

JOHN WILLIAMSON & Co.

63 & 65 West Market Street,

BRASS FOUNDERS,

Manufacturers of Railway and Street Car Trimmings,

METAL SPINNERS, PLATERS, &C.

Louisville, Ky. April 12 1878

H
Dear Mr Davenport,

I have time to write you a few lines, your card was received. The difference between my etch plates & those lithographed is this, my style of printing & etching is as old as Rembrandt. The lithographic process is something new to me, but very simple,

A transfer is made direct from my metal plate (and not from a print as some suppose.) The ^{transfer} paper that is used for this purpose is composed of a number of ingredients with a large percentage of starch. This transfer after being removed from my plate has just the appearance of one of my regular etchings. The transfer ink is composed largely of a greasy nature. This transfer is then placed on the lithographic stone. This stone has a great affinity for grease. The greasy ink already referred to takes a firm hold to the stone. The paper and starch is dissolved with water leaving the ink sticking fast to the stone. The stone is next washed in a weak solution of acid that cleans the stone perfectly but does not harm the ink.

In this process ~~than~~ the impression is printed from a raised line. in my etching it is printed from a sunk line

For all practical purposes, at least for my work
the one is just as good as ^{the} other, every line I give is
reproduced, but it may not be so bold, &c.
Of course this would not be tolerated in high art
although some books have been illustrated this way.
Mrs Eliza Greville, Etching in colorado, is printed
by the lithographic process.

It is expensive to print direct from the plate
but I may tell you that there is no comparison as
regards the real value of the work, an art critic
would scarcely thank you for a transfer, when he usually
values the genuine etching. It will be a pleasure to me
to present to you a complete set, just as soon as I
get over my work. I will make up probably 1/2 of
set for my friends. I may send one to Prof. Gray, Prof.
Eaton, two friends here that are helping me, and from
I am sorry to inform you that by some mechanical
difficulty I will require to place the plates in the back
of my book. I will have Trichomanes, as frontispiece
Structure & fertilization plates, with the text, but the
rest are doomed to go to the rear. The descriptions
of course are ^{as} not uniform in length as "Her Majesty's & San. deers"
that is I say a great deal more about Polytrichum
americanum than I do about P. bulgarum, &c.

The printer said he could not set them in right, sometimes
two backs would come together, &c. You see I will
have to ^{make} ~~make~~ I think they ought to set round it
some way. However I will have every thing named & marked well

I will have the Plate numbered, and named with both Scientific & common name. The descriptions will also be numbered ~~with~~ correspondingly,

I enclose you the *Botrychium virginicum*.

Should this be *B. virginianum*?

Mr Dravenport - What value do you attach to Mr. D. A. Pratt's Criticism on Mr John Robinson's Check List in ^{Naturalist} American, Vol IX Page 417.

I am reading up your notes on *Botrychium* -

This etching I may say is printed rather surreally. The paper was a little too damp.

The letter is longer than I expected
I hope you will understand me.

Yours &c.
John Williamson



Williamson, John. 1878. "Williamson, John Apr 12, 1878." *George Edward Davenport correspondence*

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