

Urbana, Illinois

March 3, 1913

Mr. A. C. Bent

Taunton, Massachusetts

My dear Mr. Bent:

I have been informed by Mr. Henry Thurston of the A.O.U. and by Dr. E. D. Hovey of the American Museum of Natural History that you will accompany our Crocker Land Expedition north this summer. Since I am to have charge of the ornithology during our work in the North, I am very much interested in the news, and very glad that I shall have the great pleasure of meeting you and of the opportunity to work with you learning from you the best methods of obtaining and keeping data and material.

I have decided upon a pair of Leitz Prism Binoculars, No. 8 for my bird work. Do you think they are the best? If you would please advise me as to what other equipment I should provide for my bird study, I should appreciate your kindness.

Thanking you in anticipation of your early answer to my inquiry, I remain

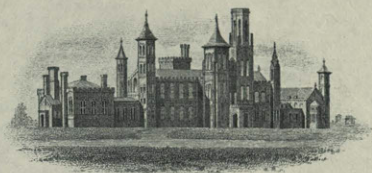
Yours sincerely

1103 West Springfield Avenue

Urbana, Illinois







ALL CORRESPONDENCE
SHOULD BE ADDRESSED
TO THE SECRETARY

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Washington, U.S.A.

UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM
INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES
BUREAU OF AMERICAN ETHNOLOGY
NATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL PARK
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INTERNATIONAL CATALOGUE OF
SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE

Taunton, Mass. March 7, 1913.

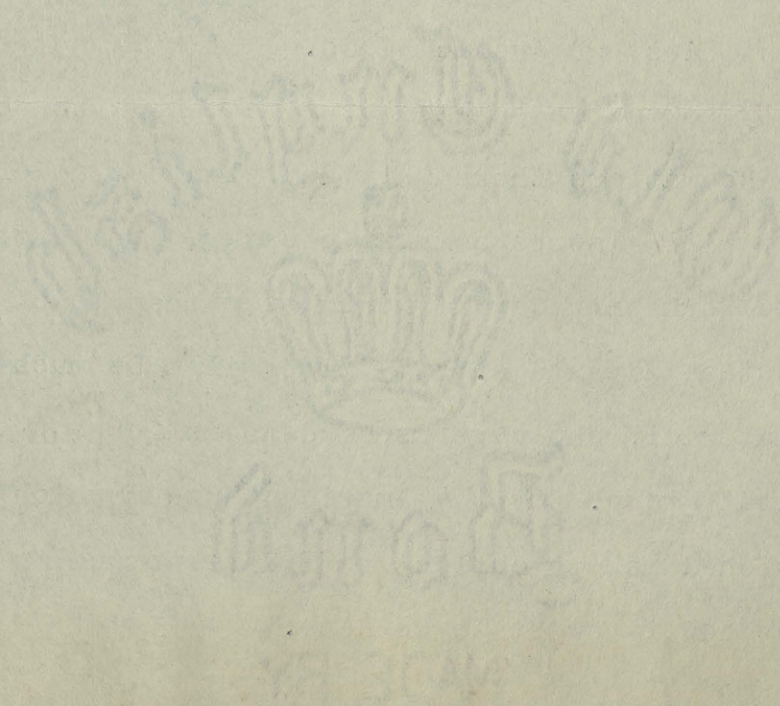
Mr. W. Elmer Eklaw,
1103 West Third St.,
Urbana, Ill.

My dear Mr. Eklaw:-

I was glad to receive your letter of the 3rd inst., although I had already heard that you were going on the Crocker Land expedition, and was intending to write to you. I was delighted to hear that we are to have a real ornithologist stay with ~~Mr.~~ MacMillan during the two winters, as much valuable work can be done in that far northern region in early spring and much is to be learned about breeding habits and other matters connected with the life histories of Arctic birds. I will not enter into this subject fully now as we shall have time enough on board ship to discuss these matters thoroughly and plan out an effective line of work. It will also be a great pleasure for me to have an ornithologist to work with, for it would seem that we could work together to mutual advantage. My time will be much taken up with gathering material, photographs, and notes for ^{the} formation of an Arctic habitat group. for the American Museum, which Mr. Chapman has commissioned me to collect, as I have worked in the field with him and know how it ought to be done.



