



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1912-05-01

Letter from John Muir et al to Harold French, 1912 May 1.

John Muir

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

Recommended Citation

Muir, John, "Letter from John Muir et al to Harold French, 1912 May 1." (1912). *John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)*. 6257.

<https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/muir-correspondence/6257>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by 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.

"To explore, enjoy, and render accessible the mountain regions of the Pacific Coast; to publish authentic information concerning them; to enlist the support and co-operation of the people and the Government in preserving the forests and other natural features of the Sierra Nevada Mountains."



SIERRA CLUB
402 MILLS BUILDING
San Francisco, Cal.

Board of Directors—1911-1912

Mr. John Muir, President	Martinez
Prof. A. G. McAfee, Vice-President	San Francisco
Prof. J. N. Le Conte, Treasurer	Berkeley
Mr. William E. Colby, Secretary	San Francisco
Prof. Wm. F. Badè	Berkeley
Prof. Vernon L. Kellogg	Stanford University
Vice Prof. E. C. Franklin, resigned	
Prof. W. C. Morgan	Berkeley
Mr. E. T. Parsons	San Francisco
Mr. Willoughby Rodman	Los Angeles

Outing Committee

Prof. J. N. Le Conte	Mr. E. T. Parsons
Mr. Wm. E. Colby, Chairman and Manager	
Mr. Clair S. Tappan, (Los Angeles) Assistant Manager	

Honorary Vice-Presidents

Mr. R. U. Johnson	The Century, New York
Pres. David Starr Jordan	Stanford University
Mr. Gifford Pinchot	Washington, D. C.

Committee on Publications

Prof. Wm. F. Badè, Editor	Berkeley
Mrs. E. T. Parsons, Book Reviews	Berkeley
Prof. J. E. Church, Jr.	Mr. Elliott McAllister
Mr. Wm. E. Colby	Mr. E. T. Parsons
Miss Anita Gompertz	Prof. H. W. Rolfe
Mr. J. S. Hutchinson, Jr.	

San Francisco, May 1, 1912.

HAROLD FRENCH,
1522 HENRY ST.,
BERKELEY, CAL.

*Valuable letter
to be preserved*

The SIERRA CLUB has an opportunity to acquire the Soda Springs property in the Tuolumne Meadows within the Yosemite National park, and this opportunity will probably never again be presented. You are doubtless familiar with the holding, which was taken up and patented as a homestead and embraces 160 acres including the famous Soda Spring, a large portion of the finest part of the Meadows and probably the best hotel site to be found in the whole region. The owners are anxious to sell and they have already had several offers. If it is purchased it will probably be in the interest of some commercial proposition and the Club will never again be able to control it. The Club has for years been anxious to acquire this property, but has never seen its way clear to do so. Its main object in acquiring it would be to control it so that it would not be used to the detriment of the Park. The owners are asking \$7000 cash and have given us until the 1st of July in which to decide whether we can buy it or not. We have talked with Lieutenant-Colonel, formerly Major, H. C. Benson, who for years was Superintendent of the Park, and he says that this is a very fair price. He knows personally that the father of the present owners, recently deceased, was offered \$5000 cash for the property several years ago and refused it.

For the present the only possible way in which we could raise the necessary money would be for members of the Club who are able to advance \$100 each, to combine and buy it in the interests of the Club. We hope that you will feel that you can help the Club to this extent, in this important transaction. We, of course, are not in a position to make any guarantees, but we feel that your money would be safely invested. Our idea would be to have the property taken over in the name of the Club, and then have the Board of Directors authorize proper declarations of trust to be issued by the Club to each person putting up any of the purchase price, declaring him to be the owner of his proportionate interest of the legal title. Our idea would be to allow this loan to stand for say ten years in the expectation that the Club would by that time have grown large enough to be able to finance the proposition itself or arrange some means of taking it over and relieving those who have advanced the purchase price at this time.

There is the possibility that there would be some income from the property by leasing it as a public camp site. This could be arranged if it seemed best to do so. The Club will pay taxes on the property and carry it without expense to the owners. If at the end of ten years, it were deemed best not to continue controlling the ownership of the property, it could be sold and the proceeds divided among those who have advanced the purchase price. If it were sold or if it were taken over by the Club, our idea would be to reimburse those who have advanced the money to the extent of the sums they have advanced and interest. If the Government saw fit to purchase it, as we hope they may eventually, our idea would be to turn it over to the Government for the amount that we paid for it plus 6% interest per annum.

The property is too important to be allowed to pass beyond our control and we hope that you will be able to assist us to the extent that we have indicated, as this is the only means that we can now see of retaining it. Perhaps it might be found advisable in time to build a Club lodge on the property, since this would be the most feasible place in the Sierra, if any one place were to be chosen. There is now a fine large cabin on the property which cost several hundred dollars. Since we are given only until July 1st in which to definitely determine and pay for the property, an early reply to this letter will be greatly appreciated. In brief, the proposition that we ask is that you advance us \$100 by June 1st to be used in purchasing this property, and the property to be carried without further cost to yourself for ten years, at the end of which time you would be reimbursed with interest or the property be sold and the proceeds divided. With the rebuilding of the Tioga Road, which the Government is now contemplating, and the steadily increasing travel, this property should become immensely valuable, being the only private holding in the Eastern portion of the Park, and in time should be worth many times the sum now asked, as a hotel site. We appeal to you knowing your interest in the Club and your knowledge of the situation. We sincerely hope that those who have previously agreed to participate will still be willing to do so now that we have secured an extension of time.

With kind regards, we remain,

Very sincerely yours,

John Muir

E. T. Parsons

Wm. Colby

J. W. Le Conte

WM.F. BADE