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The John Muir Newsletter, Summer 2003

The John Muir Center for Environmental Studies

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THE JOHN MUIR NEWSLETTER

UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC, STOCKTON, CA

VOLUME 13, NUMBER 3

SUMMER 2003

THE TRAMPS

by Edmund Herlihy, Mission Viejo, CA

(Editor's note: Edmund Herlihy is an Environmental Studies major at the University of the Pacific. This paper was prepared in the fall of 2002 for an undergraduate course, "John Muir and the Environment")

Imagine a vast expanse of raw untamed land where a man might make a fortune as quickly as he might be scalped — the American West during the late 1800's was the frontier where one could pack up and start a whole new life west of the great Mississippi. Gold had been discovered in California at Sutter's Mill in 1848 and people from around the world headed for California with expectation of getting rich. Overnight, California turned from a sleepy ranching province into a bustling territory, gaining the reputation that all one had to do was claim a spot and collect the gold. During this same time, the United States government was practically giving away land. With land laws beginning with the Preemption acts of the 1840s and culminating with the Homestead Act of 1862, millions of new acres were opened up for settlement and thousands of eager people took this opportunity hoping for a better, wealthier life. These dreamers soon realized, however, that hardships lay ahead of them. Most miners could barely live off the little paydirt they found and the

majority of farmers discovered that 160 acres in the arid West could not support a family.

In addition to those seeking gold and land, some headed west just for an adventure. Every day was a gamble; survival depended upon wit and cunningness. Some went to study the numerous species of plants, animals, and trees that were as yet undiscovered; others chose the West to become mountain men and live in solitude away from the hardships and pressures of the civilized world. Two such adventurers were John Muir, an unknown young man with a thirst for knowledge of all things wild, and Charles Lummis, an aspiring editor who wished to make a name for himself. Both men started their journeys in the Midwest: Muir in Indiana, and Lummis in Ohio. What makes these two journeys so extraordinary was the method by which these two men decided to explore the country. After the Civil War, the railroad was the most popular way to travel, especially to the West, but Muir and Lummis chose a

(Continued on page 4)

MUIR CENTER TO HOST 55th CALIFORNIA HISTORY INSTITUTE

On April 23-24, 2004, the John Muir Center will host an academic conference on SPANISH AND MEXICAN CALIFORNIA: HISTORY AND CULTURAL LEGACIES. Scholars from across the state will convene to present papers on topics exploring California's rich Hispanic/Mexican heritage, as well as contemporary Latino culture and contributions. Students from universities and colleges in the region will also participate and we expect to have a public event co-sponsored by the Haggin Museum of Stockton, which houses an outstanding art collection and interpretive historical exhibits. For more information, please contact us at johnmuir@pacific.edu or (209) 946-2527.

OPENING OF JOHN MUIR BIRTHPLACE VISITOR CENTER

The Dunbar birthplace of John Muir has been transformed into a new visitor attraction. Opening on August 23, John Muir's birthplace is a stunning interpretative center which highlights the work and achievements of the remarkable man who has been dubbed 'the father of modern conservation.'

The center has been imaginatively created within the property at 126 High Street, Dunbar where John Muir was born in 1838. Three themes are used to guide the visitor through the three floors of the building. The ground floor details Muir's boyhood in Dunbar and how the influences of the town and surrounding landscape shaped the future interests and beliefs of the man.

The second theme of the center concentrates on Muir's life and work and provides visitors with an idea of the extent to which Muir's life was a spiritual journey of exploration, revelation, hardship and wonder. The top floor of the center aims to encourage visitors to make their own links between John Muir's life and work and current and future environmental issues. That one man can change the world and inspire so many to become responsible for protecting our environment is a key theme of the center.

Campbell and Co. were the creative team who developed the project working with architect, Richard Murphy. Campbell and Co. have wide experience of designing and developing interpretation centers and other recent projects include the Scottish Parliament visitor center, Stirling Castle and the Royal Yacht Britannia visitor center.

The £500,000 cost of creating the center was supported by a £292,500 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

NEWS FROM HETCH HETCHY

John Muir called Yosemite National Park's Hetch Hetchy Valley "a grand landscape garden, one of Nature's rarest and most precious mountain temples." However, following several devastating fires and the 1906

earthquake, San Francisco looked to Hetch Hetchy as a place to put a dam and reservoir for its public water supply. Muir rallied the American people against San Francisco's proposal: "Dam Hetch Hetchy! As well dam for water-tanks the people's cathedrals and churches, for no holier temple has ever been consecrated by the heart of man." Despite the fierce nationwide debate led by John Muir, San Francisco was authorized by the U.S. Congress, in the Raker Act of 1913, to construct a dam and reservoir on the Tuolumne River in Hetch Hetchy Valley. The O'Shaughnessy Dam was completed in 1923 and, after the necessary pipelines and power houses were completed, San Francisco began using water from the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir for its water supply and electrical power generation.

