

980 Grand Ave
Rockford Ills
Jan 8th 1944

My dear Mr Deane:—

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My recollection of the matter is that I first wrote to you - at the suggestion of our friend Colette - asking you to make a tracing of a willow for me - and ~~that~~ you responded so graciously that I have kept you at that sort of thing ever since - Why - under the circumstances should not I be a good-natured correspondent?

I ought to have deciphered "R. H. No" but for an honest fault I couldn't I should have missed the form of your appreciation of the situation if I had done so -

I thoroughly enjoyed your long letter - full of little touches

of home life - and of the way things
go at the barium - All sentiment
- at any rate all germs of sentiment
in taking some little flower from
its native haunts and "putting it to
rest on a white sheet of barium
paper" I lost years and years ago
when this country was first settled -
- How beautiful the rolling prairies
were before man's meddling!
You never saw an old fashioned
Prairie "breaking plow" - It was
drawn by ten huge oxen and cut
a furrow 30 inches across - the sod
was cut only about two inches thick
and was laid over as smooth and
even as the boards of a floor -
On the "land side" stood in all the
purity and freshness of its pristine
beauty the native vegetation - on the
other was a black field with not
a vestige of living plant to be

in years -

I don't know whether I have
two or not. but receipts of grain
are so light on the Rock Island R.R.
that Rob will let Arthur off during
the first two months that wife and
I are gone and he is coming out
to stay with Mattie and Frank and
the three will keep the home open -
March 20 Walters finishes your
Medical School and then he
will take Arts place - This is so
much pleasanter to think of in
leaving home - than to be obliged
to close the home and "farm out"
the youngsters -

The "sick ones" are all well
again - We are quietly getting things
ready for the trip South - I can
stand a few extra days of cold
weather better than I can the excite-
ments of travelling Sincerely
Wm L Webb

seen - Such an outfit - and there
were thousands of them at work
all over the country - would destroy
in one hour more beautiful plants
than have been collected by all the
botanists of the state since the
Indians were driven out - A few
choice things were left on stony knolls
where the stones would dull the sharp
edge of the breaking plow - or in
spots too irregular in shape to
pay for cultivation but even there
some way a few years later the
blue grass and cow pasturage -
Tropaeum which grew out in the
open and upon the richest and
sunniest slopes was about the
first choice thing - botanically
considered - to be utterly exterminated
I have not seen a plant of it growing



Bebb, M. S. 1895. "Bebb, Michael Schuck Jan. 8, 1895." *Michael Schuck Bebb letters to Walter Deane*

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