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The John Muir Newsletter, Fall 2005

The John Muir Center for Environmental Studies

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In the last issue of this newsletter, we introduced John Muir’s World Tour of 1903-04. We continue that story here, told by Muir himself by way of his unpublished journal, a part of the John Muir Papers held by the University of the Pacific’s Holt-Atherton Department of Special Collections.

Part II begins where Part I ended with Journal # 48 (out of eighty-four extant in the Muir Papers). We print the journals as Linnie Marsh Wolfe transcribed them a half century ago. Where she could not read a word, I have made an earnest effort to decipher what Muir penciled in his small notebook. At times, he inserted lines in between other lines, making it very difficult to read. At other times, he used abbreviations, some of which Wolfe decoded, some of which remain undetermined. Where words are clearly illegible, I have indicated such in brackets. I have made no attempt to provide academic comment on the journal. It is the raw transcript as found in the Muir Papers.

We begin on the reverse end of Journal # 48, which has a series of entries out of chronological sequence. Journal # 49 follows and is printed in its entirety, taking Muir and his two companions, arborist Charles Sprague Sargent and his son, Robeson, by train across western Siberia from the Russian city of Rostov on the Don River, July 26, 1903 through Harbin toward Vladivostock on August 15. We include the first few pages of Journal # 50, taking the Muir-Sargent party through Manchuria to the coast on August 21, where he writes, “The sea air reviving. Hope to leave this evening 9:00 P.M. for Kabarovsk.”

In 1993-1994, the John Muir Newsletter printed “John Muir in Russia” by University of Pacific Professor William H. Breenan. This three-part analysis of Muir’s trip across “Old Russia” remains an important piece of Muir scholarship. We offer it to our readers as a reprint for $3, to cover reproduction and postage.

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The reverse end of #48

In Regel Nursery, Petersburg - Leontipodium, Alpinum, Eade[?] Heuchera sanguinea, Gentiana Bursciana, large yellow pale, 5 foot high. Gentiana listea, 5 foot high, bright yellow, many flowers in whorls.

Regel and Kisselring: Campanula humilis, lovely crowded, multitude of bluebells close to ground.

Samara at the crossing of Volga: Ufa Celyabinsk, on west and east sides of Urals. Before reaching Urals, clumps of pine run through. Forest fires destroy hundreds of villages. Ufa pretty situated on wooded hill. East of Chelyabinsk the ground flat for 2000 miles (?)

Omsk, 50,000 population. In center of rich agricultural country and pasture. A belt 2000 miles wide of forest to north, but fine forest hills to south.

(Continued on page 4)
Birthday / Earth Day 2006 and Annual Meeting

Celebrate John Muir's Birthday and Earth Day on April 22, 2006, 10am to 4pm at the John Muir National Historic Site in Martinez, California. The house and grounds will be alive with music and exhibits about earth-friendly technologies and programs that sustain the environment. Learn about solar power, green building, wildlife conservation, hybrid vehicles, organic gardening, recycling, and much more. Admission to the park is free; food and beverages will be available. Rain or shine, come and follow in the footsteps of John Muir.

John Muir Mountain Day Camp

In its fourth year, the John Muir Mountain Day Camp, now a program of the John Muir Association, is an outgrowth of the John Muir Festival Center whose aim is to promote and foster Martinez as a world class destination for Arts, Culture and Education. It began as an educational outreach of the Willows Theatre John Muir Mountain Days musical. The day camp is operated on the grounds of the John Muir National Historic Site in Martinez, California.

The Day Camp's goal specifically is to enlighten students to the teachings and legacy of John Muir as well as provide opportunities for expression, creativity and interaction in a safe environment which fosters growth and appreciation for nature and conservation.

About Our Staff

Camp Director Jill Harcke has 15 years experience as a grade school teacher. Assistant director Susan Barry is a professional artist, who teaches arts and crafts at the camp. Guest teachers are subject to change. In the past, they have included Frank Helling performing as John Muir, Ranger David Blackburn giving a tour of the John Muir home at the John Muir National Historic Site, Dan'l McHenny performing songs from the John Muir Tribute CD, Dr. Bonnie Gisel of the LeConte Memorial Lodge as Dr. Nature, Eco-musician Bill Oliver, Children's book author Donnel Rubay, Megan Costello from REI-Concord, and many others.

Also, John Muir's grandson and other Muir-Hannsa family members stop by to visit with the campers. All counselors are qualified instructors with extensive experience working with children. Guest teachers are specialists in the area of that day's focus. Some events subject to change.

This year: Three Fantastic Weeks:

Last week of July, & First two weeks of August, 2006
For Ages 7-12 yrs. Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Tuition

$200 per participant, per session includes field trip, park admissions, and camp T- shirt! Deposit and Tuition are non refundable after July 1, 2006. Registrations by fax or phone will need to pay application fee and tuition with a credit card. By phone: (925) 798-1300 • By fax: (925) 676-5726 • Email: info@muircamp.org

John Muir Association John Muir Conservation Award

John Muir advocated the protection of places with particular beauty and wildness and he demonstrated ecological insight by partnering humankind with nature for future generations. Each year the John Muir Association acknowledges individuals, groups, or organizations for their restoration, protection, or conservation efforts. The winners for 2005 were Igor and Shirley Skaredoff.

Recognizing their contributions in the restoration of Alhambra Creek through downtown Martinez and beyond. They are leaders in the group, Friends of Alhambra Creek. He and his wife Shirley lead the annual Alhambra Creek clean-up days and are the first to take groups of all ages into the creek and along the Carquinez Strait. Mr. Skaredoff is also active in the broader Watershed Forum, bringing leadership and strong representation to that group. He has been personally involved in mapping sections of the regional watershed and takes regular water samples from the creek to test temperature and salinity for the restoration of steelhead trout upstream. In addition to his work with the Alhambra Creek Restoration and Environmental Education Collaborative (ACREEC), Mr. Skaredoff has been in many classrooms throughout the District presenting lectures and demonstrations. He has been a creative partner in grant-writing, PowerPoint presentations, and public forums. His self-effacing and easy-going manner has encouraged participation by many people who would not otherwise have gotten involved.

Nominations for the 2006 award are now open. Nominations may be submitted until March 31, 2006. Contact the John Muir Association for more information.

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This Newsletter is printed on recycled paper.
Late last summer I had the opportunity to camp two nights at Cathedral Lakes at the base of Cathedral Peak in Yosemite National Park. The lakes are about a four-mile hike west of Tuolumne Meadows. The skies were mostly clear, but the variable gusts assured no shelter from the cool temperatures. A bit of snow fell on us when we hiked in, and a bear, which we only remember as a big shadow, jostled our bear bins (bear proof food containers) while we slept.

With over a year under my belt working with the John Muir Papers at the Holt-Atherton Special Collections in the University of the Pacific Library, I had a few stories to tell about Muir while we hunched over our dinner of freeze-dried Pad Thai. Nevertheless, the landscape had an effect that went deeper than my anecdotes.

I had brought along passages from Chapter 10 of My First Summer in the Sierra that covered the areas we were exploring. On Saturday, my friends decided to climb Cathedral Peak (a gimpy knee prevented me from joining them). As one of them neared the top, we established contact over the walkie-talkie, and I could follow him with binoculars. I was inspired to read Muir’s account of his first trip in 1869 to the peak. “How often I have gazed at it from the tops of hills and ridges, and through openings in the forests on my many short excursions, devoutly wondering, admiring, longing! This I may say is the first time I have been at church in California, led here at last, every door graciously opened for the poor lonely worshipper.”

