

En Route August 7th 1838

My very worthy old Friend

It affords me indiscribable satisfaction, to have received both your letters of the 25th of May 1837 & of the 20th of the February following. Thanks God, the prevalent story that was circulated, I am happy to find, is like many others founded in fiction. It was indeed a source of consolation to me, as well as my family, to learn of your welfare, thanks to kind Providence for granting us an ample share of that inestimable blessing.

Until I reached Norway House, the 11th of the anticipated leave of absence, but it must be deferred till '39, according to the settlement taken, then if God spares me, I shall take a turn to the civilized World, on Furlough, but whether I will cross the Atlantic or not, is uncertain, tho many reasons urge me to it, in the first instance, with reference to my son Johnny, I feel desirous of giving him a year or two of schooling, in England or Scotland, to complete his Education, which I think hardly attainable where he is - another cause no less weighty, is the self satisfaction of seeing an esteemed & respected friend, but that I can ^{not} accomplish without particular instructions of your advice, neither can I direct my letters with any certainty of their

In September last, to my no small surprise, who should I meet one day as I was passing the East Gate at St. Anne's Lake, but my oldest son - I found on his way to McPh. R. to superintend the Canal, in the Canal Company's project of establishing St. Anne's Lake, to reach places they were to have some in a course of the present summer. - My dear old friend - He

He is a stout well built young man, and am happy to add, has escaped
the failing that so many of his countrymen have imbibed. — I hope that
he has reached the age of discretion, I hope he will avoid those propensities
that the salesmen of so many Mr. Ballenden & family of Marryat House

their reaching you, this very Circumstance precludes
writing so fully as I would do, was I certain of a direct
Conveyance — therefore I beg of you, to give me your
address, so as to avoid mis carriage of letters, and
that I may rest assured of hearing at least once
annually, & oftener if possible, of one whom of all
others, I would be very sorry to forget his Correspondence,
it will never be willingly on my part be un-
answered for. — After what I wrote you on a former
occasion, I dare say, you would not have expected,
that I would have speedily succeeded to an extended
Charge, however, such is the case, for last year, Mr. C.
Smith went down, and the charge of Attabasca
devolved on you, trustable servant, I spent the last
Season at Fort Chipewyan, J. Butcher, by appointment
went to G. Slave Lake - R. River, as the year before,
our success in Trade would have been very good
had G. S. Lake Returns been equal to last year, or
even the preceding one, but unluckily it hardly
came up to the half of the last years amount, still
the District shows an amount of 10,634 for the British
Market, all saleable Furs. — other parts of the Northern
Department, will also experience a depression in their
on Outfit 37, and the Current Outfit is not likely to
be turned to better advantage, letting alone, the effects
of a bad season, such as the last, there is still a much
greater evil lurking about, i.e. the small Pox, it has
commenced awful ravages among the Plain tribes
in the

We have the whole quantity made to each of two, and it may return
from my intended parent, & may be collected to in the foregoing
Rivers - which may mean one of the following - in direct or
indirect - they will be made for me then then then then, to the
Barage, by the way. J. M. E.

Saskatchewan, & very late accounts from Carlton, states it
to be among the Beaver Hill Creek, as yet we know not of its
having proceeded Northwardly, but a rumour to that
effect was circulated in the early part of the last winter
and the natives, as is generally the case on such occasions,
felt sensibly alarmed, & inactively resorted therefrom,
and will last until the cause is removed, & vaccination
has been resorted to, as the most effectual means of
avoiding the Contagion -

My winter residence
will be Dumfries, it is considered expedient that I should
see most of the West fall & Spring, which I do not is very
proper; but it is attended with inconvenience, arising
from my being so much out of the way, when the
Expresses pass and re-pass - Mr Campbell is now.

Mr Chipewyan to reside there both winter & summer ^{the} till
with three men, the other parts are allowed only two each
& nine & twenty including a Guide is allowed for the summer
Voyage, with the strongest injunctions against employing
any natives to assist in the transport over P. la P. - I have
adhered thereto, and in ten of keeping to the letter of the law.
our Boats are deep, but River forges the Landing that each have
we have several days advance on the last year, yet
I am not very certain of reaching my home by water -
My wife & Children, are gone to P. la P. with a view to
their improvement, to which my whole ambition
is directed - I am certain as I am, if this will force you
out, I dare not say more, than assure you of my

Sincere Regard & Esteem
While A. M. Leach Esq.

