

Alfred Cunningham Papers, 1910-1937, n.d.  
(Correspondence Series)  
Schenck Letter to Cunningham, 26 April 1931

Transcription

[Transcription of a handwritten letter addressed to "My dear Charlie" from German forester and former Biltmore Forest School director Carl Alwin Schenck penned aboard the Holland-America Line's *S.S. Statendam* ship. In the letter Schenck thanks Cunningham, a former student, for his continued friendship and support even after Cunningham's change in profession from forester to printer. The original spelling and formatting of the letter has been maintained in the transcription below without any editorial correction. Digital scans (150 dpi; maximum pixel limitation of 600 pixels) of each page of the letter are included at the end of this document. The letter is part of the [Alfred Cunningham Papers](#) held by the Library and Archives of the Forest History Society in Durham, North Carolina.]

S. S. Statendam  
After sailing  
4/26/31.

My dear Charlie,

Your farewell wire tells me what I have seen: Old Charlie Cunningham continues to be "my" boy; and I am glad & elated & thankful for that; and I meant some more!

Your package of books, too, is in my cabin, and I am delighted to have the

fruits of your flock: What difference does it make that you became a printer instead of becoming a forester? The chief thing in life isn't the "what" but is the "how"; doing a common thing uncommonly well; doing it so that it is an inspiration to others; the spiritual life after death being the inspiration given before death. And in

this connection, a cobbler can be  
as immortal as a poet, and a farmer  
as deathless as a preacher.

This year, I am leaving the U.S.A.  
in really great elation: My old boys  
continue to love me; + they do not  
mind to show it; + thus my life  
was worthwhile.

I'll be back in late fall;  
Ames and Syracuse and some others  
want me for another farewell tour;  
and I'll come! If I can come  
to Denver, I'll spend a real weekend  
with you in the hills; + w'll climb  
the highest mountains, and slide down  
the other side!

Best regards from the Ollis for you,  
and for your parents from me. Very sincerely,

C. A. Schenk

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HOLLAND-AMERICA LINE  
ROTTERDAM.

S.S. Statendam  
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14/26. 31.

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This connection, a cobbler can be  
as immortal as a poet, and a farmer  
as deathless as a preacher.

This year, I am leaving the U.S.  
in really great elation: my old boys  
continue to love me, & they do not  
seem to stop it; & thus my life  
was remarkable.

I'll be back in late fall;  
Aunt and Grace and some others  
want me for another farewell;  
and I'll come! If I can come  
to Denver, I'll spend a good week  
with you in the hills; & I'll climb  
the highest mountains, and slide down  
the other side!  
Best regards from the Ellis for you,  
and for your family from me my sincerely  
C. W. [unclear]