The dream of restoring Hetch Hetchy Valley to its natural state has never gone away. A non-profit organization, RESTORE HETCH HETCHY, was formed in 1999 to obtain a "win-win" outcome for Hetch Hetchy and for the San Francisco Bay Area water & power users. RHH is doing a lot of exciting things: preparing our own engineering Feasibility Study to outline alternate ways to store the water outside Yosemite and to generate electricity, producing a new documentary film, pursuing a lawsuit against San Francisco over its plans to "improve" the O'Shaughnessy Dam, and reaching out to the American people at community fairs and festivals. To learn more about our effort and to get involved, please visit our webpage:

www.hetchhetchy.org
info@hetchhetchy.org

and e-mail us at:

As John Muir said, you will be "doing something to make the mountains glad!"

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ANNOUNCING TWO NEW BOOKS

Two new books, one released in August and the other to be available in November, have recently been announced. Both are by authors whose names will be familiar to *John Muir Newsletter* readers.

CALAVERAS GOLD: The Impact of Mining on a Mother Lode County

Calaveras Gold by Ronald H. Limbaugh and Willard P. Fuller Jr. will be released in November. Most histories of the California Mother Lode have focused on the mines around the American and Yuba Rivers. However, the "Southern Mines" — were also of importance in the development of California's mineral wealth. *Calaveras Gold* offers a detailed and meticulously researched history of mining and its economic impact in this region from the first discoveries in the 1840s until the present.

Mining in Calaveras County covered the full spectrum of technology from the earliest placer efforts through drift and hydraulic mining to advanced hard-rock industrial mining. Subsidiary industries such as agriculture, transportation, lumbering, and water supply, as well as a complex social and political structure, developed around the mines. The authors examine the roles of race, gender, and class in this frontier society; the generation and distribution of capital; and the impact of the mines on the development of political and cultural institutions. They also look at the impact of mining on the Native American population, the realities of day-to-day life in the mining camps, the development of agriculture and commerce, the occurrence of crime and violence, and the cosmopolitan nature of the population.

Calaveras County mining continued well into the twentieth century, and the authors examine the ways that mining practices changed as the ores were depleted and how the communities evolved from mining camps into permanent towns with new economic foundations and directions. Mining is no longer the basis of Calaveras's economy, but memories of the great days of the Mother Lode still attract tourists who bring a new form of wealth to the region.

Ronald H. Limbaugh is the author or editor of numerous books and articles about Western political history, environmental history, and the history of technology. He retired in 2000 after thirty-four years at the University of the Pacific, serving concurrently as director of the John Muir Center for Regional Studies and Rockwell Hunt Professor of California History. Willard P. Fuller Jr. has been a resident of Calaveras County since 1954 and a leader of the Calaveras County Historical Society for nearly forty years. He is retired from a lifelong career as a mining geologist, engineer, and consultant.

392 pages, 75 b/w photographs, 6 maps; hardcover, 0-87417-546-1. This book will be available November 2003 for \$39.95 from University of Nevada Press, Mail Stop 166, Reno, NV 89557-0076. In the U.S., books can be shipped via United Parcel Service and require a street address. Charges are \$4.50 for the first book ordered and \$1.00 for each additional book. Books may also be shipped via book rate for \$3.00 for the first book ordered

and 75¢ for each additional book. To charge your order, call 1-877-NVBOOKS or visit www.nvbooks.nevada.edu. For foreign orders call the Eurospan University Press Group at 44 (0) 20 7240 0856, www.eurospanonline.com.

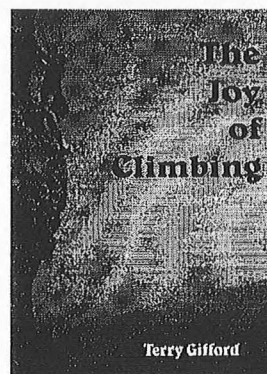
THE JOY OF CLIMBING

The other book, which was released last month, is *The Joy of Climbing* by Terry Gifford. The essays contained in this book are parables from a pilgrimage to find the best quality experiences on rock-climbs that are within the reach of most climbers. Much mountaineering writing evokes the fear and the angst that is hardly recognizable to ordinary climbers, but this book celebrates what most climbers and readers seek — the joy of climbing.

This search throughout Britain, Europe and America for the esoteric gems at the easier end of climbing is compiled from 20 years of writing for the magazines in a lively variety of forms from new myths to minor epics, from parody to poetry and from tall tales to rare interviews with some of the characters in the climbing community. The book is a sample of the richness that climbing and its community can offer a climber of modest ability who, by his own admission, 'easily gets scared on the supposedly easy routes.' The central characters celebrated in this book are the numerous awe-inspiring individual climbs themselves. Mountaineers and climbers will find this book a delight, as will those with an interest in the natural world and the landscape.

Dr. Terry Gifford, Director of the International Festival of Mountain Literature, is Reader in Literature and Environment at the University of Leeds and is also a former judge of the Boardman Tasker Award and Banff Mountain Book Festival awards. He has published several books and is a regular and prolific contributor to numerous climbing and outdoor magazines as well as the *John Muir Newsletter*.

192 pages, 25 b/w and 25 color photographs, soft cover, 1-904445-06-3. This book is available for \$27.95 from www.thebookdistributor.com/whittles. For foreign orders call Whittles Publishing at 44 (0) 1593-741240 or e-mail info@whittlespublishing.com or visit www.whittlespublishing.com.



