



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1903-06-24

Letter from George Hansen to [Wanda ?] Muir, 1903 Jun 24.

George Hansen

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GEO. HANSEN
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
2705 HEARST AVENUE, BERKELEY, CAL.

ADVISORY ARCHITECT TO PARK COMMISSIONS,
MUNICIPALITIES AND CEMETERY ASSOCIATIONS

June 24th., 1903.

Dear Miss Muir, Dear friend,

Blessed woman that you are to be so rich as to spread out a shower of delight and joy over this our home. I am sure you knew it when you dispatched the box with your luscious gift, and I thought that the consciousness of such deed would bring warmth to your heart. I therefore was somewhat reconciled when I found myself unable to sit up to the typewriter, and reluctant to write with a pencil when the use of crutches has drawn the muscles of the hands. But I arrive today with the words that were spirited to you in the very hour when we opened the lid. Each cherry looked at us like smiling, wellwishing countenance. We never knew them to be so good, so neat, so firm. Little Roland had to learn anew to segregate the stones as he was wont to slip them out of loose shed fruit.

Let me tell you in a few words just how blessed the day was on which your surprise came to us. An elderly lady, who never missed one single week to call ever since I am a cripple, now past a year and a half, came with her usual bouquet and cheer. I was looking over the pages of magazines, a choice and well assorted bundle of which had been sent by a friend that very morning. A very good rolling chair, the gift of my only brother, gave me the comfort of being off the porch, an enjoyment I have not had for months and months. The good brave wife timbered the runways for me and the chair to go over the backsteps. No nails were ever driven with more appreciation, nor the butchering of wood blessed with more fervent good-wishes. And to fill the measure of welcome deeds and intentions, good friends agreed to stay with me for a few days and try and

with at all

put up with my wretchedness--bodily ~~as well as~~ ^{and} spiritually - while I forced the good wife to skip home to the mountains to cheer the heart of the aged and feeble mother. -- So you must feel that your box came on a fortunate day, and its address and card from you went with the rest of the keepsakes into Roland's "Truhe".

When I think of you and your good father, and draw a parallel with our home, I find sufficient relatedness to warm my heart. How rich (is that a fit word?) must not you and your sister (or that there more of you besides the good mother?) feel for being the children of a man so universally beloved. To be in his presence must be like ~~ad-~~ling under a tree widely spread out in bough and leaf and singing his peaceful song every hour of day and night. When a person is blessed enough by a gracious God to commune with such living tree, he needs neither rubies nor the treasures of Ophir to bring happiness to his home. -- And with us - would that I could be a tree, a tree to spread over our child. But only the freed soul of a shattered bole, a few limbs stuck out in weird manner can try to protect him. - But he needs no more from me. The mother is all to him, his playmate, his protection, his doctor, his saint, and God creates friends for him wherever knowledge of his smiles, his constant cheer penetrates.

Let me put to words to you what I expressed some time since. Let me know the addresses of your father from time to time so that I might drop a line of greeting to him in far off lands. Robinson Crusoe loved his man Friday, and so will your father appreciate a line from near where his home is and where his heart dwells. - You, dear friend, have the stamps of his letters and add them to the collection that I paste together for the little man. -- When you come this way, please us with your presence. Kindest regards to all that make up your home, even the trees and vines, dogs and chickens, bluejays and doves. Special good wishes for your mother, Love from Roland (who broke his arm twice in one month, in the same place almost) and sincere greeting from the mother. Your grateful friend

John Hanson