

Felch writes that he has received Marsh's letter and is pleased and relieved to get it as he has long wanted to explain what went on over Quarry 2 and his abrupt end of work. He and Ned had stored tools and specimens at Quarry 2. He was extremely ill again and attempting at the same time to get his pension. While he was so ill his family was afraid to inform him that the tools were stolen and the specimens vandalized. He is glad to finally explain and set things right.

In a second letter he answers Marsh's question regarding the discovery of a new bone quarry. The quarry is being worked by Lambert [John Lambuth] and Felch sent a man to the site to take notes, which he did discretely. The workings are reported to be like Cope's but not as extensive. While in town, he did see some of these bones one set of which is in the "library rooms" and the other, a private collection and describes them as from a large Sauropoda.

Canon City, Colo.
Feb. 10th, 1891

Prof. Marsh
Dear Sir

Your very kind and welcome letter of the 4th inst. I have just received – and I wish to say that it gives me great relief to get it – for I have been a good deal worried of late about how I could give you any satisfactory explanation of my long neglect in writing – and now this gives me a little start in that direction.

You mention of writing to me a year ago or so – but it is more than a year and a half since I have received a letter from you – 'though since that time I have got from you the paper on the horned saurians of the Cretaceous – and a N. Y. Herald with your summing up of some of Cope's favorite tricks = that was a crusher sure.

I will try now and write up a full account of how matters have been with us during the last two years.

In the summer following my daughter's return from the east – I kept putting off from time to time – sending the specimens collected the season before – hoping all the time to get able to go to work a little and add something more to the collection – for it seemed to me that compared with the work of some former years the lot was of but little account – there being nothing new or of much interest, although we had gone over a good deal of ground and worked hard to get it.

Winter came on however – I had not been able to do anything – and the bones still on hand = all snug and safe as we supposed – nothing ever having been meddled with up to that time – the packages all inside a tent made of new wagon sheet – pegged down tight – and fastened securely.

Toward the latter part of Dec. a friend in Denver wrote me that if I could only make the trip up there he would get Gov. Cooper to help me in pushing my claim for pension along – so wife and I started – I was taken very bad with my old complaint – heart trouble – on the way there and had

to be carried to my friends room – which I did not leave for ten days and then to come directly home – and for the next two months was in a very critical condition a good deal of the time, and the only time I went to town up to the 5th of July last I had to have a bed made in the wagon to ride on – was then called to go on some legal business before the Clerk of the Court or should not have gone then.

While we were gone to Denver or soon after we came back our tent, some picks and other tools were stolen – the packages cut open – scattered – mixed and strewn around so that everything was ruined.

My son – Ned, and a neighbor were the first to find out about it – but our folks did not dare mention it to me in the situation I was in – until it was too late to get hold of the one who done the mischief.

The work was done as much for spite as anything by a fellow named Geo. Bronson – a roving – wood and tie chopper and hunter – at work here at the time for a company that were boring for oil. I never had a dozen words with the scamp but he and Ned had some trifling dispute and he took that way to get even – and also to steal a good tent to take with him when baching.

After he had left here for parts unknown a young fellow that came with Bronson from the mountains in the fall – and had bached with him while here – told us who done and why it was done – and gave as a reason for not letting us know of it sooner – that he was a desperate character – and he feared him – and that if we had attempted to prosecute him – he would have tried to do us still worse damage – but if I had of known it at the time – I would have got after him and took all the chances.

Taking this in connection with my long sickness and the expenses attending it – debts accumulating – poor crops on the farm – no chance to sell anything at any price – completely disheartened me – and I gave up and didn't care much how things went – knew I should write you and tell the truth about matters – but I didn't have the nerve and courage to do it.

Matters did not improve with the season – it was very dry here and we had a continual fight to maintain our priorities and get water to make half a crop – I was hard pushed for means to get along – 'till in Nov. to pay the most pressing of our debts I sold that fine span of horses we had when you were here last for \$140. the same team I was once offered and refused 400 for, but now when we had got to about the end of the rope – the result of our trip to Denver last winter began to crop out – Gov. Cooper through Proctor got my claim made special – and the result was last week I got my first money – with back pay enough to pay up the debts, and then have three or four hundred dollars for my wife and I to go back and make our old home and relatives in New England a good visit.

I did think and say once that I would never return to New England unless I could go in some kind of shape – but am getting over that and think it my duty to visit my old father and mother in any kind of style I can get there in.

To wind up this part of the subject I will say that I am now better than in any time for nearly thirty months – and though not strong enough yet to do more than chore round – I hope that now when I won't have to worry so much as I have that I shall yet get so as to do something again.

Now that I have made a full statement and confession – I wish to know what I can do for you to make up for my neglect and omission of duty in the past – keeping in mind something of what I have had to go through – and the manner I have tried to attend to affairs heretofore.