(Continued from page 1)

less conventional way of getting there — they walked. Between the two of them, they traveled more than four thousand miles. Both endured great hardships, solitude, and unexpected danger, but they also experienced incredible beauty and met fascinating people along the way.

John Muir's love for the wild began as a young boy near his home in Dunbar, Scotland. It was there that the future conservationist got his first taste of wild freedom. Muir, recalling his youth stated, "When I was a boy in Scotland I was fond of everything that was wild, and all my life I've been growing fonder and fonder of wild places and wild creatures."¹ "By the stormy North Sea, there was no lack of wildness. . . . With red-blooded playmates, wild as myself, I loved to wander in the fields to hear the birds sing, and along the seashore to gaze and wonder at the shells and seaweeds."² For any child full of life it was the perfect place to grow up, but big changes were in store for the Muir family. John's father, Daniel "came in with news, the most wonderful, most glorious, that wild boys ever heard. 'Bairns,' he said, 'you needna learn your lessons the night, for we're gan to America the morn!'"³ With that, young John Muir was off to a world he had only dreamed of. The family settled in Wisconsin.

Being the eldest boy in the family, John Muir received many chores from his stern, demanding father. In winter he had to "feed the horses and cattle, grind axes, bring in wood, and do any other chores required, then breakfast and out to work in the mealy, frosty snow by daybreak, chopping, fencing, etc. So in general our winter work was about as restless and trying as that of the long summer. No matter what the weather, there was always something to do."⁴

Besides his almost daily excursions into the wild, John loved tinkering with homemade inventions. His father was at first reluctant to allow his son to study or read any books other than the Bible saying, "The Bible is the only book human beings can possibly require throughout all the journey from earth to heaven."⁵ Daniel Muir soon realized that there was little to stop a determined John Muir. John awakened early every morning to make "water wheels, curious doorlocks and latches, themometers [sic], hygrometers, pyrometers, clocks, a barometer, an automatic contrivance for feeding the horses at any required hour, a lamp lighter and fire lighter, an early-or-late-rising machine and so forth."⁶ His whimsical inventions soon took him to the State Fair in Madison where his inventions proved to

be the most popular attractions in the hall. Recalling his inventions, Muir states, "These inventions, though of little importance, opened all doors for me and made marks that have lasted many years. . . ." However, it was his love for machinery and science that forever changed his ideas toward conservation. One day, while working in a factory, he received an injury to his eye that caused him to lose sight in both eyes. It was in that desperate hour that John made a promise to himself. If his sight came back to him, he would be done with the inventions of man and indulge himself in the inventions of God. To a relieved Muir, his sight returned after a few weeks.

In Indianapolis, on September 1, 1867, twenty-nine year old John Muir set out on the biggest adventure of his life. He knew his goal was to reach the Gulf of Mexico but had no set path, not even knowledge of what he was going to do the next day.

" . . . I was looking at plants. . . , all kinds; grass, weeds, flowers, trees, mosses, ferns — almost everything that grows is interesting to me. "

From: Muir's *A Thousand Mile Walk to the Gulf*

His plan was merely to "push on in a general southward direction by the wildest, leafiest, and least trodden way [he] could find. . . ."⁸ Getting away from the civilized world and

its people was all he wanted. With him, he brought a "a comb, brush, towel, soap, a change of underclothing, a copy of Burn's poems, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and a small *New Testament*. . . ."⁹ He planned to have the luxury of a bed and roof only where he could find it. He brought with him very little money and relied on his brother to occasionally send cash.

Muir was often asked why he was taking this journey. His reply: ". . . I was looking at plants. . . , all kinds; grass, weeds, flowers, trees, mosses, ferns — almost everything that grows is interesting to me."¹⁰ It was the inventions of God that inspired him now — botany was his love. Armed with his plant press he lingered in almost every wild field he came across a "long happy while, pressing specimens and printing this beauty into memory"¹¹ In Kentucky, on

the first few days of his trip, he was mesmerized by the "deep green, bossy sea of waving, flowing hilltops"¹² and called it the "leafiest state [he had] yet seen."¹³ In Georgia and North Carolina he wrote, "Such an ocean of wooded, waving, swelling mountain beauty and grandeur is not to be described."¹⁴ He had not imagined the wonders he would encounter as he headed south. In his journal, Muir meticulously recorded his findings of new plants and ferns. He studied, sketched and pressed plants so that he could study them later. When the collection of plants in his press grew large he sent his plant collections by express to his brother in Wisconsin."¹⁵

Of all the states Muir intended to pass through, he dreamed about Florida the most. One month and fourteen days after beginning his journey he reached the swampy Peninsula. He wrote, "Today at last, I reached Florida, the so called 'Land of Flowers' that I had so long waited for, wondering if after all my longing and prayers would be in vain, and I should die without a glimpse of the flowery Cannan."¹⁶ Within a few hours of his arrival, he was overwhelmed by the diversity of flowers in the swampy marsh lands. He commented in his journal, "I was meeting so many strange plants that I was much excited, making many stops to get specimens."¹⁷