John Stuart Esquire



en, and
rely on
I hope

DEAL
SHIP LETTER

W. C. Stewart Esquire

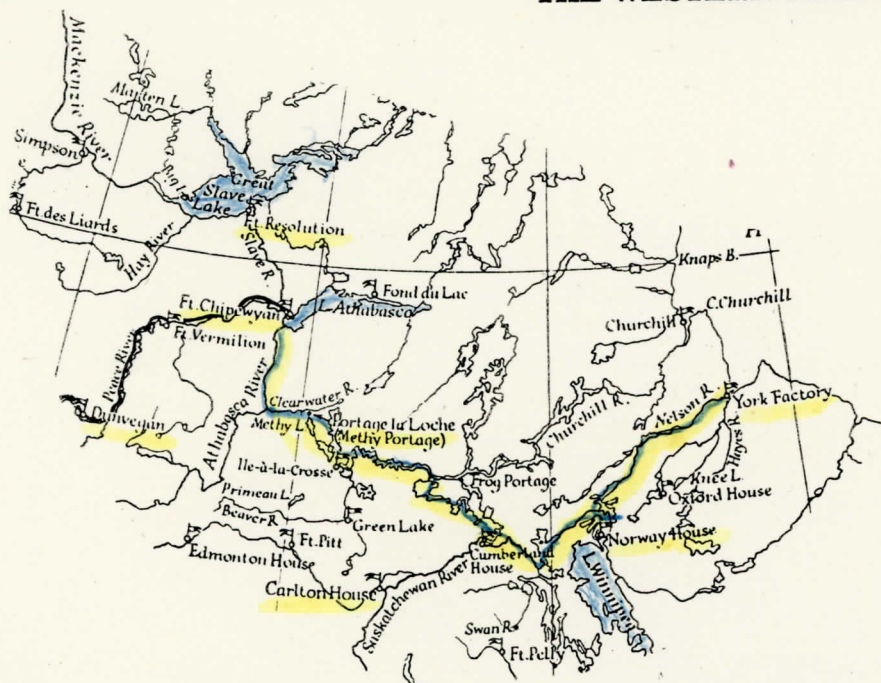
Hudson's Bay House

Lancaster



C de V

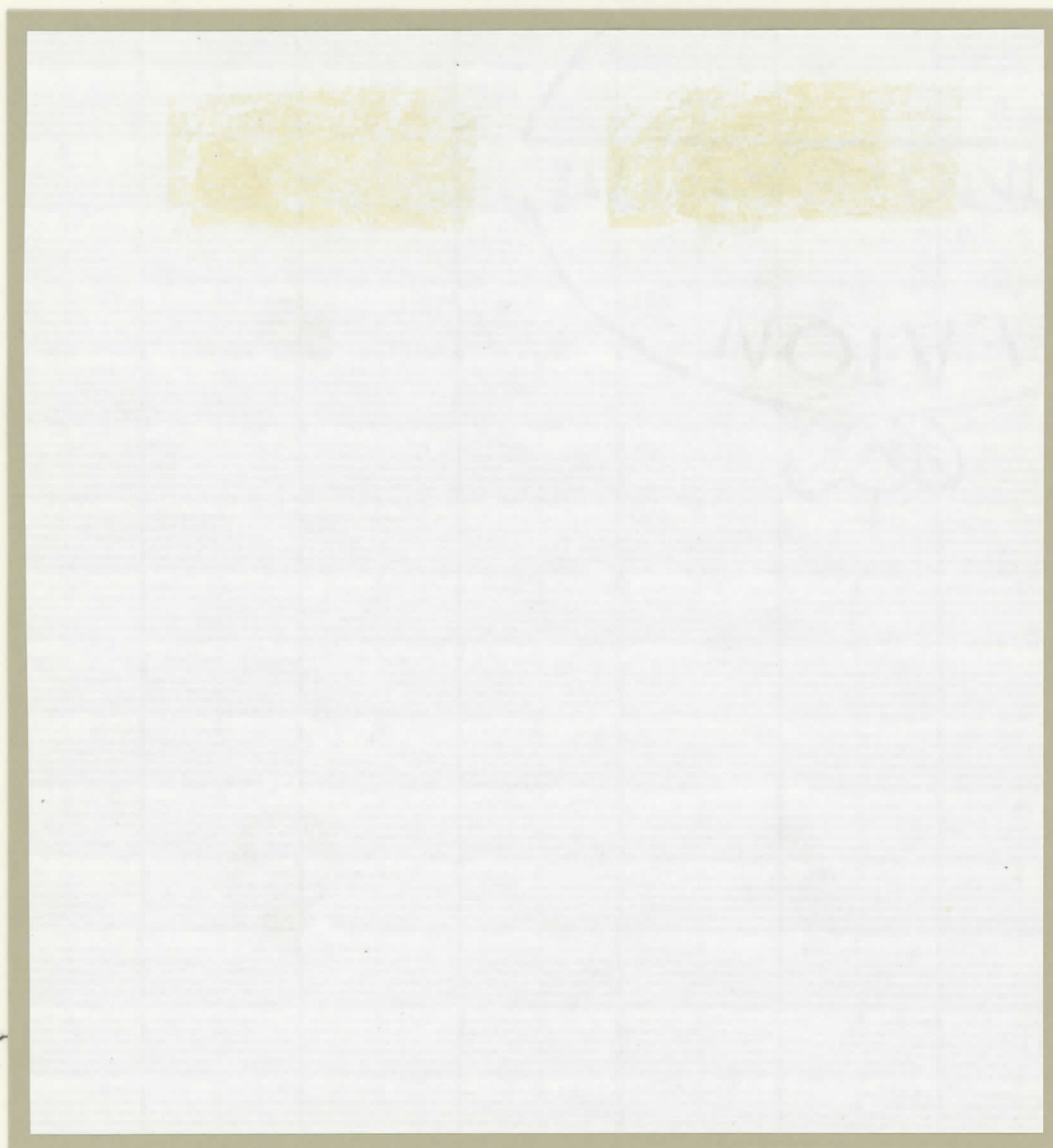
THE WESTERN MAILS



DEAL SHIP LETTER

Letter written while "En Route" from Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca to York Factory via Norway House. See map on left for the route taken and the Posts mentioned, highlighted in yellow. Also see other letters in this collection to John Stuart who was a Chief Factor in the H.B.Co., returning to England in 1836, retired in 1839 and died January 14, 1848.

HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY "EN ROUTE"



1/4 sterling
collect-8d.
incoming ship
letter fee, in-
cluding 2d to
ship captain
plus 8d. inla-
nd postage
from Deal to
London-74miles

THE WESTERN MAILS

*"En Route" August 7th, 1838
to York Factory for Company ship to England
arrived at Deal and received London 18 Oct.*

Letter is from Alexander Roderick McLeod (c. 1782-1840), he entered the service of the North West Company in 1802. He became a chief trader with the Hudson's Bay Company at the time of the union in 1821. He was appointed chief factor in 1836 and was in charge of the Athabasca district when this letter was written.

The first part of the letter are personal matters, the mails and his sons education. "Until I reached Norway House, the 11th ulto, I anticipated leave of absence, but it must be deferred till '39 [1839].... then if God spares me, I shall take a turn to the civilized World, on Furlough, but whether I will cross the Atlantic or not, is uncertain.... Mr. E. Smith went down, and the charge of Athabasca [district] resolved on your humble Servant, I past the last season at Fort Chipewyan [on Lake Athabasca]. F. Betcher, by appointment went to G. Slave Lake - P. [Peace] River, as the year before, our success in trade would have been very good had G. S. Lake returns been equal to last year, or even the proceeding one, but unluckily it hardly came up to the half of the last years amount. Still the District shows an amount of L 10,634 [English pounds] for the British market, all saleable Furs. - other parts of the Northern Department, will also experience a depression in Returns on outfit '37, and the current outfit is not likely to be turned to better advantage, letting alone, the effects of a bad season, such