

(COPY).

THE AUSTRALASIAN ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION 1911-14.

The University,  
ADELAIDE, 5th Oct., 1931.

The Hon. W. Davies,  
Minister for Education,  
SYDNEY.

Dear Sir,

Is the report in the daily Press correct - namely, that your Government has decided to cease publishing the Australasian Antarctic Expedition 1911-14 reports?

Whilst appreciating the financial stringency of the times, I regret that you have not found it possible to carry out the agreement made last year between your predecessor in Office and myself acting for the Expedition - namely, that the printing of manuscripts in hand would be proceeded with provided I took steps to hasten the conclusion of the work and to have forwarded to Sydney items of the Expedition assets covered in the original agreement.

Before proceeding South last year, I took steps to carry out my part of that agreement, with the intention of completing same upon return. Months later, when I returned to Australia, I found that, contrary to the extended agreement, your Government had not taken any steps whatever to have set up in type the numerous manuscripts awaiting printing.

Indeed, on the contrary, such manuscripts as had been lying at the Government Printing Office had been sent back during my absence to Adelaide to await my arrival, as there appeared to be no prospect of printing them.

Therefore, as the Government evidently had no intention of carrying into effect the agreement made with me, there was no urgency for me to secure the forwarding to Sydney of items, if any, already due to be sent and not yet delivered.

Nevertheless, I have been going over such items relating to the Expedition as are in my care here with a view to despatching at as early a date as possible everything that can be sent, not indispensable for the completion of outstanding manuscripts.

Such items as it is essential to retain here for reference and description in order to complete the several manuscripts yet outstanding can be deposited with the Curator of the South Australian Museum, should you feel that they will be safer in his hands than in the Geological Department of this University.

It will help me very much if a list can be supplied of the items that have already been received in Sydney in accordance with the agreement. In the case of some of the items which I myself have forwarded I have received no acknowledgement of their reception, and in regard to the Biological collections, these were being attended to by Professor Haswell and editors of Series C reports, so that I am not aware of what has been received in that connection or what has not.

From some remarks that have been made, it would appear that there is a feeling in some quarters in Sydney that I am trying to evade forwarding the items intended for the New South Wales Government under the agreement. This is, of course, an utterly unwarranted insinuation. One could wish no  
/better



better housing for the splendid collections and relics of our life's effort than the Sydney public institutions, otherwise I should not have originally selected Sydney as their depository. No doubt this tribute arises largely from the fact that my youthful life and education was received in Sydney.

You will get the whole of the assets as contracted, but as already explained, some items are yet in use in preparation of manuscripts. Were you to deem it within your rights to request these latter to be forwarded forthwith and demand same, you would be ensuring the cancellation of the value of the materials and of any useful report thereon. A crime would be committed against science and reason and a great injustice done to myself and those who so splendidly co-operated in fighting the raw-ribbed wild in the Antarctic.

I cannot think that those who are advising you in this matter would advocate such action. In fact I am convinced that there is definite misunderstanding in several directions relating to this matter.

For instance may be mentioned that almost nothing has been printed during the last two years, notwithstanding the plethora of manuscripts in hand awaiting printing. Thus the work has been seriously held up in Sydney, not by me.

Secondly, the manuscripts to be printed to complete the work can be produced for a sum certainly not exceeding £2,000. This is a firm quote by Hessel & Sons of Adelaide. It is based on the style already produced and the quantity of print and illustrations yet to appear. The work is about three-quarters completed. This is quite definite, though I did observe in a Press statement that some unauthorised estimate of the work indicated that only half had yet been produced.

I should like to hear that you can see your way to complete either the whole of the printing or of such manuscripts as are already awaiting publication.

I do appreciate the difficult financial times through which Australia is now passing and would be glad to contribute towards the cost of this printing were my own resources not already drained to defray expenses in connection with the preparation of the manuscripts. I could, however, engage that if your Government would agree to print the manuscripts now awaiting printing, I could find the money necessary to complete the remaining part of the work.

Perhaps you are not aware that I have spent a considerable sum of my own money in subsidising and preparing the reports; that the only money that I ever received from the Expedition funds was the sum of £200 a year for the time that I was absent from Adelaide University, which sum was of the nature of a refund for payment made by me to a locum tenens; also that the proceeds of "The Home of the Blizzard", the popular story of the Expedition which I published, were all paid into the Expedition fund.

With apologies for again troubling you with this matter, and with the request for an early reply.

I am,  
Yours faithfully,

(SGD.) DOUGLAS HANSON.

Mr. A. J. Kent,  
Government Printer.

For favour of a report.

WJS  
for U.S.

20.10.31.