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Seigniory de Mont Louis,
Gaspé Co., Quebec
August 13, 1923

Dear Deane:

It is raining in torrents, the
pizzas are all changed and behind the big
kitchen range, the collection of 75 to 100
species of mushrooms made yesterday
in a walk of 30 miles! out from
Montagne de la Table is organized on
tables and ironing boards around the
kitchen & dining room fires, and I at
last have a clear time in which to
write you something of our expedition.

You already know the makeup of
the original party. Besides "The Chief"
they are, as they get recorded on the
collecting sheets, C & G M P S, i.e.,
J. F. Collins, C. W. Dodge, Ludlow Griscom
who proved to be the most charming fellow
imaginable, son and heir of a 5th Ave.
family of old New York stock, delightfully
companionable and a man of very unusual
culture and poise, K. H. Mackenzie,

A.S. Pease and Lyman Smith, an 18 year old student at Harvard, as nice a boy as ever was, healthy, enthusiastic and the "baby" of the party.

Just as we left Cambridge a letter came from the head guide, Joe Fortin, stating that, owing to prolonged drought and serious forest fires the warden throughout the province had been forbidden to issue permits to enter upon the wild lands & that such a permit might be obtained only through the good will of the government at Quebec. Accordingly we were forced to wait over at Quebec. I first visited the Commissioner of Colonization & after waiting for a conference was referred to the Prime Minister. He in turn referred me to the Minister of Agriculture, who passed me on to the Minister of Forests and Crown Lands. His office had closed for the day & we returned to the hotel to wait until next day. - Pease suggested that it would simplify things if the Prime Minister should call a cabinet meeting, but that was unnecessary for next morning

The Minister of Forests promptly gave me the permit, which has since been used on three rivers - on two of which we were the first party to go inland this year.

The first trip into the mountains was by lumber road about 30 miles up Rivière Cap Chat to get at the Mt. Logan region which Pease & I had discovered last year. It soon became apparent that the big mountain which we had identified as Logan was by no means the highest, but that our Mt "Pease" of last year was much higher & in altitude agreed with the original measurement of Logan. Beyond that was another great mass which the local guides tell us is Mt. Pembroke and east of that another which we have not reached, Convent du Chaudron, which they maintain is the biggest of all. Our guides, Joe Fortin, Israel Thibeault and Léon Dugas (pronounced Jew-gar) were splendid fellows and the whole party full of good nature and willingness to do their share. Consequently we

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were able to accomplish a good deal of exploration. The Base Camp was established at about 2000 ft., perhaps five miles from the lumber-road, reached by fording or rafting the river & then by a newly blazed trail. The guides packed the tents, blankets, provisions, paper etc. to that camp, while we satanized from that base; then we all moved up to Haines Pass at 3200 ft. for a more permanent camp and finally the long-leggers, Collins, Gniscom, Pease & Joe moved further on to a base on Mt. Logan, the short-legged corps, Wodge, Smith & I going down to the river to dry out everything already collected & to be ready when the Logan party should return loaded with bundles of specimens laid out in white paper.

During this wait Smith and I made a two-day trip with sleeping bags and collecting boxes fourteen miles to the back side of another big mountain, Eticolabert.

Altogether the Cap Chat trip yielded about 3000 sheets of specimens, including,

of course, the old Shickshock standard: Lycopodium alpinum, Festuca scabrella, Poa cenisia, Carex rupestris, Halleria and miliaris, Juncus castaneus, Topfieldia minima, Streptopus oreopolus, Thalictrum alpinum, Draba nivalis, arctica and fladnizensis, Saxifraga cernua and gaspensis, Potentilla fragiformis, Dryas integrifolia, Rubus arcticus, Pyrola grandiflora, Vaccinium rubiginum, Euphasia Oakesii, Pedicularis flammea, Campanula uniflora, Gnaphalium norvegicum, &c. But we also brought but about 30 novelties: Carex nardina, an arctic species; C. atrisquama of the Canadian Rockies; true C. atrata of Europe; endless willows; Arenaria norvegica of northern Europe; a beautiful Caytonia carpeting the alpine meadows; endless Drabas (there seemed to be a different one in each alpine chimney and crissom accordingly parodied the vulgar song of a generation ago: "Every little chimney has a Draba all its own") a new Prunus (presumably the Rocky Mt. Choke Cherry), Galium Brandegei of Colorado; a strange Sambucus; new Antennarias; Petasites frigida; endless Arnicas and

