St Louis Hotel
Fairhaven
Washington
U.S.A

Feb 5th/96

Dear father

It seems to be a very long time since I wrote to you last, and I suppose it will appear so to you too, and you will be wondering what has become of me. As I wrote in my last, I thought I would like to take a trip ~~th~~ to the coast. Well, I left Ducanelle, two days after Christmas, having enjoyed myself among my friends there. On Christmas Eve, us Lancashire people met together in Jim Shepherds house, and their agreed to go out as Christmas Waits. Before we had been out long, we had quite a big choir, chiefly Englishmen and Scotchmen. There was quite a few ladies us. It was a great novelty to the Ducanelle

Feb 5th/90

Dear Pertie

It seems to be a very long time since I heard from you, but I suppose it would appear so to you too and you will be wondering what has become of me. The truth is my dear, I think it would be to take a trip out to the coast. Well, last Saturday week, two days after Christmas, having surprised everyone in Grandville here, Dr. Christmas & Mr. Chamberlin left and together in Mr. Chamberlin's buggy, and their course was out to Christmas' ranch. Before we had been out long we had quite a party, young people, chiefly young women and relations, there was quite a lot of them, altogether about a great quantity of the Christmas

folks, who were well pleased with it. We recieved great praise for our efforts. I had my 'cello out, the only instrument, the people could not make out what it was. Some thought we had an organ, two or three others told me, we had one beautiful bass singer. There were very few people that knew "Christians Awake", but they liked it so well, that they included in the Church Service that morning. They had no idea of singing it before, and would have felt it out.

I also took part in the concert on the 26th.

My trip down the road was a pretty tough one, and all my own fault, as I did not wrap up enough. It was very cold, and I got my hands and feet frozen. My fingers were all cracked and terribly sore, and I had a great deep crack across each heel, so I could scarcely walk. It was 40 below zero one day. The frost was so

keen I could hardly breathe, and it froze the moisture from my breath till I had a big solid mass of ice around my mouth.

However I reached the coast safely and stayed in Vancouver a few days. Everything was very dull here and I could get no work to do, so I took the boat to Victoria, where I stayed two weeks. This is a beautiful city, and it felt like being in England again most of the people are English.

Just about that time the war-scares were on, and the patriotism of the people both in Vancouver and Victoria was fully aroused, they were all ready to fight the Yankees or Germans. You could see little crowds of men at every street corner discussing the chances of war, and all kinds of rumours were afloat. Some said they were going to arm and equip the "Empress of India" which was ready to leave for Japan. The papers were full of war,

I came near taking a trip to China and Japan, for I boarded the "Empress of India" and asked the boatswain to give me a job of some kind. He said if I had been a day or two earlier he would have took me. They had a full compliment and were to sail next day. He recommended to see the boatswain of the "Empress of Japan" which would be in Vancouver a week later. But I saw an advertisement in the papers wanting men at the Victoria new water-works, so I went there and worked half a day and quit. It was too hard for me, and I could not keep up with the others, all big men. I am not the only who had to give up, there are men starting and leaving every day. Some only work a few minutes. I was put to wheeling barrows loaded with clay. Things were dull here too. I only got another half day job. That was unloading a sealing schooner of sealskins, stores, etc.

I could have had a job to out on a sealing expedition; but I would have had to sign for the season, eight or nine months.
I would have gone on a short trip, but they would not do that. Some of the vessels hunt along the coast till the end of May then return, and fit out again for the Japan seas. I stayed in Victoria two weeks, then went to Seattle in the States. where I engaged to come out here. I am now working in a sawmill at $1.50 a day. I have been here two weeks, and was on night-duty as fireman till yesterday I had $1.10 for that job. It was too hard for me and the hours too long — 13 hours each night, — so I quit and the boss changed me to day work.
I expect to be here 5 or 6 weeks longer; then I go straight back to Cariboo, never to return here, I have had enough.
Dont write to me here, I shall be back in Cariboo, before your letter would reach me.
Hoping to find you in good health
Your affectionate son Tom.

I could hardly find a job to put on expecting
[illegible] but I would have had to begin
for the season, early or none worth a
I would have gone on a short trip, but
they would not do that. Some of the people
hunt during the worst till the end of May
then return, and fit out again for the
[illegible] season. I stayed in Indiana two
weeks, then went to Seattle in the State.
where I happened to come out here. I am now
working in a sawmill at $1.10 a day. I have
been here two weeks, and was on night-
duty on Sunday. Still quite dry I had $1.10
for that job. It was too hard for us and
the hours too long — 13 hours each night —
so I quit and the boss allowed it. It [illegible]
I expect to be here 3 or 4 weeks longer, then
I go straight back to Carlisle, where it returns
then, I have had enough.

Don't write to me here, I shall be back in
Carlisle, before your letter would reach me.
Hoping it find you in good health
Your affectionate son Jim.