My friend and John Muir stood in the same spot with only 136 years and 3 days between them. When we re-grouped in camp that evening I considered the mountaineer John Muir, who had been “climbing, scrambling, sliding on the peaks around the highest course of the Tuolumne and Merced (rivers).” Then I considered the written John Muir, which is preserved only 30 feet from my desk. I continued reading from My First Summer in the Sierra, “Camped beside a little pool and a group of crinkled dwarf pines; and as I sit by the fire trying to write notes the shallow pool seems fathomless with the infinite starry heavens in it.”

The journey of Muir’s thoughts from his hand in his notebook to its published books to the print out of Chapter 10 from the Sierra Club website in my hand is a reminder of what his ideas have gone through physically. I recommend that anyone bring Muir along in whatever form possible when visiting the Park or any place he had visited and reflected upon. Despite the years and physical transformation of his words, the enthusiasm shall I forget this big, divine day, -- the Cathedral and its thousands of cassiope bells, and the landscape around them, and this camp in the gray crags above the woods, with its stars and streams and snow.”

The next day, we returned to Tuolumne Meadows where we could buy gas, really good hamburgers, beer, and Tuolumne Meadows pen and pencil sets for my friends’ children. On the ride back to Stockton, I had the spacious back seat where I could spread out a bit and take in another passage from Muir, “Arrived at the main camp at nine o’clock, and soon was sleeping sound as death.”
Dairying etc. Ships come to its wharves from around North Cape and Nova Zembla and up the Obi. 1500 Deering reapers sold in a year (Nitchevo) "Cechas". Presently Tomsk, Capital of Siberia, 82 vers [a verst is a Russian measure of distance; 66 mile]

Passengers ran off into the woods for berries or flowers when the train stopped at stations.

Map showing approximate route of a portion of John Muir's Round-the-world Trip May 1903 - May 1904. Taken from John Muir: Nature's Visionary by Gretel Ehrlich, Published by National Geographic Society, 2000

Krasnayark at crossing of the Yenesei is beyond "the Great Forest, a pretty place with beautiful public gardens, considered the finest in Siberia. Irkuts on the Irkut River, branch of the mighty Yenesei. The Paris of Siberia.

The Obi, Yenesei and Lena navigable thousands of miles. One man said to have a thousand steamers on the Lena.

From Irkutsk to Lake Baikal, the road follows the Angara, the outlet of Lake, making a rise of 400 feet. Lake 420 miles long, 10 to 60 wide.

Stretiisk on the Shilka, where change is made to the River Amoor[Amur]. 1428 miles to Khabarovisk, then 253 miles to Vladivostock, or change to Manchurian line straight to Vladivostock.

Blagajovostchensk - the chief town of Irkutsk and the Pacific.
Bydarrna on sea coast, elevation 1600 feet, fine view and hotel, 40 versts from Sebastopol.

[begin Journal #49]

July 26th

Reached the large city Rostov, on the Don, 15 miles from its mouth on Sea of Azof at 5 A.M. From city, the first 10 or 15 miles marshy, pasture, then hay and grain, very fertile bottom land above floods.

Our interpreter left us at Rostov.

On no part of trip do I look back with greater pleasure than in our little excursion up Kasbek. It was so delightful to feel once more mountain air sifting through us and hear the distant roar of torrents and the near clash and gurgles of falling crystal water in bouldery, flowery banked channels.

At 8 A.M. we are running through prairie like expanse of hay and grain shocks and cocks, dotting the fertile levels far as eye can reach. Not a tree in sight for miles except at town and villages. No homesteads. Weather pleasantly cool and sky half cloudy. No dust since entering the mountains from Tiflis.

At 9 A.M. pass block of few square miles of planted forest, elm chiefly oak and Nigundo, about 15 feet high. Like the strips along the railroad to fence out drifting snow. Elevation about 600 feet at sea level. Prairie less fertile or more exhausted. Grains and hay short. 1250 crossed branch of Don at 10 A.M. 200 feet above sea level, and now running along its left bank. Land poorish, grass and corn and wheat mostly short like in parts of Kansas. Thin cover of glacial drift, bedrock crumbling slates very wide. Terrace banks of streams hereabouts and southward showing copious flood streams of glacial period.

2 P.M. 700 feet above sea level, grain ripe, crop better, many cattle. Homes of peasantry whitewashed and neatly thatched with straw. A good many Dutch windmills. Seldom have been over 5 or 600 feet all day. Vivid lightning, sheet sort which lighted all the landscape with its fields and towns. Many zigzag bolts discharged through the sheet.

July 27th

Heavy rain last night. At 7 this morning are passing through a level wheat field bounded by the sky, soil black, fertile, heavy crop. Saw men cradling wheat. Yesterday saw some few self-raking reapers, labor cheap. Some trees on landscape edge in black. (Noon) All one wheatfield except patches of oats and rye, etc. Some very short. Saw woman spreading manure today first time.

Men each plowing and harrowing at same time, one man on plow, another attached to harrow, the man/.../ 1 P.M. Within 2 hours so or so of Moscow. Crops better, mostly ripe. Saw bands of poor men and women going to harvest, all crowded together in box cars with children like cattle. Yet seemed not unhappy.

Norway pine and spruce sylvestris and Nordmannia excelsa now common along road, and birch and poplar telling of the north.

Today saw three men thrashing grain with flails.

Yesterday saw a man thrashing grain with a span of horses and a wagon, comfortably seated, he drove round a circle of 40 to 50 feet diameter.

Around Moscow at 4 P.M. Drove to Slavianski Bazar.

Good hotel.

July 28th [Moscow]

Good rest last night. The 3 weeks Caucasus trip was very hard, very hot, very dirty. From boundary, and I was very weak. Must be tough though as would probably have died. Began to mend as soon as struck the glaciers of Kasbek. Arm now about well.

Went to American consul at 10 A.M., and to bankers. No letters for me. Many for Sargents. They got word that Alice had been operated on for appendicitis and cabled for news about noon. A reply that she was doughty well was received in the evening of same day. I at same time cabled to Martinez and received reply "all well", next morning. Wondrous quick and comforting. The first word since leaving home. In the P.M. drove to Botanic garden, 6 or 7 miles over bad ill-smelling road. Little of interest. The old Minister of Agriculture a good kind man. Also drove through park planted by Nickolas and through the Kremlin. Interesting old towers and very fine view of City from the walls. 500 churches with gilded domes.

July 30th

At the Consul's again for information, got word from home, and drove to Kremlin, wandered through Museum, endless jewels, crowns, carriages, vases, and above all guns and other weapons most wearisome to behold. A few good pictures. Sauntered through the palace, very grand, some truly noble rooms, but the most interesting of all are the ancient towers, old lofty, venerable. The Cathedral of Ivan the Terrible, an indescribable mass of bulbous domes in barbaric color and grandeur of metal.

July 30th

Have been in hotel all day, reading Russian and China. Expect to start on our long journey day after tomorrow. Had the pleasure of visit from 2 Americans
today. Professor Berry and his son, the former of Nebraska State University, the latter from German University and a fine botanist.

**July 31st**

Reading in room. Had visit from Mr. Ward of Rochester, who is on his interminable travels in search of fossils, meteorites, etc. Anything that will sell well. Has been most everywhere.

**August 1st**

Received letter this P.M. from Mr. Harriman, dated Hotel Netherlands, New York, June 5th, with welcome news of recovery, had been out driving in park. He sent with this letter a request to all agents and officers of his 2 steamship lines to serve us in any way they could, etc. Very kind in every way to think of me in the midst of his dreadful domestic trials, not to mention his endless business. This letter was sent to Martinez, had Martinez post office mark, July 15th. London, July 28th, and reached me in Moscow, August 1st.

