

Robert Taft correspondence related to frontier artists, Catlin - Deming

Section 14, Pages 391 - 420

A series of research correspondence from the Robert Taft collection relating to frontier artists. Robert Taft (1894-1955) was a professor of chemistry and author on the subjects of photography and art. The artists included here are George Catlin, Henry Caylor, Carl Christian Anton Christensen, Samuel Colman, Vincent Colyer, George Victor Cooper, Eanger Irving Couse, H. F. Cox, Charles Craig, Henry H. Cross, Edwin A. Curley, Frank H. Cushing, Felix Octavius Carr Darley, Theodore R. Davis, Charles Deas, and Edwin W. Deming.

Date: 1930-1955

Callnumber: Robert Taft Coll. #172, Box 20

KSHS Identifier: DaRT ID: 308631

Item Identifier: 308631

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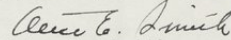
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water colors and several oil paintings, small sketches, while on a visit to Mrs. Robert Watts. They lost at the South during the war a large chest¹ filled with valuable papers and books, and a few paintings.

You do not include Charles Lanman's Summer in the Wilderness (N.Y. and Philadelphia, 1847), in your list of sources of information on Deas. Lanman speaks, pages 15 to 17, of seeing Deas' paintings in St. Louis in June, 1846, praises them highly, and describes some of them, including the North Bend scene. Lanman's account will enable you to add, I think, to your list of Deas' productions, and to give an approximate date to the painting of the North Bend scene.

All these items will probably prove more tantalizing than helpful, but I hope that some of the clues will be of value to you.

Sincerely yours,



Alice E. Smith
Curator of Manuscripts

Robert Taft correspondence related to frontier artists, Catlin - Deming

August 10, 1940

Miss Alice E. Smith,
State Historical Society of Wisconsin,
Madison, Wisconsin

Dear Miss Smith:

Thank you for your letter of August 8th and for the Draper notes relative to Charles Deas. They will furnish several additional starting points for further work. I am glad, too, to have the reference to Charles Lanman's Summer in the Wilderness with which I was not familiar.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Taft.

RT/cv

Robert Taft correspondence related to frontier artists, Catlin - Deming

September 16, 1940

Miss Mildred E. Deas
5651 Cherry Street
Philadelphia, Pa.

Mrs. Inez E. Deas
1538 North 13th Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dear Mrs. Deas:

I have in preparation a book The Frontier in Picture which is to deal with the artists and illustrators who recorded the life and growth of our American west. Included in the list of artists that I have under study is Charles Deas who was born, according to my notes, in Philadelphia in 1818. His date of death I have found given all the way from 1859 to 1867. Do you have any family records that would show whether Charles Deas, the artist, belonged to your family and if so would give any definite information on his life and career? If you do not have this information, can you suggest other members of the family who might have it?

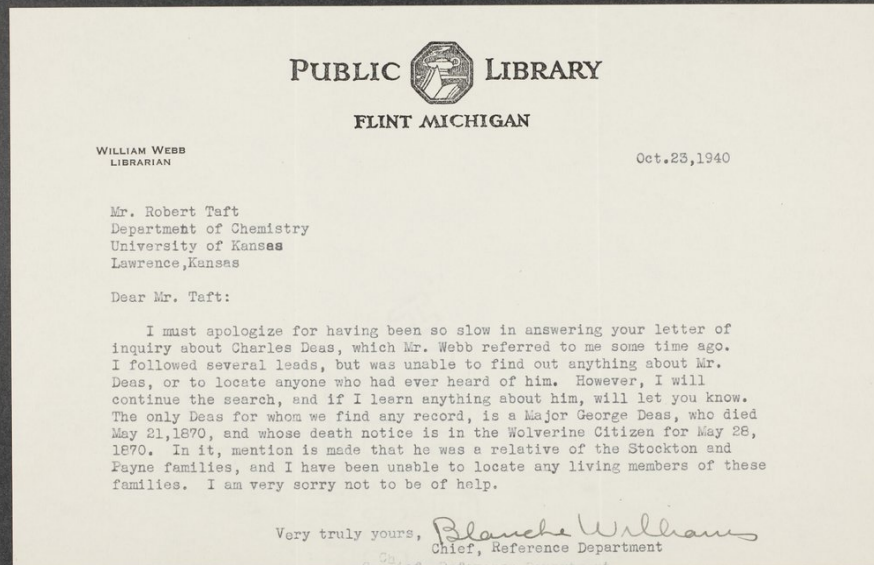
Thank you greatly for any help that you can give me.

Sincerely yours,

RT/cdo

Robert Taft.

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The Caxton Club
Chicago

August 3, 1942

Mr. Robert Taft
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas

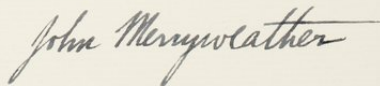
Dear Mr. Taft:

In my search for certain information about the work of the artist Charles Deas, I am told that you are the one who could most likely help me out. Here in brief is the situation.

The Caxton Club is considering reprinting as a limited edition "The Prairie Log Book" which originally appeared in 1844 in the periodical The Spirit of the Times. Written by Lieutenant J. Henry Carleton, the "Log" tells of the expedition of a dragoon regiment from Fort Leavenworth to the Pawnee villages where its mission was to confirm peace relations between the Pawnees and the United States, and to settle disputes between that tribe and the Sioux. Accompanying the dragoons was artist Charles Deas who apparently did a considerable amount of painting and sketching throughout this campaign. It would certainly add much to our proposed book if we could include reproductions of paintings and sketches that he did at this time or that relate directly to this campaign.

