



July 2021

## Reminiscence of John Muir by Magee, William A.

William A. Magee

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

---

### Recommended Citation

Magee, William A., "Reminiscence of John Muir by Magee, William A." (2021). *Reminiscences of John Muir*. 22.

<https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/muir-remiscences/22>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the John Muir Papers at Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Reminiscences of John Muir by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact [mgibney@pacific.edu](mailto:mgibney@pacific.edu).

Dr Wm J. Bade

with compliments of

William A. Magee

[Published in Sierra Club Bulletin, 21 (Nov 1936) 25-34]

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF JOHN MUIR

By William A. Magee

-----

Very happy personal recollections of John Muir are mine because there was a warm and intimate friendship and companionship between him and my father. This began when they met in Yosemite Valley in the Summer of 1871, while my father and mother were there. It was the beginning of a life-long friendship of these men, whose love of the mountains drew them together on trips in and about Yosemite, the Lake Tahoe region, throughout California and to Washington State and Alaska, on many of which my brothers and I were included.

My earliest recollection of Mr. Muir goes back to about 1873. At a dinner at our home he asked me what I was going to do when I grew up. My reply was, "The real estate business with my father." "Oh", he said, "then your father will have the sign on his office changed from 'Thomas Magee' to 'Thomas Magee & Son'". I thought that was what would happen. My father said, "No, Muir, the sign will be changed to read 'Willie Magee and Father'".

This reminds me that, as was the almost universal custom, they addressed each other by their last names, although on the basis of close personal friendship, they might have been expected to speak to each other by their first names.

Recently when introduced to Mr. Frank Swett of Berkeley, I at once asked him whether by any chance he was John Swett's son. His reply was, "Yes, and by any chance are you Thomas

Magee's son?" I said yes and that many a time, in the days before the telephone, I had gone to his father's home on Taylor Street, near Washington, with notes for Mr. Muir, who spent several winters there. This is the 1419 Taylor Street, address from which Mr. Muir wrote many of his letters now in Dr. Badé's wonderful volumes, "The Life and Letters of John Muir". It was here that Mr. Muir explained to me the marvelous clock he had made when a student at the University of Wisconsin. It was run by weights, and not only told the time of day, but many other things as well.

When my brothers and I were old enough, we were taken by my father and Mr. Muir on trips to Yosemite and to Lake Tahoe, not only in summer, but in winter also. They taught us to use skis and many a time we made the trip with them from Truckee to Tahoe and back in the snow. This was usually in March, which was selected as the time when the heavy storms were over and before the snow began to thaw in the Spring.

On one of these winter trips we stayed at McKinney's, which was the only place on the Lake kept open during the winter. One day, Mr. Muir and my father rowed nine miles in a big whitehall boat to Emerald Bay. On their return they told us that they had had a swim in Emerald Bay, had then rolled around in the snow, like a couple of boys, and after another splash in the lake, rowed back to McKinney's. The Scotch are a hardy race. It must have been about this time that I delighted Mr. Muir's Scotch soul by repeating for him Bruce's address to his Army before the Battle of Bannockburn part of which is still remembered:

*Tahoe trip*

"Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,  
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,  
Welcome to your gory bed  
Or to victorie!

Now's the day, and now's the hour;  
See the front o'battle lower;  
See approach proud Edward's power -  
Chains and slaverie!"

One of the summer trips which stands out in my memory was a three-day tramp from Summit Station on the Southern Pacific, over the mountains to Lake Tahoe. In later years, and after many rough experiences in the Mountains, we look back and marvel that, without maps or anything but his knowledge of the mountain ranges to guide him, Mr. Muir never got us into brush fields or impossible spots. We made this wonderful tramp with comfort and in just about the time he had estimated. That trip will never be forgotten nor my disappointment that no time was taken to climb to the actual summits of Tinker's Knob and Anderson's Peak which were on our route and close to which we passed. With my brother Tom we had, a few years before, spent a summer vacation at Summit Soda Springs, from which these peaks were visible, and we had longed to go to the top of each of them. We either travelled on ridges or hogsbacks everywhere, when possible, or kept them in sight, in the same way that, we later learned, Indians, experienced woodsmen and hunters always do.