THE
OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF THE
TREASURY
WASHINGTON, D. C.



I shall also be gathering photographs and notes for my work on the Life Histories of North American Birds.

I am not familiar with glass you mention as I have been in the habit of using ^a Bausch & Lomb or ^a Zeiss. I use a ^{ten} power glass because it will enable ^{me} you to identify birds at a longer distance,

but I think for ordinary work an eight power is strong enough, and it is much more convenient to use, as it has a ^{larger} field and does not have to be held so steadily. I hope you will decide to take a

small, light, 4 x 5 camera, not of the snapshot type, but one that can be set up on a tripod and focused for timed exposures. This would do for nearly all kinds of work, whereas ^{the} ~~and~~ ordinary film kodak would be useless for photographing nests or young birds.

I assume that you ^{are} familiar with photographic methods. ^{If not} I shall be glad to give you all the information I can on this subject, for I think it very important that you should bring back from your trip a fine series of carefully taken pictures, as nothing of this sort has ever been done in the Arctic, and I shall be there too late to get much in this line next summer. I hope you will also come well supplied with note books for ^{making} ~~copying~~ copious field notes. I can go into this more fully also if you care to have ~~me~~.

Hoping to hear from you again soon, I am

Sincerely yours

A. P. Bent





Urbana, Illinois

March 22, 1913

Mr. A. C. Bent

Taunton, Massachusetts

My dear Mr. Bent:

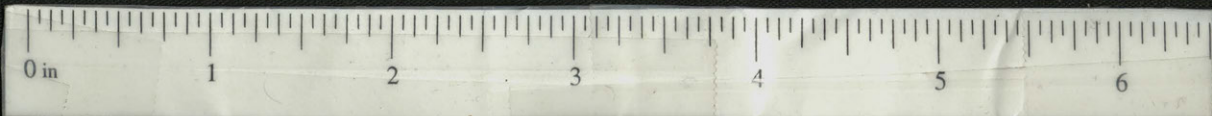
I hope that I shall be as competent to do the bird work in the North as you expect me to be. I shall be unfamiliar at first, I fear, with the birds and their habits, but with your aid I trust that I shall accustom myself quickly to the new species and their environment. I have noted your recommendation regarding the camera and also your suggestions for notebooks with which I shall go well equipped. If you consider that some particular kind is better than others, I shall be glad to accept any further suggestions you may make.

