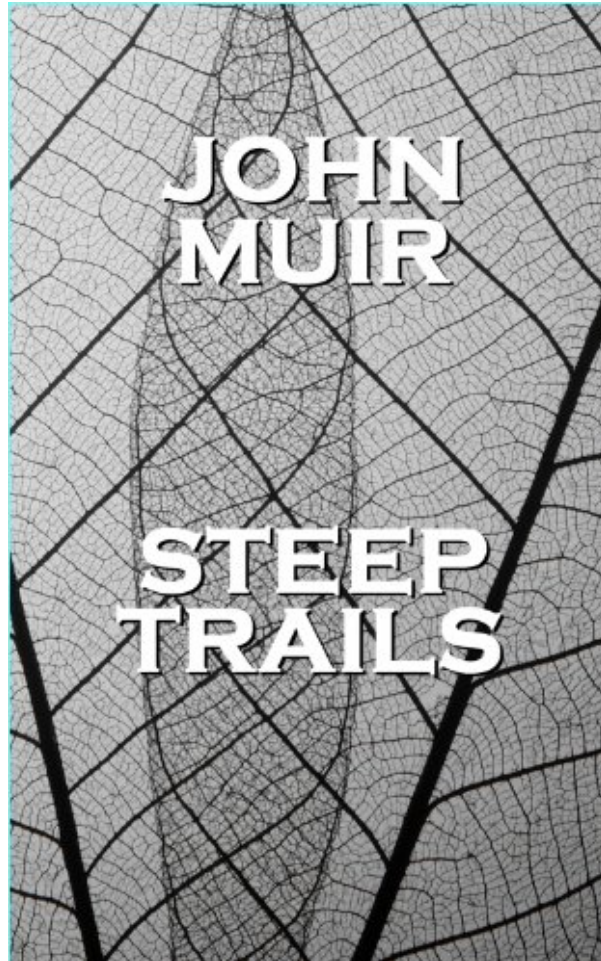
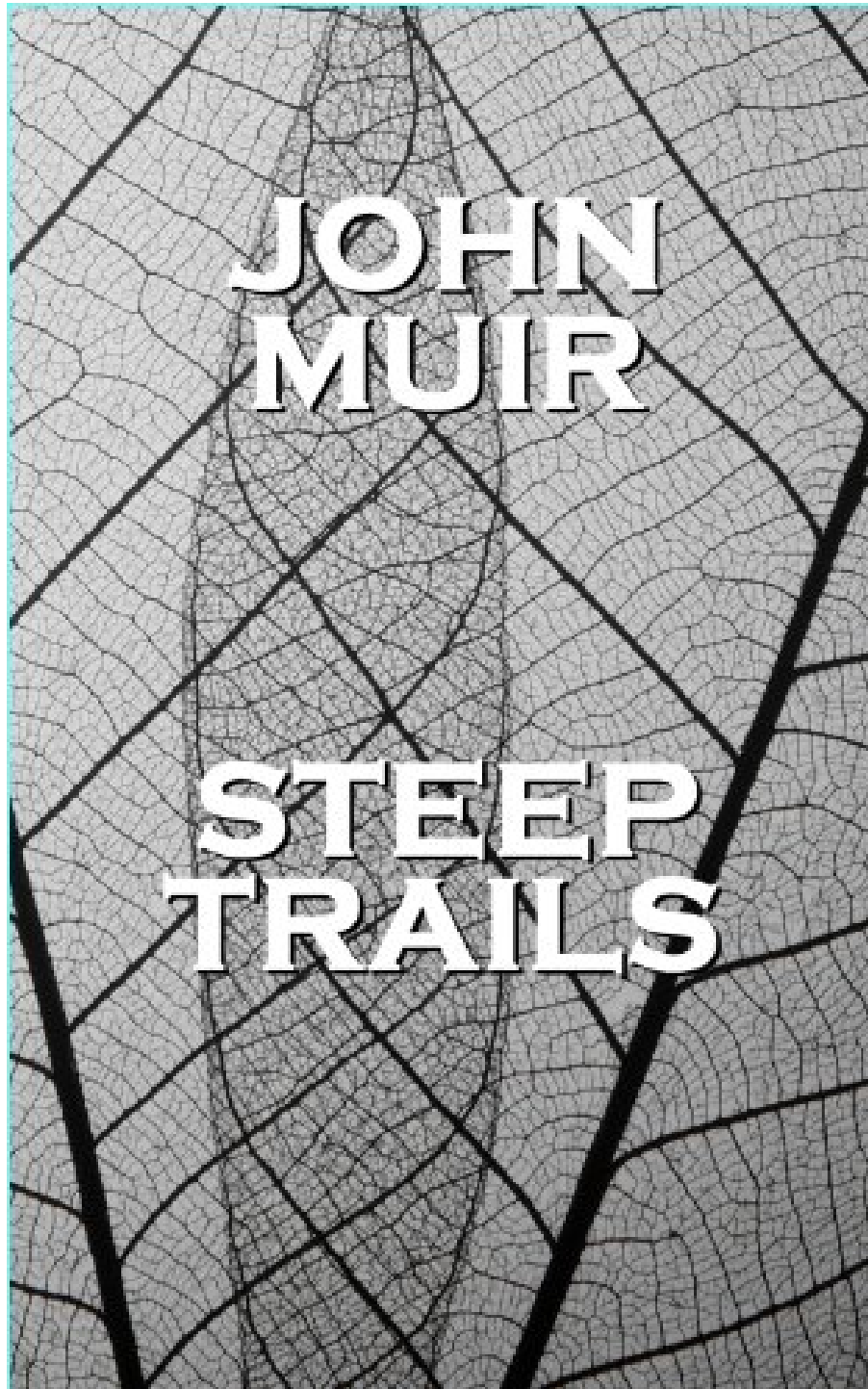


