

Cambie
Nov 21

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY,
OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF.

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Ottawa, Nov 21st 1878

My dear Mr. Dawson

Many thanks for
your letter of 19th and also for the
pamphlet on surface geology of B.C.
which I shall read with a great
deal of pleasure -

I cannot accept your
description of my red bark (?) and
therefore send the specimen to you
today by parcel post - but must
ask you to return it as it is
my whole stock -

Seeing a lump of what I

Supposed to be red chalk, lying among some geological specimens in Ross's office in Kamloops I asked where it came from, and was surprised to find it bark - As I was about to leave next morning he sawed it in half and gave me the piece now enclosed to you -

Ross assured me that he has often seen the bark in its natural state on the tree - that this specimen has not been prepared in any way - that the tree has foliage very much like the arbutus and is deciduous - Also that it generally grows at high altitudes - Had any one

else told me the story I should have accepted it without reserve - but you doubtless know that Ross is famed for his power of "economizing the truth" so I ~~accepted~~ took it with a large grain of salt -

I had as a fellow passenger across the continent a Mr. Sargent from Harvard who has charge of the Botanical garden at that place and who had just been having a trip through Nevada and California - We had many conversations on trees of B.C.

and I showed him the bark -
which he thinks is in its natural
state and is not from a coniferous
tree - I have written to Ross
to try & get a specimen for
him - Knowing the interest
you take in botanical research I
felt confident you would give its
history - but perhaps it is only
Douglas Spruce bark which has been
prepared in some way -

Please excuse my troubling you
so much about such a trifle which
may be only "a shell" after all -

Remain yours truly

H. J. Cambie

