



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1902-03-22

Letter from John Muir to [James] Murdock, 1902 Mar 22.

John Muir

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Martinez, Cal. March 22, 1902

Dear Mr Murdoch;

Your kind letter & the set of photographs came safely for which I heartily thank you.

I am heartily with you in all you say of Scotchmen. Whenever grit & skill & invincible granite determination & principle are required the world cannot do without them.

I'm sorry you did not see the Grand Canon of the Colorado River of the West. What you saw is the gorge of the Arkansas River in the state of Colorado which would make only an insignificant almost unnoticeable side wrinkle in the wall of the great Arizona Canon. There is no more comparison between the two than between the Trossachs & the Himalayas or your Castle Rock or the Bass & Mt Blanc. The Grand Canon is about 220 miles long 5000 to over 6000 feet deep & from 5 to 15 miles wide. A branch railroad runs from the main line of the Santa Fe to the very rim of it. The sculpture of the Canon & the colors of it are even

more marvellously impressive than
its vast size, altogether unrivaled
on the face of the globe. So you
must just come back & make
this trip & the one to Alaska, thus
enriching your life & lengthening it.
I went to see the Canon two months
ago when it had on its winter garb,
& the glory of it was unspeakable.
I have since been trying to write
about it, but it makes all my
best words seem silly.

It was the Half Dome of
Yosemite that Andersson the
Swedish Scotchman climbed by
drilling into the rock & inserting
eye bolts to rest his feet on.
The North Dome is easily accessible
from the north side, one has no
difficulty in riding a mule to the
top of it. Be sure you come
again to this side the sea.
Your first trip was only a good
reconnaissance - I'll be delighted
to see you. Sincerely Yours John Muir