# **STEEP TRAILS BY JOHN MUIR**



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## Review

"Muir's writing has survived for a century because he was not afraid to wear his heart on his sleeve. He didn't hunt or fish in the wilderness, sell trees or snag nuggets, and thus in a sense he has only been freshened for us by the passage of time." -- Edward Hoagland, from his Foreword

"To read this book is like going on a joyous holiday through the most picturesque parts of America." -- The New York Times, December, 1918 --Review

## From the Publisher

### From the Inside Flap

Originally published in 1918, this brilliant collection of letters and magazine articles spans nearly thirty years of Muir's writing and is one of the lesser known gems of the Muir canon. Gathered shortly after Muir's death by family friend William Frederic Bade, these passages are learned, funny, exalted, and quirky in one amazing turn after another. Here is Muir caught in a snowstorm below the peak of Mount Shasta; interviewing the one remaining miner in a Nevada ghost town; bathing "clean as a saint" in the Great Salt Lake, and sparring with Mormon elders; exploring the forests of Puget Sound, and climbing Mount Rainier; peering into the Grand Canyon, "a collection of stone books covering thousands of miles of shelving, tier on tier." Steep Trails is Muir at his wondering, joyful, ebullient best.

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John Muir, born on April 21, 1838 was born in Dunbar, East Lothian in Scotland but became the most successful advocate for the preservation of the natural habitat of the United States. His tireless work helped preserve the Yosemite Valley, Sequoia National Park and many others. The Sierra Club, which he founded, is now one of the most important conservation organizations in the United States. One of the best-known hiking trails in the U.S., is the 211-mile John Muir Trail. In this book, Steep Trails, he writes lovingly about his work.

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The original arch-druid

By Edward Bosnar

Long before the late David Brower's environmental activism at the helm of the Sierra Club and after led to his designation as the 'arch-druid,' John Muir was making epic journeys through the (then much more truly wild) wilderness of the U.S. western states and jotting down his observations as well as his thoughts on Nature and life in general. "Steep Trails" is a collection of pieces covering Muir's various travels through and

about Northern California, Nevada, Utah, Oregon, Washington and the Grand Canyon. Writing mainly in the second half of the 19th century, Muir describes the terrain and its characteristics in simple and effective prose, but with the meticulous attention to detail and accuracy of a hard-nosed naturalist. One also cannot help but be impressed with the fact that Muir usually set off on his wilderness treks (often during the winter) with only the most meager of supplies and without the high-tech equipment and various Gore-Tex accoutrements deemed indispensable by today's rugged outdoorsmen. What comes out of Muir's writings and sets him apart from most of his contemporaries is his view that America's vast natural wealth and beauty should be appreciated in and of themselves, above and beyond their functional and economic value as natural resources to be exploited. Despite his firm belief in 'progress' and 'civilization' as these terms were understood in the nineteenth century (hence his often disparaging comments about the local Indians), at several points Muir showed that he understood the potential dangers of excessive economic development and industrialization.

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