Evidence of the American Civil War that wracked the South during the first half of the 1860s was still present. The physical as well as emotional scars could be seen in its people and on its landscape. Muir could not avoid this and wrote his experiences in his journal. He came across several houses that were "far apart and uninhabited, orchards and fences in ruins – sad marks of war."¹⁸ Particularly in the South, strangers were not ignored. After being interrogated on one of his stops Muir remarked, "Since the war, every other stranger in these lonely parts is supposed to be a criminal, and all

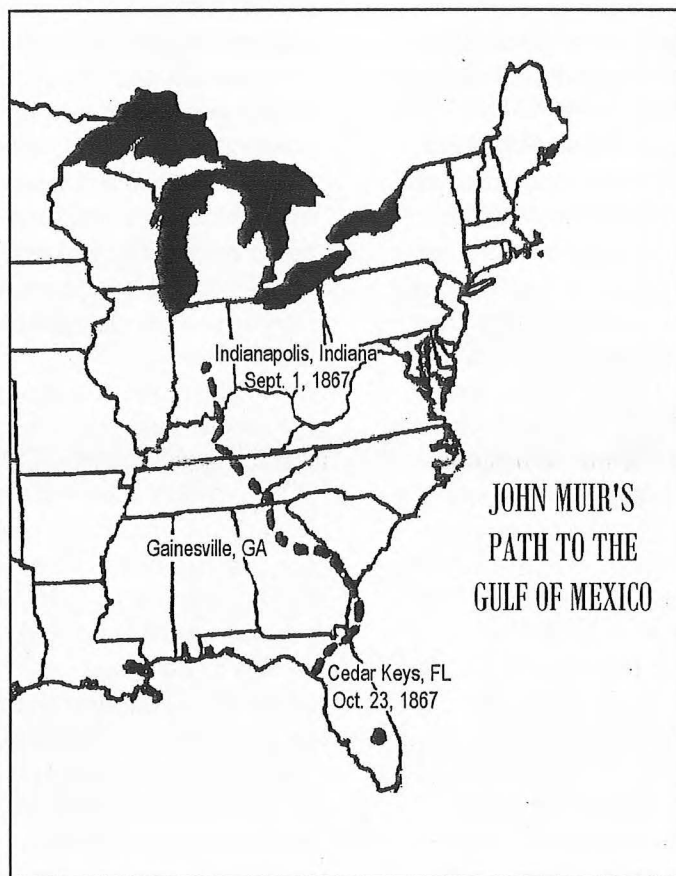
are objects of curiosity or apprehensive concern."¹⁹ This was only one obstacle that Muir had to deal with on his walk and just one of the many hardships he faced on his journey to the Gulf of Mexico. Additionally, he dealt with thieves and murderers, wild animals and plants, extreme hunger, disease, and at times, heart-wrenching loneliness.

Since the South had seemingly become a haven for criminals, Muir watched for them constantly. His first experience with one came in the Cumberland Mountains where he recalled.

"I was overtaken by a young man on horseback, who soon showed that he intended to rob me if he should find the job worth while."²⁰ Muir had nothing of value with him, so this robber left him alone. He was advised that "walking across the Cumberland Mountains was still far from safe on account of small bands of guerrillas who were hiding along the roads . . ."²¹ and given "warnings of danger ahead, saying that there were a good many people living like wild beasts on whatever they could steal, and that murders were sometimes committed for four or five dollars, and even less."²² Advised to turn back, Muir pressed onward. Just the next day, Muir "suddenly came

in sight of ten mounted men riding abreast. They undoubtedly had seen me before I discovered them, for they had stopped their horses and were evidently watching me . . . Evidently they belonged to the most irreclaimable of the guerrilla bands who, long accustomed to plunder, deplored the coming peace."²³ Muir's "mountain man" appearance persuaded his would-be robbers that he carried nothing of value.

Another source of danger was from animals and plants. He was repeatedly warned about rattlesnakes in the area. If Muir had been unlucky enough to



cross paths with one, his remoteness from medical attention would surely have complicated his journey. In Florida, however, the danger changed from rattlesnakes to alligators and he had a few close calls. Once, he was attacked viciously by a pack of dogs. Muir compared himself to a fly in a spider's web when he encountered certain plants. In the Cumberland Mountains, he wrote of one of his struggles, "My path was indeed strewn with flowers, but as thorny, also, as mortal as ever trod. In trying to force a way through these cat-plants one is not simply clawed and pricked through all one's clothing, but caught and held fast . . . and the more you struggle the more desperately you are entangled, and your wounds deepened and multiplied. The South has plant fly-catchers. It also has plant man-catchers."²⁴

Plants and animals aside, one of Muir's biggest obstacles at times, was dealing with his loneliness. He had been so eager to venture out on this journey into the wild that he had not thought it would be a problem. But, coming from such a large family, he really had not been able to imagine true isolation until this trip. In a desolate field in Georgia, he wrote, "Am made to feel that I am now in a strange land. I know hardly any of the plants, but few of the birds, and I am unable to see the country for the solemn, dark, mysterious cypress woods which cover everything. The winds are full of strange sounds, making one feel far from the people and plants and fruitful fields of home. Night is coming on and I am filled with indescribable loneliness."²⁵ In Florida too, he had only his journal to keep him company: "Everything in earth and sky had an impression of strangeness; not a mark of friendly recognition, not a breath, not a spirit whisper of sympathy came from anything around me, and of course I was lonely. I lay on my elbow eating my bread, gazing, and listening to the profound strangeness."²⁶ Despite the dangers, hardships, and loneliness, Muir wrote, "yet I thank the Lord with all my heart for his goodness in granting me admission to this magnificent realm."²⁷

Muir finally reached the Gulf of Mexico and ended his 1000 mile journey on October 23, 1867, one month and twenty-two days after he had started out from Indiana. The experiences he had and the wonders he encountered stayed with him the rest of his life.