We soon discovered Mr. Muir and my father were but boys of a larger growth, for many a time we would stop at the top of a mile-long snowfield and start boulders and big rocks rolling down the snow--yes, and all yell with delight when a particularly big one would race on ahead of a smaller one, or

throw an immense spray of snow when it struck a boulder, a stump or a fallen tree.

On this summer trip, one night, we camped on an open spot in sight of The Soda Springs. Mr. Muir proposed to my father that they start a fire in a hollow pitch pine log, 60 or 80 feet long, lying on the ground. He knew it would raise a rumpus, and it did, although there was no danger of setting a forest fire, for it was on open ground. When the log was well afire, the roar of flame through the hollow chimney of the log and the immense clouds of smoke, which only a pitch pine log could produce, made a wonderful display and caused the people at Soda Springs, as we heard afterwards, to think that it was a big forest fire. It burned all night and kept the cold from us, but was out by morning.

There were no kodaks or handy cameras in those days to enable us to bring back pictures of scenes we had enjoyed together, but the sketches Mr. Muir occasionally made of trees or meadows, or of mountains and ranges we thought exceedingly good. Many of these were published with his articles in the Century Magazine in those early days and appear also in his collected works. They bear out my recollection that they were good, for even now there can be distinguished in them the characteristics of a yellow pine, a sugar pine, or a Douglas Spruce, far better than from most photographs or kodaks.

Mr. Muir and my father gave us the benefit of definite instruction and advice about walking, skiing, rowing and swimming, which, above everything else, were to be done in moderation.

My father had laid down three rules for swimming to guide my four brothers and myself: The first was, Swim Slowly; the second was, Don't Swim So Fast; and the third was, Swim Slower. Anyone who remembers how fast beginners try to swim, will realize the practical wisdom contained in these rules.

The same rules applied to rowing. My father and Mr. Muir were powerful swimmers and oarsmen, but they never permitted us to race, nor did they ever race either in swimming or in rowing or in walking.

My father, my brother Tom and I put this training and instruction in rowing to the test in later years by rowing around Lake Tahoe in a day. Leaving McKinney's at 5 o'clock in the morning, with six oars in use all day, we covered the 65 miles and were back at McKinney's at 8 o'clock that night. Never once did we put on any speed, but with uniformly slow and steady stroke we made five miles per hour for 13 hours actual rowing time.

On these trips we learned from Mr. Muir that there were likewise three rules for tramping in the mountains: The first was, always take good care of your feet; the second was, always wear heavy socks and good stout old shoes (never a new pair); and the third was, stop several times in a day's walk and bathe your feet. He told us that more men were rejected from the Army because of bad feet, than from any other cause. I can still hunt, tramp and fish all day in the mountains, and, whatever may hold me back or slow me down with advancing years, it has never been, and probably never will be, my feet.

We always noticed that Mr. Muir had a peculiar shuffling gait, like Indians, who lift their feet but little. There was economy of effort and no wasted energy, but he never gave his reasons for doing this, and we never asked, for fear he would think we were criticizing him. On a dusty road he shuffled along and paid no attention to the dust he raised, so we kept far out in front, while he and my father walked side by side in the rear, or frequently we trailed along behind, leg and foot weary, while Mr. Muir with his shuffle, and my father with his long swinging stride, seemed never to tire. We tried to imitate Mr. Muir's shuffle, but were never able to acquire his peculiar gait.

On one trip returning from Tahoe to Truckee, the melting snow on a warm day stuck in chunks to the bottom of our skis, which made it impossible to use them, no matter how well treated with dope. My legs were too short to walk in the soft snow, into which we sank a foot or more, while we carried our skis. Mr. Muir and my father therefore decided to shove on to Truckee, through the soft snow and slush, leaving me in an old cabin until they could send out a man in a two-horse sleigh for me.

On one winter trip, my father, who had become quite proficient in using skis on level ground, was very anxious to take a long run on a sloping hillside. With Mr. Muir he went back of McKinney's, at Lake Tahoe, up one of the long sloping hills, to get an opportunity for a good long slide. He had often referred to the joy and thrill of riding on skis and had

used the expression, "the poetry of motion", as descriptive of the sensation.

After he had successfully slid quite a long distance, he completely lost control and took a terrible spill into a snowbank. Mr. Muir often enjoyed telling of the curve my father, with his 6 feet 3 inches of height, described in the air, and of the fact that the "poetry of motion" was rudely interrupted while he extricated himself from the snowbank into which he had dived headfirst. Mr. Muir when telling of this skiing experience, which he often did, always explained in detail the disgusted way in which my father slowly got out of the snowbank, took the melting snow from his neck and wrists forgetting all about the "poetry of motion".

