

611 Prince Henry Ave.  
Hopewell, Virginia  
Nov. 2, 1942

Dr. H. B. Stenzel  
Bureau of Economic Geology  
University of Texas

Dear Dr. Stenzel,

I just received a letter from Jack Mc Lellan saying that you were interested in the Eocene fossils from this vicinity. Under separate cover I'm sending a few samples that are representative, but rather poor in amount. I hope they will be sufficient for identification.

Ostrea compressirostra, from the James River at the mouth of Bailey's Creek (about two miles down the river from Hopewell). This locality is surely the exposure (James R., I) described in Va. Geol. Surv. Bull. no. 4 to which you undoubtedly have access. Pleistocene, Miocene (Cabert) and Eocene are well exposed. The pink, compact Marlboro clay is well displayed. The Eocene shells in the bank are extremely rotten and specimens are very difficult to secure. Jack and I tentatively identified *Turritella mortoni*, *Transtelites abeiformis* and some other species of *Turritella*. In enclosing

a sample of what we thought is *T. martoni* (in a pill box). There were quite a few *O. compressirostra* lying on the beach but none were found in the bank. Va. Bull. no. 4 states that the Aquia disappears beneath the water a few miles below this point. We have never found *O. compressirostra* below this point. The sample I'm sending is rather poor but is the only one I have at hand. The largest I have seen from this locality is 15 x 15 cm. The iron-stained layer in the bank and the gypsum crystals below (sample) are a pretty good explanation of why the shells are rotten.

*Ostrea sellaeformis*, from the James River, right bank, about six miles below Hopewell on Tar Bay at the mouth of Chappell Creek. Some of these were found in the bank in situ but most of them were on the beach. No articulated specimens were seen. The exposure is not very good, being obscured by vegetation, landslides and confused by an apparent Miocene formation above. This locality is probably the James River Section II of Va. Bull. no. 4.

The sharks' teeth were found on the shore of Tar Bay within a mile or so each side of the *O. bellaeformis* site. As far as I can tell from the location some of them may be Miocene (Calvert) but sharks' teeth are much more infrequent here where the Eocene is absent. The largest I have seen (*Carcharodon* sp.) is about 6 inches long. Small teeth 1 inch or so long are very common. The belemnite casts are from the same locality as the teeth.

I'm afraid these are a pretty sorry lot, but the Eocene specimens here are much poorer than the Miocene. You are welcome to them and if you are especially interested in any I'll be on the look-out for better specimens. Gasoline and tire shortages have put a crimp in my explorations but I'm an incorrigible prospector and I'll get there some way.

I would appreciate having your identification of the sharks' teeth, ray tooth fragment, belemnite casts & *Turritella* if you have the time. They are numbered for reference.

Yours,

William J. Congdon