Started about 11 P.M. for Manchuria. Large number of ladies and gentlemen at the train to see American Courier off. Found a young man at Hotel who is from San Francisco. He is on this train - is going to mining region near Tomsk, has made several journeys over the railroad before. Is employed by big firm in laying hydraulic pipes in placer mines. Prefers Russian mines to Alaskan on account of cheapness of labor - 50 kopeks a day, and cheapness of provision, etc., railroad fares and freights. Bought sack of frozen milk for half rouble, but 2 cents per pound, etc. Great pleasure to hear English spoken.

**August 2nd**

Had good bed, slept pretty well, raised early this morning, is raining now, 10 A.M. quite cool. Most of country a wheat field, rolling hills, dark soil, grain now in the shock mostly, good crop, belts and blocks of timber, (oak, birch, alder, etc., small) presenting monotony, a few meadowy marshy places, streams, ponds, white pond lilies, lonely looking herds out in the gray rain with flocks, droves of cattle and horses.

Elevation 600 feet. Glaciated. P.M. quite warm, hot. But little change, waving gentle swells, a fair streams in very wide valleys as in all post glacial streams. Vast wheat fields and bits of forest, grain being cut, large fallow fields, black as if burned. Gray that Villages of workers. No fences, cattle herded.

**August 3rd**

Warmer. Crossed Volga at 4:30 this morning - a great river. Vast grain fields, rich black soil.

At 1:30 P.M. are in wide Country sunk valley. Red, rounded bluffs 200 feet elevation (?) On the north side extending east and west. Strata exposed on sheer spots.

Saw man crackling wheat - much cut by sickle. Was handed Magazine by Mr. Fowler with account of President's trip. Also story by Bailey Millard. 5:30, elevation 1200 feet, extensive patches of birch forest, the largest trees about 50 feet high, raggedly, drooping, picturesque. Grain very short, stacked and shocked more carefully. Harvest now on, round shocks with carefully adjusted cap sheaf.

6:45. Elevation 600 feet. (6:50 P.M. 520 feet; 9:00 P.M. elevation 480 feet. Temperature 90°. Extensive stretches seem pasture for long years unplowed.

**August 4th**

4:15 A.M. Yesterday's time. In a gorge of Urals alongside a fine mountain stream.

Temperature 60°. Elevation about 1100 feet. Dense forests on either side of Pinus sylvestris. Mountains rising to about 2000 to 3000 feet at sea level. At 5:00 A.M. sunrise reached fine spacious flat, filled lake basin and stopped ½ hour at station. ВЯЗОВАЯ densely forested mountains all round and though elevation only about 1000 or 1100 feet, the calm, cool air - 60°, the birch and
pine, the asters, bluebells, epilobium, and ferns, etc., make the place seem truly alpine. The aspen (?) Also and willows. A fine young river flows through the flat up which the railroad runs a short distance then turns to left up a small tributary to elevation 1400 feet. Here a broad upland is partly cultivated, oats and rye not yet ripe, and very short while every open grain spot however small, is cut for hay as in Norway. On this upland is a village, apparently old. Before 5 o'clock, the industrious peasants were at work haying, and herding cattle. Beyond this half hour or so, the solid forest nearly closes on the track, then up to 1400 feet, and at 7 o'clock of yesterday's time we are running down the right (south) bank of wide valley (5 or 6 miles) with finely moulded mountain sides generally forested, but forests interrupted by little farm clearings, the tops and upper slopes of the bounding mountains solid forest. Countless myriads of Pinus sylvestris. Never saw glacial lines more firmly finely drawn, one back of another, passing in charming gradation of color and distance, lovely peaceful moderate mountains purely wild, in great part wholly so.

7:30 A.M. Elevation 1100 feet, magnificent mountains on either side of broad valley (6 or 8 miles), all forested slopes charmingly gentle and simple, height of mountains perhaps about 2000 or 2500 feet at sea level.

The rock as far as seen is mostly slates, with but little strength of structure, alluring glaciers to degrade and sculpture them at will.

8:00 A.M. Elevation 1500, running up small stream, millions of pines on hills and mountains all round. Millions, few above 50 feet high. Here it is very strictly erect, unlike the cultivated. Birch also very abundant, and about the same size. All open spots in the woods mowed for hay. Now mostly stacked in round piles like rat nests. They make curious marks in the wild woods.

9:10 A.M. Today's time, are passing through a flat [illegible] the mountains, in which many handsome spruces are associated with the pines and birches at elevation of 1150 feet. The forest boundless, endless, etc. Zlatans, 1350 feet, at 10:00 A.M. Picea abies, saw a few larch, and oaks. The town seems old — traces of fire in adjacent forest.

11:00 A.M. 1600 feet. On right side of broad valley displaying immense breadth of forest, a few peaks rocking instead of common rounded low wave crests. Going down grade in series of daring loops, sharp-eared larch becoming common. Also noticed abies mountain Picea obovata is the only spruce seen.

Here and there a small lake with pond lilies, white spiraea common. Nearly all the vast forest seems virgin; saw long strips in parallel lines cut for railroad (?). Separated by serried strips of equal width.

12:45 P.M. Elevation 1150 feet, boundless forests. The Pinus sylvestris here and for miles back branchless to height of 15 feet. Evidently the lower limbs were fire-killed to nearly uniform height, showing evenness of grass and twig, fret and absence of wind. All these pruned trees are plainly fire-blackened at base. We are now passing a large lake which lies south of the railroad, 10 miles (?).

6:00 P.M. More lakes and swamps and dry marshes. No grain except small patches of rye now being cut. The pines cease at foot of mountains, 500 feet elevation. The birch extends far cut on account of enduring fire, sprouting from root. At 10:30 P.M. Still extensive patches of birch, a few grain fields, now barometer reads 240 feet above sea level (?). The waters of the western slope of Ural's here drain into the Ob, running a course of 2000 miles (?) with fall of 500 feet or less. So most of the great rivers flowing to Arctic Ocean have little fall and are navigable to their sources nearly.

August 4th
The Ural mountains fairly swarm with forests were from 4:00 this morning to 2:00 this P.M. in endless pine, spruce and birch, with some Abies, poplar, willow, Mountain ash, and larch. How much was missed in the night don't know, perhaps nearly half. Never before saw mountain range so densely feathered and universally covered with conifer trees. Am told by intelligent mine owner I met on train that Pinus Cembra is also common in parts of the Ural's towards Ekaterinburg called cedar by people, and yields famous crop of nuts. Common also about Tomsk and Altai and northward (?)

August 5th
6:30 A.M. Barometer about 300 feet above sea level. 65° cool, calm, bright day, cloudless after cloudless nearly full moon night. Still the indomitable birch holds sway over a low meadowish region given chiefly to cattle. The peasants are at work haying — very little grain in all this vast stretch from base of Ural's. Birch in belts and clumps, trees about 20 feet high here. The open grassy spaces greatly exceed in area the forest belts. Though the whole country in distant views seems forested.

8:30 A.M. Temperature 70°. Went a few yards from track at small station and gathered handful of flowers. Tall ranunculus, silene, pink flowered milfoil, climbing...
pea, bright pink flowers, long pedicilled in loose panicles of 3 to 8. Flowers 3/4 inch wide across wings and glows in grass like fire, fine purple comp like liatris, achemilla, phantaé. Yellow compound ray flowers, many and narrow, dandelion, foxglove, potentilla, mint, polygonum and several tall and umbelliferous plants which make brave show, strawberry abundant berries small now ripe, delicious, bought from girl on platform. All the roadsides in Russia where I have been are flowery from the Crimea to Arctic Ocean. Water standing in ditches some places this morning.

Large areas do not appear to have been planned, wild prairies islanded with birch, grass almost everywhere tall enough for the haymaker. Hay said to be worth a dollar a ton. The brave birch seems like a weed in the flowery prairie.

