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**Title:** Letters from Spencer Baird to George Lawrence (Apr. - Jun. 1871)

**Date:** April - June 1871

**Location:** MC 2000.11, B1, F10

### Contact:

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2396<sup>4</sup>

Ad. v. r.

Washington, D.C. April 14, 1871.



My dear Lawrence.

Yours of the 11<sup>th</sup> is at hand, & I hasten to answer it. I am on the look out for a box from Sclater & Salvin, & shall return you your share of the contents as soon as received. I am much obliged to you for your memorandum in regard to the price of the ferns; I shall probably have occasion to order some. The pamphlets asked for will be sent in a few days, as soon as I can get our clerk to attend to them.

Ridgway is now at work at the Flycatcher, & is making his usual smashing up of species. He finds that in nearly all the genera there are from two to six varieties of typical forms, all belonging to different geographical regions, & all varying from the type in the same manner. Thus, the specimens that in northern Mexico are olivaceous or more or less rusty, as you proceed south become darker & darker, especially on the



head, the rusty disappearing & the general appearance  
changing, & withal so closely related that a series  
can be made out - that shall connect the whole  
with the utmost precision. I told Ridgway  
that as soon as he gets through his examina-  
-tion here he had better take his specimens &  
manuscript - on to New York & examine your  
collection with the view of ascertaining how far  
his conclusions are correct, & how far it is possible  
to extend them over species not at present in  
our collection. I think you would be pleased  
to have him do so, as the principal result  
will be to smash up a great many of the  
so called species of Selater & Salvin, & to be sure  
a good many of your own will suffer in  
the same way, but that is a matter of no con-  
-sequence. I have been hit pretty hard in  
regard to some of my names, as Tyrannus  
Couchi etc., but I stand it wonderfully well.



You have by this time seen Mr Boardman.  
He & Dr Brewer left us last Tuesday for the  
north. We have had miserably uncomfortable  
- like weather here; owing to the great heat; but  
it has become much pleasanter for a few  
days past.

Very truly Yours.

Amos W Board

Geo. W. Lawrence Esq.

172 Pearl Street,

New York.

Washington, D.C. April 14, 1871.

My Dear Lawrence,

Yours of the 11th is at hand, & I hasten to answer it. I am on the look out for a box from Sclater & Salvin, & shall return you our share of the contents as soon as received.

I am much obliged to you for your memorandum in regard to the price of the ferules; I shall probably have occasion to order some. The pamphlets asked for will be sent in a few days, as soon as I can get our clerk to attend to them.

Ridgeway is now at work at the fly-catchers & is making his usual smashing up of species. He finds that in nearly all the genera here are from two to six varieties of typical forms, all belonging to different geographical regions, & all varying from the type in the same manner. Thus, the specimens that in northern Mexico are olivaceous or more or less rusty, as you proceed south become darker & darker, especially on the

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head, the rusty disappearing & the general appearance changing, & withal so closely related that series can be made out that shall connect the whole with the utmost precision. I told Ridgeway that as soon as he gets through his examination here he had better take his specimens & manuscript on to New York & examine your collection with the view of ascertaining how far his conclusions are correct, & how far it is possible to extend them over species not at present in our collection. I think you would be pleased to have him do so, as the principal result will be to smash up a great many of the so called species of Sclater & Salvin; & to be sure a good many of your own will suffer in the same way, but that is a matter of no consequence. I have been hit pretty hard in regard to some of my names, as Tyrannus Couchi etc., but I stand it wonderfully well.

[Page Break]

You have by this time seen Mr Boardman, He & Dr Brewer left us last Tuesday for the north. We have had miserably uncomfortable weather here; owing to the great heat; but it has become much pleasanter for a few days past.

Very truly yours,  
Spencer F Baird

Geo. N. Lawrence Esq.  
172 Pearl Street,  
New York.



24066

Ans) 28<sup>th</sup>

Washington, D.C. April 26, 1876.



Dear Lawrence.

On my return from Carlisle I found your letter of the 21<sup>st</sup>. Please let me know whether you can find any boarding place at a reasonable price, any where in your neighborhood, for Bridgeway. As his visit will be at my expense entirely, I of course do not particularly care to pay four or five dollars a day for him, if it can be well avoided. He will probably be ready to go on in the course of a week or two, & will take with him quite a number of his typical specimens, in order the more readily to compare them with yours.

He is a very quiet, unassuming, modest fellow, & I am sure you will be very much pleased with him.