Seventeen years after John Muir's historic walk across the United States, a young man in his twenties was about to begin his own tramp across the continent. His walk had many similarities to Muir's. He faced many hardships and dangers and also had to deal with

loneliness. Unlike Muir, however, Charles Lummis was driven by a desire for fame, in addition to the desire for an adventure.

A young, married Charles Lummis found himself in the Midwest managing his father-in-law's farm in Chillicothe, Ohio. "I had never managed a farm in my life. I knew nothing about farming. But nevertheless I decided that managing Pater's 600 acres was exactly my job."²⁸ Despite his inexperience, he quickly learned to run the business and it was during those three years that Charles found a hobby. First he became the city editor and then editor-in-chief of a weekly four page publication, the *Scioto Gazette*.

Diseases and illnesses were common during that time, especially in the part of Chillicothe in which Lummis lived. During a particularly bad illness, Charles "burned and tossed and leaked at every pore. In the morning I was pounds lighter and weak as a drowned rat. The bed was though I had turned a hose on it."²⁹ Like Muir, it was this strange near-death experience that changed his life forever, the catalyst for his decision that ". . . I was going to move, that I was going to move a long way, that if I could arrange it, I would make it California. And I was going to walk there."³⁰ But why California? Lummis explains: "My choice of California as a goal was due largely to Colonel Harrison Gray Otis, editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, who had promised to print a weekly letter as I Walked Across and to give me a position on the local staff. My letters were printed weekly in the *Times*. . . ." ³¹ Paid five dollars a letter, unlike Muir, Lummis wished to gain a bit of fame as he walked and so he wrote, describing himself as "something of a tourist."³²

His journey began on September 12, 1884. Like Muir before him, he did not have a set path and would rely heavily on the friendliness of strangers he encountered along the way. His gear consisted of "writing materials, matches, a small revolver (changed later for a .44), a strong hunting knife, three hundred dollars in 'quarter eagles' in a belt strapped against his skin. He also carried his beloved fishing tackle . . ."³³ recollecting daughter Turbesé and youngest son, Keith, in compiling a biography of their father.

He wore an odd color outfit that became his signature style as he made his way to Los Angeles. Lummis believed "the ideal outfit consisted of a white flannel shirt tied at the neck with a blue ribbon, knickerbockers, red knee-high stockings, a wide

brimmed felt hat and low cut Curtis & Wheeler dress shoes. Over it all, he would wear a large canvas duck coat."³⁴ The large canvas coat was ideal for the walk. It had twenty-three separate compartments and could double as a blanket on cold nights when he did not have the luxury of a bed. He knew that this odd outfit would be the attention grabber that he needed on his trek. According to analyst Mark Thompson, the curiosity "about his odd attire might come at some cost to his dignity, but . . . Lummis just didn't mind if people poked fun at him. In fact, defying conventions was part of the point, and ridicule came with the territory. . . . People would have been disappointed if Charlie Lummis had set out for California without making some sort of splash."³⁵

As Charles made his way to California, he, like John Muir before him, was exposed to dangers and hardships that

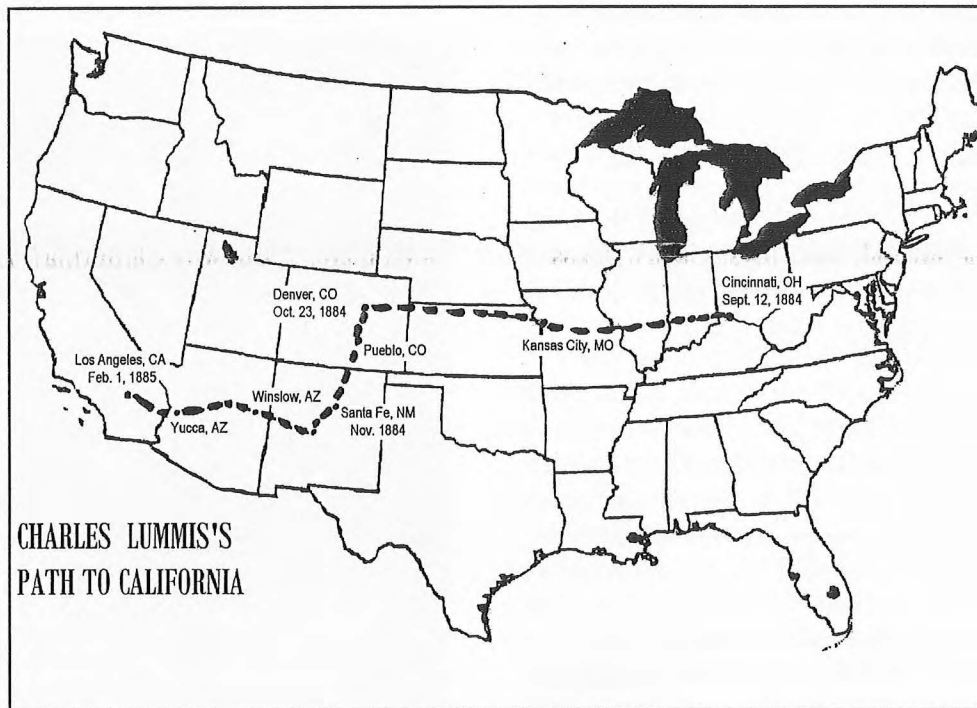
he had to overcome to complete his journey. Lummis had to "brave almost trackless expanses - desolate plains where the bones of pioneers told of starvation and Indian massacres, mountains swept by freezing winds, and blistering deserts with

