

MSL 8/4

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Caracas September 29th 1824

My Dear Father & Mother

Of this opportunity of communication I have only had a few hours notice therefore I shall be obliged to make a short letter suffice - having other letters to close for London- I expected long before this to have made my departure from Caracas for Bogata [sic] over land, but the reports from the interior of the country have been very unfavourable respecting the state of the roads we were therefore obliged to postpone our journey till the end of the rainy season, when we shall be enabled to proceed with comfort. This season is however drawn very near a close and I expect to be able to leave here on the 6 of October- The journey to Bogata will probably occupy about 50 days, this will give you an idea of the nature of the journey but there is one satisfaction in undertaking it viz That the reports of those who have gone the road before seem favourable, respecting the climate of the interior being much better than people in general imagine - The exercise of riding every day will I have no doubt be much to my advantage- We have had very favourable reports of the mines that I am going to-

My time here has been chiefly occupied in the examination of the intervening ground between Laguayra & Caracas, it is quite incredible the difficulties I have had to contend with and after all it will require an enormous sum of money to complete it and make it at all feasible- Respecting the particulars of the undertaking I shall postpone any mention in this letter as I have not yet closed my report to Messrs Herring Graham & Powles. With the report which I shall have an opportunity of sending them in a few days I will enclose you a letter with some particulars and my ideas respecting the carrying into execution of the road-

When we arrived at Laguayra it was found impossible for all our apparatus to go across the country with us on the backs of mules. To risk our valuable instruments upon which our success at the end of the journey depended gave me great uneasiness, and after due consideration I resolved to send the Miners and Charles round by Cartagena and up the Magdalena. I at first thought of sending our interpreter but I found I could not possibly want him in going through the country on account of the Language. There is one satisfaction however my separation from Empson will not be long, we shall meet again at Bogata in the space of about 50 days-

Charles and the Miners have already sailed from Laguayra and as Mr Walker and myself shall leave Caracas in a few days the whole expedition will be in motion and you may expect to hear from me at every opportunity. I shall keep the post road nearly the whole way to Bogata therefore shall frequently have an opportunity of writing if it even be but a few lines- When I arrive at Bogata I shall be able to give you an abstract of my journal which you will at all events find new if not interesting- I must close with my best respects dear friends particularly Mr & Mrs Longridge and other friends which it is needless to mention and also to the Pease family