



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1868-01-01

Letter from Joanna Muir to John Muir ?, ca. 1868

Joanna Muir

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Copy from which this was made in possession of Mr. Charles Moores.

About 1868

Sheep Camp on the Plains
Two miles north of Snellings
Dec 21st

My dear little friend Charles:-

I am glad to know that you are so happy. I read your letter two or three times and you did not seem to be very far away when I was reading it. I know how you looked when you were telling your mother what I say, and I could almost see your beautiful eyes.

I have read about Daniel and the lions, but I would like to have you tell it to me again. There are a great many grizzly bears in the mountains, and I think they are about as strong as the lions that Daniel saw. Once one came to our camp fire and frightened me.

I am glad to hear that you are learning to read and to sing. I am a shepherd now and sometimes I sing when I am with the sheep. Larks sing almost every morning in California. I wish you could be with me and then we would all sing together, and I would give you a pet lamb and help you to make a little mill upon the stream that runs behind my cabin. There are a great many glossy black ravens where I keep my sheep. They say: Croak, Croak, when they want a lamb, and I say: There is none dead. There are a great many rabbits here that run so fast the dogs cannot catch them. Their ears are six inches long. They are very handsome. They skim over the grass about as fast as a bird's shadow. I wish I could see the beautiful snows of Indiana winter again. The dead flowers have no snow to cover them here. A great many boys in California never saw snow, excepting what is far away upon the mountains. It is too cold for butterflies now, but not too cold for grasshoppers and crickets, but then they cannot jump so far as they could in summer.

I have a little dog, too. I call him Compie because he is my companion. The stars of California twinkle more than the stars that are above Indiana.

A flower grows in the mountains that is like candy-stalk, and leaves and all look just like red, crispy candy.

I don't know when I will be home, but I will be glad to see you when I come. I hope you will write to me always. I pray that you may ever be happy and good, and that your eyes may always have abundance of the best and sweetest light that God may send to the world.

From your friend,

John Muir.

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