At 6:00 PM. Temperature 84°. Have been running through level rather marshy country all day with millions of birch, 20 or 30 feet high in usual belts and patches like islands. Very little grain of any sort, rye, wheat, patches of buckwheat and potatoes. Most of country looks like a wild vast prairie, birch perhaps about 1/10 or less of area, probably less, but now at 11:00 PM. it seems still to stretch on leaving no bare “steppe” of which so much is said. A beautiful effect was made this evening at sunset by the rising of a smooth white mist over most of the ground, heaviest where dampest, nearly all the country was covered with smooth, shallow, silvery mud-like water in both the birch belts and patches rose like islands.

About 4:00 this afternoon, we crossed the great Irlish River, branch of the Ob, seemed a mile wide and very muddy and sluggish. The barometer all day about 250 feet above sea level. No use can now be made of it. Omsk on the Irlish is large imposing town.

August 6th.

4:30 A.M. The same vast grassy prairie, swampy here and there and lakey, but everywhere the horizon is fringed with this wonderful birch. 6:30 A.M. It seems to be increasing in abundance. Coming close to track showing flowery openings of considerable size for miles.

Half an hour ago, we crossed small river with marshy borders. Large herd of cattle already out with patient herdsmen. The track being repaired in many swampy spots hereabouts. Forest of birch has a poplar here and there, and is becoming more extensive as to the area it covers compared with that of the prairie. Vast amount of pasturage apparently untouched, either by scythe or cattle.

Flowers of wayside showy on fine geranium abundant here, and a campanula willows. See large lake off to north. No settlers hereabouts or fields in sight. Land rich, grass dense and tall, fires seem to prevent the birch from taking possession of all the huge country.

8:00 A.M. of yesterday’s time. Temperature 74°. Barometer 520 feet. Opener region. Birch in smaller patches and scrubbier. Village by a lake, some hay made. Some garden patches of vegetables. Low range of hills like a stream bank in distance to south. We are going up grade, here is a stream with visible current and with dimpling, swelving, danks and banks – a marked change and relief from the dead lake bottom or sea-bottom levels [illegible] here and the Urals. Here too are little fields of barley and oats still green. The driest patches just turning yellow.

No dust this morning, rain here yesterday or last night. Geranium 3 feet high, flowers pale purple, nearly 2 inch diameter and abundant. Tall larkspur or monkshood. Tall larkspur or monkshood. Old villages very far apart. Blocks of old tall birch show the scrubbier areas second growth.

10:40 local A.M. All the country in sight covered with birch forest, as birch second crop, except small swamps and fields, say, one-tenth of area.

About 11:00 A.M. Arrive at Ob on large river of same name, about half mile wide. Numerous steamers along banks. All about 430 feet. Stop half hour. As soon as cross river find ourselves in Pinus sylvestris woods. A good many old picturesque round-headed trees, a thick growth of tall, younger and infinite seedlings. Good groves or forests within a few minutes walk from station. In an hour from station East, the railroad reaches 700 feet elevation. Trees mostly birch, the pines having been cut. Many old stumps visible and young pines among the birch. Pinus sylvestris is a wonderful indomitable species. Not a specimen seen after leaving the foot of the Urals until here – able, enduring, so is the admirable birch. Fine to see hells again, however low. Ground dry, scarce at all cultivated. The birch much larger here and has been cut so extensively what is left makes sunny openings. At distance of 3 or 4 miles, the woods seem continuous and dense.

1:30 P.M. Altitude 500. Delightful to see real hills. They are covered with tall grasses good for hay, and birch forest (with here and there a Pinus sylvestris) heavily thinned by fire and the axe. Grass flowery.

2:15 P.M. 600 feet Altitude. Grand old pines feet fire-blackened, standing near track among birch and forests.
of them in massive array on hills a mile or two away. Surely among the most ancient of their race.

At 15 minutes farther a lot of spruce or Abies or both and more abundant Pine. 2:30 P.M. Still more beautiful woods. Pine noble looking, Abies and birch on charming hills, each tree with its own shadow. Flowery sunny woods, bright day, here and there flower beds thick undergrowth. Soil mostly sand, stratification not plain in many places. No bedrock seen in the cuts. Altitude 700 feet.

6:00 P.M. Altitude 900 feet. Magnificent pines and Abies, compared with those we have seen, half mile from the track, one of the pines may be Cembra. They are. Still birch is the main tree, forming forests nearly pure.

As we approach Tomsk station, the Cembra pine, called cedar here and from which thousands of tons a year of seeds are gathered for food becomes common, growing with birch, spruce and fir. It is a very strikingly picturesque tree with strong outspoken personality, takes many forms like sugar and Monticola and flexilis, all that group of 5-leaved pines often on flat or with long outreaching arms, some densely dome-shaped, young, airy, feathery like sugar pine. [sketch] some growing on wet almost boggy ground, others on sunny hills.

Fir and spruce abundant also near station Taija, but eastward about dark 9:00 P.M. The ground is again given up to the wonderful birch mostly. In moonlight at 10:00 P.M. can still see the pine spreading its arms above the birches.

**August 7th**

4:30 A.M. P. cembra, spruce and birch still with us. A few open meadowy spots, people at work before 6 o’clock, women mow, split wood, plow, etc. Yet seem able for the harvest work.

6:00 A.M. Yesterday’s time. Have just crossed fine stream, probably a branch of Yenesei.

7:00 Local time today A.M. Have just left Atchinsk where had tea. Both Cembra and sylvestris with birch, and think I saw larch. Spruce common and good-sized poplars. A great deal of hay, little grain. Dark cloudy morning. Temperature 65°. Elevation about 1200 feet, probably too high. Yesterday had heavy rain towards evening, and magnificent whole double rainbow. Met Mr. Brown at Taija (Tomsk station) Sargent’s friend, came 200 miles from mining claim in Altai foothills to meet us (in 28 hours) in wagon and take us to his place for a good time, making all arrangements for relays of horses. Of course, was sorely disappointed when Mr. Sargent senior decided it was too far and would take too long. Young Sargent also disappointed. I feel sorry to see such eager hospitality foiled. Told of the game, blackcock, grouse, deer Maral (elk) etc., and a steamer trip on Yenesei where are bluffs like those on Hudson, the most beautiful and picturesque part of Siberia, etc.

7:30 A.M. Raining. Larch now abundant, trees great size and picturesque. 75 feet high (?) Spruce and Abies. A fine forest extending far to horizon, hills and dales and streams. Like an Alaskan morning.

10:00 A.M. At Komschag. Barometer 1100, rainy. Cembra growing in ground where water is standing within a foot of surface, with spruce and larch. The country is heavily covered with clay and sand roughly or evenly stratified, and cut into banks, ridges, “hogbacks” like those around Georgian Bay, Canada, parts of Alaska, Puget Sound, etc. The wash from receding glacial ice-sheet in region where no resisting rock with definite determining cleavage, few quartz pebbles?

10:30 have just passed bedrock exposure, crumbling clay slates. Whatever the size of fragments from such rocks, they are speedily reduced to clay and sand by the weather and glacial streams, the same material in the Steppes.

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1250 P.M. In a broad flat valley mostly treeless, rounded bluffy banks bare on north. Mountains with afar peaks, 100 versts [a verst is a Russian measure of distance; 66 mile] or more to south, extensively cultivated and pastured, grass still green. Descending fast not 800 feet.

