

### Sooke and Leech Rivers

**DR. BROWN'S DISPATCH**

cretary of the Exploration Committee of

Camp No. 25, July 29th, 1864.

GENTLEMEN, - I beg to enclose for you in  
formation, Lt. Leech's official report (A) of the  
labors of the expedition from Spoke Harbor  
to Cowichan Harbor, during the period in  
which he had the command during my tempo-  
rary absence. I have requested him to  
make it as abstract as may be compatible  
with clearness, but to give as full statements  
as possible of the particulars attending the dis-  
covery of the placers of Spoke and Leech riv-  
ers. Though hitherto I have refrained from  
giving for publication more than a bare outline  
of the movements of the Expedition, it being  
expedient to furnish more and thereby in-  
curring the unpleasantness of having the pub-

In judging the labors of the Expedition by the results, it is not fair to expect that it should criticize our work until my extended and official report is before them. Yet as the discovery of the gold is most likely to be made of practical use to the colony immediately, I have thought it best to publish the results as abundantly enough desired. I have instructed Mr. Meade to draw out a formal account (enclosure number B) of the particulars of the prospecting, and at the same time forward (enclosure number C) some of the more important results of the same subject. Messrs. Foley and Buttler, at present in Victoria, will furnish you with the fullest particulars regarding the part they took in the discovery.

The documents are so complete that it is almost unnecessary to supplement them with any explanations. It appears that the found gold prospects for several miles above the cabin of Stoker's River. After passing the Leeches and the falls, the found gold prospects to decrease, and naturally conclude that the gold came by way of that stream, as they prospect and found the gold which is seen in the Victoria Corporation's prospecting note made by Stoker's with the prospecting note above the cabin, and the particulars as narrated.

rated in his letter (July 17th); subsequently the expedition found the still richer prospects of Leech river. These they brought over to Cowichan Harbor, and were sent by me to you with the account of their extent &c. (Despatch No. 4.) This will account for some seeming discrepancy in our accounts. The reports of Messrs. Leech, Meade and McDonald, agree on all points of any moment, and differ in no particulars but what

might be expected from the different view  
taken of the same subject by different men  
and the fulness or shortness of their state

3. I hear that parties are already starting for the mines, and I assure you we sincerely wish them all success. Doubtless many will return (as in all such cases) disappointed, but the gold is *there* whether *they* take it or not. I enclose a small sketch of the gold district, which may be of some assistance in finding the locality. This, with the gold specimens you will, I trust, exhibit in some of the museums for the purpose of comparison.

place for the information of the adverse  
 4. Lieut. Leech's foot, I regret to say, is  
 not better, but I hope before requiring to  
 start (after Corporal Buttle's return) he will  
 be able to take the field.

\* \* \* \* \*

I have, &c.

ROBERT BROWN,  
 Com'dr. and Gov't. Agent of the Exped'n  
 V. I. EXPLORATION COMMITTEE.

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ENCLOSURE A.

COWICHAN CAMP, No. 25, }  
 29th July, 1864.

Str.—In obedience to orders dated Camp  
 No. 16, 12th July, I took charge of the ex-  
 ploratory party, and proceeded up Sooke river  
 to Sooke lake.

We reached the cañon at 4 p.m. on the  
 13th inst. I camped here all day on the 14th

for the purpose of enabling Mr. Foley to prospect, Mr. Whymper returned to complete a section, the cañon which he had commenced the previous day. And also because I wished to ascend a mountain which Buttle had visited on the afternoon of the 13th, and reported that we could obtain bearings on several important points. On the afternoon of the 14th, when I returned to camp, Mr. Whymper informed me that he had prospecting the cañon, and was very satisfied indeed, the lowest yield being three cents, and the highest 25 cents to the pan. The gold was found on the right bank of the river, immediately above the cañon.

The altitude of the mountain visited is about 10,000 feet above the level of the sea. From camp 16, for about two and a-half miles up stream, the country is level, or slightly undulating; good soil. The country lying to the westward consists of conical hills covered with pines; very little level land—To the eastward, is very rugged, consisting of rocky peaks and ridges.

The lake lies north of this point, distant about six or eight miles; the country between is very mountainous.

We reached Sooke Lake at 1 p. m. on Saturday the 16th instant, leaving made the camp at 10 miles above the level of the sea, above the cañon the river forks one fork flowing from the N. W., the other coming from the Northward from the Lake; the latter stream being the smaller of the two.

On Sunday I did not move camp, but paid

on three of the Indians and retained Lazare and engaged him to come as far as Cowichan at \$1 per day. Sent a letter to G. Craik, showing the results of the prospecting, and the results of prospecting below the forks of the river. He was pleased and sent it to Mr. Muir at Spokane with directions to forward it with the least possible delay.

