

July 6, 1948

Dr. H. A. Lowenstam
Department of Geology
The University of Chicago
Chicago 37, Illinois

Dear Dr. Lowenstam:

Thank you for your letter of June 24. I have been rather anxious to hear from you about these plans because Dr. Weller was rather indefinite concerning the type of work and the time that it would encompass. I notice from your letter that you have made rather ambitious plans for this work. I am still very much in doubt whether you will find unaltered fossil materials in the Cretaceous strata. Most of these Cretaceous forms are casts as you know, except for the oyster, which are probably not altered. Formations which can be traced for considerable distances and from which contemporaneous assemblages from quite contrasting biotopes can be collected are the Weno and the Eagle Ford. The Eagle Ford in particular can be traced and recognized in New Mexico, Texas, and Mexico, even in other Rocky Mountain areas. I suggest that you read up on these two formations in particular. The best reference is Adkins in University of Texas Bulletin 3232.

If you really want extensive contemporaneous assemblages with unaltered fossils, the most promising horizon is in the Miocene. It is the Yorktown-Gatun formations and their equivalents. These can be recognized from Virginia to the Canal Zone, and many other places, are very rich in fossils, represent various different climatic zones from fairly cool water to tropical, and are exceedingly rich in excellently preserved fossils. It is my opinion that this level would probably give you the best results.

As to my going with you on such an extended trip, I am afraid it will not be possible. I am going to teach a Tertiary field course in Texas in the second semester that is beginning July 19 and shall be busy with it until the end of August. It will be possible for me to be with you for a few days only I am afraid.

With best regards,

Sincerely yours,

H. B. Stensel
Geologist

HBS/gfs