Mr. Muir had, in our various trips to Yosemite, told us of the men he knew there in early days, of Galen Clark, the first guardian of the Valley, of old man Lambert, who had a cabin at one of the soda springs, of Black, the hotelman, and of others; but the man we thought most of, outside of Mr. Muir, was a Scotchman named Anderson, who was the first man to climb to the top of Half Dome. Mr. Muir told us that in 1875 Anderson had drilled holes in the bare surface of Half Dome and fastened spikes enough to enable him with ropes to climb to the top. Although a dangerous trip, Mr. Muir made the ascent in 1876. After Anderson's death, which occurred that same year, the spikes were neglected and many of them disappeared. It is not believed that anyone else attempted the ascent until 1895, when my brother Tom, with Stuart Rawlings, reached the summit.



About 1926 Mr. M. Hall McAllister had a permanent metal hand-rail and steps installed.

These mountain trips were an inspiration and education to my brothers and to me. They may not have been, and probably were not, fully valued at the time, but were deeply appreciated and remembered in after years when we came to understand, with grateful hearts, that we have no richer inheritance than these mountain experiences in all our treasury of unearned blessings.

Is it any wonder then that I revere my father's memory, as well as that of John Muir, in the recollection of their companionship on these wonderful mountain trips, and rejoice in the love of God's out-of-doors which they inspired?

Mr. Muir's knowledge of plants, flowers, shrubs, trees and botany was almost unlimited. On one occasion these men stopped while Mr. Muir picked a tiny flower, at the foot of a Sequoia, or at the base of a cliff. He gave us its name and called attention to its beauty of form and delicacy of color. My father then remarked that this little flower was praising the Creator and showing forth the beauties of his handiwork, as much as the giant tree or the mountain. He then said, "Muir, do you remember in Gray's Elegy, the lines:

'Full many a gem of purest ray serene  
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear,  
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air'.

"This is beautiful poetic license", he said, "but it is not true" - and then my father stated, and Mr. Muir agreed, that no flower is "born to blush unseen or wastes its sweetness",

while, in the sight of the Creator, it does its part as truly as a Sequoia, an El Capitan or a South Dome.

What a wealth of quotations and references in literature and in poetry we heard, only a small part of which can now be remembered. One day looking up at El Capitan or down from Glacier Point, we asked how long it would take a rock to get down the 3750 feet to the floor of the Valley. We no doubt got an answer, although it is not now remembered, but it led to my father asking Mr. Muir if he remembered the passage in Milton's Paradise Lost which described the devil's fall when thrown by Angry Jove from the battlements of Heaven. My father quoted the first part "From morn to noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve, a summer's day"; and then Mr. Muir added, "and with the setting sun dropped from the Zenith like a falling star". We were told that the words "a summer's day", was as great an example of emphasis as existed in literature.

Dr. Edward Robeson Taylor expressed his admiration for these men, whom he knew, and their sterling qualities, by dedicating to them the following Sonnet, entitled,

"NATURE'S CARE OF HER OWN"

((( "Nature takes loving thought of all her own  
With marvellous cunning and with watchful eye,  
So that her countless brood may multiply,  
Nor leave their mother desolate and lone.  
To the wild fruits by care of man unknown,  
That ripe where winter at his stormiest blows,  
She gives more seeds and better than to those  
In cultured garden delicately grown.  
And so in him that on the rugged breast  
Of mountain finds his joy and his repose,  
Who makes the pine his fellow, and with zest  
Treads the great glaciers and their kindred snows,  
A strength is planted, that in direst test  
Dares all the devils of Danger to oppose."

On these mountain trips we absorbed from these men a love of the woods and the mountains, and from Mr. Muir, a knowledge of the different kinds of trees, plants, flowers and shrubs, and frequently had our attention called by him to evidences of the action of glaciers; all of which were constant subjects of conversation. We learned the difference between a lateral and a terminal moraine, and heard from him that glacial action had carved out the Yosemite Valley, not an earthquake or an upheaval or a subsidence.

