



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1878-09-15

Letter from Sallie J. Kennedy to John Muir, 1878 Sep 15.

Sallie J. Kennedy

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safety and your companions also preserved. I hope nothing in your experience will ever again approach it. I am just a little distrustful.

Before coming to Berkshire I passed five weeks among relatives in N.W. Pennsylvania. There I received in beautiful views - long drives and rambles, and many days on beautiful sheets of water.

Nothing do I see that delights me but a little shadow steals over me with the thought "how our little party of last summer would enjoy this." Heart, mind, and body, have been refreshed. It is true almost I was turning home-ward, but from here on the 28th I expect to go to New York - then Brooklyn, then Haverstraw - to be at home by October 15th. I am anxious to see some of a New England Autumn. Already a few branches and

Abby Lodge Sep. 15th 1878.

My dear Mr Muir.

Where are you just now?

Listening for answer will avail nothing - none can come. This is a beautiful Sabbath.

day. One year ago where were we wandering? Your welcome letter came two days since.

I was happy to have so long a one, which could tell me so much. Scold you? No

I am only thankful for your escape from your perilous expedition. I do not associate with you the thought of heedlessness or unnecessary exposure to danger. (This is I fear an admission.) I know you would not act - willfully or blindly.

I am passing three weeks in the country between Pittsfield and Lenox - Mass. visiting a particular friend Mrs Lathrop.

Your other young ladies are also here, and in addition to a family of mine, so you may fancy we have merry times. What a glorious day this would be to quietly start out for a long walk to the top of the Blue Hill mountains; - "Berkshire Hills", which lie in full view with a beautiful stretch of uncultivated meadow between us and the Housatonic River which flows at their base. I would enjoy the walk - possibly it would be too slow for you. This part of our wonderful land has long been called the "Switzerland of America".

You would enjoy its beauty. The road-sides on many of the drives are lined with ferns, golden rods and asters of many hues, and an occasional gentian. (Do you remember the gentians you found at Mr. Lavatts?) In one long special drive in addition the trees meet their branches overhead making long beautiful green vistas while just near

enough to hear the murmur of its water flows the river - the air is fragrant with fern and woody odors. I have wished and wished that you could follow it. What grand studies you have been able to make during your long journeying. My sympathy is with you in anything new you may learn relating to what have become dear friends - the pines - the plane plants, and the sparrow. But the glacial formations you will have to tell me more about. How grand the storms must have been - how precious the darling massy banded mountain summits - all this I covet the sight of once more; How fearfully Mr. Murri you must have suffered in the experience you relate. I can readily believe that if you had had the guidance such a dreadful condition would never have come to you. But what a blessing that you were brought through it - in

an occasional tree have changed from green to a gorgeous crimson or yellow.

The maple grows to an enormous size (as in rate size) - and is a very shapely beautiful tree. I do not think the

Elm is interesting in its change but is so graceful & lovely. These are the two most conspicuous trees I see in our drives.

I am glad you may possibly be east this winter. We will have a welcome for you. I do not recall my expression

in regard to going West. At present I have no expectation of doing so - for some other member of our little household must go next. But we hope to have Annie at home next Spring. Alas how far away it seems.

I was called away from this and resume to say good bye -

I imagine your camp fire is burning low.

I send this to San Francisco as your
Hamilton address will be changed today
and to what I do not know.

I had a pleasant postal from Prof -
Butler, as he was about to step on board
a Cunardian at Boston, in early August.
The last line was "Remember me to
Mr Muir". Thanks for note in
regard to forth-coming papers.

Hoping your journeyings may
be happy and that you will be re-
stored in safety before long to either
East or West.

Believe me your friend

Sallie J. Kennedy -

What an unnatural fact, not one
cross word in this letter, a mistake

Monday night,

Surely this is as much of a letter as
you will want to read. But as we did
not go to town it was not posted and
I must tell you what a happy day I
have had. We (Mrs Lathers & I.)
took a drive of twenty six miles over
the loveliest roads lined with rich tall
as well as smaller ferns, and flowers of
many hues, over which clouds of butterflies
gay in color flitted so gently or settled in
our way like little regiments.

The views too picturesque and beau-
tiful for my poor pen to describe;
I send a gentleman I cherish - which I
am told never opens -

Again good night

S. J. K.