Do you know whether or not such works of Deas exist, and if so would they be available (by photograph of course) to The Caxton Club for reproduction? I would greatly appreciate your giving me any information in regard to this matter.

Sincerely yours,



Chairman, Publications Committee
The Caxton Club

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August 14, 1942

Mr. John Merryweather, Chairman
Publication Committee
The Captain Club,
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Mr. Merryweather:

I found your letter of enquiry concerning Charles Deas upon my desk after returning from an out-of-town trip, which accounts for the slowness of my reply.

I have a good deal of information concerning Deas but not much about the present existence of any of his work. If you are not familiar with it, there is an article about Deas in Godey's Lady Book for 1846, pp. 250-253. I have an extra copy of this article which I am enclosing. I also am enclosing some correspondence which I have had concerning Deas that contains considerable information. You are welcome to this material. Of course, if you use any of it, I would appreciate a credit line.

The matter of illustrations by Deas is particularly tantalizing as he seems to have been a popular artist in his day and copies of his paintings were apparently engraved and on sale. The Library of Congress, the New York Public Library, and the American Antiquarian Society have no copies of any such engravings catalogued, however. I was in St. Louis a year ago seeking for information concerning Deas and several other artists. The only positive information I found about Deas, however, is that he was listed as a resident of St. Louis in the city directories for 1845 and 1847.

I am sorry that I can't help you more with Deas illustrations. If, in your search for material, you discover any, I would greatly appreciate a line from you.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Taft

RT/wac
Enclosures

Robert Taft correspondence related to frontier artists, Catlin - Deming

The Carlton Club
Chicago

August 24, 1942

Dr. Robert Taft
Department of Chemistry
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas

Dear Dr. Taft:

Thank you for your letter of the 14th, and for the interesting enclosures concerning Charles Deas.

The expedition with which we are concerned is mentioned in the article from Godey's Ladies Book, and Deas' picture "The Indian Guide" was apparently done on this campaign from Fort Leavenworth. In Lt. Carleton's narrative the author frequently tells of their Indian guide whose ability as a pathfinder was extremely questionable. This may or may not be the same one.

Within the next few weeks I am trying to gather together all material preparatory to publication of this narrative-and The Club's publication of "The Prairie Log Book" now appears very likely. And so if by any chance you should discover anything of Deas in the near future I should be delighted to hear from you. You may rest assured that if we use any of the material that you have so graciously sent me you will be given a credit line. Also should I by any stroke of luck discover an elusive Deas illustration I shall inform you at once.

Sincerely yours,

John Meryweather



Robert Taft correspondence related to frontier artists, Catlin - Deming

September 4, 1943

Miss Mildred Deas
5651 Cherry Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dear Miss Deas:

Thank you greatly for your letter of recent date concerning Charles Deas. I would very much like further information concerning him as he was one of the important early western artists. The specific information which I should like is as follows; the place and date of his death; the nature and extent of his art training; and any information concerning his surviving paintings. Do you know if contemporary information concerning him--especially in the form of letters, note-books, diaries--is still in existence?

I shall be very pleased to have any information that you can furnish me and if you know of others who might have additional information concerning Charles Deas, I should very much like to have their names and addresses only.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Taft

RT/wac

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[1943]

Dr Robert Taft.
of Chemistry
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas

Dear Dr. Taft:

Some time ago I received
a letter from you, asking me
about the artist, Charles Deas
in reference to a book call
Frontier in Picture.

I am very sorry I did
not answer your letter at
the time.

It so happens that I still
have your letter and would
like to be of any help, even
at this late date.

And if I may ask, just
what information you would
like to have of his life.

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and also his career.
If you have not already
accomplish your information
and I can be of any help
write to the address stated below.

Sincerely yours,
Miss Mildred Deas
5651 Cherry St.
Philadelphia Pa.

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CITY ART MUSEUM OF ST. LOUIS

Forest Park 5

President: DANIEL K. CATLIN • Vice-President: THOMAS C. HENNINGS • Director: PERRY T. RATHBONE • Secretary: JAMES B. MUSICK

Acting Director: CHARLES NAGEL, JR.

RICHARDSON MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Office of the Librarian

April 11, 1946

Dr. Robert Taft
Department of Chemistry
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas

Dear Dr. Taft:

Thank you very much for your letter of April 3 and for sending us the reprint of "The Pictorial Record of the Old West."

We have photographs of three paintings by Charles Deas:

"The Trapper", owned by the Yale University Art Gallery

"Turkey Shoot", owned in New York by Rutherford Stuyvesant and exhibited at the Met.Mus.of Art in their "Life in America" exhib., 1939, #125.

"Portrait of Judge Luke E. Lawless", owned by the Mo.Hist.Soc.in St.Louis (gift of Alexander J.P.Garesche). While this bears a signature, "Geo.Bingham", it is attributed to Deas.

If it would not be too difficult for you to let us see the information that you have assembled on this artist's life, we should greatly appreciate receiving it.

Yours very truly,

Odille D. Stewart (per E.C.)

Odille D. Stewart
Librarian

ec

Robert Taft correspondence related to frontier artists, Catlin - Deming

JOSEPH SAFRON

April 24, 1946

Mr. Robert Taft
University of Kansas
Lawrence
Kansas

Dear Mr. Taft:

Recently I had the pleasure of reading your "Pictorial Record of the Old West" and enjoyed it very much.

Would you kindly send me a copy and I will return whatever the fee.

Is it possible in your work that you have uncovered anything on Charles Deas? He painted out this way in the 40's I believe. A friend of mine in the East owns two and unless I am mistaken they turned up in Kansas.

E.M. Bloch and myself are collaborating on a catalogue of the paintings of C.M. Russell. Bloch as you probably already know has been working for several years on Bingham.

