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Columbia University  
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Dr. H. B. Stenzel  
Box B, University Station  
Austin, Texas

Dear Doc,

You probably think that I've been swallowed alive by the Big City, what with my lack of correspondence. I could apologize and say that I've been busy studying with no time to write, but I'm afraid you know me too well and wouldn't believe that.

Things were just as you and Mrs. Plummer predicted on the job I had. In fact within 30 minutes after arriving I discovered that you were 100% correct in everything. Consequently, luck was with me when I managed a switch to do library research work for Dr. Newell on the upper Paleozoic pelecypod section of the Paleo Treatise. Although a little tedious, this work has given me a wonderful opportunity to learn the literature, and I even absorbed quite a bit in spite of myself. Dr. Newell is a pleasant fellow to work for, and since he was interested in the work we had a good many interesting conversations.

I have tried to spread my courses out the first year taking paleo under Newell, structure under Bucher, sedimentation under Kay, invertebrate zoology, taxonomy under Mayr, and genetics under Dobshansky. Your eyebrows probably went up on the last two. Unfortunately for my grades, I fell under the spell of Neo-Darwinism last semester (completely new ideas to me) and spent so much time reading everything along that line I could find that my regular courses ran a poor second in attention. Maybe I'll drift into paleo yet!

Dr. Kay had explained that my chances for a scholarship last year had been diminished by being single and on GI training. When I heard that the Board of Trustees had eliminated most grants-in-aid for next year, I figured I was left out again. However they surprised me with the Britton Scholarship for next year (pays \$600 which with GI and what I will save this summer will be enough). So I guess your letter or recommendation is still working.

Dr. Newell returned from the GSA convention enthused over a West Texas problem for me, apparently sparked by Mr. DeFord. He told me that you had talked to him about my interest in Tertiary and Cretaceous and felt that I should stick to a chosen field, with which I certainly concur. Mr. DeFord had seemed certain of Bureau financial aid for a West

Texas problem, but Dr. Lonsdale mentioned the Bureau policy of not aiding a student on both his masters and Phd theses, and said I had already received help. He must have a better memory than I do, for I can't recall any help financially nor even a request for it on my part. In view of this cool attitude toward even a West Texas (but non-igneous) problem, and keeping in mind the possibility that Dr. Lonsdale may have been either misquoted or misunderstood (since I received the information second-hand), I figured the chances were nil in obtaining help on any other problem. Consequently any new problem I undertake will be both expensive and will take several years to complete.

On the other hand, the Pilot Knob area offers possibilities that haven't been touched as yet, particularly in the microstudy of sedimentary patterns and structures and the paleoecology on such an isolated tuffaceous mound in a chalk sea. The more I think about it, the more I am convinced that this area is readymade for a thorough and detailed study of this nature. Since this is right down the alley of combined stratigraphic, sedimentary and paleontologic aspects and the type problem which will become more important in the future, I think it to my advantage to attempt it. I have just now spent sufficient time in the area to become familiar enough with it to make future field work really pay off, I am extremely interested in the above aspects of it and hope to do the work whether for a dissertation problem or not, I can handle the field work without financial assistance, and I think I can do a bangup job on it and still finish it several years sooner than if I tried to do a thorough job of any new problem I might take up now (more and more I realize the necessity of getting a PhD as quickly as possible and then doing extensive research later). If I can get a position in Austin year after next (and I still have my fingers crossed) I will be working on a problem which is near at hand.

What do you think of the above? You may be buttonholed about it at Chicago. I hope you will back me up especially after having seen the area. As far as the approval of the Department here, they are particularly interested in a student bringing his own problem with him. As might be expected, Bucher is enthused over the mudflows, tuffaceous crossbedding, etc. and their paleogeographic interpretations. Newell is interested in the paleoecologic aspects, so I will have backing here at Columbia (which will probably extend to departmental help in financing the thin-sections). Right now I'm straining at the bit to get back to Austin and see if I can't find silicified fossils in the chalk adjacent to the serpentine.

You are probably snowed under this week getting ready for the convention, Presidential Address, etc. I had hoped to make it but guess I'll have to read your speech later. By the way, it was interesting to note that S. W. Lowman

completely overlooked the marine disconformities in his version of the Gulf Coast Tertiary sedimentation cycle.

One trouble (among many) about New York is the difficulty of getting out in the country. Consequently I've made only one field trip (down to Vicentown). Before returning to Texas I have three days earmarked for a visit to Miocene localities in Maryland. Glenn Collins is working in micro-paleo at Johns Hopkins so she is assembling the information on all the important localities. So don't be surprised if a couple of nail kegs of fossils arrive at the Bureau about June 1st. Any suggestions on the trip?

You were always bemoaning the lack of reference books at Austin. Since I am doing reference work at the fairly complete American Museum library I may can help you out with any current problems. I will have several days after exams toward the end of May so if you want anything looked up and extracted I'll be glad to do so.

Tell everyone at the Bureau hello for me. My best wishes to Mrs. Stenzel and the girls. And be sure and have a good time at Chicago.

Your overworked? assistant,



Clarence O. Durham, Jr.

P.S. - Kuenan of Holland spoke here yesterday on turbidity currents and their relation to submarine canyons and graded beds. He is an excellent speaker and gave a very provocative talk accompanied by films and slides of his turbidity current experiments.