

Just imagine what an old fellow I  
am. I completed my 72<sup>nd</sup> year  
last Saturday!!

Fallowfield Dec 1<sup>st</sup> /88

My Dear Friend

Dining out yesterday,  
I sat side by side with a  
friend of yours, a Major Goldsmith  
of the Fusiliers, who made me  
uneasy by telling me that you  
had suffered from a nasty fall  
whilst you were geologising  
somewhere or other. Pray let  
me have a line from some  
of you, telling me that you  
are no worse for the accident.  
Both you and I are advancing  
too far in life to endure much  
of that sort of accident. My  
wife, Herbert and I spent our

autumnal excursion on the Engstelen Alp, 5000 feet high on the Jock pass in Switzerland: & on our way thither I got a nasty kick on the shin from a horse which inconveniently crippled my freedom of locomotion but without leaving any permanent mischief. Still such things are unpleasants. — I was more struck than ever with the vast development of the Cretaceous Jurassic limestone of the Oberland and of the evidence they afford of the comparatively recent elevation of the Alps above the sea — Was it not Elie de Beaumont who first observed that "the more the Alps were studied, the younger they grew". Beyond this I did nothing in Switzerland but sketch

at home I am now beginning to get the Batavical museum into order; and if ever the opportunity occurs of sending us

any of the vegetable products,  
such as fruits - seeds &c of your  
Canadian woods I should be  
so much obliged to you - I especially  
want the cones of your Conifers  
and the seeds of fruits of your  
American Juglandaceae. I am  
especially anxious to make my  
Collection of the Gymnosperms  
by fruits as complete as possible  
embracing those of the entire  
world. I have already a good  
nucleus. One that I have  
especially facted in obtaining  
is the Japanese Glyptostrobus.  
Have you examined Schenks  
Book? It seems to be an  
amusing echo of Polun's, even  
copying the latter's mistakes.  
When will you be issuing a  
new edition of your own. When  
you do so, could you not with  
advantage bring out more  
prominently the remarkable

William  
development of the exogenous  
dec 1888  
form of growth amongst the  
Carboniferous, if not also amongst  
the Devonian plants. Do  
also reconsider your fourth  
form of Calamite. The longer  
I work at the subject the more  
I am convinced that the Coactyl  
had no ridges or furrows: That  
there were variations in the relative  
size of the medulla may be pro-  
bable; as was certainly the case in  
small twigs - but even these were  
mainly due to age.

My Part XV is ordered to be  
printed. It contains some very  
interesting raphidopterids, & rosettes  
of aquatic types; but one of the  
References has objected even to my  
naming the populicity of Chicago -  
Carp affinites! -

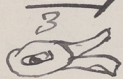
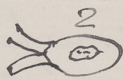
All here join in loving rem-  
embrances to you; to Lady Dawson  
& to Eva - My wife will be writing  
very & humbly  
Ever affectionately yours  
W. C. Williamson

Studying, when I wrote my  
last paper on Calamites to  
which you have referred in  
your Book: We are certainly  
making steady progress, but  
Renault will never yield  
anything. He is like what one  
of our writers compared to the  
Hulks moored in the Thames-  
Stationary, whilst the stream  
of progress is perpetually  
flowing past them. Eh bien!

It is not of much consequence  
so long as the stream continues  
to flow.

I am now working at a very  
interesting stem which links  
together the genera Anacharop-  
teris and Lygopteris as well  
as my Rachiopteris Corrugata  
& some Pithos like Rachiopteris  
insignis &c. These appear to constitute

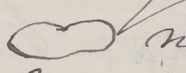
a very special group of Ferns  
to which my *Rachiopteris Duplex*  
also belongs. They seem to have  
had this remarkable feature  
that they gave off <sup>secondary</sup> branches  
from opposite sides of the  
primary petiole in pairs



while the  
secondary branches again gave  
off tertiary ones. Yet we have  
found nothing like this in our  
ordinary ferns in *Phales* &c.  
It is an extraordinary thing  
that we have found so many  
striking structures for which  
we can find no certain  
correlates without structure  
but with the contours  
preserved:

I don't think I have written  
since I got my magnificent

Stigmarea put together in  
our museum. You never  
saw anything so grand in  
your life & I suspect never  
dreamt of seeing anything  
so grand in a museum!

The coats have scarcely under-  
gone the slightest degree of  
flattening. The 4 large primary  
& secondary ones are all  
cylindrical as when they were  
living - and even the sixteen  
tertiary ones are almost all  
cylindrical - a few of them  
have only become very  
slightly flattened  near  
their extremities. The  
specimen settles all remnants  
of nonsense about Stigmarea  
for ever and ever - with  
any one who is capable  
of understanding the nature

of significance of the evidence  
of facts. Except at the extreme  
tips of my sixteen coats not  
a fragment is missing; such  
is their perfection. But  
I must stop all this gossip  
as I shall have even your  
sneering at me for wasting  
so much of your time. I  
Here we are all well and  
all my people join me  
in affectionate remembrance  
to Lady Dawson - Eva and  
yourself. Tell Lady Dawson  
that the progress Herbert is  
making with his drawing  
is astounding even to me.

I am my Dear Parent  
as ever yours

W. C. Williamson