If you have any information concerning Russell paintings which are out your way I would be pleased to know of them.

Sincerely,

J. Safron
7498 Teasdale
St. Louis, Missouri



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JOSEPH SAFRON

May 22, 1946

Mr. Robert Taft
University of Kansas
Department of Chemistry
Lawrence, Kansas

Dear Mr. Taft;

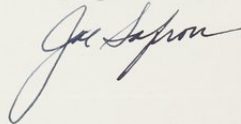
Thank you very kindly for your booklet
on the artists Frenzeny-Tavernier.

I have requested photographs and pro-
venance on the two Deas paintings which I
mentioned earlier.

Deas as you probably already may know
painted in St. Louis between 1840-45. There
are numerous mentions of his studio etc., but
unfortunately not a single canvas has been re-
discovered in these parts.

I will be pleased to cooperate with you
on whatever material you may like for your
future article on Russell.

Respectfully,



JS/j

J. Safron
7498 Teasdale
St. Louis, Mo.

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*Same sketch appears in Artist-life by Henry T. Tuckerman
New York, 1847.*

July to December
Godey's Ladies Book, XXXIII, 1846 (JANUARY TO DECEMBER) pp. 250-253.

Our Artists No. V

Deas

The gardens of the desert, as one of our poets calls the prairies, constitute a peculiar feature of American scenery. To an experienced foreigner the great charm which invites a pilgrimage to this continent is the interesting spectacle afforded by primeval nature, and the juxtaposition of civilized and savage life so richly in contrast with scenes familiar in the Old World. If there be any legitimate foundation for a literature essentially American, it is doubtless referable to like sources. A man of genius, with keen powers of observation, who came over in one of the earliest steamers that crossed the Atlantic, complained to us, after a few weeks' residence in Boston, that he could discover nothing characteristic or original except the eloquence of a well-known sailor's preacher. He could scarcely realize that he was not in an English provincial town. The stranger's disappointment ceased at once when he found himself in the Far West. There life assumed a new aspect and nature presented striking phases. He received what he earnestly sought - vivid and lasting impressions. There was a moral excitement awakened quite different from the luxurious dreams he had known on the shores of the Bosphorus, the mental stimulus derived from the intellectual circles of London, and the suggestions of art and antiquity in Italy. He saw for the first time majestic rivers flowing through almost interminable woods; seas of verdure decked with bright and nameless flowers; huge cliffs covered with gorgeous autumnal drapery, and resembling the ruined castles he had beheld in northern Europe. Nor was this new experience confined to the externally picturesque. He became acquainted with the hunter and the Indian. The guest of a frontier garrison, he heard the cry of wolves while sharing the refined hospitality of the drawing-room; and often passed from the intelligent companionship of an accomplished officer to the lodge of an aboriginal chief. He witnessed the grave bearing of a forest-king and the infernal orgies of a whole intoxicated tribe. The venerable sachem, the graceful squaw, the lithe young warrior; the war chant, the council fire and the hunter's camp, furnished ample materials to his senses and imagination.

It is somewhat remarkable that a field so peculiar to our country has not been more ardently explored by native artists and authors. There is nothing in the life of our cities which may be deemed original. Their comparative youth renders them far less suggestive than those of the Old World, where a greater variety of elements and a more intense social being create ever-new sources of inspiration. We are educated under the same influences as our English progenitors. Their poets and philosophers are ours also, and have their prototypes among us. In fact, the general culture is the same, and it is in our border life alone that we can find the materials for national development as far as literature and art are concerned. Yet the greater part of what has yet been done in America in the way of writing and painting, echoes the past instead of representing a new present or foreshadowing a great future. We are not advocating originality as alone desirable; on the contrary, a good poem in the style of Pope, a fine essay in the diction of Addison, or a portrait after the manner of Sir Joshua,

Please return

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for us have each their intrinsic interest wherever produced. We can see no reason to complain of our artists and writers if the scenes or the sentiments they illustrate have no peculiar "native American" zest, provided they are in themselves noble and lovely. There is, indeed, no little cant prevailing on this subject, and it is absurd to expect from a mind educated in one of our northern cities any other than a Saxon development. Greater freedom of thought, a bolder reach of speculation should, indeed, distinguish men of talent in a republic; and there are a few local traits of climate and scenery which our poets should chronicle; but, as a general rule, our tastes are formed on the same models as those of the mother country, and our mental characteristics are identical with the race whence we sprung. It is with reference to the frequent complaints of the want of transatlantic appreciation that we allude to this question. It is unreasonable to expect that any great interest will be excited abroad in the fruits either of the pen or pencil here, except so far as the subjects are novel or the execution superlatively great. Tales of frontier and Indian life - philosophic views of our institutions - the adventures of the hunter and the emigrant - correct pictures of what is truly remarkable in our scenery, awaken instant attention in Europe. If our artists or authors, therefore, wish to earn trophies abroad, let them seize upon themes essentially American. The young artist named at the head of this paper has acted on this principle. Those who are accustomed to look occasionally into the rooms of the Art Union in New York, cannot fail to have seen from time to time very spirited representations of Indian or hunter life. There is a wildness and picturesque truth about many of these specimens in remarkable contrast to the more formal and hackneyed subjects around them. We remember one in particular, of an Indian maiden standing on a rock and gazing forth upon an immense prairie, her figure relieved against the evening sky and her whole air full of the poetry of grief. One could have surmised the tale at once. She had been abandoned by her lover, and was about to cast herself from that precipice. There she stood alone, calm and voiceless, watching the sun go down - as she had often done beside the faithless object of her devotion. Another represented a Pawnee galloping on an unshorn and unharnessed horse across the prairie. Its authenticity was self-evident, and everything about the rider and his steed in perfect keeping.