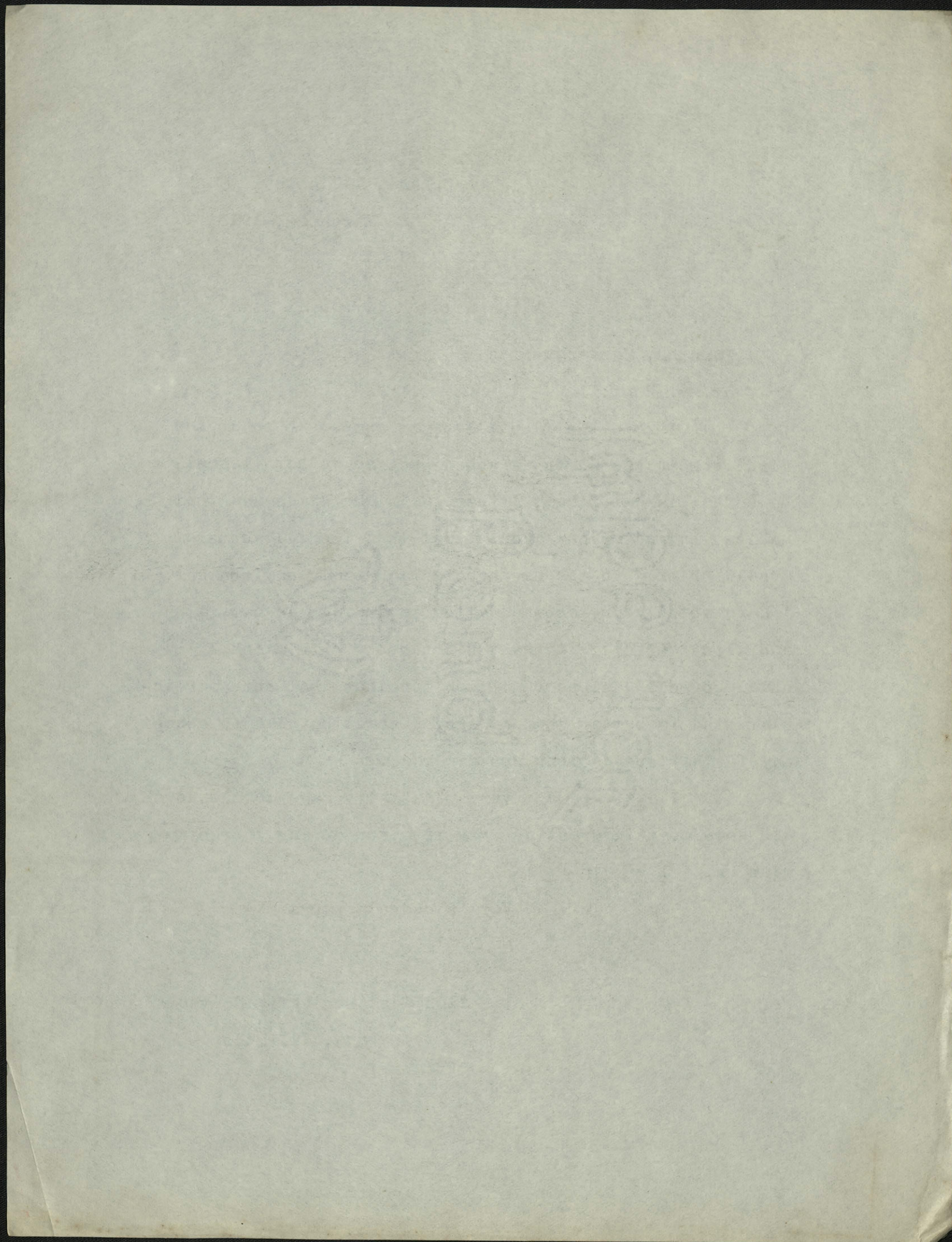
I anticipate a very pleasant voyage to the North and some most interesting work with you during your stay with us. I remain

Very sincerely yours

1103 West Springfield Avenue

Urbana, Illinois







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Taunton, Mass., April 11, 1913.

Mr. W. Elmer Ekblaw,

1103 West Springfield Ave.,

Urbana, Ill.

Dear Mr. Ekblaw:-

As you asked for some suggestions regarding cameras and note books, I am writing to tell you about an excellent camera which I have recently seen, and which is the only one outside of the reflex cameras, in which you can use films satisfactorily. It is called the #4 Screen Focus Kodak; it is made by the Eastman Kodak Co., and costs \$30.00; it measures $10\frac{1}{4} \times 6 \times 3\frac{1}{4}$ ". It takes a 4 x 5 film or can be quickly changed to use 4 x 5 plates. It is so arranged that when using films, the film roll holder can be lifted on hinges at the top and the focus on the ground glass be taken. This is a very useful arrangement for photographing nests or birds at a short range, where there must be exact work and no uncertainty, as to the focus. If you are thinking of buying a camera to take with you on the Crocker Land Expedition, I should recommend this one, as being a very useful all round camera.

For field notes, I have, after studying the methods of a great many naturalists, adopted my present system, which I think is a satisfactory combination.



