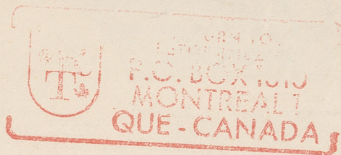


*Shaw
Lois*



*Write to
Harlan P. Barak
from Metis Cottage*

Miss Clare Harrington,
Croydon Apartments,
3455 Cote des Neiges Road,
Montreal, P. Que.

22

C. F. HARRINGTON

630 DORCHESTER BLVD. WEST

MONTREAL

CORNELL UNIVERSITY

DIVISION OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

ITHACA, N. Y. 14850

SECTION OF GENETICS, DEVELOPMENT & PHYSIOLOGY
PLANT SCIENCE BUILDING

May 2, 1966

Mr. Conrad Harrington
3481 Holton
Montreal, Canada

Dear Mr. Harrington:

I had the pleasure of talking with your brother-in-law, Mr. Hastings, on the airplane April 28. He told me of your relationship to Sir J. William Dawson and I indicated that my presence in Montreal was the need to study Dawson's original specimens in the Peter Redpath Museum. He suggested I call you. Unfortunately, I had only Friday the 29th to study and the work took until late Friday night. On Saturday, I flew out again at 7 AM.

However, I assure you that interest in plants like Dawson's is intense at the moment. Those collected on the shores of Gaspé Bay, on the shore from Dalhousie to Campbellton and those from Perry, Maine are all from rocks of the Devonian Period, about 400 million years old. These plants were among the first plants to colonize the dry land so our interest is in the early evolution of land plants.

Miss Johanssen, the Director, and Mrs. Stevenson, Curator of Geology have been very helpful to one of my former graduate students, Dr. Francis Hueber. He is currently Curator of Paleobotany at U.S. National Museum but worked also at Geological Survey of Canada. At the earlier time he made extensive collections on the Gaspé and is re-studying its fossil flora. Earlier this spring on one of his visits to the Redpath, the Montreal newspapers carried quite a spread on his visit. You may have seen the account. Whether or not the story indicated it, Dawson's collections were the object of his visit.

A reason for the significance of the Dawson collection is that he gave new names to some of the plants and according to botanical rules for nomenclature, the oldest name has priority over all others. However, ONE specimen in the original collection must be designated as the TYPE specimen. This rule came into effect after Dawson's time but we are trying

Mr. Harrington

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May 2, 1966

to determine which specimen is to be considered the TYPE for each of his names. Thus we are especially anxious to see that the collections are well housed, well curated, and well protected for posterity.

It would be a pleasure sometime to hear some accounts of Dawson that have been handed down in the family.

Very truly yours,

Harlan P. Banks

Harlan P. Banks
Professor of Botany

HPB:sw

Tenth
May
1966

Dr. Harlan P. Banks,
Professor of Botany,
Division of Biological Sciences,
Cornell University,
Ithaca, N.Y. 14850
U.S.A.

Dear Dr. Banks,

It was most interesting to learn from my brother-in-law, Roy Hastings, of your chance encounter in the aeroplane.

Sir William departed from the scene before my time, but Lady Dawson was one of my god-parents, and I can recall a photograph - type "4 generations" - which showed me at the age of 3 months or so, seated on her knee and surrounded by the necessary supporting cast.

We have always been proud of Sir William's work, even though the number of his descendendants, direct and otherwise, has now become almost as numerous as the grains of sand among which he sought his specimens.

It would have been agreeable to meet you, and perhaps there will be another opportunity. In the meantime, I am glad that the staff people at McGill were helpful to you and Dr. Hueber.

A copy of your letter and this letter will be sent to my aunt, Miss Clare M. Harrington, who owns and occupies (in the summer) Sir William's cottage at Metis Beach, where I believe much of his writing was done. Perhaps she knew him - her grandfather - as well as any person now living, and I will leave it to her to decide whether or not she feels willing and/or able to do anything about "some accounts of Dawson that have been handed down in the family".

Yours very truly,

COPY (Original Signed) C. F. Harrington