The maternal grandfather of Charles Deas was Ralph Izard, whose recently-published correspondence honorably identifies him with our Revolutionary history. His promising descendant was born in Philadelphia in 1818, and received his education from the lamented John Sanderson. His first ideas of art were derived from some good copies of the old masters belonging to his family, and from a habit, acquired very early, of diverting himself by drawing at school on a slate, and modeling little horses in beeswax at home. He possessed great sensibility to color. According to phrenologists, this depends upon organization, and facts warrant the inference. A striking difference is observable in individuals, both in regard to the correctness of their natural perceptions and the feeling they have in this regard. The remark of a blind man when asked his idea of scarlet, that it was like the sound of a trumpet, is well known, and indicates how much reality there is in such impressions. It was one of the earliest delights of Deas to note the mysteries of color and trace the manner in which the brilliancy of one is heightened by the gravity of another. To one who has the soul of a painter,

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the effects of light and shade are a world in which it is as pleasant for him to expatiate as for a soldier in military tactics or a bard in the intricacies of the heart. Visits to the old Pennsylvania Academy, to Sully's rooms, and loiterings on holiday afternoons before the print-shop windows in Chestnut street; drawings from casts of the antique, and experiments in portraying his playmates, were among the significant tendencies of our painter's boyhood. His views, however, from the first, were directed with enthusiasm towards a military life, and upon leaving school he went to live on the Hudson, and prepared himself to enter the military academy there situated. Meantime, however, his leisure was wholly given to exploring expeditions amid the beautiful scenery by which he was surrounded. His constitution thus became inured to fatigue, his eye practised in the observation of nature, and his dormant artistic propensities fostered into new vigor. He was a zealous sportsman, and found his purest enjoyment when wandering equipped with gun, fishing-rod and sketch-book. This independent existence alternating with periods of secluded application, was finely adapted to harmonize his character. Having failed in obtaining an appointment as a cadet, he immediately turned his whole attention to the art of painting, and sought to enlarge and deepen his senic impressions by a tour to the head waters of the Delaware and through the magnificent scenery of the White Hills. A year or two were then given to the study of his profession under the auspices of the National Academy, and to improving fellowship with other artists. The era of manhood brought with it a revelation to the moral nature of the student, and he learned to recognize the authority of the higher sentiments. His first successful picture illustrated a frequent local scene familiar to the denizens of the Hudson. It was called the "Turkey Shoot," and was so graphically delineated as at once to hit the fancy of a genuine Knickerbocker whose ancestors were among the early colonists, who became its purchaser. The next year he exhibited a variety of cabinet pictures, drawn chiefly from familiar life, which met with more or less success. "Hudibras engaging the bear-baiters," "Walking the Chalk," "Shoeing a horse by lamplight," etc., were among the subjects.

With the tastes and habits we have described, it is not difficult to fancy the effect produced upon the mind of Deas by the sight of Catlin's Indian Gallery. Here was a result of art, not drawn merely from academic practice or the lonely vigils of a studio, but gathered among the freedom of nature. Here were trophies as eloquent of adventure as of skill, environed with the most national associations and memorials of a race fast dwindling from the earth. With what interest would after-generations look upon these portraits, and how attractive to European eyes would be such authentic "counterfeit presentiments" of a savage people about whose history romance and tradition alike throw their spells! To visit the scenes whence Catlin drew these unique specimens of art, to study the picturesque forms, costumes, attitudes and grouping of Nature's own children; to share the grateful repast of the hunter and taste the wild excitement of frontier life, in the very heart of the noblest scenery of the land, was a prospect calculated to stir the blood of one with a true sense of the beautiful and a natural relish for woodcraft and sporting. A brother of the artist was attached to the fifth infantry, then stationed at Fort Crawford, and in the spring of 1840 he left New York for that distant port. By the Lake rout he reached Mackinaw - one of the most romantic spots in the

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country - and here for the first time he saw genuine sons of the wilderness, many of the Chippewa tribe being encamped on the beach. He thence proceeded to Green Bay, through the interior of Wisconsin, by Fort Winnebago and Fox Lake, to his destination at Prairie du Chien. Besides a happy meeting with his brother, he was cordially received here by his messmates. General Brooke was at that time commanding in the northwest, and through his influence and that of the gentlemen connected with the Fur companies, he was enabled to collect sketches of Indians, frontier scenery and subjects of agreeable reminiscence and picturesque incident, enough to afford material for a life's painting. Keopuk, the great chief and orator of the Sacs and Foxes, was at Fort Crawford holding a council with the Winnebagoes. The assemblage and their proceedings were very imposing. The Sacs were endeavoring to "cover the blood" of a young man of the other tribe who had been killed some time previously. They tendered a considerable sum of money, which was at last accepted by the opposite party. The Sacs and Foxes were living in tents allowed them from the fort, in an enclosure attached to the palisades. A relative of the deceased object of the conclave, wishing to insult Keopuk, took advantage of the absence of most of the party, to crawl up under the shelter of a fence in the rear of his tent where he was seated in state. The costume of the venerable chief was superb, a tiara of panther and raven skin adorning his head. The intruding Winnebago quietly lifted the canvas of the tent, and suddenly tearing this gear from the old man's person and scattering it over the mats, retreated as he came, before the sentry could arrest him. This insult to their leader produced many serio-comic scenes, and gave Deas a fine opportunity to observe the expression of Indian character. Keopuk maintained a dignified silence, but the gloomy light of his eye betokened how keenly he felt the mortification. His enraged spouse was by no means so calm. Her imprecations caused an outcry which called out the officer of the day, and it was long before the storm was quelled. The scene afforded striking pictures of Indian character. The new post of Fort Atkinson, fifty miles west of Crawford, was also visited. The picturesque appearance of the cabins and tents, the novel mode of life in the open air, the excellence of the grouse shooting on the rout, the success of which was enhanced by the perfect training of the pointers, rendered the trip delightful, and furnished some camp incidents for the sketch-book. After his return to the "Prairie," a command was sent to the "Painted Rock" to attend a payment of the Winnebagoes. Here the artist saw the natives to advantage in their everyday life. Every moment of the excursion was replete with interest. The party ascended the river in a Mackinaw boat. Several Indians were allowed to come on board, one of whom is quite a character, known by the sobriquet of "Two Shillings," which he obtained by his adroitness in procuring quarters of dollars from visitors at Washington while there on a deputation. The scenes witnessed at this payment would require a volume to do them justice. Sickness in all its stages was there, from the first listlessness of ague to the raging madness of high fever. All were attacked, from the mother with her first-born to the aged crone, from the venerable sachem to the young warrior. In passing from lodge to lodge, the most extraordinary incidents presented themselves; and in the stillness of the moonlit nights, the echoes of the Indian lover's flute blent with the battle chant or the maiden's shrill song.