If I go back home I want to visit you at New Haven – and feel free and all right to do so – for next to making a visit to the old homestead I think I should enjoy that as much or more than anywhere else.

Our family are well and desired to be remembered to you – though Sadie is at present attending a school out in Kansas.

Thanking you again for your great kindness and consideration in the past I am
Very Respectfully Yours

M. P. Felch

Canon City, Colo.
Feb. 10th, 1891

Yes there was a new bone quarry discovered some over a year ago – and the man – Lambert I believe had it surveyed – entered and worked it for a while – but at last accounts – some six weeks ago – he had ceased working it as it failed to pay – so was told me.

It is located on the old Grape Creek road to Webster Park – some 7 or 8 miles from town – and in the blue Jurassic marls.

I have never been there myself – but soon after they got well at work in taking out bones I sent a young man there to take notes – giving him accurate instructions as to what to look for and then report to me – so in case there should be anything new or of value to let you know about it.

This duty the young man did well and they never had a hint of what he was up to – 'though he went there several times – and from his report I concluded they had got another Lucas field – though the bones in the new find were not as plentiful as in the old quarry where Lucas worked for Cope

On last Election day I saw a lot of bones from there – two lots – one in the Library Rooms – and the other a private collection.

Among those in the Library is a large femur over five feet long – massive – and well preserved – evidently from one of the large Sauropoda – in the private collection are several smaller leg

bones and fragments and a lot – a dozen or more of the bodies of vertebrae – all anterior caudals and lumbar I should judge ‘though in most all cases the neural spines and side processes were gone – badly water worn – though the party that has them thinks and exhibits them as perfect specimens just as they grew in the animal.

All of the bones I have seen from there – seem to be of the same kind – large Sauropoda – none of the smaller or Carnivorous species – and I could not hear of a foot bone tooth or skull being found – make a good cabinet specimens where not too badly water worn but of no great scientific value.

The bones in the quarry the young man told me were not continuous – or many together rather badly scattered about – one here and another there – but as for the smaller bones – not being found It is possible they did not look for them much – their idea of the value being the bigger the bone the more it was worth proportionately.

For a while the finders thought they had made a fortune – but when they came to try and sell their specimens found the market dull.

I knew they wrote to Cope and others probably to you – but I never heard of their selling any – though I was told that Prof. Cope offered to pay what they were worth to him if they would ship them to him but some question about pre-payment of freight ended the transaction.

If you would like to know more of the quarry – and have me make a visit to it – when the snow gets off I will do so – but my present notion of the find there is that about all there is – is where one of those overgrown monsters laid out his bones but that there is nothing to show only in a general way to the order or family it belonged to.

Very Respectfully
M. P. Felch

P.S. There are no other parties but at Lamberts quarry that have done anything in the way of getting out bones that I have heard of.

Marsh writes to Felch that he is glad to hear he is well and ok financially. He asks Felch to stop by New Haven if he is back east and thanks him for the information on the bone quarry in Webster Park. He tells of Cope's financial downfall and does not want him to start again in Cañon City.

New Haven, Conn.,

February 18th, 1891.

Dear Mr. Felch, -

Many thanks for your kind letter of February 10th. I was very glad indeed to know that you were so well, and were so well situated financially.

I hope you will not let those fossils trouble you, even if you did have bad luck with them. We will try to straighten the matter out later. You have had some good luck in the past, and remembrance of that will wipe out the bad luck.

If you come East, I hope you will visit New Haven and see all my fossil treasures, both those you have sent me and the later monsters from the Cretaceous. I shall be glad to see you at any time, but, as I am away from home a great deal, please let me know beforehand about when you expect to come.

I was glad to know about the bone quarry in Webster Park. I had heard various reports about it, and that Cope was after it. I should be sorry to have him get a start again in Canon City, so please keep an eye on it, and look out for my interests. He is busted financially, and cannot do any permanent injury, but will probably try to have things sent to him on approval, and then let the parties whistle for their pay. This has been his game for the last few years.

Yours very truly,
O. C. Marsh

Felch writes more details of the bone bed near Webster Park as the “party” has asked Felch for a recommendation to Marsh. He goes into detail about Lambreth [John Lambuth] and his work with the quarry which was largely disappointing. He also mentions a trip east but has set no date.

Canon City, Colo.
Mar. 19th, 1891

Prof Marsh
Dear Sir

Since my last the party who has filed on the fossil beds near Webster Park has visited me to see if I would not recommend him to you, or others to supply him in working his ground this season.

Knowing that he had made some sort of an agreement with parties in town – to work the ground in partnership I went in last week - and saw the President of the Board of Trade who gave me a full history of how it has been managed since discovery

A little more than a year since one Lambreth by name was deer hunting in that section and run across some bone croppings – took them to Weston I think who told him what they were and advised him to go back and prospect for more – and if he found any in quantity he would help him to dispose of them.