On Monday morning, at the suggestion of Mr. Foley I sent him with a party of three (Macdonald, Mead and Tomo) to the N. W. Fork mentioned above, for the purpose of prospecting it for gold, as we found good prospects up to the Forks, but having passed that point nothing worth mentioning was

from six cents to the pan. In as much as seventy-five cents, want of regular mining too mining only forms part of our

21st July.—Proceed, after prayer, most satisfactorily, to join Lieut. Leech's party. Led to the prospects ranged from five dollars, of good coarse gold; and

have done better with a pick,  
the diggings are, you can guess  
tools we had were a shovel,  
bowie knife! Reached camp,  
companions newly burnt out,  
fuge on an island in the lake.  
ration Island." \* \* \* \* \*

What follows in my journal, re-  
work. Respectfully submitted  
indent servant, \_\_\_\_\_ J

ENCLOSURE C.

EXTRACT from the journal  
Donald referring to the gold

13th.—The Commander and started for Victoria to-day on of much moment to us, the re-charge of Lieut. Leech started

We had four Indians with us; where they were getting her for the Victoria tannery; this up the River. Crossed the side after passing a deserted proceeded two miles more and general course N.N.W., distance miles. The range of mountain distinct mountains is called by the na-toa or the "two packers," The Sooke village bears about east range is called by them Pa-

next range is called by them *Pa* at the bottom is a small lake. ning W.S.W. and E. N. E., i tremity bounding the lake N. led Co-con-a-witch; a high (chin) bears W.N.W. The lake the River is said to rise is a con-a-witch. The great Co bears about W.N.W.; the po at Sooke Bay is S. by E., the N. by W. This camp by the small anenoid is 1200 feet above

N. B.—These observations by W. from where Mr. Leech first observed.

14th July. \* \* \* \*  
prospected the banks of the river  
times as much as 20 cents. Sixte

\$1 20; average about  $\frac{7}{8}$  cents. They were with us state that they found a place where coal exists, and with gold. It is on a creek on the left ascending) above the Bark Encampment.

\* \* Camped at the Falls of the Indians Who-ton-gas, (the "jumping" as the cañon is very narrow.

16th July.—Up river; good

gold and copper. Got several gold; course about N.N.W. Confluences of two rivers, the larger Westward; the stream which we formed a junction with the water river.

16th July.—Followed up again stream and in 4 miles reached So

18th July.—Mr. Leech despo  
Foley, Meade, Antoine and my  
mentioned on the 16th July to  
amine the same. Left the ma  
lake about 8 a.m.; reached fork  
The river flows into the Sooke a  
"The Forks;" we named it su  
mander's approval "Leech Riv

each bank as we went up; got  
wherever we tried. The river  
compass due West as far as  
washed boulders are in bed of the  
a series of small benches. \*  
Travelled about 6 miles.

19th July.—Up Leech river. nothing but the color; at other the pan. Traveled prospecting  
20th July.—Cached our blain the camp, so as not be encum weight, and started prospecting usual way with miners—from th and back—but felt the want of pecially a pick. The pan show sion 51 and we would have get pick. Mead and Antoine went

anything to add to the geograph  
Returned and told us there w  
flowing into Leesh river, and  
Consequently we went up and  
blazing on the trees. We followe  
for over a mile, but found our

impeded for want of the pick. Our largest prospect to-day is a dollar as possible and I have to judge gold to very small coarse scale gold, some of the cents. Whenever we struck a pick it good, say from 3 cents to \$1 may also be followed in time, rich gold fields. Although I

bearing gold, yet I saw several men assure the Victorians, and all else (not loafers) that in this region deposits of gold awaiting them. The forks of Leech river is witness to some very large boulders in it

portion of the river which we  
with high mountains, but before  
ceeded a short distance further.  
cover anything of great importa  
try began to open out, as if app  
side of the range, or another

21st July—Left our camp, N about seven o'clock, and commenced back. Reached our main camp had left, leaving a notice on a proceeded four miles further, and

keep on the margin of the lake we should find them camped on found our cache all right. Ma spurred ahead, and found Mr. camped on an island, where the cape the woods on fire. They

N. B.—Mr. Leech wrote the

Sooke Lake, with the return  
catch him in Victoria. He en-  
mens of gold from Sooke river  
Mr. Whymper. The gold and t  
of the discoveries on Leech river  
through to Cowichan, and are v  
both the gold and the quantity to

I hereby declare the above to  
tract from my journal, in refe  
discoveries. Respectfully subm  
dient servant, HANA

H. M. S. TRIBUNE.—We  
that the Tribune is still mak  
and it is feared that she may

to San Francisco, and be placed in dock for repairs. In the meantime, understand that she will go into a trial trip.

This image shows a blank, aged, cream-colored page, likely an endpaper or flyleaf of a book. The paper has a slightly textured appearance with some minor discoloration and small dark spots, possibly due to age or handling. A faint horizontal crease is visible near the bottom edge of the page.

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