

New Bedford June 9. 1842.

Dear Sir, I have received your note with a package of shells. It will give me much pleasure to correspond with you and exchange such specimens in the several departments of Natural History as we can spare to each other. I have given much of the little time I can snatch from business, for several years past to the study of Geology, Mineralogy and Conchology and am endeavouring to collect cabinets of specimens in each. Your position so far to the North Part of us will while it enables you to furnish us with shells which are strangers on our coast, also enable me to send to you shells which you cannot find in your waters.

Your remark in your note that you have not access to books or collections to enable you to determine species. Permit me so far as I can do it to aid you by naming such of your shells as I can find described in the books to which I can get access. And in order to help you to certain starting points I propose to send to you at this time good specimens of the shells which are common to your coast and our own, marked. I shall add to the collection some other shells, not only of Massachusetts but also of our Southern Coast and Western Lakes and Rivers -

In return you may send me such good specimens
of *Lymnaea* - *Statica* - *Astarte* - *Arca* - *Unio*
Buccinum *Modiolus* - *Purpura* *Sapillus* - *Cytherea*
Convexa - *Helix* ^{*Subglabrosa*} *lobosa* - and the small *Littorina*
as you can readily spare.

Permit me to suggest
to you that fresh ponds and streams ought to furnish
you with *Anodonta* and *Unio*, most likely of species
not common here, and not improbably, new and
undescribed.

The green, ribbon-like sea weed
which grows on sandy and muddy bottoms in sheltered
bays, coves and the like yields to us many very small
shells. I obtain them usually rather late in the summer
by wading into water 2 or 3 feet or more deep at low
tide, pulling up the sea weed, with the roots if I can
reach as soon as I reach the shore rinse it off in fresh
water - the shells immediately fall to the bottom of the
tub and when dry may be examined and assorted.
A bushel of the weed will sometimes yield me a
quart of very minute shells of 10 or 12 different species.

Unio *Lymnaea* - from Magdalen Islands resembles very closely
L. Umbrosa, Say - I send you a single specimen from Lake
Champlain for comparison - If you obtain them in abundance should
be glad of three more of them. I have ventured to mark your shell
L. Umbrosa and place it in my cabinet -
Buccinum - the large one No. 1. from Bay of Fundy is *B. Modiolus*
not found South of Cape Cod - very rare in Massachusetts Bay - good
specimens will always be acceptable to me for making exchanges
with other persons. - No. 2. is not a *Buccinum* but *Purpura* *Sapillus*

of larger size than we commonly meet with on our coast, and such will be acceptable to me. The black one is *Buccinum Obsoletum* - very abundant quite South to Florida - the other is *B. Trivittatum* - compare with my specimen -

Natica - *Heros*, Say - good specimens are desirable - The smaller shell is a *Pettorina* *Arctis* - Gould - - *Turbo* *Budis*, Donovum - common here - the smallest I incline to think new - would be glad of more for comparison. It is of the genus *Pettorina*, *Ferrusa* *Spirski* - *Spirillum* - Lamark - abundant here

Helix - This is not a fresh shell - it has lost its color - I am disposed to call it *H. ~~obsoleta~~ ^{subglobosa}* - Binney - *H. Hostensis*, Muller. I can scarcely doubt it is the same - a fresher specimen would settle the question.

You cite *Antigonish* as the locality - If it be the shell I suppose a question of some interest arises which you can probably settle Our *Subglobosa* has been found only at one locality on Cape Cod and owing to its strong resemblance to, if not identity with *Helix Hostensis*, a European shell, our conchologists have been divided in opinion as to whether a living specimen has at some time been imported from Europe and dropped there, when it became the parent of those we now find, or whether it is indigenous. Now please to inform me where is *Antigonish*? Would a foreign shell be more likely to find its way there than to Pictou? - Would a foreign shell be likely to get there at any rate? - You see the importance of the question -

Succinea - This shell is broken and I cannot determine the species. It resembles a species in my cabinet from Vermont which I have not yet determined.

Mytilus - *Edulis* ^(Linn) - with *Balanus* *Clavicornis* - Gould - abundant
Modiola - *Plicatula* - and *Papuaana* - good specimens of the latter are wanted - Also the smaller species when you can furnish it.

Anomia - I incline to pronounce this an undescribed shell, but possibly it may be one lately described by Doct. Michels of Portland, the description of which I have not seen -

Pecten Magellanicus - This with both valves entire and of fresh color is very desirable in considerable quantity if it can be obtained. It was formerly abundant at Eastport and in the gut of Caruso, and the markets were abundantly supplied with it as I have been informed but I have been unable to obtain more than one or two good specimens of it - Perhaps it may be within your reach.

Solen - Ensis - the large one - the smaller is *Solecurtus*

Coelatus - the former abundant here, the latter rare, *Cyprina* - The larger shell is *Yenus Mercenaria*, the smaller, *Cytherea Convexa* - the former common here the latter wanted - I send you a specimen of *Cyprina Islandica*.

Mucella - These two valves belong to different individuals and it is rather difficult therefore to decide on the species positively. I shall venture however to call it *M. Saprotilla* of Gould, the living analogue of *M. Lewis, Say* - Fossil ^{in Maine} - My bag taken from the stomach of Cod - I wish to remark that we find the Haddock yields us more shells than the Cod - It appears to feed more on shells than the Cod does.

