

Keswick. Sept 24/71

My Dear Mamma

Last week I accomplished the feat of ascending Skiddaw twice, & on two consecutive days. Ward was unable to go out on Wednesday as some friends were visiting him, so arrived with a portfolio of maps by which to find a good "graptolite place." I set out on a fossil hunting excursion on Skiddaw. I went up the shortest way by the map but found it by no means an easy one, as for more than a mile I had to walk along a slope of loose stones at an average angle of 38° . The graptolite place was I found only a few ^{hundred} feet from the top & so after spending some hours searching for fossils I went up to the top & then came down by the ordinary footpath which is very easy but 5 or 6 miles long. It was a busy day.

there was not a good view. As I
came down I was making up my
mind not to go up again in a
hurry, but how soon resolutions are
broken. Walking up the street to my
lodgings who should I meet but
Mr. Etheridge & Co who had just
arrived under Ramsays guidance
& informed me that they were going
up Skiddaw fossil hunting next
day. Mr. E. insisted on the instant
production of the fossils I had found
& so we sat to one side of the street
& they were unwrapped for his
edification. He was especially pleased
with the squashed fragments of a
Trilobite as they are quite scarce in
the rocks here. Next morning we
were to start at 9 but the day was
so threatening that we did not get
off till past 11. After we had walked
about 2 miles to the foot of Skiddaw
it came on a regular downpour
of rain which

Castled for about 1/4 hour. Hughes & I
who were in advance got shelter in a
Cottage. The rest found as much as
they could under a tree. Then we
went on, & when about half way up
had lunch under a gutter rain in
the channel of a brook. afterwards
we went through ever so much wet
heather & at last got to the graptolite
place but minus our Etheridge who has
missed his way & was last seen
making his way up, among a mass
of loose stone to the top. We hunted for
fossils & got a few rather poor ones
but after a time found it so bitterly
cold that as it was getting late we
determined to go to the top & down
by the regular path to Keswick. When
we got to the top we found Etheridge's
lunch-paper ballasted with stones, &
"gone down" written on it. We had
been previously conjecturing that we
would find him somewhere frozen into
an icicle, but it afterwards appeared

that after waiting about three quarters
of an hour on the summit, & finding
it remarkably cold work he had very
sensibly "gone down". When we got to
the top we found ourselves enveloped
in cloud, & a remarkably strong &
cold wind blowing round us. We
sat down on the lee side of the Cairn
however & were rewarded by some
splendid glimpses of view before we
left.

Next day we drove to Seatoller & then
went up on the fells behind that place.

It was very cold & we had barely got
up when we were obliged to sit under
a wall for some time to weather a

shower. We got along very well
till we got to Lower Quiln Combe
when the wind which had been rising
became a perfect gale & came down
in sudden squalls. Accompanied with

sleet. First Hughes climbing along a
hillside lost his hat, it went about
1/4 of a mile at a

bound but was fortunately recovered
among a pile of stones in the valley. Then
Pug Ramsay's went & ran like a hare
for quite a distance but finally lodged
in a brook. After it had been recovered
we sat down in the shelter of a rock &
ate our lunches. Then we went up
on the edge overlooking the course &
walked along the top to green gable. Here
the wind was tremendous, & we had
several times to take shelter behind
rocks. While showers of hail & sleet
were falling, or rather passing for
they went quite horizontally. Here
Mr Etheridge had carried away
its moorings & was only recovered by
a miracle. However when we sat
down in the valley again it was
comparitively quite calm & altogether
it was a very pleasant day.

I think you will have to give
me credit this week for having
made a long enough story about
Small events, & hope you may
be sufficiently interested to read
it through.

Believe me

Your affectionate Son

George

Sept 27 I enclose a letter to Mrs Stewart
which if you think it will do please
send to her. I do not know her
proper address