temperatures to 130 degrees."³⁶ The dry deserts and snow-capped mountains of the West proved more of a challenge for Lummis than the walking trip to Florida had been for Muir. Muir had not encountered the extreme hot and cold temperatures of the West or dealt with the hardships that they brought. In one particular incident, when Lummis was near the Continental Divide, "a blast of wind whipped him through the ice of a shallow pool. With his clothing frozen to his body he walked eight miles before reaching shelter."³⁷ Nature's dangers also included a near deadly attack by a

"wildcat"; and even his faithful companion, Shadow, after becoming ill, attacked him. In self-defense, Lummis claimed he had to shoot the dog.

A physical injury to anyone in this vast remote frontier would be a major crisis, particularly while traveling alone. During a winter storm, Lummis found himself in a predicament. He fell and fractured his arm two inches below the elbow: "He could not pull the jagged bone into place by tugging at his hand while he held it between his feet. So he wrapped one end of his canteen strap around his wrist, buckled the other around a cedar, threw himself backwards as hard as he could, and yanked."³⁸ Along with nature's dangers, and injury brought on by himself, he also faced danger from others who wished to hurt to him. He "rubbed elbows with toughs, sharpers, desperadoes, and women of wit and warmth, all

ready to hazard everything"³⁹ He also had "a narrow escape from a stone hammer in the hands of a convict."⁴⁰ Despite these many hardships, Lummis found on the high plains of the Southwest people and cultures that brought about a



profound change to him and to his future.

Lummis had heard horrific stories of the Mexicans and "savage" Indians and initially hoped that contact with both peoples would be kept to a minimum. But fate had a different plan for him and by the end of the trip, his interactions with these people had "played havoc with his New England-nurtured sense of Anglo-Saxon superiority."⁴¹ A tired and trip-worn Lummis arrived at the small town of Carnoe, New Mexico knowing that if he could not find someone to take him in, he would have to brave

the cold winter night alone and hungry. Lummis was "driven at last to ask for help at the home of a poor laborer, Ramón Arrera. Unknown, unshaven, and suspicious as the traveler was, the Mexican welcomed him wholeheartedly to his home and scanty rations."⁴² Lummis had always heard of how uncivilized and cold these people were. But here he was, enjoying dinner with the friendliest people he had met. His letter the next day shows a dramatic change in the ideas he held about the resident people of this land. He wrote, "Why is it that the last and most difficult education seems to be ridding ourselves of silly inborn race prejudice? . . . Men everywhere — white men, brown men, yellow men, black men — are all just about the same thing. The difference is little deeper than the skin."⁴³ From that night onward, Lummis became fascinated with the Native Americans and the culture and people of New Mexico. He also had a new purpose in his letters. His daughter and son recollected, Charles "felt that he was one of a generation that had been misled about the Indians and the West, and he resolved to set the record straight."⁴⁴

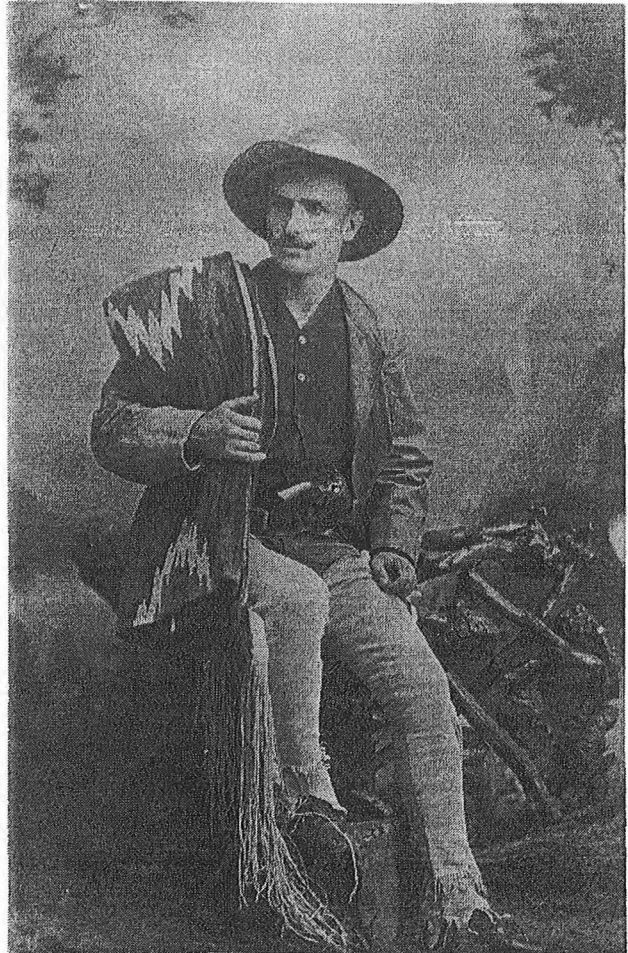
" And once I had reached Spanish America and the hearts of its people, I realized that this is where I belonged."

