



1879-07-16

Letter from John Muir to [Annie Kennedy] Bidwell, 1879 Jul 16.

John Muir

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Sitka Alaska
July 16th 1894

Richard P. Popen
Bancroft Library

Dear Mrs Bidwell.

This is a charming

portion of God's lovely world, such a wonderful
composition of land & water. Still glazy bays
& inlets islands & mountains. The voyage
all the way up from Victoria is through
the most wonderful system of ocean inlets
straits reaches & channels imaginable. It was
difficult to realize that we were on salt
water at all. We seemed to be sailing on a
deep winding river abounding in lovely
mountain scenery, snow & ice on the summits
dense forests from the snowline down to the
water's edge. Immense cascades like silver
ribbons & nets of lace pouring in through
the woods on either side. The water calm & glazy
fenced out from the swell of the ocean.

The whole marvellous network of fjords
along this northern coast was carved &
fashioned by the ancient glacier. & the
small waves that plash their shores have
not yet appreciably marked the rocks.
I had a delightful botanical ramble yesterday
through a forest & a bog. The old favorites
of Canada were found in bloom. Hawthorn
Linnaea Cranberry buckberries Ledum Pyrola
etc. The forests are impenetrably dense, green
& damp & mossy. Cupressus Menzies Spruce & Hemlock.

One generation falling & crumbling into
humus for the next to grow upon. The
decaying leaves boughs & trunks & mosses
forming a mass 10 to 15 ft deep. I saw
four trees growing astride one prostrate
trunk, - such mosses & ferns!! You
& the General must come to this fine wild
Northland. How little it is known
I have but a moment to write
& you will excuse this hasty
scribble. I will probably visit
the Stickine Glaciers & will be
in Port Townsend in a month from
this date. Ever cordially yrs

John Muir

Remember me to Your Sister & the
General

The glacial phenomena are
most eloquently telling

Sitka Alaska

July 16th 1879.

Dear Mrs Bidwell.

This is a charming portion of Gods lovely world, such a wondrous composition of land and water- still glassy bays and inlets islands and mountains. The voyage all the way up from Victoria is through the most wonderful system of ocean inlets straits reaches and channels imaginable. It was difficult to realize that we were on salt water at all- we seemed to be sailing on a deep winding river abounding in lovely mountain scenery, snow and ice on the summits dense forests from the snow line down to the waters edge. ^{for} Numerous Cascades like silver ribbons and webs of lace pouring in through the woods on either side the water calm and glassy fenced out from the swell of the ocean.

The whole marvellous network of fiords along this Northern Coast was eroded and fashioned by the ancient glaciers, and the small waves that plash their shores have not yet appreciably marked the rocks. I had a delightful botanical ramble yesterday through a forest and a bog. My old favorites of Canada were found in bloom, heathworts Linnea Cranberry huckleberries Sedum ^{Pyrola} etc. The forests are impenetrably dense, green and damp and mossy. Cupressus, Menzies Spruce and Hemlock, one generation falling and crumbling into humus, for the next to grow upon the decaying leaves boughs and trunks and mosses forming a mass 10 to 15 ft. deep.

I saw four trees growing astride one prostrate trunk.- such mosses and ferns. You and the General must come to this fine wild Northland. How little it is known, I have but a moment to write and you will excuse this hasty scribble. I will probably visit the Stickine Glaciers and will be in Port Townsend ^{W/V} in a month from

this date.

Ever cordially yrs.

John Muir

Remember me to your Sister and the General.

The glacial phenomena are most eloquently telling.

The punctuation is as Mr. Muir made it,
and I leave th to Dr. Badé to properly place
it. We are searching for Mr. Muir's letters to
General Bidwell, and will forward copies
of same when found. As I have reported
heretofore, my husband tied his letters in
bundles convenient to handle, which have
to be untied, and Mr. Muir's, segregated.

In these bundles, or packages, are letters
of great value to us, but hundreds
of packages, in many boxes, have to be
examined to find what we wish.

Miss E. T. Bidwell

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