



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

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1897-02-09

Letter from S. Hall Young to [John Muir], 1897 Feb 9.

S. Hall Young

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Wooster, Ohio. Feb. 9, 1897.

Friend of my heart,

Your two letters have arrived almost together. This is a red letter day to me. I was a little fearful that my silence & neglect would render the reception of my tardy letters cool. You see my conscience is not altogether dead. And now to have you pour out your kindness and love upon me in this way breaks me all up. God bless you! I know my feelings toward you have been growing deeper & warmer all these years, & now I see that friendship when it is true is not in the least degree dependent on mere propinquity. What are space & time to spirit or spiritual experience?

But as to the money, Miss; - I have really had half a day of severe spiritual "exercise" over the question of accepting it.

02237



I have been trying to recall what I said in my letter about my hard struggle with the world. I thought that there was a word in that letter that could be construed into a request for that kind of assistance I would send the P.O. order back by next mail. But I think too much of myself to imagine that there was such a word; and I think too much of your opinion of me to imagine that there was a thought of charity in the gift; and so I accept thankfully, in the spirit in which it was given, having fondly forwarded to a time when you and yours will all be our guests in Letha and give us an opportunity to reciprocate. I shall offer this to the tuition & music lessons of my girls.

Now my dream is this: - to get the appointment, and to start early next summer, go up with you early in July to Alachua & have six weeks of explanation with you before my term of office opens, Sept 1st. How will that suit you? We will get hours some great times together. Then I

will stay four or eight years in Alachua, as the elections may go, and save enough to buy a little fruit ranch of your & build a house, perhaps preach a few more years in some local church, and then retire to my ranch & "well grow and thither." Here is the dream?

I visited Maj. McKinley a week ago. My interview was all I could wish & more than I could expect. I was introduced by Pres. Seavel, of the University of Wooster, & two other men who are intimate friends of Maj. McKinley & mine. Maj. M.K.

said I had already been introduced to his notice, & that he considered my appointment the "most suitable possible"; and that unless some extraordinary opportunity should occur him to change his mind, "which," he said, "I do not consider possible", he would consider the application favorably. We had quite a conversation, and my friends felt that the matter was written



4

ally settled. I don't feel as sure as they do, but have strong hopes. Your letter is very strong, and will have more influence than almost any other, for your name was mentioned in our interviews and recognized by Maj. McKinley with enthusiasm. He said that he wished that kind of endorsements.

Your thought of writing to Senator Perkins is both kind and good. I need a "friend at court" - some deviator who will keep my application before the Pres. and put through the confirmation if I am appointed. I have been relying upon Sen. Mitchell of Or., but he is having a hard fight for reelection just now; and at present his success seems doubtful. If Sen. Perkins is connected with Goodall Perkins & Co. who formed the Pacific Coast Steamship Co. (as I think is the case) he would be just the one to act. He owes me a kindness, for I have secured his Co. as my a

5

summer by my descriptions of the wonders & glories of the trip - in my lectures & articles. I hope you can secure his active aid.

Edward Marsden, a Sainyeham Indian from New Mettakhakhtah, who has graduated from <sup>at</sup> Merritt College and is now in the Middle Belas at Lang Theol. Sem. Cincinnati, is with me just now. He is very intelligent and will make his mark. He has just been to see Maj. McKinley, a delegate from his people to plead for their island which white miners are trying to get from them, and for such a settlement of the boundary question as will not give them body to British control. He tells me that J. G. Brady of Sitka is an applicant for the governorship; also Mr. Johnson, former District Attorney. Both these men seem <sup>9<sup>th</sup> March</sup> to me, utterly unfit for the position. Maj. McKinley said to me that no one else had applied for the office when I saw him - so that I was the first. I wrote lately to Rear Admiral



6  
Beardlee, Commander of the Calif.  
ie Squadron, asking for an endorse-  
ment. I directed to Flagship Phil-  
adelphia, Mare Island, local. If the  
Philadelphia is lying there, perhaps a  
visit from you to the Admiral would  
be opportune. I know he thinks a good  
deal of you. If you know any other  
"strings to pull", pull them. Have  
all endorsements or petitions addressed  
to the Pres. & sent to me here.

Your book is a delight. May  
I thank you for it. Like other never red'd  
me. And as to the "swamy letters" I  
do not think that I failed to answer  
any that I received except the last  
one rec'd in 1890, & the two rec'd last  
summer. But that was bad enough,  
& I have no adequate excuse. But  
I will not repeat the same explana-  
tion of my last letter.

I shall look eagerly for the  
article in the Century about your  
stickpins. I am glad if my sketched ones

7  
helpful. Certainly, publish it if you  
wish; - use it in any way you desire;  
- Take any liberties with it.

I am sorry to say we never had  
a picture of Stickins. He lived before  
the day of the Alaska Camera Triad,  
Mrs Young got him a present  
from Mr Healy, that Irish seaman  
who lived in a cottage up the beach  
towards the Presbyterian Mission in  
Sitka.

Wait for me to go with you to  
Yakutat; - and we must not slight  
Lilya on the way.

You seem to think that you  
were to blame in some degree for my  
accident. My dear fellow, what an  
idea! There is no blame about it.  
It is one of my richest & most pre-  
cious experiences; I am thankful all  
through for it - pain & all. And as to  
your conduct through it all: I do  
not know of anything more hero-  
ic or sublimely self-forgetful in all  
the range of my reading.

02337



8

My time is so occupied now with this political office correspondence that my book must wait. After it is decided I'll go at it. If I go to Letha I'll finish it there.

I'll remember about the photographs. I have a good many but they are eight years old. I don't think Lowatt ever had his picture taken. Mrs. G. doesn't know anything of Stickine's ancestry. Mr. Healy will know.

What degree did you get from Harvard? I want to know so I can give you your proper title. You deserve the full set. Sorry you didn't know where we were last summer.

Give my warm regards to your good wife & daughters. Mrs. G. & the daughters join in this - and I thank you for your great kindness. I'll write again soon.

Yours more than ever

S. Hall Young.