In later years we learned that his views in this regard were early opposed by Professor Whitney, Clarence King and many others, but Mr. Muir's opinions and conclusions are now not only universally accepted, but in addition it has long been conceded that he was the first to attribute the origin of Yosemite to glacial action.

There was also discussion of literature and poetry with many quotations from the Bible, Shakespeare, Scott, Burns and the Classics, in all of which they were both thoroughly read.

On another memorable trip to Lake Tahoe, on which it was impossible for me to go, Mr. Muir, my father, Bob Watson, a well-known Tahoe guide, and two of my brothers went to the summit of Mt. Tallac in mid-winter.

In 1879 Mr. Muir, my father and I sailed on the old side-wheeler "S.S. Dakota" to Victoria and Puget Sound. After the trip down the Sound to Seattle, Tacoma and Olympia, we returned to Victoria. They went from there to Alaska, while my return to San Francisco to go to High School prevented me from going.

I sailed home on the same steamer with Miss Emily Pelton, an old family friend of the Muirs. They went to Juneau, Sitka and later to the glacier, on which Mr. Muir spent much time then and later in studying and exploring, and which was thereafter known as the Muir Glacier.

We later heard from him and my father about the wonders of this trip. Mr. Muir made a trip the following year to the same glacier.

While we listened to his vivid description of this great glacier, we were particularly interested in his story of Stickeen, a little dog, which accompanied him on a perilous trip across this glacier in a storm, when both nearly lost their lives. If you have any love for dogs, or any desire to note John Muir's wonderful powers of description, get and read this story of "Stickeen". Dr. Badé, in his "Life and Letters of John Muir", truly states that "Stickeen became the subject of one of the noblest dog stories in English literature". You might well think they were caught in a storm. So they were, - but in this case, as in many other experiences in Mr. Muir's life, he had deliberately chosen to go out and investigate and study Nature under storm conditions. He said that "Many of Nature's finest lessons are to be found in her storms, and if careful to keep in right relations with them, we may go safely abroad in them, rejoicing in the grandeur and beauty of their works and ways".

You need hardly be reminded of the startling description which I heard him relate, of a terrific windstorm in the

Sierras, into which he deliberately went to see and learn the action of the wind on the trees and the forest, in what he described as one of the grandest storms he ever witnessed. While telling of this experience, and in writing about it, he minimized the personal danger from falling limbs and trees, as he walked through the forest, literally rejoicing in the manifestations of the storm king. He said that it would be a fine thing to climb a tree to get an extended outlook, and be close to what he described as the music of the topmost branches during the storm. He made his way to the upper branches of a Douglas spruce about 100 feet high, where he said he hung on for an hour or so, while the spruce bent and swayed in the storm. His description of this experience in his "Mountains of California" is thrilling, and the only experience of its kind, it is believed, in existence. This desire to see the forces of nature at work was shown again when he rushed from his cabin at 2 o'clock in the morning, both glad and frightened, as he expressed himself, to witness the effect of the earthquake of 1872, while thousands of tons of granite made their way, fiery from friction, to the floor of the Valley, from the Yosemite walls.

Nothing relating to the formation of the mountains, or their carving or sculpture, ever missed his bright blue eye. After a trip to the Mt. Whitney country in 1909, I told Mr. Muir of it. When he learned that we had been on the lower Kern, he told me the Kern lakes had been formed by a big landslide caused by the earthquake of 1872; that he had examined the ground subsequently, and there was no question that this was

the origin of these lakes.

When on many a tramp we reached some secluded and beautiful mountain meadow, where we had planned to camp, and found that it had been overrun with sheep, Mr. Muir's and my father's disgust was unbounded. Mr. Muir always spoke of sheep as "hoofed locusts", their owners as equivalent to outlaws and only one step worse than the "human locusts", as he called the lumbermen, who cut timber and would have denuded the forests it had taken hundreds and thousands of years to bring to the maturity of the glorious forests of California and the West. He said that while Indians burned the brush to facilitate deer hunting, campers permitted fires to run and so did millmen, but the fires of sheepmen were responsible for ninety per cent of all destructive fires that sweep the woods.

It always seemed to me that Mr. Muir and my father were very temperate in their language in discussing these matters on which they felt so deeply. They never used "damn", but the limit of their strong language was reached when they would refer to the "confounded" sheep and cattlemen and the "ditto" lumbermen, who, if they had their way, would have cut even Sequoias, in God's temples in the Sierras, which should be preserved for posterity. It is well known that Mr. Muir aided materially in the formation of Yosemite National Park, first, and later the Sequoia National Park, by enlisting the interest and help of President Theodore Roosevelt and many other influential men in the East and the West.