On another occasion, Deas left the hospitable walls of Fort Crawford to accompany an expedition into the interior of Iowa, and

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penetrated the country as far as the east branch of the Des Moines river. While absent, besides enjoying fine sport, he enriched his portfolio, and thus ended with renewed gratification his first summer in the West. Prairie du Chien at this period was almost a French village, and the lively manners of the inhabitants, their races and other out-of-door amusements during the fine autumn weather, afforded new subjects of observation. The groups of half-breeds, Indians and voyageurs, always to be found about the trading houses and fur depots, realized all that an artist needs in the way of frontier costume and manners. In the winter of 1840-41, he visited Fort Winnebago, went down on the ice to Rock river, and returned to paint the likenesses of the prominent members of the tribe. He again visited the new post, the surgeon's room being his studio. The ensuing summer he made a tour to Fort Snelling and the upper Mississippi - painted a view of St. Anthony's Falls and several of the fine-looking Sioux in the vicinity. The latter enterprise was attended with some difficulty. The Indians, believing that the governor had sent a "medicine man" to carry away a portion of their visible bodies with a view to the utter destruction of the tribe, refused to sit. Tommah, a great conjurer, was at last induced to submit to the ordeal after much persuasion, and the others soon followed his example. Deas remained a week or two on a beautiful sloping prairie, dotted with the conical lodges of the race of Indians who make such regions their home. Here he saw some admirable specimens of the human form, and witnessed the celebrated ball-play in its perfection, each man appearing in a gala dress and painted from head to foot. There were also dog feasts, rice feasts, dances, songs and recitations by the old men of their principal exploits in war. The occasion was the ratification of a treaty, and called out all the display of which the Indians were capable. At a subsequent period, our artist joined the command under Major Wharton ordered to proceed from Fort Leavenworth to the Pawnee villages on the Platte river.

It will be seen from what has preceded what extensive opportunities he has enjoyed in the sphere which he has chosen for the exercise of his talents. If it be true, as is maintained by many advocates, that Nature is the best guide, and that the poet and the painter are most successful who throw themselves heartily into her embrace, who are jealous of the encroachments of authority, and seek mainly to reproduce what they see and feel, independent of the dictation of schools and public opinion, we may justly look for some rich and peculiar results from the youthful experience of this artist. He is now established at St. Louis, and it is gratifying to add from his own testimony, that he has there found all that a painter can desire in the patronage of friends and general sympathy and appreciation. Among the subjects which have recently occupied him are "Long Jake," designed to embody the character of the mountain hunter; the "Indian Guide," whose prototype was a venerable Shawnee who accompanied Major Wharton; "The Wounded Pawnee;" "The Voyageur," "The Trapper," two illustrations from the history of "Wenona;" "A Group of Sioux," and "Hunters on the Prairie." The most important epic subject which has engaged his attention is taken from the life of General Clarke, of Kentucky; it is the meeting of the council of the Shawnees at North Bend, when by his firmness he saved the frontier from the horrors of an Indian war. There is now on his easel a picture entitled "The Last Shot," founded on an incident which

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occurred immediately after the late battle of Rio Grande - the parties being Captain Walker and a Ranchero. Art, it will be seen, is not without its representatives in the Far-West; and diverse as is the school from those of Europe, it has its own permanent interest, and one which, we trust, will be more and more worthily recognized and illustrated.

*I found Deas name listed in the
city directory of St Louis in the early
40's. R.T.*

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Coll. 172:20
Deas

Paintings of Charles Deas

(Compiled by Robert Taft, 1940)

DATED

- Turkey Shoot (ca. 1836) (A reproduction of this painting appears in Life in America Metropolitan Museum, New York, 1938)
- Fisherman making a Haul (1840)
- Long Jakes, the Rocky Mountain Man (1843)
- Indian Guide (1845)
- Oregon Pioneers (1846)
- The Last Shot (1847)
- The Mountain Pass (1847)
- Wounded Pawnee (1848)
- Western Scenery (1848)
- Sioux Ball-Playing (1848)
- Landscape (mountain pass) (1849) (30 x 25)
- Two sketches (western) (1850) 12 x 9