Very truly Yours.

Spencer V. Baird

Geo. N. Lawrence

172, Pearl Street,  
New York.

Washington, D.C. April 26, 1871.

Dear Lawrence,

On my return from Carlisle I found your letter of the 21st. Please let me know whether you can find any boarding place at a reasonable price, any where in your neighborhood, for Ridgeway. As his visit will be at my expense entirely, I of course do not particularly care to pay four or five dollars a day for him, if it can be well avoided. He will probably be ready to go on in the course of a week or two, & will take with him quite a number of his typical specimens, in order the more readily to compare them with yours.

He is a very quiet, unassuming, modest fellow, & I am sure you will be very much pleased with him.

Very truly yours,  
Spencer F Baird

Geo. N. Lawrence  
172, Pearl Street,  
New York.



24133

Washington, D.C. April 29, 1871.



My dear Lawrence.

I have your letter of the 28<sup>th</sup>, & have arranged with Ridgway to go on to New York about Wednesday next.

He will take with him such specimens as he needs, to compare with your collection, & will probably have occasion to examine more particularly the fly-catchers, although he will be glad to look over your collection generally. Please give him all the help you can, & thereby secure a smattering of a good lot of your species!

Mrs Baird received the receipt for bean soup, & is much obliged; she will try it as soon as she can get the right kind of beans. She is glad to learn that the salad dressing proved acceptable.

Very truly yours.

Spencer W Baird.

Geo. N. Lawrence,  
172 Pearl Street,  
N. Y.



Washington, D.C. April 29, 1871.

My Dear Lawrence,

I have your letter of the 28th, & have arranged with Ridgeway to go on to New York about Wednesday night.

He will take with him such specimens as he needs, to compare with your collections, & will probably have occasion to examine more particularly the fly-catchers, although he will be glad to look over your Collection generally. Please give him all the help you can, & thereby secure a smashing of a good lot of your species!

Ms Baird received the receipt for bean soup, & is much obliged; she will try it as soon as she can get the right kind of beans. She is glad to learn that the salad dressing proved acceptable.

Very truly yours,  
Spencer F Baird.

Geo. N. Lawrence  
172 Pearl Street,  
N.Y.



24213  
My Dear Lawrence.  
Washington, D.C. May 13, 1877



The package of Stearins came safely to hand, with your enclosures; & we are indebted to you for the pamphlets forwarded to complete the Smithsonian set.

Ridgway informs me that he called at the office at the appointed hour & waited a considerable time, & on being told that there was no certainty of your being there, took his departure, as he had some other engagement that he wished to attend to. He will probably write you himself, explaining the circumstances.

I have told him to pick out such of the birds in your list as could be spared, so that he might in that way do something for your great kindness to him while in New York.

We have just received from Salvin his box of Veragua birds, several hundred specimens, embracing several interesting things, although I do not know that there is any thing entirely new to us; & Schlotter & others, by the same opportunity, several boxes of birds,



sent him by us, & also one of yours, which  
will be forwarded to you before long.

Will you be so kind as to order in ad-  
-dition to the other articles for which I have  
written 3 gross best-velvet-corks,  $\frac{3}{8}$  an inch in  
diameter at the lower end; 3 gross,  $\frac{1}{2}$  an inch in  
diameter & 3 gross,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch in diameter; Also 3  
gross of large Corks  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch in diameter, &  
3 gross  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches, all these measurements being  
at the lower end. These are partly for  
Capt. Hall, & partly for Mr. Dall, the latter  
of whom, as perhaps you know, is about  
to return to Alaska where he expects to  
spend several years in the high north.

Very truly yours.

Geo. N. Lawrence.

172, Pearl Street,

New York.

Steven W. Board



Washington, D.C. May 13, 1871.

My Dear Lawrence,

The package of Stearine came safely to hand, with your enclosure; & we are indebted to you for the pamphlets forwarded to complete the Smithsonian set.

Ridgeway informs me that he called at the office at the appointed hour & waited a considerable time, & on being told that there was no certainty of your being there, took his departure; as he had some other engagement that he wished to attend to. He will probably write you himself, explaining the circumstances.

I have just received from Salvin his box of Veragua birds, several hundred specimens, & embracing several interesting things, although I do not know that there is any thing entirely new to us; & Sclater returns, by the same opportunity, several boxes of birds,

[Page Break]

lent him by us, & also one of yours, which will be forwarded to you before long.