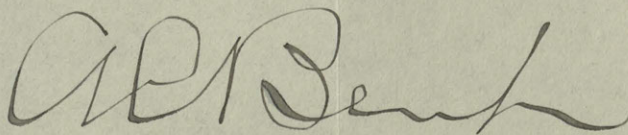


April 11, 1913.

I use two note books, one a small book which will easily go into an ordinary coat pocket, containing loose leaves on the I.P. ring system. On these small sheets, I record each day a nominal list of the birds seen and other items such as localities visited, weather, etc. Whenever I have any elaborate notes to record, I use a separate sheet, in this book, for each species, writing the name of the species, locality and date at the top of the page; as many sheets as necessary can be used for each species, but I never put more than one on a page. When I get home these sheets are taken out of the note book and filed away in two separate files, in envelopes marked for localities in one file and for species in the other, which brings the lists for one locality together and all of my notes on one species together. The other book is larger, about 8 x 10, in which I write out, at the end of the day, a simple journal, describing matters of general interest, localities visited, weather, etc., which forms a narrative of the expedition. I exclude from this book all lists of birds seen and all special notes, which are contained in the little book. No copying of notes is necessary after I get home, as they are written with a fountain pen in the field.

You might experiment with this camera and with this system of notes, before you start on the expedition, and see if you do not like them.

Sincerely yours,



A.C.B.



Urbana, Illinois

April 18, 1913

Mr. A. C. Bent

Taunton, Massachusetts

My dear Mr. Bent:

I wish to thank you for your kind letter advising me of the new Eastman camera and of your notebook system. I shall presume upon your kindness still further to ask you to recommend to me such books and literature relevant to my bird work in the North as you deem advisable to take with me and necessary to good results. I shall need several, I imagine, for all my work, practically, has been with land birds.

Thanking you in anticipation of this additional favor, I remain

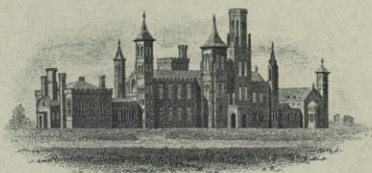
Sincerely yours

1103 West Springfield Avenue

Urbana, Illinois







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Taunton, Mass., April 28, 1913.

Mr. W. Elmer Ekblaw,
1103 West Springfield Ave.,
Urbana, Ill.

Dear Mr. Ekblaw:-

In reply to your favor of the 18th inst., I will give you suggestions in regard to certain books which may be of use to you in your northern bird work.

Very little has been published regarding the birds of this region which our expedition intends to cover. I would suggest that you read, or take with you the three following publications, of which the first is by far the best, and practically covers the whole ground.

#1 "The Birds of Greenland" Andreas T. Hagerup
Little Brown & Co., Boston/
1891

#2 "List of the Birds collected in North Greenland by
the Peary Expedition of 1891-1892, and the Relief
Expedition of 1892."
Witmore Stone
Proceedings of the Academy of Nat. Sciences of
Phila. 1895.

#3 "List of the Birds hitherto unobserved in Greenland."
Dr. J. Reinhardt. The Ibis 1861.

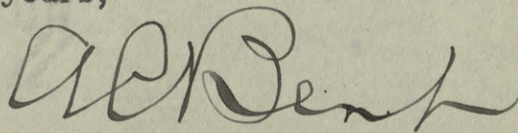
The "Catalogue of Canadian Birds," John Macoun, 1909, is a good general work on Canadian birds which has numerous references to Greenland, but there is little in it which is not covered by