When he decided in 1911 to take his long talked-of trip around the world, he called at my office and asked me to go

with him to the bank to help him arrange for the expenses of his journey. I gladly went and told him the bank would give him a letter of credit for any amount he desired. He actually wondered if they would do it, although he had on deposit to my knowledge more than fifteen times the amount of the letter of credit he wanted.

As we walked along Montgomery Street and looked up at the office buildings, he referred to "these sunless canyons" and regretted that civilization and business seemed to make them necessary. He then gave me a lecture, as only he could give it, when he heard that I, one of his "boys", was in favor of taking Hetch Hetchy for a San Francisco water supply. We discussed this at great length then and later, but neither ever changed his opinion on the matter. It was not that he objected to San Francisco having a Sierra, or even a Tuolumne, water supply, but that he contended that all the water required could be obtained from sources outside the Yosemite National Park.

About a year later, in 1912, on a visit to Muir Woods, in Marin County, and while we were waiting for lunch to be served, I wrote out an acrostic on Muir Redwoods, first placing a capital letter at the beginning of each line, which then spelled vertically "Muir Redwoods", as follows:

M uch heartfelt praise from every pilgrim true  
U nto this sylvan shrine beneath the blue  
I n heaven above, is duly offered up,  
R eturning thanks for his o'erflowing cup.

R everence deep for the God of Nature dear  
E ach one must feel, who walks and worships here.  
D ivine protection here is well portrayed,  
W here branching boughs unite in peaceful shade.  
O h, may we ever love God's out-of-doors,  
O n hills, in vales, while every spirit soars,  
D elight to roam away from city strife,  
S incerely thankful both for health and life.

A few days later, just as the verses which had been typewritten were handed to me by my stenographer, who should walk into my office but John Muir. He was just back from his world tour, on which he had been away about a year. After telling him how glad we were to welcome him home, I handed him the first copy of this Muir Redwoods verse. On reading it he said he was greatly pleased to see my expression in rhyme of a love of the woods. But he quickly told me that if I had not loved the out-doors, the hills and the mountains, after the training he and my father had given me, he would feel like taking me over his knee and spanking me. He said he was glad to have the first copy of my verses, and Dr. Badé told me that after Mr. Muir's death they were found in his desk at his home near Martinez.

In May, 1913, he presented to my brother Tom and to me each an autographed copy of his book, "The Story of My Boyhood and Youth". He had written on the flyleaf of one, "To Willie Magee, With Sincere Regard of John Muir", and on the other, "To Tommie Magee", with the same sentiment.

Although we were grown and had families of our own, we were still "Willie" and "Tommie" to him. These books will always be cherished treasures in our family.

To my children he was known as "Uncle John", when occasionally in his later years he came to our house for dinner. He did not like to be away from home overnight, and on several occasions he preferred to leave soon after dinner and take the train for Martinez, rather than stay overnight in town.



On one occasion in his later years he went to lunch with my brother Tom and me when he was in the city for the day. Charles Wheeler, who loved the outdoors, accompanied us, and we spent the lunch hour listening to Mr. Muir's stories of some of his experiences in the mountains. Wheeler had a place on the McCloud River near Mt. Shasta, and we asked Mr. Muir about the most thrilling of all his experiences, his ascent of Mt. Shasta in a snowstorm. He told us how he and Jerome Fay, a guide from Sissons, were kept from freezing by making their way through the storm to a hot spring above the timber line, where they spent the night. This experience occurred in 1875. I then related that in 1876 my father took us all to Sissons and to the McCloud River on a camping trip with Jerome Fay and Indian Dan McKenzie for our guides.

On another occasion Mr. Muir and my father were making the ascent of Mt. Shasta in early summer, and due to a threatening storm, dared go no farther than Shastina, the volcanic cone a few hundred feet below the top.

Mr. Muir, while intensely interested in wild life, was never a hunter or a fisherman. He told us that if nothing else, except fishing and hunting, would take men to the woods and the mountains, he could tolerate them, but killing game was unnecessary to provide food, in his opinion, as a man could go many a mile and many a day, as he had done, on tea and biscuits. It was truly remarkable the miles he could travel on foot with a minimum of food.