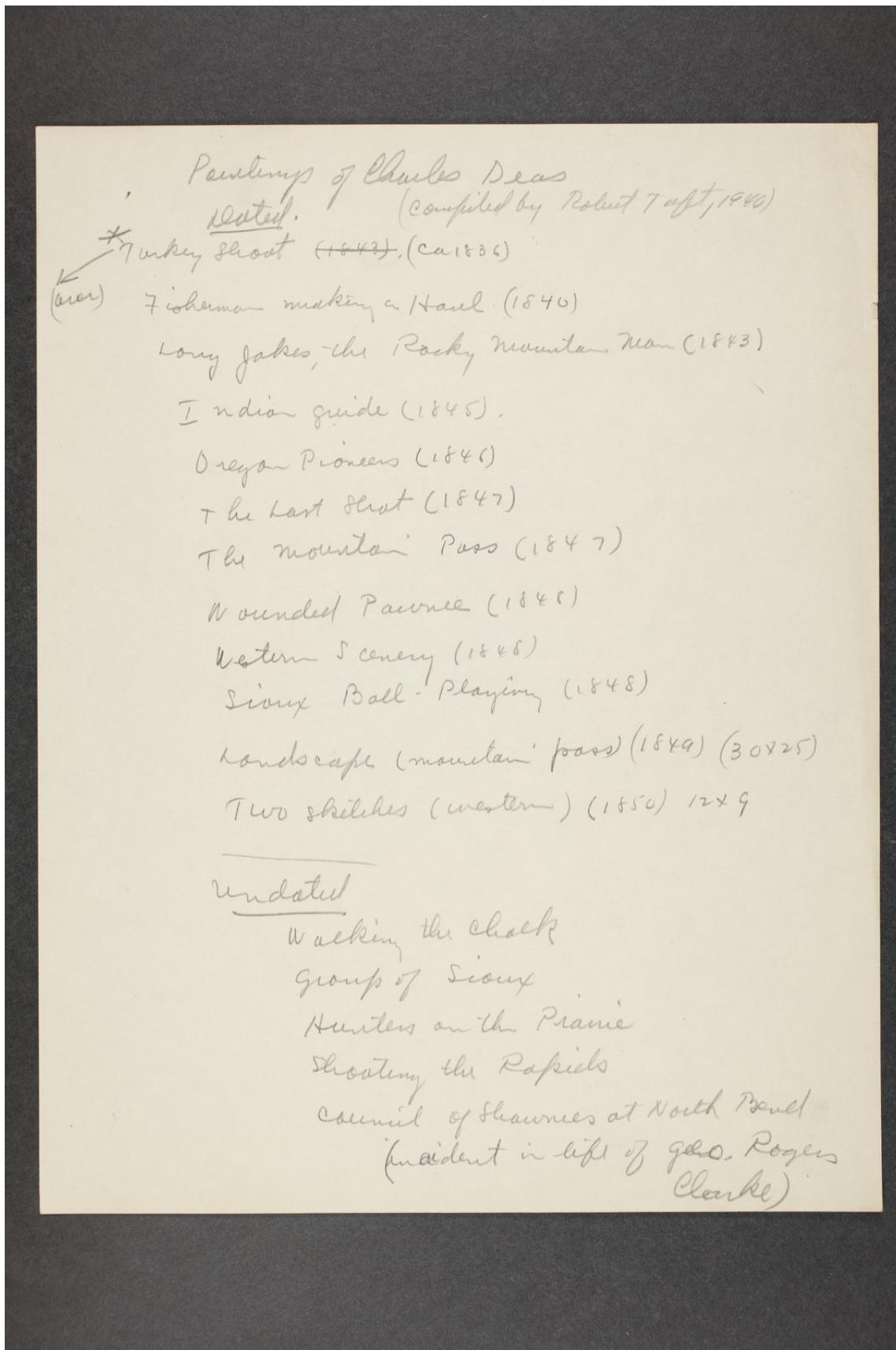
UNDATED

- Walking the Chalk
- Group of Sioux
- Hunters on the Prairie
- Shooting the Rapids
- Council of Shawnees at North Bend (incident in life of Geo. Rogers Clarke)

Please return

I have recently learned that Yale Univ. has a Deas painting The Trapper. Whether it is dated or not, I do not know. R.T.

Robert Taft correspondence related to frontier artists, Catlin - Deming



Robert Taft correspondence related to frontier artists, Catlin - Deming

* A reproduction of this painting appears in
Life in America (Metropolitan Museum, N.Y.,
1938).

Robert Taft correspondence related to frontier artists, Catlin - Deming

121 Madison Ave N.Y. City.
February 5th 1937

Professor Robert Taft:
The University of Kansas
Lawrence.

Dear Professor Taft:

Your letter just received and I will be glad to help you out in getting information of the work I have been doing. I have spent my life in making a pictorial history of the old time Indian and his life. In '91 I took my wife a girl of 18 out New Mexico and we spent a year with the Pueblo and Apaches and ever since we have been working together. We have nine books on the Indian, Mrs. D. has written them and I have made the color illustrations. The last series of four have been adopted by the Indian Department and by most of the states and are now used in schools.

I am sending by separate cover a brochure, compiled by Mrs. Deming, on my work.

I have a number of pictures which I am selling to state galleries and libraries.

Two years ago the Federal Government selected one of my pictures for the tercentennial stamp of Wisconsin.

If you are in N.Y. City drop in and I will be glad to show the work I am doing.

Faithfully yours

E. W. Deming

Robert Taft correspondence related to frontier artists, Catlin - Deming



Robert Taft correspondence related to frontier artists, Catlin - Deming

October 7, 1940

Mr. E. W. Deming
121 Madison Avenue
New York City, New York

Dear Mr. Deming:

You may recall our correspondence of several years relative to your work. I am still actively engaged in the preparation of my book The Frontier in Picture, the record of the west left by artists and illustrators.

