



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1871-11-16

Letter from John Muir to [Ann Gilrye Muir], [1871] Nov 16.

John Muir

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3rd

In all my lonely journeys among the most distant and difficult paths, passless mountains, I never wander, am never lost. Providence guided through every danger and takes me to all the truths which I need to learn, and some day I hope to show you my sheaves, my big bound pages of mountain Gospel.

I have just been busy moving my few chattels from Hutchings to Black, about half a mile down the valley and I scarce feel at home. Sidings of the great far-sweeping fires have reached our hidden home and I am thankful that your section of town and farms has been spared.

I heard a few weeks ago from David and Joanna and learn that all is well.

00031

or copy
of mother's
letters

[copy]

[13]

[1871]

Yosemite Valley

November 16th

Dear Mother Our highwalled home is quiet now, travel has ceased for the season, and I have returned from my last hard exploratory ramble in the summit mountains. I will remain during the winter at Black's hotel, taking care of the premises and working up the data which I have garnered during the last months and years concerning the ancient glacial system of this wonderful region. For the last two or three months I have worked incessantly among the most remote and undiscoverable of the deep canons of this frozen basin, finding many a mountain page glorious with the writings of God and in character that any earnest eye could read. The few scientific men who have written upon this region tell us that Yosemite Valley is unlike any thing else, an exceptional

2nd

creation, separate in all respects from all other valleys, but such is not true, Yosemite is one of many One chapter of a great mountain book written by the same pen of ice which the Lord long ago passed over every page of our great Sierra Nevada's.

I know how Yosemite and all the other valleys of these magnificent mountains were made and the next year or two of my life will be occupied chiefly in writing their history in a human book - a glorious subject, which God help me preach aright.

I have been sleeping in the rocks and snow often weary and hungry sustained by the excitement of my subject and by the Scottish pluck and perseverance which belongs to our family - for the last few days I have been eating and resting and enjoying long warm sleep beneath a roof, in a warm rock-ledge boulderless bed.

4th

His cousin winter will soon be upon you may you enjoy its brightness and universal beauty in warm and happy homes.

Our topmost mountings are white with their earliest snow, but the Valley is still bare and brown with rustling leaves of the Oak and Alder and fronds of the fast fading ferns.

Between two and three thousand persons visited the Valley this summer. I am glad they are all gone, I can now think my thoughts and say my prayers in quiet } ever devoutly yours
in family love
John