



1881-06-07

Letter from Louie [Strentzel] Muir to [John Muir], 1881 Jun 7.

Louie Strentzel Muir

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Recommended Citation

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been hard and unreasonable if you could have seen his patience and gentleness when baby fretted and moaned continually those weary days after you were gone.

Sunday morning, Wanda received the homage of her distinguished countryman the Count Lamoyzski, and she listened with clear, starry eyes to the legend of her royal namesake who loved purely, and suffered, twelve centuries ago, — and when Lamoyzski kissed her hand, and hoped some future time to welcome her in Poland, she smiled with the serene dignity and graciousness of a princess, then closed her eyes in peaceful sleep as Captain Bielawski gave her the old Slavonic blessing of Joy and Life Forever.

The young Count belongs to a princely house of Poland, is modest, gentle-mannered, and thoughtful — is a Commissioner from the French Government

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Martinez, California,
June 7, 1881.

My beloved husband.

Baby and I are here, searching for you through the darkness. Reach out your hands and lead us with you all the way, for the shadows bewilder our eyes, and our hearts are sore with longing. Our precious wee bairnie, has she indeed found you! She has started up from sleep, looking far beyond me, her beautiful eyes aglow with smiles, and her rosebud mouth cooing and quivering as if trying to say, O father, father! Ah me, if only I also can soon hear a blessed message, and out from the silence, the old words "Safe and well," I shall once more

be comforted. When you lay down, I was weaker than we knew, and after that night of strife with fate, I was miserable for many days, and baby suffered with me, for restful sleep deserted us both, and night and day, her great eyes were wild and strange, always seeking, pleading, for what we could not give her. I am better in every way now, stronger and more patient, and so little Wanda is thriving steadily, sleeping and waking like the summer birds; like them too in blithe graceful little movements, and beaming eager eyes. But always a tender loving heart, for already she is never quite satisfied unless held close in our arms, her velvety fingers clasping ours with caressing touch. She seems more and more nervous, and impatient of every harsh sound—but never tires of

sweet low lullabies, of kisses and love murmurs. Every moment she is precious, and the strange, sweet joy grows unceasingly deeper and stronger in my heart. O papa, it is hard that you must be denied the delight of her presence all these many days. Please God, at the blessed home-coming, you will not be a stranger to her, for, every day, she looks upon your portrait, and listens to your joyful words from wild gardens, and mountains and singing waterfalls. Papa, do not fear to love her with all the power of your heart, for she is fair and sweet and pure as a lily in the morning sunshine.

Grandmother looks happier and younger every day, and grandfather is the most tender and devoted guardian that you ever knew.

Dear, you would forget that he had

The Rodgers is expected to leave tomorrow, so there is little time, but I write as much as I can for I know it will seem good to you to hear about your own wee bairnie.

All the morning she was too restless, but is now sleeping quietly with her face against my breast, while I write, so here is a little curl from her dear head, and a spray of fern worn in the laces at her throat, with her kisses and mine upon them, and O, the love and tender longing that go with them to our dear wanderer, no words can tell.

So much was left unsaid a month ago, and we have felt so troubled because father could not go to see you on the Corwin as you asked. He could not be absent from the annual Warehouse meeting that Wednesday, and so wrote you with his regret about it, but

in the morning he thought that something he had said in that letter might seem too reproachful, and he did not send it, and I not knowing till afterward, did not write you the reason for sending only Charlie. Only your first letter of Monday came Tuesday evening, and during the night while baby slept a little while, I gathered together what I could for you, then mother packed them in the rubber and in her hurry, left out your Alaska coat. Still we hope that you bought every thing very needful for your comfort.

In my misery and terror about the baby, I could not write more. I have never received the letter you said you wrote Tuesday evening, so much is a blank to me adding to my bewilderment. Mr. Upham with the little boys, came up Sunday, and

flowers, the first of Wisconsin spring time, with a kiss and her love. Maggie has sent a picture of Master John Muir Reid.

Sarah herself has come in a letter with Gracie, 7 years old, a sweet, bright lassie with rounded cheeks, delicate chin, and the very look in her face that has so often puzzled me in that of our own Anna! So I love Gracie too, and now I can write to them all.

Charlie is waiting to take this letter to the express, so there is no more time. Mr. Upham will deliver it to Lind. Berry.

O John, my letter is but just begun; and there is so much that I want to say!

I am trying so hard, dear, to be good, only I need your help. Call to me, answer me,

(83)
brought me the \$100. you sent, and
the check from Scribner's for \$285.

I fear that you have not taken
enough with you for all your needs.

Mr. & Mrs. Sweet and Helen
came yesterday for three or four
days' stay, to look at land &c. They
like best a 7 acre field of Mr.
Barber's, below his house, on the creek
opposite Rogers' field, and also 70
acres of our Barber pasture. Mr.
Sweet is not quite sure though that
he wants any farm at all.

Mrs. S. said she came to tell me
about "the last moments in San
Francisco." Alas! there is so little
that she can tell.

I have written a long letter to
your mother, my dear mother now,
and I think that we can comfort
each other's aching heart, a little.

Sister Joanna send to baby, a
little cluster of daintiest wild

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to Australia on forestry, mines, &c. is
now on the way home, but will spend
some time in the Nevada mines.

The Doctor of the party told us
about a Polish Professor exiled from
Warsaw to Siberia, who has given
much study as a naturalist, to
Kamtchatka. He is Dr. Dybowski
and a few months ago, was living in
Petrozavlovsk. I hope you will
find him there, and he may be
able to help you in many ways.

I did not think before of the
possibility of the Rodgers meeting the
Corwin, but Lieut. Maguire of the
Richard Rush, called here yesterday
and said they would undoubtedly meet
at St. Michaels. The Rush will come
again next week to our wharf for
painting, to remain 3 weeks, and the
Lieut. said he would come out then
and tell us about his trips in Alaskan
waters, and what he knew of the Arctic

(103)
my beloved, my husband.
I will be patient until the
wild winter wears this, but after
that, I can not, I can not bear
it, and our little child will
need you.

Dear husband, dear father
may God be with you.

Your faithful wife,
Your wee, wee bairnie
Louie and Wanda Muir.

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