

November 9, 1934

M.A.

Mr. Macks Stempel,
Macedonia, Iowa.

Dear Mr. Stempel:

While I was looking through the copy of Coue's Key this afternoon checking on the identification of one of the birds I came across some paper or rather notes of your Father's. I took these out to ask you if I might look through them to learn if they contained any information about Iowa specimens that your Father had secured. I inadvertently picked these up with my papers and didn't discover them until I was writing up my notes this evening. I am enclosing these papers with my apology.

I had no opportunity to tell you how much I appreciated the chance to see this collection of birds. I had had heard of these birds for some time but had never had the chance before to visit your town.

Mr. Johann and I made the complete identification of all birds in 9 of the 13 cases. I suggested to Mr. Johann that he discuss with you the possibility of having a directory card drawn for each case, the card to be about 4 X 6 inches and on it would be shown the general shape and outline of the bird, in its exact position in the case. This could then be numbered and the names of the birds could then be listed below the directory card by numbers. These directory cards would be attached in the corner of each case or on the wooden frame of the case. Then when a person looked at the collection they could locate the number by reference to the outline on the card and look below to the list. This is the method used in the American Museum of Natural History in New York City where I worked for five years.

If you are interested sometime when I am in Council Bluffs again it might be possible to identify the birds in the other 4 cases.

I am especially interested in several birds as they might serve as Iowa records. I spoke especially of that McCowan's Longspur, the bird with the white blocked in the tail, and the chestnut on the wing. ^{bottom} There are three of those at the bottom of one of the ~~top~~ cases. Do you have any idea as the

year or approximate year when those were collected ? Do you think they were collected in Iowa at Macedonia ? Other birds that I am interested in knowing whether they were taken at Macedonia are as follows:

Prairie Falcon, that grayer or Montana Horned Owl, the two pale Nighthawks, you told me about the Ruffed Grouse being killed there but I can't remember the date, the Whip-poor-will, the Henslow's Sparrow, and the Nelson's Sparrow, the latter are in the upper case at the extreme north end, and the 4 Crossbills. Do you recall what years the Woodcock was seen?

I would like if you are willing that I should publish a note sometime in a bird journal, giving a list of these rarer birds as Iowa records, if you are sure that they all are, and the approximate dates when they were taken.

I believe your Father's name was Dr. Geo. L. Stempel. You said he secured most of his birds from 1884 to 1904 did you not ? But mostly 1884 to 1886. What was the date of his death.

If there is established a collection of birds in Iowa for the absolute preservation of Iowa record specimens then you should consider giving one of the McCowan's Longspurs as an Iowa record specimen. So far no such collection has been established, although I tried to interest the University of Iowa in it.

I believe that by working with Mr. Johann in constructing identification charts and lists that you not alone will increase of the collection tremendously but will make this collection a wonderful teaching factor in your community.

Any information that you are able to send me together with your permission to publish a short note concerning the collection will be greatly appreciated.

Very truly yours,

Philip A. DuMont.