From: *Charles F. Lummis:
The Man and His West*

He not only adopted their culture but also their home. He had lived in the East most of his life and had roots there but always felt a little bit out of place. When he visited Santa Fe, he wrote, "Then I came to Santa Fe. And once I had reached Spanish America and the hearts of its people, I realized that this is where I belonged."⁴⁵ The Native Americans and the Southwest also had a religious impact on Charles, "with the result that he became a self-appointed and zealous missionary in its name."⁴⁶ Parting from his new love — Santa Fe — was difficult for Lummis. He described his departure as "breaking away from your best girl at 11:45 p.m., when she puts her soft arms around your neck and says, Oh George, it is real early yet. Please don't go."⁴⁷ As difficult as it was for him, however, he parted ways

with Santa Fe and New Mexico and continued west toward Los Angeles.

On February 1, 1885, Charles reached his final stop of Los Angeles, having covered "3,507 miles in 143 days at a total expense of less than \$175."⁴⁸ He had received news from Harrison Gray Otis, the publisher of the *Los Angeles Times*, that Otis wanted to meet the man whose letters had captured the attention and admiration of a nation. First, Charles visited a San Gabriel hotel to shave, freshen up, and have a smoke. At the hotel, Otis congratulated Lummis on his historical walk, and they "walked together for the final 10 miles to Los Angeles, and the two had a celebratory late night meal at Eckert's restaurant on Court Street."⁴⁹ Lummis had completed his walk across the continent and concluded, "the World's Wonderland is not in



Charles F. Lummis in 1885, at the end of his "Tramp Across the Continent"

(Courtesy of the Southwest Museum, photo P32528A)

Europe, not in Egypt, not in Asia, but in the West of our own United States."⁵⁰

It is not surprising that these two men who walked across the country only seventeen years apart would eventually become friends. As the late William Kimes, the preeminent bibliographer of Muir, has noted, their friendship began through letters that "give a glimpse of the warm friendship of Charles F. Lummis and John Muir. Both were authors, intensely individualistic, and shared a zeal for conservation."⁵¹ They each saw traits and characteristics of themselves in the other. Lummis and Muir delighted in the wild and rare expanses of nature and were not fond of moving at a fast pace in life. In their letters and during their visits, they discussed everything from books to environmental issues and administration of the national and state parks.

Lummis began the correspondence by sending a copy of his new publication, *The Land of Sunshine* to Muir who greatly enjoyed the work and sent money for a subscription. In Muir's letter dated June 11, 1895, he replied, "I have read your little plucky magazine & like it. It has the ring & look of true literary metal. So has your letter to me, & I doubt not you will be successful. You have a grand field & I am sure that with honest purpose & hard work you must gain the day."⁵² However, Lummis refused the money saying that "I am just lover enough of good literature — & lover enough of California, too, — that the writer of that book is more than welcome to anything in my gift."⁵³ Lummis also asked Muir to write an article for his new publication: "I shall be more grateful than I can say if you will write something for us."⁵⁴

Their correspondence also discussed threats to environmental areas — a passionate subject to both tramps. In a letter dated March 24, 1900, Muir writes, "The two Calaveras Groves seem safe at last. Now we must fight for a decent administration of parks & reservations in general on a permanent basis. Only the merest beginning has been made. In particular the appropriations for forest guards & rangers are ridiculously inadequate."⁵⁵ They also discussed the Hetch Hetchy controversy, the dreaded project that Muir spent the last two years of his life trying to defeat.

The two men had read each other's books and held them in high esteem. After reading John Muir's *Our National Parks*, Lummis commented, "all that have the Breath of Life in them are competent to read it and grow by it. It is one of the books everyone should read who cares for beauty either in nature or in letters."⁵⁶ Muir had sent money to Lummis for his book on

Mexico and for *A Tramp Across the Continent* — Lummis's own account of his walking adventure, a book Muir enjoyed. In a letter dated April 3, 1901, he convinced his friend to write more. "Don't waste time on small or even big passing squabbles when you can do lasting things like these books."⁵⁷ Muir also enjoyed the photographs Lummis had taken, ordering three dozen copies of his works.