4:20 P.M. Barometer 1600, soon after descending Krasnoyarsk important railroad place on Yenesei, a majestic stream flowing here in magnificent channel valley. 2 well marked terraces 100 feet or more at river, a broad level mostly meadow plan from base of a lower
terrace extend to river bank on either side, underlaid, of course with gravel. This great stream coming from the beautifully moulded mountains clad in dense forests among the mountains in sight from river are a number of peaks, some [illegible] lands bold and picturesque. Steamers ascend a day or 2 above Krasnoyarsk. River views said to be very fine. Cliffs like Hudson Highlands. After leaving Krasnoyarsk, the railroad goes down the river right bank, until a small tributary stream offers a way through the high bluff, up which it turns and winds through magnificent forests, especially of larch, some of which I measured 3-1/2 to 4 feet diameter, and tallest near 100 feet high. Thousands of square miles covered with this noble, vital, all-enduring and handsome tree, a sylvestris pine here and there, and spruce, Pinus obovata and fir, and always the brave birch. The larch siberica grows on wet as well as dry ground and there is no limit to the range of forms it takes. The young are very leafy and bushy branches ascending making a cone of pale green foliage [sketch] neatly thatched with tips. The old throw out limbs of different lengths at different angles, some horizontal, some stiffly downwards or upwards. When growing with dark green picea or gray green sylvestris pine, the difference in color is very contrasting and serve manifest a greater number of trees in a forest displayed on mountain slope.

All day we have been in what may be called mountains, the laboring engine creeping from valley to valley, ridge to ridge in deep loops and curves, and all the way beautiful or sublime as scenery the whole way through forests carpeted with profusion of flowers and grasses. Bluebells, larkspur, daisies, etc., Geraniums all wild until the railroad came. Trees pass in review as we look from car windows.

Station before Taichete W. of 1200 feet.

August 8th

Calm, cloudy. Temperature 62°. Elevation 1400 feet, near Taichete at 6:00 A.M. Considerable areas here and 50 miles west covered with dense sapling forest, the same species as yesterday. On dry ground the woods are open and the largest trees very large, as if survivors of a great fire of centuries ago. The largest Pinus sylvestris have yet seen are here, truly noble trees of impressive mien, 5 or 6 feet diameter, 100 feet high. So also larch - measured one this morning, 5 feet diameter, some fully 100 feet high.

3:00 A.M. Still finer, taller forests of same trees, now pine, now larch, now birch predominating. Elevation about 1300 feet, some crowded growth of young pine as slender and tall as the wood crowded Coutarla. The other trees also correspondingly slim. When open, all kinds more leafy, more abounding, triumphantly luxuriant with still nobler forms. (Sketch, detail of young larch). At size of say, 30 or 40 feet high, they are extremely graceful, beautiful happy trees. The pine also richly clad in leafy out-curving feathery limbs. Workman along track nearly all uncaring. Mosquito nets black over heads.

noticed pink flowered Spiraea, small along track this morning and Crataegus and Mountain Ash in station garden.

Many clear streams which swell the flood of majestic Yenesey. The drooping branchlets and scattered branches of the birch give it a loose, don't care undignified expression, but like the other trees is taller, larger here than elsewhere.

Patches of rye and buckwheat here, some beaten flat by heavy wind and rain.

Near at Oka, an old village with church here. Barometer 1900 feet. A little way back crossed the old exile road, well built, posts guarding sides of embankments and bridges. Lovely forests, streams fern meadows, a grand walk excursion for the strong, but not with blistered feet, or with chains on festering ankles, or for the old and weak, or fathers and mothers with families.

Saw fine yellow-flowered bush Potentilla.

From blue mountains 60 or 70 miles to the south. Hills and valleys or mountains always with us now. A good many rocky exposures seen since entering mountain and hill region, all so far friable slates and sandstones, accounting for abscessa of far traveled erratics. Patches of potatoes and rye.

The gestures of larch in wind delightful in lovely enjoyment. The long arms waving slowly, the branches rippling in quick, cheery vibrations, sparkling in light, the whole tree solemnly waving. A larch forest pure with its white stems and branches and lightly fluttering, drooping leaves and branchlets has a strangely solemn effect. A brave tree, many broken or hurt with snow, pines also when young. Fern forests all day.

Toulone, 1850 feet. 5:16 P.M. Between this and the last main station much of the ground has been closely pastured, showing old settlement before the railroad. The old town, Toulone, with its church is on the beautiful Oka, a branch of Yenesey.

6:30 P.M. Larches more and more beautiful and abundant. Second crop when not too close are most charming trees, far surpassing European species. Soil well drained. Here also the very finest spruce obovata. One of the most exactly beautiful of its race, branches
very abundant and feathery, though prickly leaved. Seldom over 50 feet high.

Children here have circular many roped swing, like the one in our Scotch playground.

7:50 At a station. This is a large timber yard, fine straight larch and pine, 30 or 40 feet long, 2 feet diameter, and trees square or semi-circular.

**August 10th**

Cool. Temperature 60° at 7:00 A.M. Elevation 1900 feet. At 5:00 A.M. were in sandy, comparatively barren region. Pure growth of silvestris Pinus. The same now at 8:00 A.M. Have been running up valley with mountain walls, say 2 to 3 thousand feet high, purely glacial in sculpture. The valley perhaps 50 miles wide, all sandy savanna stream bank. Some slight attempts at farming by Kirigs (?) Continuous growth of pines where not cut off. Mountains black with it; country seems dry, the poorest soil since Moscow and here for first time from Urals are out of sight of birch, except perhaps on mountains, or in small thickets, low bush species.

Soon, however it reappeared. 9:15 A.M. Barometer 2300 and clear. Woods now full of larch as well as pine, both remarkably tall, 100 feet or so, 2 to 3 feet diameter, with clean shafts growing on dry as well as meadowy ground. The soil gravelly, bouldery moraine. Spruce also. Birch also as good tall trees. In the sandy region, 40 to 100 miles back, the broad flats where moist, abundantly covered with willows, making willow meads hundreds of thousands of acres in extent. Here and there attempts at farming. Lovely flowers, blue erigerons, etc.

Cold wind blowing at ГОРОХОБ. 9:30 A.M. Fine sharply sloped glacial hills on either side. An engine put on here to push. Many fire-killed patches of forest by recent fires. After leaving the very wide sandy valley and entering small ones among the hills, forests have greatly improved.

At 10:15 attained height of 2850 feet, noticed low flat patches of heath-like plant. Perhaps bryanthus. Bush potentilla, yellow poppy, anemone. 11:00 A.M. ПЕТРОВСКИИ, ЗАВО 2:00 P.M. Magnificent smooth forested scenery on either side of valleys and plains. Valley of selenga now running up right bank broad over-pastured meads,
sheep and cattle, horses. Haymaking going on.

Elevation 2400. Temperature 230°67°. Bluebells, gentian, and the lilac daisy or aster which seems ineffably lovely as we whirl past. 305 Elevation 2450. Run through short tunnel. 100 feet from timber as usual a good deal burned.

Little difference in either forest or general scenery until night. About 10:00 P.M. Barometer stood near 2900 feet.

August 11th

Leave train at Chita 2:30 A.M. Very sleepy. Country dry, sandy and most denuded of timber near town. Within 4 or 5 miles, only second crop trees, but distant mountains all around when not burned or heavily timbered. All delicate herbaceous plants destroyed by cattle and horses, meadows seem to have been over-pastured for many years. Part of town old. 80,000 soldiers said to be encamped in the neighborhood.

None of the features of vast Siberia more excites the imagination than the great rivers pouring their mighty flood from thousands of dark forested mountains and broad flowery plains, and sweeping on over the level frozen tundras to the Arctic Ocean. Any through the white winter beneath ice and snow, its fishes, people of many tribes on its banks, beneath hot and icy skies, storm clouds, cumuli taking place of mountains on the level tundras, and making snowy peaks over the smooth hills and gently waved mountains. The animals that dwell among their outspread branches, the flowers and mosses, etc., color changing the mammoths (Sketch) entombed in their banks and beneath their waters, etc.