Lambreth went back, run on to quite a lot of large and well preserved bones – returned to Canon – reported and then the Board of Trade offered to go in with him on something like the following conditions

They were to file on the ground as a placer claim – pay the expense of the work and recording – set him to work at three dollars a day and found – paying all his expenses – tools etc. - and have all of one whole skeleton = the first one taken out = and after that – they would continue to pay him the three dollars pr. day and expenses – and then divide equally what could be found afterwards – the Board of Trade taking half and Lambreth half.

Well they started in – worked two or three months and got into a quarrel.

The board were slow in payments – Lambreth says he had to spend half his time in trying to collect his pay and the other party accuse Lambreth of hiding and stealing all the best specimens to sell to outside parties – and after a time spent in wrangling they quit work – as Lambreth could not sell the specimens stolen (the story of the other side) hadn't a dollar and couldn't get trusted for grab and so the matter dropped.

Lambreth tells me that his agreement = which was put in record = is now null and void – while the other party claim that they have furnished money enough to pay the assessment work required on a placer claim for another year – and can hold it if they wish too – and if there should be a contest Lambreth would be beaten I think for he hasn't anything to fight a corporation with.

From what I saw of Lambreth in the one interview – I make him out a worse crank than Weston – and that he is wholly unreliable in his dealings is the evidence of about all who know him.

He said he could show me if I would go over; five acres of better ground than any he had got worked – had not let the other parties know of it – and I believe from his description of the lay of the ground and the croppings that he has got a good quarry – and if he could be trusted to deal with – and the thing wasn't so badly mixed up with others I would like to take hold of it for a while and see what could be found.

As for buying him out – hiring or leasing the ground nothing could be done with him – as he regards it worth more than any gold or silver mine in the State.

It may be that after he has held on to it for another season and has no better luck in finding buyers for his specimens that he can be dealt with in some kind of reason – but as he feels now there is little use of trying to have much to do with him.

I have set no time as yet to go east – will write you before I go – shall want to go down into Virginia if I go back and take a look for fossils. I had a letter last summer from an old army comrade (in Virginia) who says he found bones so plenty on his farm that he was going to try to sell them for fertilizers.

Respectfully Yours
M. P. Felch

Felch writes to Marsh that he is back east visiting. He gives information on how he can be reached and when he will visit New Haven.

M. P. Felch June 9th, 1991

ans June 10th [note attached to top of letter]

Piermont N. H. 6-9-1991

Prof. Marsh

Dear Sir,

I arrived here some three weeks since – am enjoying my visit first rate – and feeling better in health every day of my stay.

I go from here to Post Mills, Vermont to-morrow where I shall make a visit of a week or ten days and then to Providence R. I. unless the weather gets too warm – in which case I may go up to Montreal until the extreme hot weather is over. Before returning from Providence or before going there I thought if you were to be at home for a few days that I would go to New Haven – go there direct from Post Mills in ten days or so – or go to Providence first and from there to New Haven and then home to this place. If nothing happens to prevent may stay here until October or later. My address for the present will be “Post Mills – V^t”

Very Resp’y

M. P. Felch

Will not be at home then I can put off the visit there until just before going home.

My address at Providence will be – No. 7. Charles Street

Respectfully Yours

M. P. Felch

Marsh writes to Felch, who is in the east, that it would be better to come to New Haven after commencement, and that he should be his guest at the Tontine Hotel, near the museum.

New Haven, Conn.,

June 10th, 1891.

Dear Mr. Felch., -

Your note of yesterday reached me this morning, and I am very glad indeed to know that you are in the East and in such good health.

I hope you will certainly visit New Haven, and I trust that we can arrange it so that I shall be here when you come. I think, on the whole, it would be better for you to come after your Providence visit, as I should have more time to show you around the museum after our commencement racket is over. Please let me know whether you decide to go to Montreal, before going to Providence, and we can arrange a date for your visit here.

When you do come, you will find the Tontine Hotel a quiet place near the museum, and I shall expect you to be my guest during your stay there. Hoping your health will continue to improve.

Yours, very truly,
O. C. Marsh

Felch, still back east, writes to Marsh details of his trip and how he can be reached.

M. P. Felch

(ans. Oct 27th, 1891) [Note attached to top of letter]

(Providence R. I. 10-24-1891

(No 7 Chas St)

Prof. Marsh

Dear Sir

I have just received a letter from home and they tell me there has been a letter waiting for me from you for some little time.

I had intended to go home before this – but it has been so pleasant and I have been feeling so well here that I have prolonged my stay – and shall probably not get home now before the 15th or 20th of next month – unless something special turns up that requires me to go home before.

I shall be here at Providence for a week or so more and then go to Michigan for a short stay and then home.

A letter directed as above will reach me here. My health has improved greatly and I am as heavy in weight as ever before in... [The rest of this letter is missing.]