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several strange *Senecios*, including one,
S. Griscomi (which may prove to be *S.*
frigidus) with solitary heads 1 inch across.
The frequent species with such names
as *arcticus* and *frigidus* or *nivalis*
are a good indication of the climate, for our
camp at Timberline had a morning
temperature ranging from 30 to 42!

The original plan had contemplated
reaching the big Mt. Bayfield which lies
perhaps 20 miles to the southwest of
Logan, but such fine results were coming
out of the Logan region that we quickly
abandoned Bayfield for this year, especially
since the sight of Collins' & my old stamping
ground, Mt. Albert, stimulated in every
one a keen desire to go there. Accordingly
we descended the Cap Chat (finding that,
during our stay up river, rains had
caused a land-slide and had precipitated
a stretch of the logging road into the
river; consequently the wagon had to
be unloaded & everything lugged across
the gap) to go to Mt. Albert. Base,
unfortunately, had to return home from

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Cap Chat, but after moving headquarters
to Ste. Anne des Monts (where the hotel
is so comparatively comfortable, the table
so fine & the hotel family - Pelletier - so
kind that we hated to leave) the rest
of us went again by lumber road, partly
by wagon (for the baggage), partly by
lumber sled beyond the wagon road to
St. Albert, 30 miles up-river. That
was and also was, though I was
glad to collect good duplicates again
of Polystichum scopulinum, Pellaea densa,
Salix chlorolepis, S. brachycarpa & a
half dozen other endemics, Statice
labradorica, Salix chlorolepis etc.

At the end of that brief trip Collins,
Gibson & MacKenzie returned home.
& we gave up our young giant, Léon
Dugas (a boy with arm- and hand-
strength of a giant, picking up a 200
lb. trunk and carrying it over slippery
& rocky banks on one arm!) but
with a singular habit of developing
acute indigestion. Once when he was
doubled up with pain he explained that

it was due to having had cold water instead of hot tea for lunch while helping cut out a trail; but Griscom, who has been an army surgeon, wormed out the fact that his lunch had otherwise consisted of raw salt pork and a half-pound cake of chocolate).

After drying out again we came two weeks ago yesterday 40 miles east of Ste Anne des Monts to Mont Louis for a base — by motor boat. We were drenched and cold when we got here but found our hostess ready with a hot supper and home-made wine. This is a big sort of a house, with tremendous rooms, a library of hundreds of volumes & the comforts of a refined home. It is the house of the Superintendent of the Seigniory, Allan Cameron, who died last winter & now his widow, a French woman, takes boarders. We are thoroughly comfortable here, with many wood fires while it rains outside. Next morning after our arrival we started on the 30 miles over a ~~fine~~ wood road with two lumber sleds for the base of Montague

de la Table (Table Top). ⁹ Joe & Thibeault
were with us and one of the drivers was
a brilliant man, Keen, witty, a dramatic
story teller and lots of fun, a man named
Au Clair and apparently the best hunter
and trapper of the region. It took two
days up the valley of the Mont Louis and
over the 2800 foot divide to reach a
log-cabin on the North Fork of the
Madelaine, thirty miles away where we
made a base. On the way in the
trail was lined almost continuously
by Lonicera involucrata, fruiting
Calypso abounded in the moss and the
common Carex was C. Halleri, while
springy banks were beautiful with Cystopteris
montana. From the North Fork Camp
we packed ten miles to the big basin of
Table Top. That mountain is like
a great plateau 18 miles by 5 full of
lakes and ponds and the source of
many rivers. Around the rim radiate
endless high (4500) mountain ranges
from 5 to 10 miles in length, Dunraven,
Le Comte, Mac Nab, Au Clair, Les Hammelles
+ C

