

Letter from Elsie West to Bill More from the More Camp near Salmon Arm - July 22, 1933



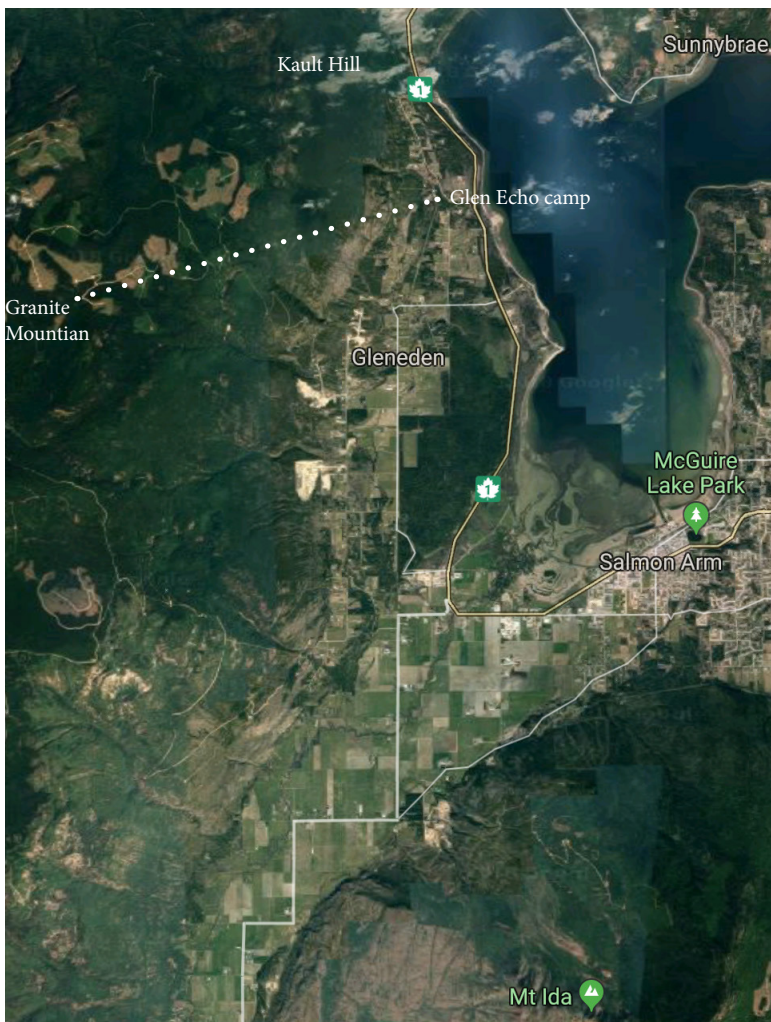
Dear Bill,

I received your letter this morning. I had a feeling it was on its way. But the mail is only brought out to camp on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturday. We get it at Aro's. So I could hardly wait until mail time to get it.

Bill, I am sitting here suffering from a burnt face. And you know how my face can turn with the sun. However I am piling on Francis lotion, which soothes it immensely. But I put up with it if it were 10 times bad, for the wonderful day we had yesterday. We went to the lookout on Granite Mountain. It was a hike and a half.

We rose, Francis and I soon after 5 o'clock yesterday morning, had a real good breakfast, and were on our way by 6:30. We took quite a large pail of lunch, and a pail of water, so were well provisioned. We arrived at Maki's and got directions from them, has Francis had never been up before. She said you wouldn't take her.

The first 2 miles are by far the worst. About at the end of them, we thought we must have gone 6 miles. And then we looked down at the view. Such a panorama! It was grand. That made us anxious to move on and see what else we could see. Soon we turned into the shade and trees. Then we came upon a botanist's paradise of all the flowers. I don't know why you didn't tell me more about them on Granite Mountain. I'm sure I could rename it, and find a more beautiful and fitting name than "granite". And I couldn't have had a better teacher than Frances. And I didn't hesitate to ask. I'm sure she enjoyed it too. I have brought back at least 20 specimens that I am pressing, and I'm going to make another nature book. It was so interesting noting the different stages. Near the foot of the mountain, we saw Saskatoon's, lunch berries, etc. All out "in berries". All the way up we watched them until near the top we found them just out in flower. There were no columbines, Tiger lilies, or lupines at the beginning of our trip, halfway up they were most plentiful. We gathered huge bouquets of each on our way back. We found a few lady slippers, but they were more rare. Oh! Do you remember the Star of Bethlehem flower? We saw beds and beds of it in the shady places I think I like it best of all. I don't know though. I saw some many others. - Lily of the Valley, and many other old friends, well I made many new acquaintances. But I couldn't begin to tell you all in this letter. But what I started to say about the different stages....at the bottom was like the month of July. Further along we went back to June, May and even late April. Right on top was covered with strawberries just out in blossom. We saw and heard many squirrels and chipmunks, and even frogs and toads in some places. Gophers are plentiful on top too. We arrived at the lookout at 12:30, having taken six hours for our trips (tsk tsk says you). Well we might have done it less time, had we worn side curtains or something. We were (I was going to say with open arms) but he really was glad to see us by Mr. Bennetts. He remembered you right away. He asked if you were the teacher. About the first thing we did while we were resting and he was making some tea, was to look through his visitors book. I found your name written in August 1923 and then again in 1927. And a little remark about your Trail Rangers motto etc. After eating the rest of our lunch (we ate twice on the way up) and drinking 3 cups of hot tea, we felt very much refreshed. We were ready for another 6 miles tramp. But we stayed there three hours. And it was the quickest three hours. For he told us the mountains and lakes and



valleys all around. Then we consulted big maps. I couldn't seem to get my bearings at first. But after an hour or so study with glasses, etc. I felt as if I had a geography lesson, that was a geography lesson, and one I'm not likely soon to forget.

