



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1910-08-25

Letter from Samuel S. Shull to John Muir, 1910 Aug 25.

Samuel S. Shull

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SAMUEL S. SHULL

GERMAN-AMERICAN
BANK BUILDING
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CJ

ST JOSEPH, MO. Aug. 25" '10.

Prof. Jonhn Muir ,

Martinez, Calif.

Dear Sir : Yours of Aug 11 last yr came into my hands just now, again, while handling some of my papers that I had laid away. I note your kind invitation to "come and talk". I recall very well that at the time I recd this invitation I fully contemplated that pleasure - for it would be quite a pleasure to me. But I have been so very busy that I have not had the opportunity to visit your "Golden West " since 1908. I do hope to be there next summer just after my boys get out of school - that is my best time to "see the country".

I am writing this letter to you thinking that I may call your attention to something that will be directly in your line : In 1908, with my family, I landed at Sausalito on the bay, then went on electric ry to Mill Valley where we waited for train to go up Tamalpais. While waiting at Mill Valley I walked up the valley some five blocks or more and saw several circles of Sequoia sequoias evidencing the spot where their forbears once stood. In one of these circles stood 51 trees, if my memory serves right, averaging in height over 100 ft. The parent tree was

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all gone except the rim of bark and a small portion of wood next thereto. This rim did not exceed in height fifteen feet and at one or two places a man could enter through and into the "inner court" which was perfectly level and smooth - it would make a splendid play ground for children. I regretted that I had no way to carefully take the circumference of the old bark or to get the exact diameter. I carefully stepped the diameter the smaller way across and made it 51 ft, then across the large way and made it 56 ft. Actual measurements would vary these figures but little. The young trees referred to as forming the circle around the bark rise from the outer side thereof but not so as to interfere with making true measurements of the circumference.

I had visited the Santa Cruz grove where mere saplings of not over 60 ft circumference grow. They astonished me much and I found that even after reading your and other acc'ts of the great trees my mind had not been prepared for such sights.

I note the "majestic old scarred monument in the King's River forest" you counted to be 4,000 yrs old being 35 8" diameter inside bark. This was the largest you saw as I read it in your "Mountains of Calif".

In the fall of 1908 I read in newspapers of an old tree lying on the ground and of its burning up at that date. It read to the effect that it was 46 ft high from ground to top of log. If that were the largest tree and it was 46 ft in diamtr

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it was a very worthy monument and I have no doubt it was carefully noted and measured - but I have no data on it.

Now, Sir, I thought I would call your attention to this grave of the grand old tree at Mill Valley so that if it should come around to you at any time to become interested in it, you would know it's grave stones are there standing.

Yours very truly,

Samuel S. Shull

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