Tellemys - *Maetra* - A single valve - destitute of the epidermis and much sea worn - doubtful about the species - but incline to believe it *Maetra Ovalis*, Gould. shell wanted.

Mya Arenaria Linn. common here.

16. *Linguiolana fusca* - not uncommon here

17. *Astarte Costacea* - rare here and wanted

Terebratula - The shell you describe I have little doubt is *T. Pitturea*, Gmelin, but of extraordinary size - See Gould's description -

"Shell sub-triangular; narrowed above, the beak produced into a decurved horn; surface striated, foramen triangular;"

"Shell thin and fragile; brownish black or sea green, of an inflated triangular form, one of the valves produced into a long pointed and strongly curved beak, something like a parrot's beak; along this runs a triangular channel (formed by the inflected margins) the third side of which is completed by the tip of the other valve; the smaller valve is obovate or fan shaped, about $\frac{2}{3}$ the length of the larger valve; surface marked with concentric lines of growth, and with numerous, fine, diverging striae increasing in number as the shell widens. The interior bony processes consist of two

slender, curved, parallel prongs arising from the base of the teeth of the upper valve. Height $\frac{1}{2}$ inch - Length $\frac{7}{20}$ - inch
Breadth $\frac{1}{4}$ inch"

Doct. Gould further remarks that he has "as yet met with only one specimen of this shell of the above dimensions, which was taken from the stomach of a cod fish. It appears to be every where rare, and is probably an inhabitant of more northern seas, especially the region of Newfoundland."

Other shells which I should suppose you would be likely to meet with, are

Glycymeris Soligua - found in Codfish about the Straits of Belleisle and the Banks of Newfoundland; very rarely in Massachusetts Bay - It is a thick heavy shell with a black or dark brown epidermis - from 1 to 3 inches broad - very desirable

Fusus Decemcostatus — a coarse, heavy shell, with 10 longitudinal ribs or striae of growth. It occasionally is thrown ashore on Cape Cod in heavy Easterly storms but always much broken and worn as if it had been transported some distance by the waves.

Fusus Islandicus — A smooth shell, lighter than the preceding, covered with a light brown epidermis

Cardium Islandicum — I have it from Annapolis
Banks. a shell of about 2 or 3 inches diameter. rather smoother than most of the genus.

Pecten Islandicus — Shell suborbicular, reddish or orange brown; ears unequal; surface covered with small, crowded, irregularly disposed, scaly, radiating ribs which disappear within. found only in Massachusetts Bay — not uncommon on the Banks.

Planorbis — Cycles & in still ponds — Anceylus on the under side of the leaves of the pond lily and other large leaved aquatic plants — Pupa. very minute species under decaying logs and other vegetable matter, and by the side of fences, walls &c, upon your limestone formations.

I often obtain many small species of Marine shells by taking up a quart or two of the fine fragments of shells, sand &c which sometimes collect in certain spots upon the shore — dry it and sift it through a coarse sieve upon a sheet of paper and then pick out the shells which are thus brought to light.

Among the minerals you meet with do you ever
get the Labrador Feldspar? I would be very glad of
some of it if you have it, and so indeed of any of
your minerals - geological specimens, especially those
illustrating your Coal formation as shales, schists,
sandstones &c. with or without organic remains,
but especially vegetable impressions -

Our region is not rich geologically - a thick
bed of diluvium reposes on Micaceous Schist gradually
passing into Gneiss, underlaid by granites of
various ages and textures - I can scarcely offer
you much in this way except some good feldspar,
and specimens of our granites &c - by no means interesting
I sometimes get hold of some foreign minerals and
when I do can perhaps help you to something of value.

My letter has grown to such a length that
it will require some exercise of your patience to
go through it - but I trust you may find some
useful hints in it to repay you for the trouble.

In the hope of entering upon a correspondence
that may be mutually agreeable and useful I remain
dear Sir,

Yr. Obedt. Servant.

Wm. Taylor

P.S. Please address
 William H. Taylor,
 Custom House,
 New Bedford,
 Massachusetts.

Not many vessels pass between New Bedford and
 Plover, but frequent opportunities occur to send to
 Fall River, which is only about 15 miles from here,
 and any things sent there to the care of the Collector,
 of the Customs, for ~~them~~ to be taken due care of.
 Or if sent to Boston, to the care of Harnden & Co.
 will come safe to hand.

Letter
 Wm H Taylor Esq
 New Bedford
 Mass

Mytilus *capensis*
Pect. Magellanica
Cyprina
Mytilus
Purpura lapidaria
Natica *Henry*
Mor. Plicatula

Urosalpinx *viridis*
Buccinum *lunatum*
Plicatula (Shell)
Paludina, *Canthar*
Enchium (white Corals)
Antenna *Prat*
Factoria - *cauda*
 No 1 *Buccina* *more*
 - 2 white shell *more*
 - 3 *Cardium* *the* *eye*
 - 4 *Cardium* *the*
Mar
more in p. quadratus, oblonga

Wm H Taylor
 Custom House
 New Bedford