as the last, there is still a much greater evil lurking about, i.e. the small Pox, it has [caused] awful ravages among the Plains Tribes in the Saskatchewan, & very late accounts from [Fort] Carlton [N. Saskatchewan River], states it to be among the Beaver Hill Crees, as yet we know not of its having proceeded Northwardly, but a rumour to that effect was circulated in the early part of the last winter and the Natives, as is generally the case on such occasions, felt sensibly alarmed, & in actively resulted there from, and will last until the cause is removed, Vaccination has been resorted to, as the most effectual means of avoiding the Contageon - My winter residence will be [Fort] Dunvegan [on the Peace River], it is considered expedient that I should see most of the Posts fall & Spring, which I admit is very proper, but it is attended with inconvenience, arising from my being so much out of the way, when thre Expresses [Hudson Bay Co.] pass and repass. Mr. Campbell [Robert, Chief Teader, H.B.Co.] is now at Ft. Chipewyan to reside there both Winter & Summer with three men, the other Posts are allowed only two each & nine & twenty including a Guide is allowed for the Summer Voyage, with with the strangest injunctions against employing any natives to assist in the transport over P. la L - [Portage la Loche, Clearwater River to Lake Methy] I have adhered there to, and intend keeping to the letter of the law. Our Boats are deep, 64 pieces forms the Lading that each have - we have several days advance on the last year, yet I am not very certain of reching by Water. - My wife & children, are gone to R.R. [Red River settlement] with a view to their improvement..... Sincere Regards & Esteem/A.M.M. Leod.

John Stuart Esquire."

Note: " In September last, to my no small surprise, who should I meet one day as I was passing the Fort Gate at Slave Lake, but my son Alexander on his way to McK - R - [Mackenzie River] to support R. Campbell, in the long contemplated project of establishing Deases Lake [Post], to which place they were to have incourse of the present Summer. Alexander holds the situation of an apprentice Clerk -"

Note: * Edward Smith a partner in the North West Co. was made a Chief Factor on the amalgamation of the N.W.Co. with the Hudson Bay Co. in 1821. As the letter indicates he was in charge at Fort Chipewyan until he went on leave in 1837-38. Smith died in 1849.