

RG:0002,c.0049; FILE # 00597;
STEA - STEL, 1921- 1932

FILE 597

STEA - STEL

MC GILL UNIVERSITY
MONTREAL

FACULTY OF ARTS
OFFICE OF THE DEAN

June 17, 1931.

Sir Arthur Currie, G.C.M.G.,
Principal,
McGill University.

My dear Principal,

I am writing this letter to you for Major Harwood Steele who, as you probably know, is a son of General Steele, late of Winnipeg. Major Steele has been contemplating a solo voyage of exploration from the Near East overland to Central China. I am enclosing a rough map showing the projected routes of this expedition. I have had several conversations with Major Steele during last winter and his first suggestion was that McGill University might give him a simple official letter stating that he had our best wishes for the success of the expedition and that we were interested in any new geographical or anthropological knowledge which he might obtain. He tells me that Cambridge University has suggested giving him a similar letter indicating that the expedition is wholly peaceful and unofficial in character. He also tells me that the Montreal Star has proposed making him a correspondent of theirs, provided always that he can offer them good reasons why the people of Canada should be interested at all in Chinese affairs and in Eastern affairs near and far, and when I saw him the other day I promised to bring his matter to your attention with a view to arranging a short interview with ^{you.} ~~him.~~ I should be greatly pleased, therefore, if you will make an appointment with Major Steele by letter at his address 456 Pine Avenue, West, or permit me to do so on your behalf.

I have no means of knowing Major Steele's qualifications for undertaking such an expedition, but I can easily see its significance. I wonder

if the people of the British Commonwealth realise how inevitable it is that the Soviet Union, once known as the Empire of All the Russias, and the British Commonwealth are certain to meet each other all along the line from the Bosphorus to the China Sea. There is it seems to me very little danger at present that Russia will ever break through Europe far enough to seriously disturb us, but if they push southwards, as they are almost certain to do, the British Commonwealth will have to meet them single handed without an ally. Every little information, therefore, which it is possible to get as a result of an expedition of this kind may be invaluable in the future.

Yours very truly,

Genl. A. Mackay

Dean

Encl.

June 18, 1931

Major Harwood Steele,
456 Pine Avenue West,
Montreal. P. Q.

Dear Sir,

Sir Arthur Currie asks me to say
that he will be very glad to see you if you can
make it convenient to come to the University on
Friday afternoon. Perhaps you would telephone me
between now and then.

Yours faithfully,

Secretary to the Principal



June 19th, 1931.

The Honourable Herbert Marler,
Care Secretary of State for External Affairs,
O t t a w a .

I am taking the liberty of giving
this letter of introduction to Major Harwood Steele, M.C.,
who has it in mind to visit China in the near future for
certain reasons which he will explain to you. I have
strongly advised him that the first thing he should do
is to consult with you, as I know what you can tell him
regarding political conditions and trade possibilities
will be extremely valuable.

With cordial good wishes,

I am,

Ever yours faithfully,

WESTBROOK STEELE
LAWRENCE COLLEGE
APPLETON, WISCONSIN

March 29, 1932

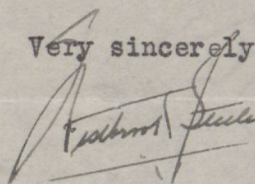
Dear Sir Arthur:

I have just returned to Appleton and wish to take the first opportunity to thank you for the very pleasant interview you gave me while I was in Montreal and the hospitality you extended to me. It is my hope that at some time in the not distant future you may find occasion to visit this section and that I may be in a position to reciprocate your courtesies.

Under separate cover I am sending to you copies of the publications of the library of the Institute of Paper Chemistry. I hope that you will find them of sufficient interest to add them to your files.

With kind personal regard, I am

Very sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Westbrook Steele", written over a horizontal line.

Sir Arthur Curry
McGill University
3420 University Street
Montreal, Quebec
Canada

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April
Fifteenth
1921.

V. Stefansson, Esq.,
Harvard Club,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Stefansson:-

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of March 12th with reference to a three year polar expedition which you are planning.

I have had careful enquiries made among our graduates to ascertain if there were any who would care to take advantage of your offer, but so far we have had no applications.

With all good wishes for your success, I am,

Yours faithfully,

Principal.

Ottawa, Ontario,
12th March, 1921.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Dear Sir Arthur,

I am planning a three year polar expedition. This year I want to send north to a point within the Arctic Circle an advance party, consisting of a Topographer, a Botanist, a Zoologist, a Geologist, and one or two other men. While it is hoped that some incidental scientific work can be done this year, the task of the party will be largely the preparation for more extensive work the following two years. Next year a second party of five or more men will go out to join these. The expedition will then be complete and will carry on at least for two years further.

My experience has been that generally the younger the man the more readily he adapts himself to northern conditions. For that reason I should prefer to get men just out of college. The chief qualification is temperamental. There should be no tendency to imagine that you are a hero or that it constitutes remarkable hardships to be away from movies and operas for a year or two. Moderately good health is desirable. The man should be especially a good walker; his circulation should be at least so good that there is no marked tendency to numbness of hands or feet, and the eyesight should be above the average. No man is useful in mid-winter work in the far north who is not able to get along without glasses.

- I -

Sir Arthur Currie,
Principal,
McGill University,
M O N T R E A L,
Que.

I am writing thinking that among the graduates of the last year or two, or among those graduating this year either from the college or from some of your Departments, such as the Medical School, you may know of one or more young men who would like to become members of such an expedition. I should think a returned soldier would be preferable, other things being equal. The wages would be nominal - \$1800 a year. The man should at the very least have specialized as an undergraduate in Botany, Zoology or Geology; preferably he should have had at least a year's post-graduate work.

This letter is confidential in so far that I should not like to get any mention of the undertaking into the public press.

I should appreciate it very much if you would refer this letter to anyone in your faculty who might be able to find young men of desirable qualifications. They would address any communication to me at the Harvard Club, New York City.

This expedition will be a Canadian enterprise. I know of some desirable young men in the United States but prefer not to take them unless I fail to get Canadians of the right qualifications.

Yours sincerely,

V. Stefansson.
H.



WALTER RAYMOND
PROPRIETOR

PASADENA SOUTHERN
CALIFORNIA

March 18, 1924.

Sir Arthur Currie,
McGill University,
Montreal, P. Q. Canada.

Dear Sir Arthur Currie:

Perhaps you may have read some of Mr. Vilhjalmur Stefansson's books. His work as an explorer is greatly appreciated in Great Britain and in the United States. It seems to me that it has not been adequately appreciated in our own country.

He is to speak in Montreal in the early future, I understand, and I venture to suggest that you might like to get in touch with him during his visit. In the Department of Geography at Cambridge, Stefansson's ~~publication~~ "Friendly Arctic" is the standard work on Polar Exploration.

We are enjoying a very delightful climate here and expect to return to Ottawa about the middle of April.

Faithfully yours,

W. L. Baden