Will you be so kind as to order in addition to the other articles for which I have written 3 gross best velvet corks,  $\frac{3}{8}$  of an inch in diameter at the lower end, 3 gross,  $\frac{1}{2}$  an inch in diameter & 3 gross,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch in diameter; Also 3 gross of large corks  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch in diameter, & 3 gross  $1 \frac{1}{4}$  inches, all these measurements being at the lower end. These are partly for Capt. Hall, & partly for Mr Dole, the latter of whom, as perhaps you know, is about to return to Alaska where he expects to spend several years in the high north.

Very truly yours,  
Spencer F Baird

Geo. N. Lawrence,  
172 Pearl Street,  
New York

24421

Washington, D.C. May 23, 1871.



My dear Lawrence,

Did you receive a letter from me about the 8<sup>th</sup> inst., asking you to order three dozen bottles of <sup>purest</sup> first-quality Crystallized Carbonic acid, put-up carefully in boxes of half a dozen in each; + 100 lbs of alum + Salt-petre, in the proportion of two <sup>parts</sup> ~~parts~~ of alum to one of Salt-petre, + packed in tin cans, <sup>with screw caps</sup> containing ten pounds each, ~~with screw caps~~. These are wanted for the Arctic expedition which will leave in about ten days or two weeks, + as I hear nothing from you of them, I fear the order has gone astray. Can you not put the matter in hand so as to have them here at an early date?

I wrote also for a lot of velvet Corks for small vials. This I think went in a different letter. Awaiting your reply with much impatience, I remain,

Very truly yours.

A. V. Baird

Geo. N. Lawrence

172, Pearl Street, N. Y.

(over)



N. B. - Will Messrs E. N. Lawrence & Co.  
attend to this order if Mr Geo. N. Lawrence  
is in Philadelphia?

Baird -

I am sorry for your misfortune, but as I write  
you are above that, do not think I am at fault.

Washington, D.C. May 23, 1871.

My Dear Lawrence,

Did you receive a letter from me about the 8th inst., asking you to order three dozen bottles of ~~first~~ poorest - quality Crystalized Carboic acid, put up carefully in boxes of half a dozen each; & 100 lbs of alum & Salt-petre, in the proportion of two ~~pounds~~ parts of alum to one of Salt-petre, & packed in tin cans ^ with screw caps containing ten pounds each, ~~with screw caps~~. These are wanted for the Arctic expedition which will leave in about ten days or two weeks; & as I hear nothing from you of them, I fear the order has gone astray. Can you not put the matter in hand so as to have them here at an early date?

I wrote also for a lot of velvet corks for small vials. This I think went in a different letter. Awaiting your reply with much impatience, I remain,

Very truly yours,  
S. F. Baird

Geo. N. Lawrence  
172, Pearl Street,  
N.Y.

(over)

[Page Break]

N. B. - Will helpers E. N. Lawrence & Co. attend to this order if Mr Geo. N. Lawrence is in Philadelphia?

*[The following written in pencil, upside-down on the reverse of the above letter.]*

I am sorry for your impatience, but as I wrote you as above stated, do not think I am at fault.



24444

my

Washington, D.C. May 24, 1871.



My dear Lawrence.

yours of the 23<sup>d</sup> is just at hand. Please have all the articles ordered, sent on to Washington as soon as possible, with the Bills, as the expedition will start from here, & that before many days. Dall will be absent a week, & perhaps longer, among the Aleutians, & will undoubtedly make some first-rate collections. We shall send you tomorrow a package, containing the box from Sclater & some specimens lately borrowed from you by Ridgway. Ridgway has been able to find very few of your desiderata, but has necessarily confined himself to the overhauling of the Land Birds. We do not dare to unpack the Water Birds now as the moths are too troublesome; but we positively expect to get to work at this department in the Hall, & then we can supply you with <sup>some of</sup> your deficiencies. I am very glad that you have, unfortunately, so complete a collection that it is very difficult to make any additions to it. There will be no <sup>objection</sup> ~~reason~~ at all for your sending Salvin a list of the Terebinth birds, & I would



10114  
However, hasten the publication of the paper on the subject as speedily as possible, & would begin with the Land Birds alone, all of which I think you now have. You might, if you think proper publish a Special Catalogue of the Iles Marias & Socorro Collection, as it is quite different from the remainder of the Mexico, & introduce them again into the grand list, when you come to that. The visit of Grayson's trip will add very much to the interest of the paper.

