



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1902-03-09

Letter from Henry Randall to John Muir, 1902 Mar 9.

Henry Randall

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We only made ⁴² five mill
and the next day drove
into the Valley and up to
Hutchins Hotel and how you
hired me out to do the milking
and to drive the Oxen and I
had never done either and I
was so scared when you made
the contract that I dare not
open my mouth but you said
to me you can do it all right
it's nothing but I guess it was
lucky for me that J.W. went
to Washington that winter. I rem-
ember about Mrs Spout saying
to me one morning after I had
milked. That buttercut did not
give so much milk as she did
when Billy milked her. and
those Oxen Paddy & Duke
do you remember them well
I did not think I could
ever yoke and drive them
but I did and milked for

¹¹
Worcester Massachusetts
March 9th 1902

My dear John Muir

I was extremely pleased
to receive your second letter and
to get so clear a description of your
life and travels. it also pleased
me to have you say you had not
written as long a letter to any one
in a long time for I had somehow
gotten the idea that you had forgotten
me but I see your memory is good
and your letter brings our partnership
days very clearly I never should
forget them but what troubles me
now and always has is that I
did not know how to appreciate you
and your teachings more. and it
seems to me now that if I could ^{now}
the same chance I could improve
on my past life in some respects

You asked ^{me} for a more complete history of my past life since I left California. I only wish I could give you as flowing account of myself as you have me of yours but I can't as I wrote you in my first letter that after leaving Cal I came direct home to Rhode Island my native State I staid with my father about three weeks and then got a situation for the man I am working for now and I have worked steady for thirty years with only the accustomed vacation so you see I cannot give you much more for you know what it is to work for someone. but I think in one respect I must of gotten the start of you I think I got married before you did and your last letter revealed the fact that you were married but I had told all of my family when speaking

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of you that I did ~~think~~ you would never get married but it seems you did have one weak spot and I am glad to hear it for that completes you as a man. You must remember John that I was quite young when we were in the valley and that must excuse me for ^{not} appreciating your teachings more but you will I think give me credit for having some sense to follow you an old mountaineer and trapper from off the plains for seven days. do you remember what a beautiful day it was the morning we left Deloneys ranch for the Yosemite and how it snowed when we were about five days out and how you and I staid in that Cobbin and on the next day.

to go to California and he
wants to travel I wish you could
take him on one of your trips
he has got lots of sand and
can stand hardship as well
as you and I and is a good
boy

I do not work as hard as I
have in the past I could of been
a partner but did not want it
although he has made money all the
time but I did not have the cou-
rage you know when my education
was lacking and I thought I had better
be free although he would go
away for months at a time and
I had full charge and everything
would be all right when he would
return. he has seven stores here
in Worcester and I am at the
head and as I say I get good
pay on my house and a
farm I keep a driving horse
and we get about all there
is to live for

How plain I can see all of
those faces as I read them in
your letter but it seems sad
about Floy poor girl I need
to feel sorry for her she would
beg so hard for me to give her
something to eat and she would
open her mouth and I would milk
into it and somehow her mother
would find it out

I would like to see Geo Hiney
and have often thought I
would take a trip out there and
see you all JM H has beat
you and I go and with the 4th
wife. but I am not surprised to
learn that his first wife Alura,
got a divorce from him for
they were ill matched I always
liked her only that laws of health
that she practiced on herself and
on Casy & Floy I never liked
to see anything hungry and
you know they were often

Jes John I do ^[6] remember the
Sunday morning that you and
I took the trip up the mountains
and down to the broad rail
falls and reached there just as
the sun set and I have often
thought that in getting down into
the valley that we went in places
where if we could of seen it in
daylight we would not of gone.

You always asked me
when we were about to start on
a tramp if I had tobacco enough
to last me you said you did
not ^{want} me to get short of that as it
made me cross & disagreeable
and I guess you were right, and
another thing I remember about that
tramp was that the ends of my
fingers were worn through so they
bled from feeling our way and
letting myself down those granite
boulders I remember how sore
they were when I melted that
was ~~was~~

You say in ^[7] your last that
if I had staid with you you
think you might of pushed me
a little farther along. That may
be and that is what I wanted
someone to push me for you
know I was thrown on my own
resources from the age of thirteen
never knew what a mothers care
was and although I had a good
father he could not take a mothers
place but don't you think John
that you can look back better
than you can ^{look} ahead for as you
say our fate none can foresee
but I think I have done as well
as the average but have had to
work hard I have a good home
& wife and boy & girl we never
have lost any children and
have got some money and
have about everything we want
Jib married boy Jane said
will be. by the way he wants

But I would ^{like} like to go out
to California and see
you and you know I
like to hunt I have got
a good outfit and my son
and I go once a year

I dont suppose you
ever will come this way but
if you should or any of your
family dont fail to look me
up as you say I am well
known here and above all
dont fail to drop me a line
as often as you can for I have
had nothing that has done me
as much good as it did to get
your letters

With my best respects for you
and family

I am as ever your friend
Henry Randall
#544 Pleasant St
Worcester mass

I send to you in the mail
for Photographs myself
wife
Boy
girl