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Dr. H. B. Stenzel
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College Station, Texas

My dear Dr. Stenzel:

Who says editors don't like a good trade! My original story was considerably longer, but with the papers all so pressed for space they decided to cut it, as you see. I have already heard many comments on our trip, the most interesting result, however, being from a fellow-countryman of yours, Hewas a sea captain who hopes to outfit an expedition in hunt for a lost civilization. He is at present farming, "to keep in condition", is 44, and a widower, and interesting. Interesting, I mean, quite aside from the fact that he is a widower!

I'm sorry the scissors slipped, or the paper, as I was cutting out a good many at once, as I had promised to mail some, but it does not seem to have eliminated anything that was necessary.

I'm so glad you persuaded me that the geology field trip was the one I should make. I may be able to use a different version of it in another story or article. My sincere appreciation for your kindness to such a novice. I hope I may go again.

Sincerely,

Wilhelmina Beane

Hunters' Trail Leads Back 50,000,000 Years

Party Stalks *Distorsio Septemdentata*, *Turricula Gabbi* and *Harpactocarcinus Americanus*

By WILHELMINA M. BEANE

With a party from the Texas Academy of Science, which met recently at College Station, I went on a rare hunt in the Brazos Valley which led back over a trail 50,000,000 years old.

We were trawling the *distorsio septemdentata* and the *turricula gabbi*, to say nothing of the rare *harpactocarcinus americanus*!

Best American Collection

Previously Dr. Mark Francis of A. & M. College had told us of fossils to be found in this vicinity. His hobby is collecting skeletons of prehistoric animals, of which he has the finest collection in the United States.

Dr. H. B. Stenzel assembled his hunters at Aggeland Inn: Mr. and Mrs. F. B. Plummer and J. M. Barber, geologists of bureau of economic geology, Austin; A. E. Cushing, United States Civil Service, San Antonio; Fritz W. Mueller, Kenedy, and A. J. Sterges, assistant soil chemist of the state experiment station.

At the last minute Herbert C. Graeter, Baylor University botanist, joined us. After we had started a fiugre dashed madly by, grabbed hold of the preceding car, and was pulled aboard. He was Dr. Luther Jones, acting head of the agronomy department at A. & M.

We descended an easy path to the Little Brazos, whose banks gave undisputable proof of the tertiary period. The tertiary formation carries sea shells, and is a deposit of the Gulf of Mexico of fifty million years ago.

Sea Shells of Period

The *distorsio septemdentata* and the *turricula gabbi* are sea shells of that period, many of which we dug out of the shale and clay. Many of these shells, according to Dr. Stenzel, have made great migrations. The first mentioned is now extinct, but has two descendants, one in West Indies tropics, and the other in the tropics of the Pacific, which proves that the Atlantic and Pacific oceans used to be connected across Panama.

The real prizes for which we searched were concretions, rock-like substances which we picked and pried out of shale, and occasionally holding in its heart the petrified *harpactocarcinus americanus*, or, in plain English, a 50,000,000-year-old crab. Generally the concretions contained only a conglomerate assortment of sea-shells or pebbles.

We clambered down the steep red banks, the swift-eddying red water at our feet. There we found a geology group from the University of Texas, headed by Dr. F. L. Whitney and Dr. Robert H. Cuyler.

Pearly Nautilus

Dr. Cuyler had just unearthed, shoulder-high, a pearly nautilus, which are now found in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, and somewhere around the Philippines, but which had lived here approximately 50,000,000 years ago. This species, *aturia*, is not officially known to science, but Dr. Stenzel has been

usual smile returned, he snapped his fingers, and exclaimed "I've got it!"

He immediately led the way to Dr. Whitney, who, he knew, was anxious to have one of the rare crabs. With a twinkle in his eye he apologized for not have told him where the crabs might be found.

"We got ours on the Little Brazos, but of course we have literally combed the ground for specimens for A. & M. It will probably be almost impossible to find others. But if you really want one I will swap you a perfect one for that *aturia*!"

The bargain was made, each man elated.