There are two species of Gannets, one the Sula caysiroph & the other piscator; that is to say, these names are about as near right as any thing; but in view of the great changes which the species experience at different ages, it is very difficult to say what is what. The small owl spoken of from Socorro is the Athene Whitneyi, a very curious fact in geographical distribution. I am trying very hard to get off some time week after next, but cannot yet say with certainty. I shall probably remain over night till the following afternoon in New York, as I have some matters to attend to on the way.

Very truly yours,  
N. Baird

Geo. W. Lawrence, 172 Pearl St. N. Y.



Washington, D.C. May 24, 1871.

My Dear Lawrence,

Yours of the 23d is just at hand. Please have all the articles ordered, sent on to Washington as soon as possible, with the Bills, as the expedition will start from here, & that before many days. Dole will be absent a year, & perhaps longer, among the Aleutians, & will undoubtedly make some first rate collections. We shall send you tomorrow a package, containing the box from Sclater & some specimens lately borrowed from you by Ridgeway. Ridgeway has been able to find very few of your desiderata, but has necessarily confined himself to the overhauling of the Sand Birds. We do not dare to unpack the Water Birds now as the moths are too troublesome; but we positively expect the get to work at this department in the Fall, & then we can supply you with ^ some of your deficiencies. I am very glad that you have, unfortunately, so complete a collection that it is very difficult to make any additions to it.

There will be no ~~occasion~~ objection at all ~~for~~ to your sending Salvin a list of the Tres Marias birds, I would

[Page Break]

however, hasten the publication of the paper on the subject as speedily as possible, & would begin with the Land Birds alone, all of which I think you now have. You might, if you think proper publish a special catalogue of the Tres Marias & Sacoma Collection, as it is quite different from the remainder of ~~the~~ Mexico, & introduce them again into the grand list, when you come to that. The inst. of Grayson's trip will add very much to the interest of the paper.

There are two Species of Gannets, one the Soula cyanops & the other piscator; that is to say, these names are about as near right as any thing; but in view of the great changes which the species experience at different ages, it is very difficult to say what is what. The small owl spoken of from Socorra is the Athene Whitneyi, a very curious fact in geographical distribution. I am trying very hard to get off some time week after next, but cannot yet say with certainty. I shall probably remain over night till the following afternoon in New York, as I have some matters to attend to on the way.

Very truly yours,  
S F Baird

Geo. N. Lawrence. 172 Pearl St. N.Y.

24474  
J.W.  
Washington, D.C. May 26, 1871.

My dear Lawrence.

I have your letter of the 24, with many thanks for the trouble you have taken to fill the order.

I suspect that one of your letters must have miscarried, as I am totally oblivious of any letter from you, referring to the subject of Carbolic acid. I am very glad you have found it at so low a price, as we have never obtained it at less than \$1.50 a bottle. I must have expressed myself wrongly in my last in regard to the packing of the Carbolic acid; as I intended to renew the request to have the three dozen bottles packed in boxes of one dozen each, exactly as you have done.

You must not think that I was at all impatient in my writing, as I knew very well that if you received my letter the matter would be attended to promptly, & in



a business-like manner. If you conducted  
matters up in this way perhaps you would  
not be troubled so frequently by your friends,  
who know they can always depend upon you  
for doing things properly.

The corks, ~~as compared by the articles~~, came  
yesterday, & I suppose the acid & other matters  
will follow today.

Can you, without too much trouble, as-  
-ertain for me what are the present whole-  
-sale quotations for 95-per cent. rectified alco-  
-hol, such as you obtained for us a year  
ago.

Very truly Yours.

J. W. Baird

Geo. N. Lawrence Esq.

172, Pearl Street,

New York.

Washington, D.C. May 26, 1871.

My Dear Lawrence,

I have your letter of the 24, with many thanks for the trouble you have taken to fill the order.

I suspect that one of your letters must have miscarried, as I am totally unaware of any letter from you, referring to the subject of Carbolic acid. I am very glad you have found it at so low a price, as we have never obtained it at less than \$1.50 a bottle. I must have expressed myself wrongly in my last in regard to the packing of the Carbolic acid; as I intended to renew the request to have the three dozen bottles packed in boxes of one dozen each, exactly as you have done.

You must not think that I was at all impatient in my writing, as I knew very well that if you received my letter the matter would be attended to promptly, & in

[Page Break]

a business-like manner. If you conducted matters less in this way perhaps you would not be troubled so frequently by your friends, who know they can always depend upon you for doing things properly.

