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Early Ascents.

John Muir

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EARLY ASCENTS

Letter from John Muir to George W. Stewart.

Published in Mt. Whitney Club Journal Vol I No.2, May 1903. p.81.

"Reading these accounts of these Whitney climbs (in the Mt. Whitney Club Journal) recalls to mind my first ascent in October, 1873. Early in the morning of the 25th I left my horse on a meadow a short distance north of the Hockett trail crossing of the summit, and climbed the mountain (now Sheep Mountain), about 14,000 feet high, named Mt. Whitney on the State Geological Survey map of the region. To the north about eight miles I saw a higher peak and set off to climb it the same day. I reached the summit needles about (11) o'clock that night, and danced most of the time until morning, as the night was bitterly cold and I was in my shirt-sleeves. The stars and the dawn and the sunrise were glorious, but, having had no supper, I was hungry and hastened back to camp, and to Independence, where I left my horse, and set out again for the summit a-foot, direct from the east side, going up a cañon opposite Lone Pine. I reached the summit about (8) o'clock A.M., October 29, 1873. In a yeast-powder can I found the following account of first ascents, which I copied in my note-book, as follows:--

"Sept. 19, 1873.

"This peak, Mt. Whitney, was this day climbed by Clarence King, U.S. Geologist, and Frank F. Knowles, of Tule River. On Sept. 1st, in New York, I first learned that the high peak south of here, which I climbed in 1871, was not Mt. Whitney, and I immediately came here. Clouds and storms prevented me from recognizing this in 1871, or I should have come here then.

"All honor to those who came here before me.

"C. King."

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"Notice,

"Gentleman,

(the looky finder of this
half a Dollar is
wellcome to it.

Carl Rabe

Sep. 6th, 1873."

"Of course, I replaced these records, as well as Carl Rabe's half a dollar, but did not add my own name. I have never left my name on any mountain, rock, or tree in any wilderness I have explored or passed through, though I have spent ten years in the Sierra alone."

single quotes