

Biology Building  
Jan. 15, 1932

Dr. W. L. McAtee  
Div. of Food Habits Research  
U. S. Biological Survey  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Dr. McAtee:

I was much gratified to receive your offer and am giving it full consideration. I have only one other possibility which I rate worthy of comparison with the one you mention--a game research position at Iowa State College (Ames). Nothing tangible has come from Iowa as yet, but Leopold has called for a showdown. He has asked the Iowa people for a definite commitment within 30 days. Could you grant me that much time in which to make a final reply?

From the broad outlines of the two propositions, I'm inclined to favor Iowa. Iowa seems to afford more opportunity for personal research, and I already have in mind a couple problems there that I'd like to tackle. I also have a sort of vague notion that I belong in a university. Then, too, I'm nearly thirty and a little tired of having no residence in particular; maybe I ought to settle down somewhat.

On the other hand I plainly see that a period of service with the Biological Survey would be invaluable experience for me. Although I can't say that I'd anticipate with pleasure some of the features of Grange's job--for example, the widespread and consequently superficial participation in numerous research projects instead of the intensive local research which I have done to date--I admit that such may be exactly what I need to develop future balance and vision. Nothing I say in this letter is to imply that my own personal likes and dislikes are going to be allowed to exert undue influence upon my ultimate choice; I have in the past been known to take no small amount of punishment simply because it was for my own good. Aside from the salary, I feel that I should expect no less than two things of a job; first, that it be sufficiently pleasant and adapted to my qualifications to enable me to do good work; second, that it be directly or indirectly a vehicle of progress.

I have made inquiries of two of my committee members at the University as to what would constitute a fair salary. Wagner, my major professor, tells me that new zoology Ph.Ds who accept teaching positions for the 10-month academic year receive beginning salaries ranging from \$2,500 to \$3,500, an average of \$3,000. Research men are



paid higher. Dickson, professor of plant pathology (jointly U.S.D.A. and University of Wisconsin), says that none of the research Ph.Ds turned out by the plant pathology department in the last four years have drawn beginning salaries of less than \$3,000; they are ordinarily placed in the Bureau of Plant Industry as Associate Pathologists with a minimum salary of \$3,250 and a maximum of \$4,000. Without knowing, I would suspect the Biological Survey scale for Associate Biologists to be similar.

I do not flatter myself as deserving at this stage the top \$4,000; nor do I, in view of my three years' virtually full time research on the quail (with the exception of a few hours per week spent in classrooms--I did most of my scholastic work at night) and my years of previous field experience, regard myself as rating only the \$3,250 minimum. Intermediate between these figures is \$3,600, which on the basis of Wagner's and Dickson's information I would judge a reasonable salary. If my way of calculating does not seem valid to you, I would be glad to have your advice.

I am not sure just when I could complete my Wisconsin quail work. My thesis must be handed in the first of May, and it should be ready for typing by the first of April. Progress is plenty slow, especially now, when my winter field work demands so much of my daylight time. I dare not leave on any extended trips before my thesis is done. In this respect there can be no slip-up. And I must be in Madison around the first of June to take my final examination, and also must be present for Commencement. However, I am taking no class work this year and could conceivably spare parts of April and May for Grange and Stoddard.

This, then, is roughly how matters stand. There is for me no other equally attractive position in sight, save for the admittedly nebulous Iowa prospect. In the abstract, I favor Iowa slightly, though I sense that the Biological Survey offers advantages to a comparative youngster like myself which probably cannot be duplicated elsewhere.

At any rate, regardless of whether anything comes of this correspondence or not, I certainly appreciate your kindness in giving me first chance at the position. I will let you know immediately if more definite developments turn up.

Yours sincerely,

Paul L. Errington  
In Charge, Quail Investigation