


Pictou Sept 12, 1844

Copy

Dear Sir,

Letter to Dyce Copy
1844

Since I last wrote to you,
I have seized every opportunity of ex-
ploring our Newer Carboniferous strata,
and have made out a thick series
of rocks, commencing with the New Glasgow
Conglomerate, and ending with our
newest Sandstones; and have I think
found characters sufficient to dis-
tinguish it from the lower members
of the system, even when the Sandstones
only are seen. I have reexamined
the place where I found the tracks
sent to you last autumn. I could
find no more of the same kind;
but discovered the footsteps of a four-
footed animal, probably a reptile. The
tracks are different from those found
by

by Mr Logan. They are somewhat
of this form,  and there is a
furrow where I suppose the animal's
tail trailed along. There are some
hundreds of feet below a bed con-
taining Calamites & Stigmaria! I have
a slab with 8 steps, which I intend to
send to London this autumn. There
are in the same place many beds beautifully
rain & ripple marked, and worn-tracked, and
if I could spend a little more time and
money in digging, I have no doubt that
many more impressions of footsteps, perhaps
of different animals, would be discovered.

I have also found a small bed of Gypsum
in the newer carboniferous rocks, the
only instance of the kind that I have seen!

These and other facts I am
preparing in the form of a paper, which
if you think it will be acceptable, I
will send you for the Geol. Society. If there
will be any objection to receiving it,

You would oblige me by letting me know, I will send it by an early mail.

I have also collected some ^{additional} information respecting the igneous rocks associated with the coal formation, and their ages. They appear chiefly to belong to the period of the older members of the system.

When at Halifax last winter, giving a few lectures to the Mechanics Institute, I saw Dr. Geimer, and conversed a little with him about the gypsiferous rocks. He seems disposed to admit that the Gypsums of Shubenacadie may be lower Carboniferous; but stoutly maintains that the Gypsum deposits in New Brunswick are at least newer Carboniferous. I could ^{not} learn precisely whether he meant that rocks with the fossils of the Gypsiferous series, were so situated, or that there were mere beds of Gypsum. He spoke of coming here this summer, in which case I should have endeavoured to show him some of the evidence respecting their same situation here.

He has not however been in Pictou

In some notes sent to you last winter, respecting the drift, I stated that boulders were not situated in the superficial gravels. I have since seen a few rather large rounded masses of sandstone so situated; they are however rare, and granite boulders are especially so. I am still convinced, more so from facts seen this summer, that these gravels and the boulder drift are quite distinct formations. I might also have stated that boulders having one side flattened & scratched, sometimes with the angles on other parts not much worn, are quite common.

I hope to be able to send my slab with tracks direct to London, so that it may reach you safely, & shall pack some fossils of the rocks in which it was found and other interesting specimens with it. As I have got some evidence to show that the tracks or rather scratches sent last year, are really those of a bird. I hope that when these specimens and my notes reach London, we shall be able to claim for Nova Scotia the oldest birds and reptiles.

Sincerely hoping that you and Mrs. Bell may have been well and happy since I last heard from you, and that you may long continue so, I am yours respectfully J. W. Dawson