

## AN 1863 LABRADOR LETTER

by Walter Chadbourne, L100

In a lot of 1859 10-cent covers that were acquired from a collection that had been inactive for at least forty years the writer recently found one whose contents may be of some interest to Labrador postal history buffs. The envelope is addressed to John W. Dodge, Esquire, Hampton Falls, New Hampshire, United States, franked with a 10-cent Canada stamp and postmarked Montreal, May 12, 1864. Readers may draw their own conclusions about the whereabouts of the letter between the date of writing — November 5, 1863 — and the date of posting. As to its interesting contents, let the letter speak for itself.

Cartwright — Labrador  
5th Nov. 1863

My dear Sir:

When I had the pleasure of meeting you at North West River I mentioned that I would drop you a few lines in the autumn at that time little dreaming that I should be so much pressed for time as I now find myself to be as in fact I have only just arrived here to find that all the English vessels have taken their departure, but as I am told there is still one at Forteau Harbor I have hired a boat which sets out within an hour for that place, which necessitates my being very brief at present. I sincerely hope that yourself and Miss Dodge reached home in safety and that you found Mrs. Dodge and family quite well. I should also fain hope that Mrs. Smith and the little ones are now comfortably settled down in Lachine. Since you left we have been far from fortunate no fewer than nine of our Nascoopee voyagers having died on the way inland.

I do not know how the changes that have taken place in the Hudsons Bay Company

may affect any such arrangements as that proposed by you for introducing a portion of our supplies but should you happen to go to Canada you can speak the matter over with Mr. Hopkins. I was informed at Rigolet that you intended next year bringing down a larger quantity of supplies for parties in East Bay than in former years, but I should hope that this is not the case as it could not fail to interrupt the friendly relations which have so far subsisted between yourself and our people.

Your account with us in E. Bay it will I think be better to settle when we meet as I hope we may do next year, rather than that it should appear in any way in connection with the proceeds of the salmon entrusted with you for sale at Boston. Should Mrs. S. not have returned to you any money you may have advanced to her for the journey to Canada I shall settle that next year along with the amount due for the passage of herself and children.

Pray make my acknowledgements to Miss Dodge for the handsome present of an album she so kindly left for me at Rigolet and with kind regards to yourself Miss Dodge, and altho' not personally acquainted with them, I may be permitted also to add to Mrs. Dodge and the other members of your family.

Believe me in my great haste.

Yours very truly,  
Don Smith

Will you be kind enough to bring me next year 300 cartridges for the breech loading rifle purchased for Mr. Hamilton last summer, and 3 chimneys and wicks for the parafin oil lamp.

We are very limited as to space this month. The usual columns will appear next month.

— Your Editor

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