

980 Grant Ave  
Rockford Ills  
Decr 16<sup>th</sup> 1944

My dear Dr Robinson:—

I can not tell you with  
how much pride and pleasure I  
read your last letter. I may confess  
that I have thought myself that I  
might someday be invited to do the  
Willows for the Synoptical Flora.

But as time wore on, as the date of  
probable publication of vol 3 seemed  
further and further removed into the  
doubtful future and as my own  
health grew to be more and more  
precarious I had given up all  
hope that I would ever be called  
upon to perform the grateful task.  
The other affair was sprung upon  
me as a surprise and it was  
only through the intermediation of  
my friend Dr Coulter that I finally



consented.

I fully appreciate the conditions which render it imperative that in such a work as the new Flora where there are to be so many contributors there must be a certain amount of concession made in order to secure uniformity of treatment. But the Willows can never be mustered in such beautiful precision as Prof Underwood's Hepaticas. One species may require only a dozen lines where the next could not be adequately treated short of half a page. In fact the Synoptical arrangement suits their case admirably. If you can not get all your stray cattle corralled and properly branded you do get them inside of definite bounds where not much range need be gone over in "rounding them up"!

So I think this. Even while I am prosecuting the work for the



Systematic Botany of A. A. I will  
have in mind as a background  
the preparation of a monograph  
for the Synoptical Flora which I  
will consider "the final form of  
my researches" — to quote your words.  
I have the most emphatic assurance  
from Dr. Coulter that so long as he  
remains on the board of editors no  
such high handed proceedings as  
I have received intimations of will  
be permitted.

Of course it will be pleasant  
every way — with all the delightful  
associations with Cambridge which  
have followed me throughout my  
humble career as a botanist to  
write freely with no thought that  
I will receive any editing beyond  
what I can be truly thankful  
for. I ought to feel very kindly



toward the entire fraternity of  
Potomacs who have not only left  
me in peaceful and undisturbed  
possession of my little paddock -  
but have done more - helped me  
at every turn. There is no chance  
for a squabble over the genus *Salix*  
and the claims on the score of priority  
as the names of species fall entirely  
inside of the estimate we all have  
of the matter. so when I go inside  
and close the gate - so to speak, I can  
look out over the fence and not be  
much disturbed by the extravagant  
performances of some people outside.

But it is fun to get a letter from  
Rand once in a while. He does so hate  
the Columbia set and goes for them with  
such refreshing vim.

With the best wishes of the  
season I am Sir

very sincerely yours  
W. L. Galt





Bebb, M. S. 1894. "Bebb, Michael S. Dec. 16, 1894 [to B. L. Robinson]." *Michael Schuck Bebb letters to Asa Gray*

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