



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1893-07-23

Letter from John Muir to Helen & [Annie] Wanda [Muir], 1893 Jul [23].

John Muir

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Steamship Chevalier,

Near Oban, July [23], 1893.

Hello Helen and Wanda:

My two darling babies, I am on a steamboat sailing down through the midst of beautiful islands along the coast of Scotland on my way to Glasgow and Edinburgh. You can see the brown heather on the hills and the sheep scattered about like white dots. It is all beautiful hereabouts like the coast of Alaska, only there are very few trees. All the hills and mountains are green and brown, with grass and bushes and heather. The heather where it is thickest makes the brownish patches. The heather is a good deal like Cassiope, a small shrub tufty and dense and makes delightful fragrant beds for Highlanders and all lovers of fresh, flowery, breezy wildness. I have not yet climbed the Scotch hills to find out much about heather. I have seen two species, the bell and the common kind. It seldom grows higher than a foot or so, two feet at most. It is very hardy though so lovely, and will endure any amount of trampling, nibbling and burning. The sheep eat it, and heather mutton may well be the best.

O how I would like to camp out on these shaggy hills, but I must make haste to get back to my babies. I have to go to Norway a week or two and then to Switzerland, and the time flies fast. The steamer shakes so much with the machinery I can hardly write.

It is a cloudy day and showery at times, but the sun just now is streaming its mellow light through shifting openings and making many a bright golden patch on the green brown hills, and the water sparkles and glints and shines like silver.

I must go in haste. We change steamers here. Ever, my darlings,

Your loving father,

JOHN MUIR

BETWICE BOND