John was also there to comfort his troubled friend during rough times — after Lummis' son's near-drowning and during his wife's illness. In a letter dated March 26 1908, Muir writes "I'm very sorry to hear you are so deep in sore trouble like myself — pneumonia the terrible drowning adventure of your darling son . . . But I fondly hope that Mrs. Lummis like my Helen will speedily win back to good health, your brave boy live long to bless you & the world . . ."⁵⁸

These two tramps were able to relate to each other in ways that no one else could. Through their letters they found a steadfast friendship that they enjoyed over many years, comforting and celebrating each other through sorrowful as well as joyous occasions. No matter how many people picked up Muir's *A Thousand Mile Walk to the Gulf* or Lummis's *A Tramp Across the Continent*, there were few who could actually relate to the story; but Lummis knew from firsthand experience the beauty that Muir so eloquently talked about on his trip. He had seen for himself the "ocean of wooded, waving, swelling, mountain beauty and grandeur . . ."⁵⁹ He knew what it was like to "sleep with the trees in the one great bedroom of the open night"⁶⁰ and he was aware of what "travel, elbow room, climate and other evolutionary forces of the first magnitude" do to the soul, writing in *Land of Sunshine*, in 1901, "[Man] who feels himself the Lord of Creation [comes to admit] that he did not invent it."⁶¹ Likewise Muir understood Lummis's attitude as he fell in love with the people, places and cultures of the West. He knew what it felt like to be all alone in a strange land with thieves and robbers in every dark corner. But most of all, he could relate to Lummis's comment that the West was the true wonderland of the world.



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(Photo of Charles Lummmis on page 8 courtesy of the Southwest Museum, Los Angeles, CA. Photo # P32528A.)

Books John Muir Would Like to Read

Mojave Lands: Interpretive Planning and the National Preserve, by Elisabeth M. Hamlin (Johns Hopkins University Press; 272 pages; \$42). Discusses the National Park Service's multi-use management of the Mojave National Preserve, a three-million-acre tract created under the California Desert Protection Act in 1994.

Industrial Cowboys: Miller & Lux and the Transformation of the Far West, 1850-1920, by David Iglar (University of California Press; 267 pages; \$37.50). Examines the industrial and environmental transformation of the West through a study of a meatpacking conglomerate started by two German immigrant butchers in San Francisco; describes their efforts to monopolize land, water, and other resources.

Environmental Justice in America: A New Paradigm, by Edwardo Lao Rhodes (Indiana University Press; 263 pages; \$29.95). Examines why issues of class and race were relatively neglected in environmental policy until the 1990s and offers a method of risk assessment that will incorporate the concerns of environmental justice; includes a case study of a controversy over hazardous-material disposal in rural Noxubee County, Miss.



Restoration of Puget Sound Rivers, edited by David R. Montgomery and others (University of Washington Press; 505 pages; \$30). Research on the restoration of the Pacific Northwest waterways as part of a salmon-recovery effort.

Critical Political Ecology: The Politics of Environmental Science, by Tim Forsyth (Routledge; 320 pages; \$110 hardcover, \$31.95 paperback). Examines how political factors affect the creation, dissemination, and institutionalization of scientific knowledge about the environment.

Win-Win Ecology: How the Earth's Species can Survive in the Midst of Human Enterprise, by Michael L. Rosenzweig (Oxford University Press; 211 pages; \$27). Discusses the concept of "reconciliation ecology," which blends economic and conservation interests.

Explorations in Environmental Political Theory: Thinking About What We Value, edited by Joel Jay Kassiola (M.E. Sharpe; 248 pages; \$60.95 hardcover, \$23.95 paperback). Topics include problems with "green utopianism," and reconciling the sometimes conflicting views of environmentalists and progressives.

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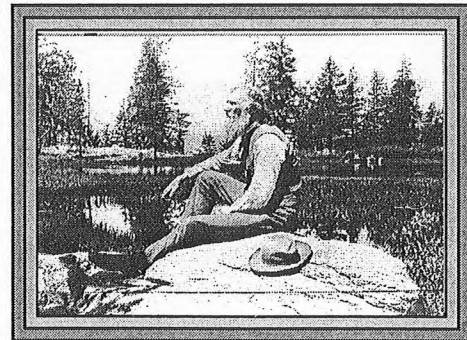
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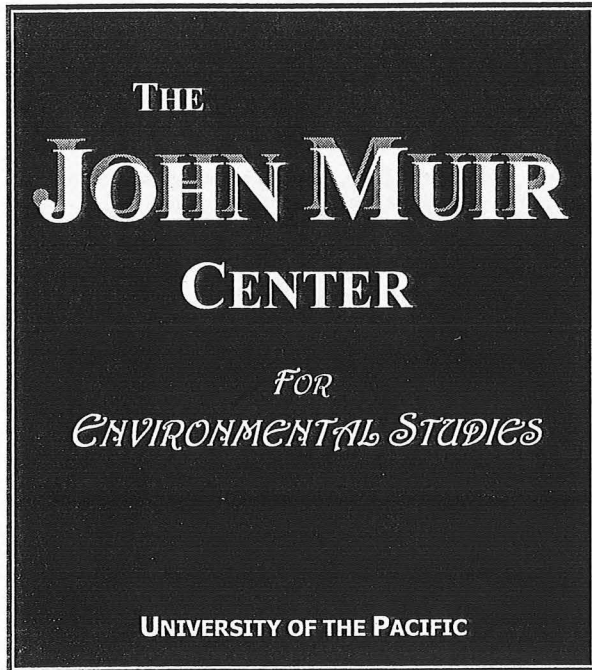
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