Next in general interest to me are the pine and larch forests their vast extent, their hardy bravery and beauty and majesty, their branches waving in breezes, streaming in storm winds, shining in sun or snow-laden, sparkling in keen frosty air, putting forth their tassels in the quick spring, sowing their seeds, etc. The fertility of the soil over extensive stretches of more than a thousand miles wide, with scarce a rod of waste.

Barometer 25 (?) miles east of Chita, 2150.

Markabebo (?) English Makkaveievsk, an old village, situated on side of magnificent glacial meadow, one of the grandest have seen on this trip. Several glaciers met here hence the basin, and in meeting made fine scenery for basin banks.

The forest here as usual, P. sylvestris, Larix and birch. Tall willows in mead.

The railroad cuts along rim show heavy moraines of sand gravel. A fine stream, size of Tuolumne or larger runs through basin. Soil rather poor soil, on adjacent dry moraine plains, few patches of rye, wheat, buckwheat, potatoes.

At Karimskai, Barometer 2150 feet. Lift above station about 600 P.M. running down left bank of beautiful river, size of Tuolumne on rather narrow valley glacier showing a few miles from station a well formed so-called Hanging Valley tributary and glacier trends well marked. The ordinary forest, which seems to have suffered sorely by fire - many bald patches on slopes, and many densely forested by plainly young trees.

The main Manchurian line crosses the river on fine now iron bridge about 10 versts beyond station Karimskai. Line here laid with heavy rails. Branch line for the Amur steamer route keeps on down the river.

August 12th

At 8:20 A.M. Still an hour and half from Streitensk [Sretensk], the river, branch of Amur now about size of Sacramento, flows in picturesque valley, low beveled mountain walls. Willow meads glacial in trends, plainly forested on shaded south side mostly bare on sunny north. Trees as usual far as can see. Wild cherry.

Barometer 1750. Barometer 1650 at Streitensk 10:00 A.M. Around 4½ hours late and lost mailboat, another which sails to day has no accommodation. Next mail sails in 5 days.

Crossed the river from railroad station to the steamer landing on ingenious ferry. A steel cable from the boat is attached to piles in the middle of the river and by manipulating helm is swung across from landing to landing like a pendulum. The river is about a third of a mile wide. There is a gravelly terrace on both sides, no meadow, the hills and mountains on either side have low slopes and the forest edge is rather ragged, trees as usual as far as can see them.

The native Amur Cossacks, seem a fine manly set.

At 1:45 P.M. go botanizing a few miles from Streitensk, found what we take to be L. dehouricæ; has much smaller cones, scales different, perhaps finer leaves, largest trees about 3 or 4 feet diameter, 100 feet high. Not so beautiful as L. Siberica, still fine tree. A few P. sylvestris. We were on trampled and cut edge of the woods. On dry mead found an orchard of wild apples, Pyrus baccata, fruit 1/4 inch diameter, trees 15 feet high, gray trunks 8 or 10 inch diameter, pruned by the cattle and horses, high as they could reach. Also a wild cherry, a new birch, a new willow very handsome, with long slender leaves, silvery beneath beautiful the most shining of all effect when turned over in the wind. 2 handsome rose bushes and a
species of elm, Ulmus parvifolia, and a gentian, dark blue flowers 1 inch long, 2 to 12 or more on plant which varies from 6 to 16 inches long, beautiful asters, 2 spiraea 2 campanula, a mint-geranium and dianthus. The Cossacks here have good farms and houses and pay no rent or tax to Government in consideration of military service. All Russia is flowery.

Mr. Sargent and son have decided to give up the voyage down the Amur, on account of missing today’s boat, though another sails in 4 or 5 days. Would go on alone but can’t separate.

**August 13th**

Lovely morning. At 11:00 A.M. are nearing Karimskia, 3 fine mountain rocks in middle of river (sketch) Valley a short distance below station. Hard masses of strong physical structure rare in those slaty formations. Direction of trends parallel with the river valley.

Wait for Manchurian train until after 7.00 P.M.

**August 14th**

Calm fine day. At 6:30 A.M. Barometer 2250. Temperature 62°. We are now on long grassy prairie, not a tree or bush in sight except in distance the tops of blue wave hills ahead and behind seeing faintly at distance of 100 miles (?) either way, east and west to which the level prairie seems to extend. The hill on either side boundary the prairie north and south about 500 to 800 feet high, width apart about 15 or 20 miles. This most like one of our big western prairies have yet seen, grassy flowery, roughened with iris. No house or cultivation visible, a few herds of cattle. Lovely aster and bluebells.

At 7:45 A.M. we are at BORZIA [Borzia on the Russian-Manchurian RR, completed in 1903], the above note was written about 30 versts west of this station.

At Borzia, quite a village, a stream of considerable size flows past on western side. The lack of settlements to westward probably due to want of water.

Half hour east from last station saw drove of double-humped camels, running free at pasture. One hour from station no tree or bush in sight over the rolling fertile hills, flowers, blue thistle or Centarea, Campanula, 2 feet high, simple stem, closely leaved, panicle of 25 flowers or so, Dianthus, aster, potentilla, and penstemon. Soil hereabouts clay and sand glacial decaying states seen in cuts, glacial drift on top a few feet thick only at very great distance an outcrop of bedrock, very fertile, grazing country.

At 9:30 A.M. Barometer 2650. Descend rapidly to about 2200. P.M. still lower 1800. Arrived at Manchuria about 1:00 P.M. Left at 4 o’clock new time, hour ahead.

Down waving hills all smooth and green until 6:30 when we descended after climbing low divide into broad green flat valley of branch of Amur. Roughened here and there by sand dunes, telling high winds Gobi Desert not far south and west of here. The dunes dotted with the brave sylvesteris Pinus, short broad bushy densely leaved. These are now at 7:30 near sundown the only trees we have seen since daybreak today. They are now in the gloaming quite abundant on broad low waves of dunes, all the dunes green with grass and flowers, with few exceptions. A mile or two back saw Ulmus parvifolium as bush, also perhaps dwarf bush. Barometer 2000. The tops of low mountains, blue and violet in distance most all around.

Lovely amber sunset and cool after very warm day. Mostly lanky Chinese at work on railroad. A month ago, this train was held up by mounted natives (?) 13 killed by guard of 40 soldiers on train of whom these Apaches were not aware. The last station reached about 7:00 P.M. was Khorkhonte (?). Treeless hills and plains after passing purely [illegible] until 10:00 P.M.

**August 15th**

At daybreak dense fog. A few trees looking here and there. At 6:00 A.M. or 6:30, mist rose, fine calm morn. Barometer 2200. Temperature 65°. Ground marshy. Soon 7:00 A.M., began to ascend Kingdon mountains by Yolo Pass. At station came to switch back, 2 heavy engines one pulling, other pushing, wheels of drivers slippery occasionally on wet rails. Peaks and ridges with steep well forested slopes, luxuriant undergrowth. Few P. sylvesteris, 2 birch the common one, and another like our Mahogany birch, or Cherry birch. Larch like Siberian not Dahourica, and one that seems new. An oak dentotia or Mongolica. Spieaea, echifolium, geranium, dryas, larkspur, strawberry, tall sedges, grasses etc. Top of Pass 5000 feet. Immense amount or work being done here besides the big tunnel, mostly by Chinese, fine example of glacial sculpture and denudation. Meadows most trends, etc. At foot of switchback on east side enter a beautiful glacial valley, flat meadow, floor 1/4 mile wide, finely obedient in trends running to touch of its many tributary valleys. Some hay cut on meadows. The rock slates metamorphosed and massive here and there (sketch).

