



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

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1891-09-12

**Letter from Eliza Ruhamah Scidmore to John Muir, 1891 Sep 12.**

Eliza Ruhamah Scidmore

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The Canadian Conference meets here in a few weeks and Dr. Dawson will make a grab for my thing worth having on the mainland coast. He needs to be muzzled before they send him on a diplomatic round again, as before he started for Berlin. Sea he spoke openly as to what he would and would not do - had set and convicted on many points before hand. I do not care very much what he does about the Pribilof Islands, but Revilla Gigedo and Sidmore Islands cannot be spared him, and you must make a stand for your own glacier and the Lake. The people living on the thirty mile strip do not really appreciate what a serious thing

Washington D.C. Sept 12<sup>th</sup> 91

1502 Twenty First Street.

Dear Mr. Meier  
 As I am not in the way of seeing you in person this fall, will you tell me the common and uncommon name of this little flower - the fragrant wax plant that grows in the mosses in the woods all around Sitka? I never found such a botanical treat in one way as Alaska is. There were the hills and the valleys and the mountain summits all around Juneau

[22] and Sitka covered with the thickest  
mats and carpets of *Glossopus*  
that I had never seen before  
and no one in either town  
could tell me a thing about  
them. I climbed *rustordia*, back  
of Sitka, three times and each  
time was quite wild over the  
weather, and the perfect snow  
banks of these fragrant white  
*Glossopus* with the collar of  
leaves at their branching stems -  
Will you tell me what it is?

And then there is this ~~little~~  
 exquisite little tulip - y sort  
of a flower that I found  
up among the weather  
patches above Muir glacier.

[33] It is the purest and truest blue  
that I have ever seen in a  
flower's petals, and Mr. Richardson  
our artist was quite excited  
over it. It was shameful for  
me to be there in the midst  
of all that rich flora and  
not even know the names of  
the things - but the other  
ignorant people whom I have  
met ever since have not been  
able to help me out.

Your Sulet will be crossed  
next year - the S.S. Co - mean  
to keep a guide there during the  
excursion season, and the  
Coast Survey as usual threaten  
to have the Patterson there and  
a camp on shore. Meanwhile

[53] This boundary question is, how  
much there is in the British  
claim, and how decided and  
cut and dried their intentions are  
compared to the indifference and  
ignorance that exists on our  
side of the line. The Pacific  
Coast ought to get excited  
about it and memorialize and  
send some one here to trace  
our Commissioners up.

I shall soon be able to  
send you photographs of  
your cabin as it looked  
this year.

With best regards to Mrs. Muir  
I am  
Very Truly  
E. R. Sidmore

01527



Washington, D. C.,  
Sept. 12th, '91.

Dear Mr. Muir:

As I am not in the way of seeing you in person this fall, will you tell me the common and uncommon name of this little flower -- the fragrant wax plant that grows in the mosses in the woods all around Sitka? I never found such a botanical desert in one way as Alaska is. There were the hills and the valleys and the mountain summits all around Juneau and Sitka covered with the thickest mats and carpets of blossoms that I had never seen before, and no one in either town could tell me a thing about them. I climbed Verstoraiia, back of Sitka, three times and each time was quite wild over the weather, and the perfect snow banks of these fragrant white blossoms with the collar of leaves at their branching stems. Will you tell me what it is?

And then there is this exquisite little tulip-y sort of a flower that I found up among the heather patches above Muir glacier. It is the purest and truest blue that I have ever seen in a flower's petals, and Mr. Richardson, our artist, was quite excited over it. It was shameful for us to be there in the midst of all that rich flora and not even know the names of the things -- but the other ignorant people whom I have met ever since have not been able to help me out.

Your Inlet will be crowded next year -- the S.S. Co. mean to keep a guide there during the excursion season, and the Coast Survey as usual threaten to have the Patterson there and a camp on shore. Meanwhile the Canadian Conference meets here in a few weeks and Dr. Dawson will make a grab for everything worth having on the mainland coast. He needs to be muzzled before they send him on a diplomatic errand again, as before he started for Bering Sea he spoke openly as to what he would and would not do -- dead set and convicted on every point beforehand. I do not care very much what he does about the Pribylof islands, but Revillagigedo and Scidmore Islands cannot be spared him, and you must make a stand for your own glacier and the Taku. The people living on the thirty mile strip do not nearly appreciate what a serious thing

[Letter incomplete]

[Eliza Ruhamah Scidmore]