



1911-03-02

Letter from John Muir to B[etty] A[verell], 1911 Mar 2.

John Muir

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/muir-correspondence>

Recommended Citation

Muir, John, "Letter from John Muir to B[etty] A[verell], 1911 Mar 2." (1911). *John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)*. 6022.

<https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/muir-correspondence/6022>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the John Muir Correspondence 1856-1914 at Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in John Muir Correspondence (PDFs) by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact mgibney@pacific.edu.

C13 martinez March 2, 1911

My Dr Betty Hull.
Your letter came perilously
near charming me across
the continent leaving all
cars to gang tapasterie as
BURNS says.

Yes I learned that Will
was going ~~2~~ 2 or 3 weeks
ago when I called to see
him ~~at the Los Angeles~~
~~Station~~ ~~just~~ ~~after~~ ~~he~~
~~had~~ ~~left~~ ~~it~~
I'm glad to hear of the
tribute to the memory
of Mr Har - none I know
disavows more. The whole
country is his monument

you mention your Aunt hood
& mother's grand motherhood -
While I have been grand fathered
thrice. My daughter Wanda has
two boys a pair of boys 2+2 ^{of age}
& the other day my darling Helen
got a boy. This quarter frozen
bought Youngsters & the Almanac
offer ^{starting} ~~proof~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~age~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~children~~ ~~yet~~
strange to say I am ~~not~~ ~~at~~ ~~all~~ ~~conscious~~
conscious of ~~accomplishing~~ the fast
glancing years at all possible feel
younger than I did while
writing the notes of my first
summer in the Sierra ^{Journal} ~~and~~ ~~569~~
with you ~~mentioned~~ ~~in~~ ~~your~~ ~~letter~~ ^{the summer of}
this ~~is~~ ~~the~~ ~~expanding~~ ~~great~~ ~~reward~~ ~~of~~ ~~those~~ ~~who~~
~~left~~ ~~their~~ ~~eyes~~ ~~to~~ ~~see~~ ~~what~~ ~~was~~ ~~before~~ ~~them~~ & keep their noses
out doors
You ask what I'm doing. I'm correcting
the book proofs of my first Sierra
Journal to be published in ~~the~~ ~~spring~~
± putting primary teachers on a 4yr basis
& a first ~~vol~~ ~~of~~ ~~an~~ ~~entire~~ ~~series~~ ~~of~~ ~~lectures~~
I began with my school days in Scotland
tells of going to America, life on a
farm in the Wis woods & ~~ends~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~
~~end~~ ~~of~~ ~~my~~ ~~4~~ ~~yr~~ ~~course~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~War~~ ~~Union~~
To complete the Auto with probably ~~4~~ ~~years~~ ~~9~~ ~~or~~ ~~10~~

I have also planned a
 book describing other
 Yogi-mites. another one
 concerning illustrated by
 some of my own wandering
 scrambling excursions
 1 on trees 1 or 2 on Alaska
 2 or 3 on 'earth' sculpture etc
 2 or 3 on travels abroad
 & on animals. etc
 The trouble is that when
 unprompted long ago to write
 write I said I couldn't
 spare the time until too old to
 climb mtns. The mtns are
 still calling though sometimes
 you have been persuaded to make
 a beginning on the endless
 weary work
 But it grows late & this letter
 is growing unconsciously
 long & looks m.s. like
 Give my love to your mother
 brother & sister & to Mrs. Harriette
 & Robert. Affectionately yours
 J.P.H.

Late. Arranged to have
 Bent take all the wharf
 land leasing down lot selling
 & all Belen's business in gen
 off my hands. a great relief
 I hope to get off kind of the
~~to get~~
 E. ~~to get~~ ~~of all his~~ ~~lowest~~ ~~days~~
~~that~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~Amazon~~
 never never never that ~~excuse~~
 It has been burning in one
 half a century & will burn
 forever. For you must know
 dear Betty that even water & rocks
 everything but possessors burns
 on this love like the stars in the
 heavens
 I've been up to the eyes in plodding
 woodwork all winter in ^{Hoofers}
 quarters where I so often ^{used to}
 sit when you last summer.
 Long ere this I had hoped to be
 with you all - the blessed ^{of} ^{the} ^{barren}
 all these blessed tribes ^{of} ^{the} ^{tribes} who
 have ^{been} ^{so} ^{much} ^{to} ^{me}
 & ^{with} ^{sympathy}
 to do more - but struggle
 as I ^{may} ^{to} ^{fight} ^{back} ^{and} ^{hold} ^{on}
 here I ^{doubled} ^{up} ^{my} ^{heart} ^{and} ^{held} ^{it} ^{near} ^{its} ^{way}
 it appears that the ^{greater} ^{our} ^{dark} ^{making}
 we are ^{the} ^{more} ^{the} ^{more}

[Rough draft of letter]

Martinez, March 2, 1911,

My dear Betty Averell:

Your letter came perilously near charming me across the continent leaving all cares to gang tapsalterie, as Burns sings. Yes, I learned that Will was going East (2) or (3) weeks ago when at Los Angeles I called to see him and get tidings of you.

I'm glad to hear of the tribute to the memory of Mr. Har[riman]. None I know deserves more. The whole country is his monument.

You mention your aunthood and mother's grandmotherhood, while I have been grandfathered thrice. My daughter Wanda has a pair of boys 2 and 4 years of age, and the other day darling Helen got a boy. This quarter dozen of youngsters and the almanac offer startling proofs of age. Yet, strange to say, I am almost wholly unconscious of the fast flying years, and if possible feel younger than I did while writing my first Sierra journal in the summer of 1869, thirty years before I first saw you. This, in part, is the reward of those who climb mountains and keep their noses outdoors.

You ask what I'm doing. I'm correcting the book proofs of my First Sierra Summer, to be published in April, putting finishing touches on a Yo[semite] book and a first volume of a sort of Autobiography begun at the Harriman Pelican Lodge. It begins with my school days in Scotland, tells of going to America, life on a farm in the Wis. woods, and ends at the close of my four years course at the Wis. Univ. To complete the Auto[biography] will probably require 8 or 12 [years]. I have also planned a book describing other Yosemite, another on mountaineering, illustrated by some of my own wandering, scrambling excursions, one on trees, one or two on Alaska, two or three on earth sculpture, etc., two or three on travels abroad, and one on animals, etc. The trouble is that when importuned long ago to write, write, I said I couldn't spare the time until too old to climb mountains. The mountains are still calling, though somehow I've been persuaded to make a beginning on the endless weary word-work.

But it grows late and this letter is growing unconscionably long and bookms.-like. Give my love to your mother, brother, and sister, and to Mrs. Harriman and Osborns.

Affectionately yours,

J.M.

Have I forgotten the Amazon, Earth's greatest river? Never, never, never. It has been burning in me half a century, and will burn forever. For you must know, dear Betty, that even water and rocks, everything God possesses, burns like the stars in His love.

I've been up to the eyes in plodding word-work all winter in Hooker's garret, whence I often ran last summer to see you. Long ere this I had hoped to be with you, the Harrimans and Osborns and all those blessed tribes who with unflinching sympathy have been so much to me. But struggle as I may to let my heart have its way, Fate has held me fast here doubled up at a desk making it appear that the greater our freedom the more firmly are we guided and bound.

04970