Elevation of meadow pass deserted above 2500 feet. The descent from summit of switchback 500 feet. Meadow bottom of pass east side widens to a mile with far-reaching bays, opening charming views bounded by peaks forested. Bluebells, asters, etc, again luxuriant and abundant, polygonum, etc. and tall comp. [illegible] I don’t
know. Extensive brickyards in pass worked by Chinese. They are also doing most all the bricklaying and stone masonry for buildings and bridges, etc. Houses of Chinese and of some Russians are half underground or on top wood-casing covered with earth, with boards corrugated iron, straw, bark, etc., some plain log-houses.

Breakfasted at 9:30 at large village in the pass where important buildings of the Company or Government are being slowly erected.

11:00 A.M. Barometer 1725. Meadow Pass (Yolo) beautiful as ever, innumerable branches opening charming view, blue mountains ahead, one peak and ridge beyond another with lovely tones, farthest 100 miles (?)

Beautiful dianthus noticed far back, common here, also Veronica.

2:00 P.M. Still descending the beautiful Yolo Valley, swollen by many tributaries it is now very wide, and the river is many times larger and brimming full as if heavy rains had fallen on sources. The valley floor now far less Alpine and meadowy. Barometer now 1100 feet, and ground covered with small trees and rough weedy plants still the general views are very fine.

3:10 P.M. Barometer 1000 feet. The view lovelier than ever. The main valley floor level 2 or 3 miles wide, dry meadow, lovely tones of green, pale yellow, dark green and brownish trees round-headed along river, brown willow, birch, oak, etc. Innumerable peaks and ridge waves of mountains rising behind one another. Most distant 100 miles. None over 5 or 6000 feet. All tones of blue, celestial on fineness, few cumuli for snowy range to add sublimity to beauty magnificent.

At sunset, Barometer 700 feet, a singularly even and gentle slope from the head of meadows at east side of Yolo Pass. Here the meads have graduated into a wide plain but still fertile, this side. Mountains have swindled into long low ridges fading into plains which shows only faint lines of wavelets to indicate glacial trends. Scare a tree in sight, even in distance, thousands of young sprouts of birch, a foot or 2 high, are scattered in the grass—a telling story of influence of fire. The deposits also graduated, all grow finer from rough moss of summit to sands of the plain, a most instructive lesson.

At 9:50 crossed the Noli River [Nonni or Nen River], half mile wide. Barometer here 500 feet. The most picturesque region have seen on the continent. Scores of charming paintings may be had in this one grand valley. The people too interesting. A great day. Landscapes few, brimming streams rich meads, finely moulded forested mountains, herds of cattle and haying. Many places wild for many miles.

**August 16th**

Barometer 420. Temperature 7:30 A.M. 75°. Level fertile prairie Nor hill not tree, nor house of any sort in sight. Bluebells and asters most show of the flowers. At 8:30 A.M. come suddenly into a region of many villages and clumps of true Ulmus Manchurica, where all the ground far and near (the prairie) is cultivated. Millet, beans, maize, etc., in narrow rows, the earth gathered up around the plants with hoes apparently; also patches of vegetables, no fences, no separate houses. The trees only in small clumps and lines, just enough to diversify this nearly dead level of the prairie, small hillocks rare.

Barometer 420 for hours.

Arrive Harbin 1:50 P.M. Situated on the Singare [Sangari], very large stream with many steamers, tributary of the Amur, seems hardly larger than the Noli crossed last evening. Barometer 400 here. The town is dirty, muddy, raw. Building going on rapidly, intended for important town, must be sickly. In the extensive cultivated country passed just as neared town, a species of Artemisia hardly at all woody, about 2 feet high, or more is the only fuel. It is pulled up by the root tied in bundles and set in shocks to dry or [illegible], then carted or carried home.

After driving through town left for Vladivostock at 3:45 P.M. Altitude 600 feet at 6:00 P.M. After running through wide cultivated prairie-like bottom, like that passed west of Harbin, we are now ascending picturesque small valley in the midst of finely and apparently freshly glaciated hills and ridges. No main characteristic glacial sculpture is to be found in Alaska or California. Glacial [illegible] and valleys with tributary trends covered mostly with bushy and small birch, elms and maple, all though better part of bottom and sides of low hill cultivated. Raspberries offered at station by Chinese. Rock exposures are slate [illegible], grape vines here. Glacially seems nearly alpine, wholly so in sculpture. Yet only 600 feet at sea level and tops of near mountains 1000 to 2000 feet only like some in Alaska.

**August 17th**

Barometer 1400, 5:00 A.M. Temperature 60°. In mountains descending a small stream which winds through an almost continuous series of glacial meads,

(Continued on page 19)
CALIFORNIA AT A HUMAN PACE: RE-WALKING JOHN MUIR'S 1868 TRIP TO YOSEMITE

Walkers: Peter and Donna Thomas

Project Overview

Our project is to determine the actual route John Muir used in 1868 to get from San Francisco to Yosemite, to map his route out and then develop and walk a route that parallels Muir’s. This new SF-Yosemite route will parallel Muir's route, using public walkways and open spaces (for example, we will walk the San Francisco Bay Trail from Oakland to Alviso, and then the Guadalupe River Trail from Alviso to San Jose). We will take time to "botanize" and to note how the landscape and environment differ from what Muir reported. We will contact local newspapers and we will give presentations at public libraries along the route, to our story, talk about John Muir's legacy and influences, and promote the creation and use of walking paths and open spaces. It will be our goal to use our story to prompt community members to share their own stories about local hikes and walking routes, and local opportunities to appreciate nature and to encourage other people to walk the route we have developed.

Project Background

In 1868 John Muir sailed from New York to California. He wanted to see Yosemite. From San Francisco, the typical traveler took a ferry to Stockton and then completed the trip by horse or stage. John Muir chose to walk. He wanted to see the plant life, to "botanize" and experience the landscape at a human pace. Muir took a ferry to Oakland and then walked, via the Santa Clara Valley, over the Pacheco Pass, across the San Joaquin Valley to Snelling, and up the foothills through Coulterville to the Yosemite Valley. Yosemite proved to be his spiritual home. To promote and protect such places of natural beauty became his life's work. Most of Muir's travels are well documented by his letters and journals or later research, but there is little documentation of this walk to Yosemite. His diaries from this period are lost and no Muir scholar has thoroughly documented this trip.

Project Details

The planning phase of our project will take place September 2005-February 2006, and will be to research in historical archives like the Holt-Atherton Library at University of the Pacific to document the details of John Muir's trip and to determine his most likely route. We will also acquire historic maps and contemporary drawings, paintings and photographs of the places Muir passed by on his 1868 trip to use in our presentations.

The first phase of the project will take place in February or March of 2006. We will drive the roads he walked, compiling a current map of the route. We will take photographs to document the change relevant to Muir's 1868 trip. At this time we will finalize the route that we will walk, which will parallel his path, but pass as much as possible through open spaces, parks, bike or walking trails, and small streets, rather than on the busy roads or highways that have replaced the dirt roads John Muir would have walked on.

The second phase will be to walk the route. March 30-April 1, 2006 we will attend the Muir Symposium at the University of the Pacific. Following that we will leave from San Francisco on April 2, 2006, to coincide with Muir's departure in 1868. We plan to have events to commemorate our departure from San Francisco and our arrival in Yosemite. As we walk, we will give programs for the local community at public libraries to talk about John Muir, tell the story of our trip, and promote the creation and use of walking paths and open spaces. We will address topics such as: "What was it about John Muir that inspired us to enter into this project?", "Is it still possible to walk across California in 2006, 120 years after Muir made his trip?" and "How has California changed?"

There will be a third phase after we have finished the walk. This will be to give additional public presentations and write articles for our sponsoring and supporting organizations (The Book Club of California, the Yosemite Association, The John Muir Center, The California State Library, our local newspaper, etc.). We will also create a limited edition artists’ book to document the trip and self-publish a map of the route we to encourage others to also enjoy California's landscape and re-walk Muir's 1868 trip to Yosemite.