The corks, ~~accompanied by other articles~~, came yesterday, & I suppose the acid & other matters will follow to day.

Can you, without too much trouble, ascertain for me what are the present wholesale quotations for 95 per cent rectified alcohol, such as you obtained for us a year ago.

Very truly yours,  
S F Baird

Geo. N. Lawrence esq.  
172 Pearl Street,  
New York.



24562

Washington, D.C. May 31, 1871.



My dear Lawrence.

I have your letter of the 28<sup>th</sup> & hasten to answer it.

I expect to leave here next Saturday & to reach New York about Tuesday or Wednesday next, & to remain a day at the Albemarle.

I shall be very sorry indeed to miss seeing you, & hope that it may still be possible to find you in the City.

Very truly yours.

Frederic W. Baird

Geo. N. Lawrence,

172, Pearl Street,  
New York.

Washington, D.C. May 31, 1871.

My Dear Lawrence,

I have your letter of the 28th & hasten to answer it.

I expect to leave here next Saturday & to reach New York about Tuesday or Wednesday next, & to remain a day at the Albemarle.

I shall be very sorry indeed to miss seeing you, & hope that it may still be possible to find you in the City.

Very truly yours,  
Spencer F Baird

Geo. N. Lawrence.  
172 Pearl Street,  
New York.



24<sup>676</sup>

Wood's Hole, June 16, 1871.

My dear Lawrence.

I am duly in receipt of your letter of the 13<sup>th</sup>, with the box of Carboic acid, & am much obliged to you for attending my request. The article is not exactly that which I have been using, but I have little doubt it will answer my purpose. We can at any rate, make use of it at home for disinfecting purposes, even if I should find it necessary to send for some of a ~~finer~~ quality. The kind I have used is Calvert's, put up in pound bottles with glass stoppers & for which I paid 75 cents, possibly getting it as cheap as it is generally sold. I have sent the bill to Washington so as to have it paid directly from that point.

I presume that the New York market is always stocked with fish in the season, but it is a great mistake to say that they were never more abundant throughout the country, as the supply furnished so far this year, in this part of the country, is decidedly less than heretofore. There have been nearly three times as many pounds in operation, & yet the aggregate catch is believed to be considerably less than that of last year.

I do not know whether Maynard has returned from Florida, but I am under the impression he has, as I think Ridgway received a



letter from him just before I left Washington.

I am very sorry to hear that Mrs Lawrence has not been as well for the last few days, & unable to visit Washington. I hope, however, this may be only temporary drawback, & that she may recover her normal state of health.

Very truly yours.

Spencer W. Davis

Geo. W. Lawrence Esq.

172, Pearl Street,

New York.

P. S. Please send as a dozen bottles, 1/4 of the Calvert Carbolic acid: glass stopper: purest quality fluid: but transparent. Cost about 9.00 per doz.

Prof. J. S. Davis

Food's Store

Staff

By Adams Express



Wood's Hole, June 16, 1871.

My Dear Lawrence,

I am duly in receipt of your letter of the 13th, with the box of Carbohc acid & am much obliged to you for attending to my request. The articles not exactly that which I have been using, but I have little doubt it will answer my purpose. We can at any rate, make use of it at home for disinfecting purposes, even if I should find it necessary to send for some of a ~~finer~~ quality. The kind I have used is Calverts, put up in pound bottles with glass stoppers & for which I paid 75 cents, possibly getting it as cheap as it is generally sold. I have sent the Bill to Washington so as to have it paid directly from that point.

I presume that the New York market is always stocked with fish in the season; but it is a great mistake to say that they were never more abundant throughout the country, as the supply furnished so far this year, in this part of the country, is decidedly less than heretofore. There have been nearly three times as many pounds in operation, & yet the aggregate catch is believed to be considerably less than that of last year.

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letter from him just before I left Washington.

I am sorry to hear that Mrs Lawrence has not been so well for the last few days, & unable to visit Washington. I hope, however, this may be truly ^ a temporary draw-back, & that she may recover her normal state of health.

Very truly yours,  
Spencer F Baird

Geo. N. Lawrence Esq.  
172 Pearl Street,  
New York.

P.S. Please send as a dozen bottles, of the Calvert Carbohc acid: glass stoppers: poorest quality fluid: but transparent: cork about 9.00 per doz.

*[The following in pencil at the bottom of the page.]*

Mark

Prof S. F. Baird  
Wood's Hole  
Mass.

By Adams Express