, striking the Snake River south of the 35th parallel, & finding a canoe there cached, took possession & descended the Snake for more than 80 miles to its mouth. On the river there are good sections of the Cretaceous rocks, & I know know more about them than I could have learnt from weeks spent on the plateau. Lamination boulders are scattered all over the country here, nearly to the base of the Rocky Mountains, while the Quartzite drift is as well marked here as further southward, & its origin in the Rocky Mountains now quite definitely ascertained.

Here is a great extent of very fertile country both to the north & south of the Peace River, at least as far east as Lesser Slave Lake. The soil is very fertile, & there are extensive areas of prairie & lightly wooded aspen country, with very fine feed for Cattle. Summer fruits, however, occur. We have experienced several in August. Wheat, however, ripens at Hudsons Hope, Denman, & Lesser Slave Lake; the latter at the general height of the plateau, or nearly 2000' above the sea.

The whole party is now collected at this place, & we have just

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Completed making out a statement with regard to
Railway lines & the general character of the country, which
Mr Gordon took to late to Edmonton & telegraphed thence to
Mr Fleming. Mr G. leaves today, & tomorrow or next
day Mr Ceccher & his nephew Major set out on their
return to British Columbia by the Pine River Pass, taking
with them most of the pack animals & men. Mr Good &
I will then each be fitted out with a small travelling party
to pursue investigations of this part of the country as
long as the weather permits. Sometime in October we hope to
turn forward from Edmonton or Fort Pitt, & may reach
the East in time for Christmas or a little before. How we
are to divide up the country between us is not yet fully talked
over, as Mr G. is anxious to get away, & letters must
be written at once.

We have almost taken possession of the Hudson Bay Port here,
using one of the rooms to write & spread maps in, though
our tents form a line on the bank of the Peace River at a
short distance. The packers & men severally form a second
encampment on the opposite side of the stream.

I have been quite well all Summer, & in fact feel better than when I left home, though rather tired out with travel when I got back here last Saturday evening. McCornell proves quite useful & improves. We have heard no late news nor received any letters since coming to this side, & as Brown & Tappan who were to meet us between here & Edwinton seem not likely to get in this season in time to do any good, it is quite problematical when we may get a mail. On my own Cores, however, to this ordinary newspaper news of "Waterloos & Peterboos" & of things which are on here in a quiet systematic way of their own. The H.B. Company still subsist mostly their people on fresh or dried meat & for that purpose keeps a number of hunters out, who send in what they kill. Moose & bear are quite abundant about here — we have seen dozens of the latter — so that every day or two sees something coming in. Half the amount of labour spent in cultivating the ground would produce twice as much food, with a far greater degree of certainty. The H.B. Co., & Taltus Fernier, a nunquam, have gardens here in which wheat, barley, potatoes & most ordinary garden vegetables are thriving. Beans, & Cucumbers & squashes are

been cut down by frost some days ago. The two last
were tried experimentally. Beans grow long enough to ripen seed
every year.

This brings me back to the Summer fruits. I should much
like to collect any information that can be had as to
the effect of them on the cultivation of grain or in other
countries, as it will enter largely into the estimate of
a great part of this north-western country. If you
know of any published facts on the question I should much
like to have them at hand on my return.

It is quite impossible to enter into details of our journey and
the various adventures at present, & so must conclude by
sending love to all at home, & signing myself

Yours affectionate Son
George

QmD
John / 19