To find our web site just make a google search for Peter and Donna Thomas, or use this address:
http://members.cruzio.com/~peteranddonna/index.htm
College of the Pacific's John Muir Center will host a conference at the Stockton campus of University of the Pacific on March 31-April 1, 2006. The focus of the 2006 California History Institute will be “John Muir in Global Perspective.”

Highlights include the following:

**Thursday, March 30:** Field trip to Martinez to visit the John Muir National Historic Site, Bonnie Gisel’s Muir’s Botanicals project, and cemetery. Travel by bus from Stockton, 9 AM to 5:30 PM. $25 per person for transportation in coach.

**Friday, March 31:**
**8:30-6:30 PM Conference Day 1**
Grace Covell Hall, UOP

**Morning Session:**
- Barbara Mossberg on John Muir’s Old World Global Education
- Jo Moulin on the John Muir Birthplace in Dunbar, Scotland
- Will Collin on Robert Burns & Muir

**Keynote Luncheon:** Robert Righter on *The Fight over Hetch Hetchy* Introduction by Ron Good, "Restore Hetch Hetchy"

**Afternoon Session:** John Muir, William Keith, and Joseph LeConte: *Early Days in California*; Steve Pauly, curator and moderator. Featuring Keith paintings and select items from the John Muir Papers, Holt Atherton Special Collections, Shan Sutton, Director.

**Saturday, April 1:**
**8:30-7:00 PM Conference Day 2**
**Morning Session:**
- Scott Cameron and Ron Knight on Muir’s Canadian years, 1864-66
- Bonnie Gisel on Muir’s Botany
- Graham White on Muir’s Return to Scotland in 1893

**Keynote Luncheon:** Garrett and Michelle Burke on the John Muir California Quarter’s international journey.

**Afternoon Session:**
- Mikko Saikku on Muir and C. S. Sargent’s travels in Finland and Western Russia, 1903
- Harold Wood on Muir in India
- Michael Branch on Muir’s Last Journey to the Two “Hot Continents”
- Ron Eber on John Muir’s Contribution to Global Conservation

**Special Presentation:** Lee Stetson as *John Muir, the Globetrotter*

**Reception and Book signing to Follow in the President’s Room**

To Register, contact
johnmuir@pacific.edu or by website:
http://www.pacific.edu/college/muir/

If anyone attending the conference would also like to be part of the Yosemite Association’s Spring Forum in Yosemite Valley on March 25, a limited number of spaces are being held for us. please contact Laurel Rematore for more information
lrematore@yosemite.org
209.379.2646
209.379.2486 (fax)
John Muir in Global Perspective Conference  
University of the Pacific, Stockton, CA  
March 30-April 1, 2006  

REGISTRATION FORM  

Name(s) for nametags: ________________________________  

Address: St. ___________________________  
City ___________________________  
State _______ ZIP _______  

E-Mail Address ________________________________  

Thursday, March 30  

Field trip by coach from Stockton to Martinez and back to  
John Muir National Historic Site. 9:00 AM to 5:30 PM.  
Must pre-register for a seat on the motor coach from Storer Coach.  
$25 per person for transportation. Coolers for lunches provided.  
Bring your own sack lunch.  

No. _______ X $25.00 = $ _______  

Conference: Grace Covell Hall, University of the Pacific, Main Campus,  
Stockton, March 31-April 1  

Catering: All catering will be by Bon Appetit, under contract with University of Pacific. Luncheon buffets and receptions will have vegetarian and non-vegetarian selections.  

Parking Permits We will be posting a map of where to park on the website. Please provide an email address so that we can send this to you with confirmation of your registration.  

I have a handicap parking permit and will need a handicap parking space  

I need ___ general parking space(s)  


Conference Pre-registration (Please mail prior to March 10): Complete Conference Pre-registration includes:
registration for all sessions, coffee, two luncheons, two receptions

No. ______ X $60.00 = $ _____

One day registration only. Includes sessions for that day, one buffet luncheon, coffee, and one reception
Friday, March 31 No. ______ X $40.00 $ _____
Saturday, April 1 No. ______ X $40.00 $ _____

Student Rate for Conference: Secondary and higher education students attending the conference:
Full conference rate No. ______ X $30.00 $ _____
One Day rate
Friday only No. ______ X $20.00 $ _____
Saturday only No. ______ X $20.00 $ _____

Total Conference Registration: Amount Enclosed = $ _____

Please make all checks payable in U.S. funds to:
John Muir Center, University of the Pacific

Mail check with this two-page form to:
John Muir Center, Conference Registration
WPC 229
University of the Pacific
Stockton, CA 95211

We cannot accept VISA or other credit cards for this conference. Those registering after March 10 will be accommodated if we have space, but we will not be able to accommodate luncheon reservations after March 20.

Pacific faculty and staff may pay by budget transfers to Muir Center. Please call Marilyn Norton at 946-2145 (M-Th, 8:00-4:00 PM) for details.

Hotel Information: I would like information on hotels in Stockton
alpine with gentians and mountains 3 to 4000 feet high, the rock granite. Passed divide in night. Ash, oak, spruce. 7:30 in magnificent fertile flat floored valley, 10 to 15 miles wide. Barometer 800 feet. Chinese settlements, villages here and there with patches of millet and vegetables; low mountain walls with ground down foothills extending into flat bottom 50 miles. We have been in this valley, beautiful trends. Very flowery and wild alpine like mostly blue gentian, a few miles back, and bluebells, asters, golden rod, wild apple, pear, plum, last evening. At 11:30 A.M. Barometer 2000 after passing through 3 tunnels. The mountains clad with rich flowers and oak wood with Mahogany birch. Charming. 12:40 P.M. Barometer 1200 feet. Oak and birch, Mahogany woods and flowery oak grubs in 10,000 show

(begin Journal #50)

In flowery, luxuriant wilderness plants showing proximity to the sea. A tall Echinopanax, like Alaskan somewhat, but with much more divided leaves. Oak dentata, birch 2 species, one or two species of Tillia, poplar, wild apple, plum, hazel, grape vine, etc. rank ferns. Great development of stratified drift, looks in general like Puget Sound. Foggy, about 6:00 A.M. the great bayfiord with ships coming to view and running around the shore. Arrive at Vladivostock soon after 7:00 A.M. and take rooms at the Grand Hotel, tired, half-starved, the last eight days, having slept in our clothes. Wash and feel better, but the hotels here are poor as to food and we have little hope of mending the flesh. West to bank to see young Rodgers. Was greatly disappointed to learn he had gone to a town on the Amur, 2 or 3 days distant by rail.

August 19th

Sargents out botanizing while I read and wish to rest. Would like to leave for Japan, etc, but Sargent wishes to go with him to point on the Amur and thence to Mukden, Pekin and Shanghai. 2 weeks more of miserable rail travel in my enfeebled condition, but I suppose I'll get through somehow, and I will see more of Manchuria.

August 20th

In house all day resting.

August 21st

The sea air reviving. Hope to leave this evening 9:00 P.M for Khabarovsk. to be continued...
THE JOHN MUIR NEWSLETTER

THE JOHN MUIR CENTER
FOR ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
STOCKTON, CA 95211

The John Muir Newsletter

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CONTENTS THIS ISSUE

• JOHN MUIR'S WORLD TOUR - PART II
• NEWS & NOTES
• CONNECTED TO JOHN MUIR BY MICHAEL WURTZ
• RE-WALKING JOHN MUIR'S 1868 TRIP TO YOSEMITE BY PETER & DONNA THOMAS
• CONFERENCE PRELIMINARY PROGRAM AND REGISTRATION