Then Mr. Bennett took us around the top of the mountain where we saw more views and more flowers. We had quite a chat with the old fellow and left him the rest of our cherries.

We left there at 3:30 and Gathered flowers along the way. We thought we'd get down in no time. But before we got halfway, we were so tired out. Our legs were so wobbly and our knees weak. So that the last couple of miles, like the first couple were the hardest. We didn't reach the main road until about 7:30. Just as we started thinking we had another 2 miles walk, and wondering how we could possibly make it we saw a car coming. When we saw it was Don Raven, and he stopped, we sat on his mudguard exhausted. So he took us home, weary, footsore and hungry, but extremely happy.

Your mother and Annie had a big hot supper for us and after soaking our feet in hot water, we hit the hay after giving the rest of the family an account of our trip, much fooling and giggling being done by all. The last thing I thought of when I went to bed was if the letter had been waiting for me from my Danny boy, it would have been a perfect day. But it went to sleep knowing that I'd get one today. So that is how I got so sunburned. I wonder if we shall ever hike up there together. If you come, we'll surely go won't we?

Well Bill, now to tell you more about camp. Yesterday wasn't the only good day we've had. It surely is lovely here. The lake is always just a little different. And it's going down rapidly now. It was up to the big trees a week ago. But now it has moved down so that the poles which mark that well show above the water. Your mother thinks by Monday the well will be pretty well uncovered. The mosquitoes are still pretty bad, but are going slowly.

You mentioned about me taking my book along to the beach to read. That's impossible yet for the mosquitoes won't let us sit still enough to concentrate for a minute. But I'm really not very worried.



We manage very nicely about sleeping. When Francis is here, she and I sleep in a double bed in the living room. Annie says where you and Ted used to sleep. Your mother and Doreen in one double bed in the bedroom and Annie and Shirley in the other. Yvonne has a little crib so you see, we are quite comfortable. When Francis is away, Doreen sleeps with me. She says she is coming back to Vancouver with me to see her uncle Bill. You should hear Shirley say Vancouver. She says Van "coo coo". Yesterday when she missed us, she asked if we had gone to Vancouver. Of course your mother and auntie changed it to "Elsie gone cuckoo". Oh! I must tell you what Doreen said, when I got my letter the first time. We had each got mail and quite a while later Doreen said I know who sent Elsie her letter. I asked who it was and she looked up and said uncle Bill. Nobody had told her. Everyone gets quite a kick out of that. No, Bill there is no old boat in sight but Francis says it is still buried in the sand, when the water is far out. The old boat at Kault is just about wrecked

Your uncle had an old scow drift over near the camp. I have been using it for rinsing clothes - I mean standing in it and rinsing in the lake. I have a great time in my bathing suit. But today your uncle Will came over and took it.

My! The lake is warm compared to what it is at Jericho. Even then I can't run in. I'm doing some splashing about which looks more like the dog paddle, but I am trying to change it into the Australian crawl. I've been going in everyday until yesterday for about three days I had to go in by myself. Yesterday my legs were so sore when we got home, I was afraid I'd get cramps if I went in. But we went in this morning before breakfast.

We've done so many things I can't begin to tell you all. One day when Francis was away, Anni and I walked up to tapping. Another day we picked saskatoons. Do you like them? I do. One evening Don Raven and family and your aunt Mary, Mrs. Langford and her babies were here. Also Ruth brought her baby. Your aunt Annie was here too. Last night Marion and Billy were here to take us for a drive. But of course, we were home too late. Tomorrow your uncle Wes is coming to take Francis, Annie and I to church. Then we are going to his place for dinner and he will bring us home.

Tonight, after supper, Francis and I went for a short hike up Kault Hill. My! The view sure is grand. Then we came home and made toast on the campfire. Then we went for the milk. All the way back I watched the stars. They were more numerous than ever. I thought of her last canoe trip. Wasn't it lovely? Wasn't the whole evening lovely? (censored lovey-dovey stuff). I sn't it strange how one can feel lonely in a crowd. They want me to stay over next weekend. I may.

Your mother is looking well although she must be tired with the youngsters all the time. But she loves them so. And They are fond of their grandmother. Your mother asked me to say she'd written so on soon. But her eyes were bothering her a bit. We tried to make or not work so hard, but she's always on the go. (More censored lovey-dovey stuff) as always,

Elsie