Hagerup. "Birds of Labrador,"^{*} is quite an exhaustive treatise on Labrador birds bringing the subject right up to date and will be useful in your work on the Labrador coast. I should advise you to send to the Biological Survey, Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. for "Distribution & Migration of North American Shore Birds," Wells W. Cooke, Biological Survey, Bulletin #35, and "Distribution & Migration of North American Ducks, Geese and Swans," W. W. Cooke, Biological Survey, Bulletin #26. These two bulletins you certainly want to read and take with you, as they will give you many useful ^{hints} ~~helps~~ ^{to the} as present limits of our knowledge and the unsolved problems, regarding the distributions and breeding habits of Arctic birds. If you cannot get them, I can probably have them sent to you. "Handbook of Birds of Eastern North America," Frank W. Chapman, D. Appleton & Co., New York Revised edition 1912, is about the best general work on eastern birds, is very complete, right up to date and very compact, and you certainly ought to have a copy of this with you. Much information of value on Arctic birds is contained in "The Cruise of the Neptune," A. P. Low published by the Geological Survey of Canada. I have not been able to obtain a copy of this book, but Mr. MacMillan has one and will undoubtedly take it with him as well as a number of other useful and interesting books. If I can be of any further help to you in this direction, I shall be only too glad to do so.

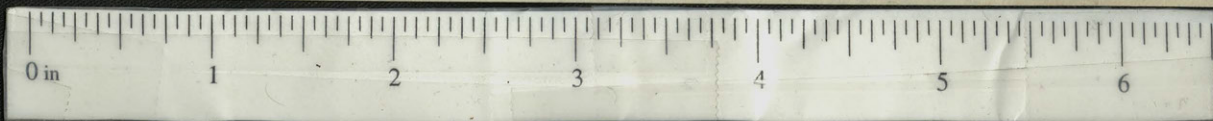
Sincerely yours,



*

Dr. Chas. W. Townsend
Proceedings of the Boston
Society of Natural History
1907







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May 14, 1913.

Mr. W. Elmer Ekblaw,

1103 West Springfield Ave.,

Urbana, Ill.

Dear Mr. Ekblaw:-

I am sorry to say that I find it will be impossible for me to go with you on the Crockerland Expedition, as I do not dare to go away and leave my large business interests for so long a time, under the present disturbing conditions. It will, therefore, be up to you and McMillan to get what is necessary in the way of information regarding Arctic birds. If you have read any of the books suggested in my last letter, particularly Prof. Cook's two pamphlets, you will see how much information is lacking regarding the distribution and breeding habits of Arctic birds. I could give you many suggestions beyond what these books show, and should be glad to do so, if you are willing to undertake to fill in these gaps in our knowledge. If you would like to collect any specimens of birds or eggs for me, or for the Smithsonian, I should be glad to furnish you with a list of specimens wanted, with the prices I am willing to pay, but perhaps you do not care to bother with this.

I hope, at all events, you will arrange to take a good series of photographs, illustrating breeding colonies, nesting sites, nests, eggs and young birds of all the Arctic species that



May 14, 1913.

Mr. W. E. Miller, Ekblaw,

1103 West Springfield Ave.,

Urbana, Ill.

Dear Mr. Miller:-

I am sorry to say that I find it will be impossible for me to go with you on the Grockeland Expedition, as I do not dare to go away and leave my large business interests for so long a time, under the present disturbing conditions. It will, therefore, be up to you and McMillan to get what is necessary in the way of information regarding Arctic birds. If you have read any of the books suggested in my last letter, particularly Prof. Cook's two pamphlets, you will see how much information is lacking regarding the distribution and breeding habits of Arctic birds. I could give you many suggestions beyond what these books show, and should be glad to do so, if you are willing to undertake to fill in these gaps in our knowledge. If you would like to collect any specimens of birds or eggs for me, or for the Smithsonian, I should be glad to furnish you with a list of specimens wanted, with the prices I am willing to pay, but perhaps you do not care to bother with this.

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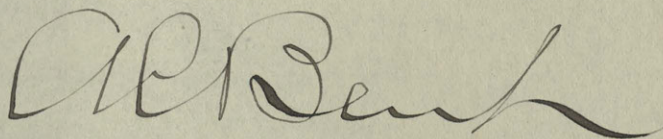


May 14, 1913.