The inner slopes from these ranges to the basin are beautiful park-like meadows with scattered white spruces, the outer slopes precipitous alpine walls full of ravines & hook-valleys. Our camp was by a lake at the foot of the meadow-slope from Dunraven. The ordinary alpine-meadow plants which Collins & I had got 18 years ago were of course abundant: *Juncus castaneus*, *Carex rariflora*, *Poa alpina*, *Gnaphalium intermedia*, *Senecio pauciflorus*, *Sibbaldia* &c, but we were amazed to find in the meadows of this tundra great quantities of *Urtica* (a Rocky Mountain species). We were on Table Top for about 11 days, most of the time in drenching fog or rain, with the wind blowing a hurricane, often with snow and sleet, and two different days our hands were numb and our feet ached with cold. Southern plants there reaching their northern limits were black & dried from freezing: *Osmunda*,

Athyrium angustum, Epigaea, &c, but
 their boreal relatives didn't mind. The
 very handsome Athyrium alpestre, which
 abounded by all alpine brooks, was full
 & vigorous & of course the alpine heaths
 were not harmed. Snow-fields, often
 covering many acres, abounded & from
 them (or at their melting bases) we collected
 blanched shoots of Heuaclean which
 gave us a fresh vegetable quite as good
 as celery! Moose were everywhere
 & I have several portraits of them; caribou
 were in small herds, and we ate
 Canada grouse fried or broiled - quite
 as good as broiled chicken. When it
 was not foggy or rainy or windy (so
 that we couldn't venture safely to
 the crests & alpine walls) the black
 flies made life miserable for Smith
 & Dodge (I have had 50 many years of
 them that now they simply annoy me)
^{but} ~~and~~ altogether we really regretted leaving.
 Every time we did have a chance to
 botanize we made fine discoveries, about

40 things new to Gaspé: more Carices, including the Arctic *C. Macloviana* & several I do not know, more Willows of course, the arctic *Betulichium lanceolatum* (1 plant had been found on Lapon); a strange white violet, a strange *Epilobium*, a small *Comioselinum*, a strange *Companula*, &c.

Finally the time was up and, although we had again only touched one small corner of Tabletop, we were satisfied with the results. So we came down the mountain.

Saturday in pouring rain and fog to the North Fork, where DuClair and his sled awaited us and yesterday, Sunday, we walked out in bright sunshine, 30 miles to Mont Louis. Dodge had been handicapped in taking care of fleshy fungi so we enlivened the otherwise tedious long tramp by collecting mushrooms along the trail, getting 75 to 100 species, which are now drying in the kitchen & dining room. We intended to spend today doing the seachiff of Mt. Louis, Mt St. Pierre (4 miles to the west, 1800 ft. high) and the

sandy lake at Anse à Pleurence to the east, but the day is very rainy and our knee-joints feel rusty so that we are taking a day off. On Wednesday we return by steamer to Ste. Anne des Monts, whence, after getting the presses in order, we shall return to the Logan region for the later plants, coming out in time to reach home by September 1.

It is now time to change papers in the presses and as I shall probably get no other chance to write, I shall be glad if you will kindly let this letter go the rounds - W. Robinson, Rand, Williams, Ware, Kidder & any other friends whom you think interested.

I hope the summer is going happily with you. The last letter indicates that Margaret & the children were well and enjoying Harwichport -

(over) Very sincerely yours,
Merrill L. Fernald

Address:

In care of M. Joseph Fortin,
Ste. Anne des Monts,
Co. Gaspé, Quebec.

Robinson mail to E. L. Rand
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Fernald, Merritt Lyndon. 1923. "Fernald, Merritt Lyndon Aug. 13, 1923." *Walter Deane correspondence* –.

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