I recently ran across a series of articles in Cutting from 1893 to 1895. They were "Sketching Among the Sioux", "Sketching Among the Crow Indians", and "With Gun and Palette Among the Red Skins". The articles were signed by "Man-Afraid-of-his-Name" and as the articles relate to you and DeCost Smith, one or the other, or possibly both, must have been the author. Do you recall who wrote the articles and when the trip (or trips) described in the articles were made?

Thank you greatly for any help that you can give me.

Sincerely yours,

RT/odo

Robert Taft.

Robert Taft correspondence related to frontier artists, Catlin - Deming

36 Gramercy Park N.Y.City
Oct. 9th 1940

Dear Mr Taft;

Your letter just received and I am glad to help you out as much as I can.

Decost Smith and I made a trip to first the Dakota Reservation of Standing Rock. Major James McLaughlin, Agent, Later we went to the Crow Reservation where we made many more pictures.

We made the trip for Outing Magazine

I had a kodack and made many photos of the Indians and their ceremonies both among the Sioux and Crows, It was at the time of the ghost dance trouble and I paid Sitting Bull two dollars and photographed all through the Grass dance (Wardance).

I painted the portrait of Gell, Sitting Bull and Rain in the Face, the latter he signed with his name in photographs.

I do not know who signed the article but we furnished all the data for the matter that the article contained.

I have been living among various tribes of our Indians for over sixty years. In the middle eighties I spent some time making studies among the Indians of Indian Territory. Pawnees, Ponkas, Ottoes and Tonkawas. In 92 I took my wife, 18 and spent a year among the Pueblos and Apaches. She has published twelve books, most of them school books that have been adopted by the Indian department and most of the states. One on the pueblos in a series of four was from her diary that she made when she was 18 years old among the pueblos.

I have not seen De Cost Smith and do not know whether he is alive or not.

While among the Dalotas in 89 and 90 I made many studies for the large picture I have of Custers defeat, I also got much information from General Godfrey, Col Lovell Gerome, Billy Jackson and from many others.

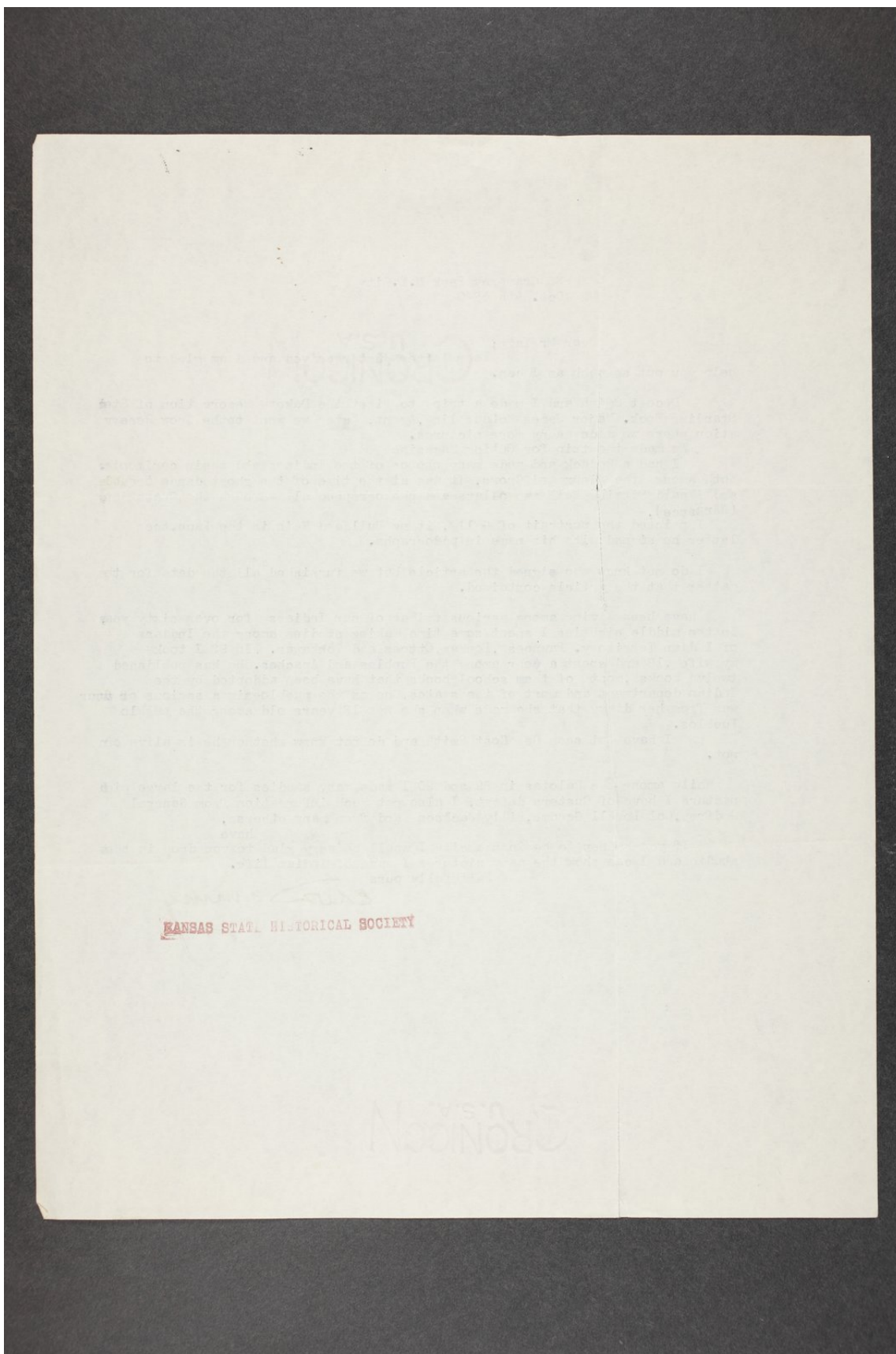
If you happen to be in the city I would be very glad to have you drop in the studio and I can show the many pictures I have of Indian life.