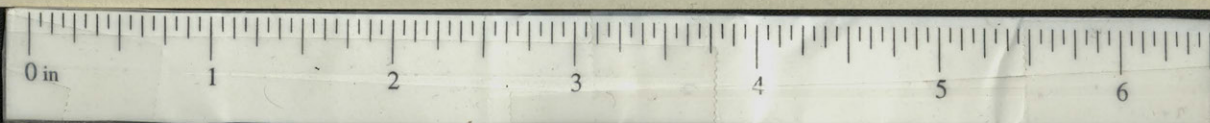
you find breeding. I do not know whether you can arrange to find time to do so, but if you could spend a day or an evening with me, before starting, I should like very much to have the opportunity to talk these matters over with you. I am leaving, the latter part of next week, for about a month in Manitoba, but am planning to return before the first of July.

Kindly let me hear from you by return mail, and if necessary, I can write you more fully.

Sincerely yours,



A.C.B.



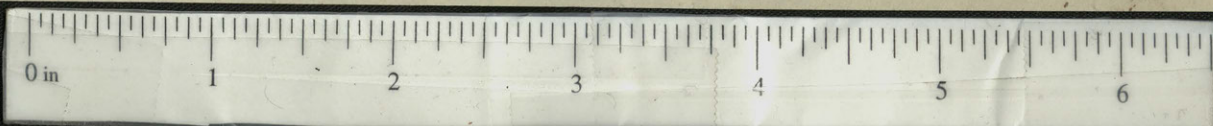
May 14, 1913.

-2-

W. Elmer Kiplaw,

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find time to do so, but if you could spend a day or an evening
with me, before starting, I should like very much to have the
opportunity to talk these matters over with you. I am leaving
the latter part of next week, for about a month in Manitoba,
but am planning to return before the first of July.
Kindly let me hear from you by return mail,
and if necessary, I can write you more fully.
Sincerely yours,

A.C.B.



Urbana, Illinois,

May 19, 1913.

Mr. A. C. Bent,

Taunton, Mass.

My dear Mr. Bent:

I am very sorry to hear that you will be unable to accompany the Crocker Land Expedition this summer, for I had expected to find your company and your instruction one of the most pleasant features of the trip North. However, since you cannot go, I shall do the best I can to obtain the information needed about Arctic birds, and I shall appreciate all the suggestions you can find time to make for my work. Indeed, I shall be very grateful to you if you will make as complete an outline of plans and methods as you think necessary, and I shall be glad to make any collections for you and the Smithsonian that the American Museum may permit.

If you return from Manitoba before our expedition leaves, I shall be glad to spend some time with you before starting, as much as you can arrange for, in order to talk over these matters with you. In fact, I feel that I could not spend my time to better advantage, so if you will apprise me of your return, addressing me in care of Dr. E. O. Hovey, American Museum of Natural History, New York, I shall certainly try to arrange to see you.

I trust that you will be back before we sail. I thank you in anticipation of your kind efforts to help me. I remain

Sincerely yours,

WEE/AE

1103 W. Springfield Ave.,

Urbana, Illinois.







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May 22, 1913.

Mr. W. Elmer Ekblaw,
1103 West Springfield Ave.,
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Dear Mr. Ekblaw.,

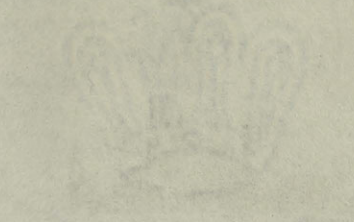
Your favor of 19th inst. is
at hand. You are not half as sorry as
I am, that I am not going on the Crocker-
land Expedition, for it is an opportunity
of a life time that I am missing.

I am very anxious to see you
and have a talk with you before you sail,
and shall make it a point to return home
before July 1st, and arrange to meet you
in New York or Boston before you leave.
I shall also write out some suggestions
for needed information.

Sincerely yours,

A.C.B.





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