

1881

Int to Leod. Aug 15/81

I went on trip with horses + X  
to get flower  
specimens

Mrs Harrington

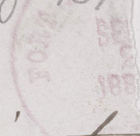
Wallbrae Place,

Upper University Street

Montreal

Canada.

Aug



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Fort MacLeod  
Aug. 15. 1881

My dear Anna,

Though I am too proud  
to write constant correspondence, & I  
find no less than four of your letters in  
the bundle I have received since being in these  
parts, I fear I have been remiss in my  
duty regarding to you. I have just this  
afternoon returned to Macleod from a trip  
to the South & West, & here I am glad to  
say I have received your kind letter of  
July 8th, from Metic, with other news  
all members of the scattered family save  
Evay, whose sickness accounts for her  
silence. Hope she is quite better long ago.  
In coming up the Missouri I made a  
few sketches, but without any marked  
success or pleasure, for I succeeded very  
badly in representing what I saw, & in  
accidentally turning up some of my old

B. Columbia sketches in one of my books  
 was disrupted to find some evidence of  
 'genius' in them than any I have done lately  
 Sketching cannot be done mechanically or  
 automatically, it requires some claw, &  
 I don't think I will try any more till I feel  
 the coming on, if I ever do. To begin with I am  
 so busy now, from morning till night, & have  
 so much riding & climbing & what not  
 that my ideas have not time to focus themselves  
 on sketching, or if accidentally concentrated  
 from hot a chin & cold point. Then when  
 any they must be represented the Camera is  
 always at hand. I am camped here on  
 the bank of the Old man River, about half a  
 mile from Fort Mac Leod, & have with  
 determination before this letter before turning  
 in. The night is clear & almost cold, &  
 starlight, outside, while the rippling of the river  
 makes a pleasant sound as its clear  
 blue water flows on toward the Saskatchewan,  
 reminding one of "Streams which sweep or  
 slow, draw down Alonian hills & flow

the dust of continents to be" - or something  
of that sort. The horses are searching  
what grass they can find on the other side  
of the tent. Three of the men have gone  
into town to see a good time of it, while  
the Cook remains in Camp. McConnell,  
with the back-board, a horse & man  
left this morning from Camp on the waterway,  
eighteen miles from here, to go round by  
Kips to see some rocks there. He will be  
in here tomorrow night, probably.

During the tent trip I had a rather pleasant  
expedition along the base of the Rocky Mts,  
westward. I had two men, two pack horses,  
& riding horses. We were gone a week, returning  
to Camp on Waterston Lake. Traveled chiefly  
through a partly wooded country with plenty  
brooks & small lakes, climbing over small  
gray spurs from the main range town  
& thence. We had a small tent along but  
were pitched it, but spread our blankets

just where it looked most comfortable  
 on the grass or under the trees. The weather  
 proved fine with the exception of one night,  
 when rain pattering down awakened me. I  
 got up & drew the waterproof sheet out from  
 below the blankets & spread it on top, & so  
 spent the remainder of the night comfortably  
 enough. After getting back to the lake, when I  
 met Mr. Conwell, we took a run up into the  
 mountains, chiefly for the purpose of procuring  
 alpine plants, which are now fast in perfection  
 of spring beauty. Camped just next in a dense  
 grove of spruce with a roaring fire, luxury  
 unknown to the plains. Took horses to summit  
 of pass next morning & then separated, Mr. C  
 going southward along the ridge, while I went  
 northward. It was a blustery morning, but  
 I got a couple of photos, which I hope may  
 turn out well. Climbed up onto a peak about  
 1000 feet above the pass, from which a perfect  
 panorama of snowy peaks in all directions  
 kind blowing madly & seem to go straight through  
 me. Took a lot of bearings & made sketch of

neighboring mountains. Then came down  
again collecting plants in route. The present  
of the mt. I was on looked downward in a  
nearly sheer cliff yet about 1000 feet or more,  
with a green valley with a little lake surrounded by  
patches of old snow drifts in the bottom, forming  
source of one branch of the brook in the pass.

Ran. flames yellow. Looked of fore behind  
some scrubby pines, whirling excitedly in all  
directions, but chiefly into ones eyes. Squatted  
in what I judged most possible & proceeded  
to press plants for an hour or more.

About 5 P.M. sheets of snow, whitening some  
of the higher mountain tops. Horses looked  
most miserable tired up & tried scraping  
about among the stones in stray blades of grass  
as glad as ourselves to start back to camp  
on lower level, where snow found rain  
after 10 P.M. by at 5 this day. Good night.

Aug 17.

Then I am of an ice still at the head  
but with very imperfectly making an  
early start away tomorrow morning

Thus I still have very great pleasure  
 in doing as why is so tiresome as  
 waiting about plains like this, arranging  
 supplies, settling difficulties with men,  
 sweeping houses or so. As to reading  
 I have done really none this summer,  
 scarcely open a book. Then returned  
 a single word of Victor Hugo, which  
 has remained among my baggage  
 in store here, but that now is  
 littered with papers, another mail  
 box just arrived but to tell you  
 the truth I feel my little interest in  
 the news, out here it seems of little  
 consequence. I will bundle them up  
 & take a look now & then at them as  
 I travel, we generally stop two or three  
 hours at noon for lunch & let the  
 horses feed & I sometimes have a few  
 spare minutes. I am going to write  
 a few lines to Father in case through  
 any chance this several letter news happens



to Miss Cary. I had a letter from  
 R. with which I had on a very fine  
 but do not want to write to him  
 now as I should have to tell him  
 what I think about his journey his  
 trip to England, which would not  
 be pleasant. He seems to want  
 some new sensation very severe  
 at someones expense, he will  
 probably manage to get two or three  
 trips across the Atlantic out of  
 facter ~~and~~ of the last more, at  
 a time when they can be ill afforded.  
 I am very sorry to see by papers  
 just received that Willie Redpath  
 is dead, it must surely have been  
 very unexpected as he always  
 seemed such a strong athletic young  
 fellow. It must be a great  
 sorrow to Mrs R, & other

8.

Members of the family. Tell  
Eric I bought a pair of  
boots for him from an  
Indian, but I fear his feet  
may have grown so large before  
I get back that I may have to  
give them to Edith, in which  
case he will be able to see the  
hard work on them much more  
easily, & to greater advantage.  
I am going tomorrow to Bow  
River County met; but will  
detail plans in letters to  
John. Kind regards to  
Bernard. I have letters  
from John & Maria from

Dalhousie delict July 27th,  
which is the ordinary time,  
for this region.

I am affectionately to the  
Yours