Faithfully yours

Edward Deming



Robert Taft correspondence related to frontier artists, Catlin - Deming



KANSAS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Robert Taft correspondence related to frontier artists, Catlin - Deming

EDWIN WILLARD DEMING
36 GRAMERCY PARK
NEW YORK, N. Y.
GRAMERCY 3-4546

October 30th 1940

Dear Mr Taft;

Your letter just received but I am afraid I can not help you much in regards to the artists you mention. I knew Cherley Graham, he was one of the best scene painters in the city. The other artists I do not remember.

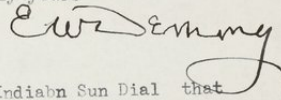
Mr Jackson is one of my best friends and we are members of several clubs and we see a great deal of each other.

Mr Jackson is known as a photographer but he is the dean of all of the early American painters and the studies and paintings that he did in early days is of more value to students of our early history of our west than that of any other artist;

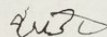
The paintings that he is now doing are wonderful in their depicting the early gathering of fur traders and other events that have passed and forgotten.

The story of his life that has just been published is a classic and will be a monument to him long after he has checked out.

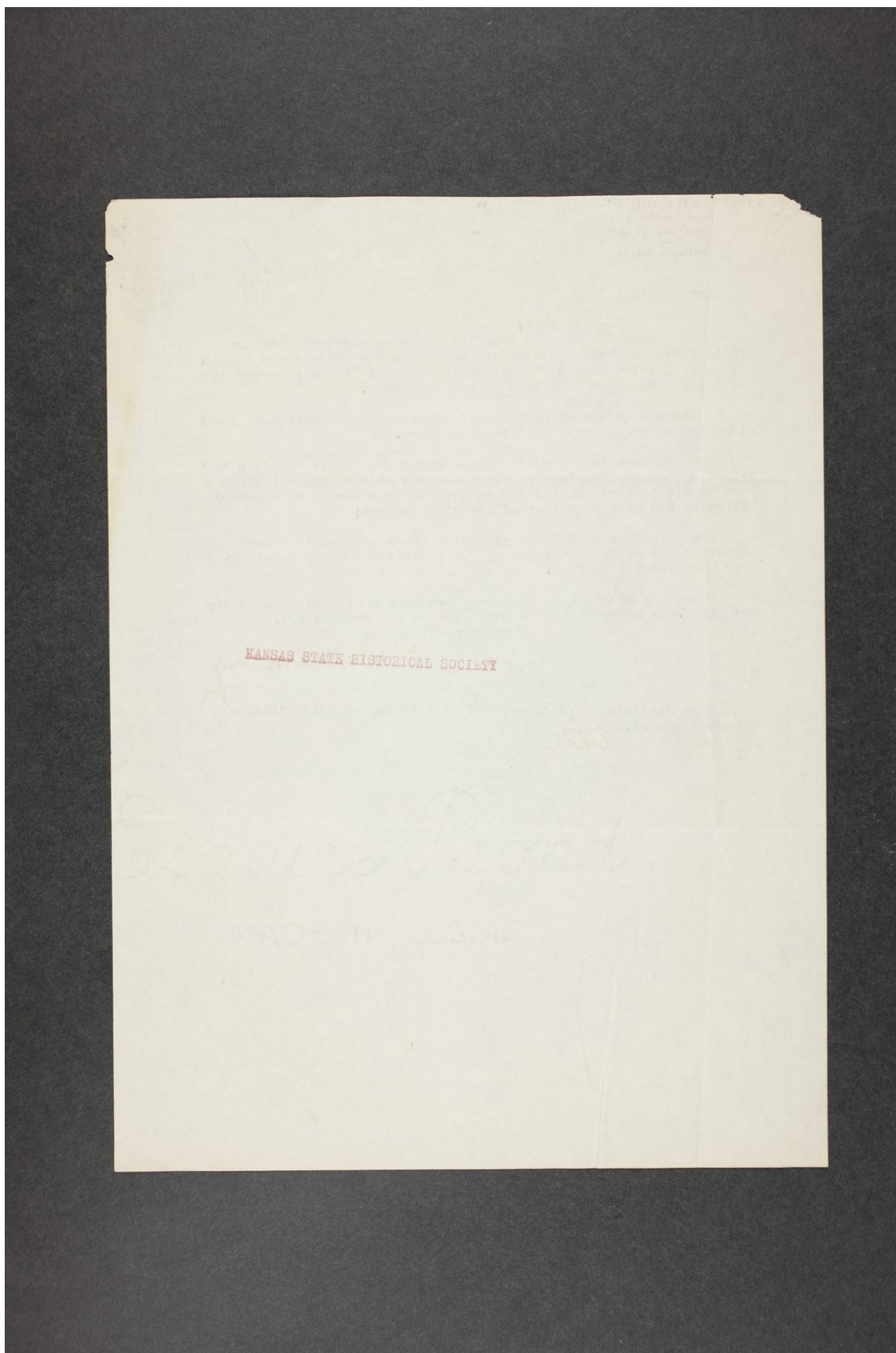
Very sincerely yours



P.S. I am inclosing a photograph of an Indian Sun Dial that I just finished.



Robert Taft correspondence related to frontier artists, Catlin - Deming



Robert Taft correspondence related to frontier artists, Catlin - Deming

