

(7)  
set-lured over in  
a canoe, but his

"dent-" & two of  
his companions.

They latter to a large  
hole long & narrow

give the rest of the  
Leach R. Expedition  
at present.

Your loving son  
~~George~~

Victoria B.C.

April 28. 1876

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My dear Mother,

Since my return from Leach R

I have been occupied with writing  
up notes & office work chiefly,  
but yesterday & today have been out  
again, trying to do what I can to  
the working up of this region before  
leaving it.

I left here for Leach R last Sunday  
week, & returned last Sunday afternoon.  
Leach R is not much more than 20  
miles from here but rather difficult to  
get at. I got a packer, Indian, &  
Forre, drove out to Goldstream, about  
ten miles, & camped for the night at

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the end of the ~~trail~~ Road. The weather had been quite fine & tempting for some days before, but on this particular day it showered at pretty frequent intervals, sometimes rain & sometimes sleet. The next morning, getting up early, we found the ground covered with white frost, & a thin skin of ice on the water, we were also rather discouraged to learn that two runners who had wintered at Seach River had the day before tried to get in with a mule to carry out their blankets, boots &c, but had been unable to do so on account of snow! Horry comes so far however, I thought it must be pretty bad to make us turn back. From Goldstream to Seach R is an old pack trail, through deep heavy woods most of the way. In we went, &

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Severe enough, when the track had ascended to a considerable height among the mountains we began to find patches of snow, & the whole appearance of even the bare ground was such as to show that the snow had just left it. The first snow was near a place called the "Summit-House", an old log shanty an Inn of better days, now with half the front store in & the chimney lumbered down, but with a conspicuous notice requesting people not to damage the property. We had about three miles of ground covered with wet, but pretty hard snow, often over two feet deep. We trudged through it not without difficulty, & some danger to the horse in passing over bridges with broken planks concealed by ~~the~~ snow, & finally arrived at "Leach Town" on Leach R. about 3 P.M.

Here were a number of shanties standing here till last Autumn, when a fire swept through, destroying all but two. Imagine a little flat at the junction of two small but rapid rivers, & hemmed in by mountains, or at least good sized hills, stony with pines & spruces. The flat itself surrounded by large tall firs, some living & others ~~many~~ dead & blackened, & still covered with gigantic stumps, shrubbery & young timber growing up on former small clearings, here & there traces of man's former presence in the shape of broken tools & crockery, but also, & more especially broken bottles, broken bottles & piles of broken bottles, square & round everywhere. Imagine on the flat, or what remains yet not washed away or turned into a ~~stone~~ boulder heap during the search for

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gold, seeing these unfortunate people wandering about looking for a level place to pitch a tent; & imagining this you will see how Leach & the expedition. After settling down I went off looking at the rocks &c. There seemed no sign of any inhabitants still remaining, but just about dark, wandering about near the camp, I noticed something moving about among the stumps, or rather as it seemed to me sliding along in a certain direction, something that looked like a man, but seemed to be preternaturally tall, & to be carrying some large dark object on its shoulder. I never before saw anything so much like a specter. I watched it - Dods rapidly along towards one of the Cabans yet standing, but could hear no

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noise, when — thump, immediately  
the sound of someone throwing down a  
heavy log, & in about ten seconds —  
"Hallo! who's here?" & enters into the  
light of the Camp fire the Ucluse of  
Leach R, or at least so I called him.  
A rough looking miner, bearded & ragged,  
clothes now pretty much all of a colour  
whatever they may originally have been, pants  
ending below in fringes the result of long  
wear, boots decidedly denuded, &  
fat-lattered. "How de do" I said "I  
I've come in here to have a look at the  
rocks & country generally & I'd advise you  
can give me some information about  
it—" "Will" he said "I've been in Australia  
California, Cape of Good Hope, England, Canada,  
all over New Zealand, in Natal, Mexico  
& other places & I've seen an awful sight  
of men — ahem, but tracking this river now

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If that man Scott was here he might tell ye that he set  
good prospects here or there or praps on the peninsula of one  
of these here mountains, but then he's the worst —  
dead beat liar I ever see — ahem — well there's a man we  
call "Doc" well we went for to prospect the upper part of this  
river — it was lit'nin — well we went — ahem — a — & on the  
first day we met two bears just crossing a creek — a — this  
gum I suppose her age any in the country, but is for throwin a  
ball she has the best of mental in her & is a condemned  
Prussian Musket & what do you think I paid for her?  
— a — well just one dollar, ye see she was the last of '98  
Afterwards his name turned out to be Lewis, & he was of  
great use, as I got him for a small sum to show me  
about the country which he knew well. His method of speech  
however as you will see was rather inconsequential, & I think  
he has become slightly cracked from living so much alone.  
Sometimes in going down a long hillside he would fire a  
whoop, swing his Prussian Musket — round his head, &  
so capering over the logs with his legs flying in all directions  
like a ballet dancer.

The packer I had was also a peculiar fellow with the well known  
name of Bob Ridley. He had once been a sailor in the navy  
& has voluminous yarns about Sampson's battles in the old  
Chinese war, & with pirates in Borneo. He was also with  
Fremont — & some of the earlier explorers of California, but ~~was~~  
~~was~~ before the discovery of gold, & had been up gold mining at Placerville  
but however "struck it rich" & on his way down from the latter place