



1881-05-05

## Letter from J[ohn] M. Vanderbilt to John Muir, 1881 May 5.

John M. Vanderbilt

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Sitka Alaska  
May 5<sup>th</sup> 1881

Dear Mr. Muir

Have just returned from our second trip to Chile at this season and I am very glad to say that business & prospects are better than we anticipated. We have given up our Sakatat trip owing to the amount of work we have to attend to this season besides we learn that the Sakatat Indians are expected to come down to Cross Sound to trade at our Hoonyah store. The next steamer from Portland will bring boiler &c for our oil works which we will establish in Cross Sound. A Capt Almy has arrived here from Newport R.I. to Superintend the same. We have now six stores in operation - the last one established is at the new town of Harrisburg or Rockwell in the Auk country about 8 miles below the Auk Glacier - the

town contains about 50 houses & a white population of some 200 - very rich looking rock has been found in that vicinity, new finds are daily made & there is every prospect of that section being well prospected.

I met Mr. Young about three weeks ago at the new town - he was on his way to Portland where he intends placing a number of indian boys at the Government School. Young said he would take a run down to California to see you if he had time.

The Glaciers are looking fine this spring and I am sure would be pleased to see you - I anticipate a fine trip this month up Glacier Bay Pass Sound where I will remain with the steamer eight or ten days prospecting the hair seal grounds. We have had a good deal of bad weather this spring giving our numerous passengers opportunities to admire the beautiful scenery and above all

the noble Glaciers invariably enchanting all beholders. About a month ago I was down in Jay Strait near Cape Spencer with a party of mining experts on board who wanted to see Dick Willoughby's locations of ledges in that direction. We went up an inlet for about twelve miles I estimated; the Inlet is about eight miles north of Cape Spencer.

U.S. Signal Stations have just been established at our post with one at Sitka - a man came out from Washington expressly for that purpose.

I am very sorry that Mr & Mrs Lyons have left Sitka for Oregon we liked them & thought that they would always remain here, Mr Lyons health failed so much that they were advised to leave this climate. We miss them greatly.

It would give us great pleasure if you could come up this season with Mrs. Min we would endeavor

[43]

to make the time pass pleasantly  
for Mrs. Muir.

I send by this mail a  
few bracelets which please  
accept from

Yours truly  
J. M. Vanderbilt

Mrs. Vanderbilt joins me in kindest  
regards to yourself & Mrs. Muir

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