

be seen about
Thunder Bay, where
we hope to arrive
about 8 this eveg.
I will telegraph you
Duluth when I get
there.

Stz Chicora. L. Superior
Thursday May 15. 1873

MCGILL UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES	
ACC. NO.	1377/15/6
REF.	2

our loving
son
George

My Dear Mamma

As we have every
prospect of getting into Duluth
tomorrow, I take this opportunity
of writing a few lines which I
intend to post here on arrival.
Our voyage up the lakes has been
rather a long one, for besides the
delay in starting from Collingwood
we have been detained a good
deal by the heavy cargo on board,
& by meeting with ice.

Col. Farrest has not come on {
 this boat, but no doubt is now on
 his way by the Second which was
 to leave ~~about~~ ^{last} Tuesday. Ashe & a
 young fellow called King are the
 only members of the Body. Com. on
 board.

We did not get away from Collingwood
 till about one o'clock on Sunday
 morning. On Sunday we saw a
 great deal of ice mostly packed along
 the S.W. Shore of Georgian Bay &
 extending several miles from it. We
 had however to pass through several
 streams which stretched across our
 course. The ice being lumpy & broken

did not give much trouble though a little dangerous to the paddles.

The weather was very fine but decidedly cold. The Captain did not judge it wise to try the inside passage as it might be ice-blocked & so we steamed out into L. Huron & straight away for the Sault River, avoiding several stoppages on the N. Shore. We took all Monday going up the Sault R. Stopping a long time at one place ~~to~~ take in wood, & for a short time at the Bruce Mines & a place called Garden River. We got to the Bruce shortly after daybreak & caused quite a sensation being the first boat of the season. We stopped an hour

or two at the Canadian Sault
Village & all hands got out for a
walk on shore. We then steamed
across to the village on the American
side & lay there all night to coal.

We took a walk through the town &
curious & examined the Canal which
is a fine work, & is at present being
widened. Two Companies of American
Soldiers are stationed at a "fort" here
& we had the felicity of seeing them
go through a drill.

Tuesday morning at six we passed
through the Canal during a flurry
of snow & wind, & steamed out on

L. Superior. After stopping a couple of hours at Point aux Pins, where we were given to understand that the Lake was full of ice, we went on our way & the ice soon began to appear, first in scattered pieces, then in little packs & finally in a long line stretching from shore to shore. This stream was very solid & was only pushed through after some time & at considerable risk to paddlers.

Soon another stream appeared, the Captain ran up to it with confidence & seeming to think it no worse than the last pushed in, & then I am sure heartily wished himself out again, for the pack proved very heavy & was rolling

about frantically under the influence
of a heavy sea & wind from the S. W.
There were large cakes of 20 feet
in length & solid & blue as little
icebergs, & from these very gradation
to small pieces & slush filling up
between, the whole making a peculiar
tinkling noise as it ground together.
The Captain seeing how heavy it
was had all the oars passed round
& stove off the lumps & so we went
humping & grinding through without
injury to platis or paddles, & emerged
on the other side on the open lake
with a heavy short sea running
& half a gale blowing dead ahead.

We plunged away through this all day to the manifest discomfort of many of the passengers as evinced by the decimated tables. Yesterday evening we called at Silver Islet village, which is quite a little place, & then crushed & pushed through several miles of half rotten field ice into Thunder Bay & to Prince Arthurs Landing. Here we got rid of the 150 men with owners, clerks, post masters &c going up to man the Red River Road, together with nearly all our other passengers, & an immense quantity of freight & baggage which had been loading us down nearly to the waters edge. There were however a considerable drawback

to the pleasure of the voyage, chalking
 up every part of the boat, & filling up
 every available foot of space on the lower
 deck floor, & on top of the luggage there at
 night. They were partly French, partly
 Scotch, & Indians, & on the whole
 behaved very well & were very contented
 & merry, enlivening the boat with
 songs now in Gaelic then in French, & in
 each case with a tremendous chorus.
 Prince Arthur's Landing is a very new
 place, with altogether from 150 to 200
 buildings or shanties, & a fine new
 wharf built during last winter.
 The inhabitants appeared on the
 same to a man, & woman, & together
 with the men on board celebrated the

arrival of the Boat with immense cheering. The village fronts directly on the Bay & is bounded behind by a semicircle of huge stumps & tall burnt spruce woods. The chief imports seem, besides the ordinary necessaries of life, to be Whisky & tobacco. For the last month or so, they say there has not been much in the place to eat but pork & beans.

As I may have ~~time~~ to add a few words in the morning I will pull up here for the present.

May 16 We have been brought to a stand this morning by great fields of ice, solid & absolutely

impenetrable in its present state
 & blocking up all the S.W. angle of
 the Cape about 35 miles deep in
 front of Duluth. We passed through
 about 10 or 15 miles of half inch
 ice of last night's formation, & then
 being confronted by the solid floe, turned,
 & are now on our way back to
 Thunder Bay.

I will send this back to Collingwood by the
 steamer & hope to get to Duluth by the
 first or second boat next week, providing
 in the meantime we have some strong
 West wind to blow the ice out

The Dawson road is not yet open, there is
 no telegraph here, & nothing can be done
 but wait patiently for the next boat
 & try again. Meanwhile see what is to