He never tired talking of the water ousel, of its grace and beauty, its song and habits, in fact, all birds and animals in

the woods had in him an admirer and a protector.

It was not the purpose of this paper to speak of the sterling character and marked accomplishments of this truly great man, but rather to give you my recollection that he was kindly to us as young boys, considerate of us in the woods, in camp and on long mountain tramps, and most entertaining to us at all times. All this we took for granted in the same mysterious way most boys do, expecting those things from their elders. We did not stop to appraise or appreciate, and did not then fully understand, the affectionate consideration and sympathy extended to us by Mr. Muir, any more than we appreciated these same things from our own father. For, indeed, we looked on him much as our "Uncle John" and were glad to find, after we had grown up, that others had come to know, love and admire him, as we had always done; and to hear him praised and appreciated by the world generally in terms we had always heard my father use about his friend and companion John Muir.

My father never went to the mountains without writing an account of the trip for the San Francisco Bulletin. As a young man he had been correspondent in San Francisco for the New York World and the London Times. Mr. Muir also wrote for the Bulletin, and constant reference is made by Dr. Badé, in his "Life and Letters of John Muir", to this fact, many of Mr. Muir's writings appearing there first. These men were rich in poetic expression in all they wrote about the mountains, and though very rarely writing verse, wrote much that was considered prose poetry. Nothing in his writings more nearly voices for me what Mr. Muir

felt and talked of in the mountains, than his now famous lines, -

"Climb the mountains and get their good tidings;  
Nature's peace will flow into you, as sunshine  
flows into trees. The winds will blow their own  
freshness into you and the storms their energy;  
while cares will drop off like Autumn leaves."

No poet ever more beautifully expressed the effect on man  
of trips to the mountains.

I often heard my father urge Mr. Muir to write and publish  
all his experiences and studies in the mountains. His reply in-  
variably was, "I'll write more when I can no longer tramp in  
the mountains." This he eventually did, although he had written  
much as the years went by. His writings have all been collected  
in 10 volumes, edited and published, together with his "Life and  
Letters" by Dr. Badé. It comprises one of the most complete,  
orderly and perfect tributes which one man could pay to the  
memory of another. There should have been included in this col-  
lection the prayer of Dr. Badé at Mr. Muir's funeral. It was a  
glorious expression of faith in the God of Nature and made a  
profound impression on every one present.

My deep and lasting respect for the memory of this great  
and good man, this devoted and sincere lover of the mountains  
and the outdoors, led me, some years ago, to write these verses  
in his memory:

IN MEMORY OF JOHN MUIR

To those who love the streams and trees,  
The mountain air and fragrant breeze,  
Who seek their rest in forest shade,  
What difference has your passing made!

From lowlands to the mountains bound,  
You led us up to holy ground,  
A high priest true, with wisdom shod,  
Where those who walk must worship God,

And bow in wonder at the shrine  
Where branching fir and fragrant pine  
Form sylvan aisles and pierce the sky,  
And give us thoughts that never die.

As on your grave, our tribute deep,  
We humbly lay, we do not weep;  
The guerdon of immortal life  
Has come to you from earthly strife.

Great as a teacher true and sure,  
You planted thoughts which shall endure;  
And though you've gone unto that bourn,  
From which no travellers e'er return,

Your monument shall stand for aye,  
The canyons vast and mountains gray;  
While we repeat in frequent praise  
And often tell in passing days,

How much you loved to walk and roam  
The mountains grand, where torrents foam,  
Where peace pervades the soul divine,  
As sunshine does the tow'ring pine;

That from your mind, refreshed so well,  
Your cares like leaves in autumn fell,  
That oft the trees of stately form  
Had sheltered you in raging storm;

That you had traced the glacier cold  
From cragland to the valley old,  
And felt the wildflowers wondrous spell  
And loved each shrub and tree full well.

With all of these you had, most rare,  
A wondrous gift, beyond compare,  
Inspiring those with whom you walked  
And all to whom you wrote or talked

With love of nature, deep and true,  
And understanding known to few,  
So that they breathe a purer air  
And find this world more bright, more fair,

Because you lived; you turned their eyes  
To peace and joy of hills and skies;  
While evermore, though earth be trod,  
You lead our minds to Nature's God.

Read at Berkeley Club  
September 13th, 1934.