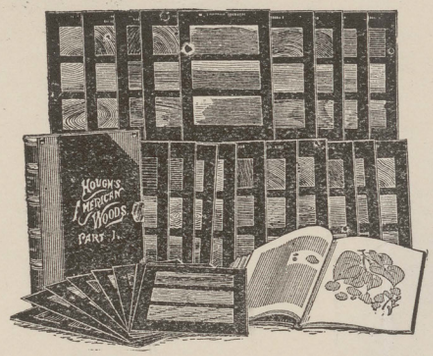
Ridgway Collection

ROMEYN B. HOUGH, B. A.,

AUTHOR AND PUBLISHER



A VOLUME OF "AMERICAN WOODS" DISPLAYED.

AMERICAN WOODS — A publication on the trees of the U. S. illustrated by actual specimens of their woods — three distinct sections of each.

HANDBOOK OF THE TREES OF THE NORTHERN STATES AND CANADA — Photo-descriptive of the leaves, fruits, winter twigs and typical barks of each species and magnified wood structures of the principal species, with maps indicating distribution and full text. One unfamiliar with botany can identify the trees by comparison with its illustrations. Its value is in its completeness.

STEREOPTICON SLIDES of trees, their leaves, flowers, fruits and barks

MICROSCOPE AND STEREOPTICON MOUNTS OF WOODS.

WOODEN CROSS-SECTION CARDS for all fancy and business purposes.

☞ *Write for further information stating which subject interests you most.*

Branch Offices
NEW YORK, 50 Church St. (Hudson Terminal Bldg.) Room 552
WASHINGTON, D. C., 500 F St. N. W. (Loan & Trust Bldg.) Rooms 303-4

Lowville, N. Y., June 12, 1909

Dear Prof. Ridgway:

I am in receipt of your esteemed favor and have carefully considered its contents.

When I started out in business- the issuing of my American Woods- it did not occur to me to seek to arrange with any publishing house to handle it for me, perhaps because of its being so different from ordinary books. I gathered the woods and brought out the work myself and then mainly by circularizing and correspondence ~~mainly~~ I worked up quite a substantial subscription list for a proposed series of similar volumes. So I worked into the selling business as well as the writing and publishing rather naturally and without much forethought.

When I brought out the Handbook I felt quite as competent to handle that also as I had been thus far with the American Woods; so I went at it. I reasoned in this way- that the mails will carry an envelope containing prospectus and letter as cheeply for me as for any publishing house, and then whatever sales result will bring much larger returns- the money would be all mine; whereas if a publishing house would would send the circulars I would only get a very small portion of the returns from the sales. Circularizing and corresponding can be done mostly by assistants whose wages are not high and thousands of addresses of likely people and institutions can be easily procured.

Of course there is a lot of drudgery about the selling part of the business, but if you have good clerical help that need not burden you p personally very heavily.

If you should undertake the publishing and handling of your proposed work yourself and should, after a little experience in the marketing, decide that you did not like that part of the undertaking you might be able to arrange with some publishing house to handle it for you on commission.

Britton and Brown published their Illustrated Flora of the Northern States at their own expense and arranged with Scribners Sons to sell it on commission- 35% I think. I thought that a very good arrangement for the authors to make, and Mr. Britton has told me that it was netting them much better returns than the royalty plan would.

You could circularize the trade, stating what trade discount you allow, and then the dealers would know that you are prepared to supply the work and they would no doubt send you many orders. You could send your prospectus to the public libraries, schools, etc., and it would seem as if you could make many sales.

Some who think of publishing privately issue a nice prospectus with sample pages and send it out widely in advance of publication, to see how orders are likely to come in and whether it would be profitable to go on and publish.

Yes, I should call the Crataegus, of which you send specimen, to be C. crus-galli.

Do not hesitate to ask me further if I can be of any service to you.

Sincerely yours

Romeyn B. Hough