

La Libertad,  
Comayagua, Honduras.

June 23, 1933.

Dear Mr. Amés:

Your letter of June First received this morning. To say that I am very much surprised by the contents is putting it very mildly. You give me quotations from a letter you say you wrote me April 9th.-I have never received that letter-in which you say that you advise me that I am to collect on a per specimen basis; yet in your letter, just two days later, April 11th. you advise me to accept the proposition of collecting on the same basis of pay as that of last year with the additional \$500.00-which you even suggest that it (the \$500.00) be divided between myself and my assistant- saying that you were having \$500.00 sent to me at once-I received it- and that another check for around \$1,000.00 would be sent me July First. I replied to this that I would ~~except~~ collect for you during the next twelve months under the terms as that of last year; with the \$500.00 increase. Now you come along with another letter saying that you can not pay the \$3,600.00 for this year. This after I have refused to collect for other institutions and private parties because I considered that I had signed a contract with you which was binding to both parties and I had agreed to devote all my time to collecting specimens for the Arboretum and The Museum of Comapaative Zoology. I would not collect and prepare specimens, as I have been collecting and preparing them for you and sell them at the prices you tell me that you are prepared to pay. You make no provision for the cost of postage-A considerable item-nor for the specimens prepared in liquid. The cost of alcohol alone will average One Dollar for each shipment. Nor do you have anything to say about the return of funds I may have to expend for materials which I am compelled to buy locally.

I know that you have had collectors in many parts of the world but I do not believe that you have ever collected in any country where conditions are just like those of Interior Honduras. When you were in this country you had all the facilities of the United Fruit Company at your command, you were in the coast country, where I am sure there are more Orchids to be found than in the mountains. You know nothing of the difficulties of mountain travel, obtaining mules, or of getting food that a white man can eat. Many times I have had to eat beans, and corn cakes and wash them down with black coffee, three times a day-Not for just one day but for a week at a time- nor do you know what it is to go out day after day and get soaking wet in these tropical rains. Up to the time I started collecting for you there were less than 100 species of Orchids known from Honduras. How could you or any other man know that there were 100 or 1,000 different species to be found in the country. You nearly took a gamble that the country had many new species-I have found many-but now that they are not coming in as fast or plentiful as you had hoped you want to call the deal off. I have tried to avoid sending duplicates, in large numbers, always searching for something new. With the exception of a few weeks of sickness and others of revolution I have devoted every hour of my time to the work.

When I wrote you that I wanted to go to San Pedro Sula and work back to the south you said "No." I changed my route and it is true that the results have not been as favorable as I had hoped. But maybe had I been allowed to go to parts of the country from which I had had favorable reports the results may have been better. During the past year it has been my custom to talk with persons who were, more or less familiar with the flora of the different localities and have mapped my routes accordingly. Do you think that, were I collecting on the per specimen basis, I would allow the purchaser of my specimens to dictate as to the territory I worked. I most surely would go where I thought the most specimens



could be found and that is just what I have been trying to do for the last year. All districts worked by me during the past year have been thoroughly collected.

I am willing to continue collecting for Harvard at the agreed rate of \$3,600.00 for this year but not at the per specimen rate you give me in this letter. Because I do not wish to dely in making contracts with other institutions and private parties, should you not care to carry out the agreement entered inot by you in your letter of April 11th, 1933 and by me in my letter of May 13th, 1933, I should like for you to so advise me. So, if you desire me to continue collecting on the terms of \$3,600.00 for the year and are sending me a check July First, as per your letter of April 11th, as soon as you have received this letter please send me a Radiogram, to Comayagua, saying, "YES". if you do not agree to these conditions say: "NO".

It may interest you to know that I refused to sell to parties in New York, ~~for~~ an order for live Orchid plants to the amount of several hundred dollars-Parties who have permits from the Dept. of Agriculture to import live pplants-because I knew that this would be a violation of our contract.

I am unable to say why the specimen's shipped April 17th. have not been received by you. I shall continue to collect until I have heard more from you. I have another shipment just about ready.

Yours truly,

*J.B. Edwards*  
J.B. Edwards,

Comayagua, Honduras.





Edwards, James B. 1933. "Edwards, James B. June 23, 1933 [to O. Ames]."  
*Oakes Ames Orchid Herbarium correspondence files*

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