

SCIENTIFIC.

C.S.

1931.

No. 261/31.

S. of S. Circular:

SUBJECT.

1931.

14th July.

COLLECTING OF NATURAL HISTORY SPECIMENS  
IN BRITISH TERRITORIES.

Previous Paper.

MINUTES.

*D. of D. Circular despatch of 14th July, 1931.*

*Copy to Mag. S.S. for his information, please.*

*12/13/8*

*Minute to Magistrate, 21th Georgia 14th August, 1931.*

*Ag. for let.*

*Please do.*

*J. M. S.*

*15.8.31.*

Subsequent Paper.

Hon Col Secy:

Thank you, seen. To my mind this is  
a most deplorable request, or suggestion  
for a great Institution to put forward under  
any circumstances. Re 4. No ① red. I could say  
what happened to £1,000 worth of rare  
skeletons that I presented through the Colony  
some years ago to the B.M. - its too painful to  
mention

Aff Bennett  
as Nat.

15/9/31.

Minute from Magistrate, South Georgia. 27th Aug. 1931.

3.

y.z.

Schittat. ? kil lesson.

JMS

16.9.31.

Hon C.S.

Noted.

JMS  
16-9-31

JMS

16.9.31

Acc. Despatch from S of S. of 23/4/35.

⑤

C.S.O. No. 26/31.....

Inside Minute Paper.

Sheet No. 1.1.1.

By: Naturalist.

To note reads 4 and 5.

MCH

Ed.

26.6.35

Hon: Col: Secy:

Thank you, noted.

A J Bennett

26/6.35

P.H.  
28/6/35

CIRCULAR.

Downing Street,  
14th July, 1931.



Sir,

I have the honour to inform the Trustees of the British Museum have recently enquired whether it could be pointed out, as a matter of routine, to all applicants for special facilities for collecting natural history specimens in British territories that in return for the facilities accorded it would be appropriate to share the collections obtained with the British Museum (Natural History).

2. It appears to me that, if it is to be regarded as a general principle that foreign expeditions operating in British territory should be invited to contribute a proportion of their trophies to any British institution in return for the special facilities for the collection of specimens granted to them, the museums and collections maintained in the territory concerned have a prior claim thereto. Moreover, the desirability of imposing on foreign-organized expeditions any conditions of this nature might, in my view, suitably be left to the discretion of the authorities responsible for the administration of the Colony or other British territory in which it is proposed that any individual expedition should operate.

3. While, therefore, I do not feel called upon to make a definite request that a condition such as that suggested by the Trustees of the British Museum should be imposed upon all applicants for facilities to collect natural history specimens in British territories, I should raise no objection if the local authorities concerned saw fit to make the grant of the facilities desired subject to such a condition. At the same time, I am prepared to leave it to the local authorities concerned in each case to decide whether it would be desirable in any individual case to extend the condition to include the supply of specimens to any local museum.

4. The Trustees of the British Museum have also expressed a desire that a suggestion should be conveyed to officers in the remoter parts of the Empire who may have opportunities of collecting rare or little-known natural history specimens that the British Museum (Natural History) has a prior claim over foreign museums upon any specimens those officers may feel disposed to collect. I shall be glad if you will bring this suggestion to the notice of any officers in the territory under your administration who are likely to be concerned.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

PASSFIELD.

The Officer Administering  
the Government of

No. 261/31.

(It is requested that, in any reference to this minute the above Number and the date may be quoted).

MINUTE.

14th August, 1931.

*From*


THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,

Stanley, Falkland Islands.

*To* Magistrate,

South Georgia.

I am directed to forward herewith for your information, a copy of a Circular despatch of the 14th July, 1931, which has been received from the Secretary of State.

  
Colonial Secretary.

FALKLAND ISLANDS.



C.S. No. 261/31.

Departmental Number.

*P 272/30*

Date 27th August, 1931.

From Magistrate.  
South Georgia.

To Hon. Colonial Secretary.  
Stanley.

Reference  
Numbers. }

*Red 2.*

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Memo of the 14th August, No. 261/31 forwarding a copy of Secretary of State's Circular Despatch of the 14th July, 1931.

*L. Barros*  
Magistrate.

(4)

Enclosure in Circular despatch dated 23rd April, 1935.

British Museum (Natural History),  
Cromwell Road,  
London: S.W.7.

27th March, 1935.

Sir,

I am directed by the Trustees of the British Museum to refer to the final paragraph of the circular letter which Lord Passfield addressed to Colonial Governments on 14th July, 1931, drawing attention to certain ways in which Colonial administrations and officials could assist the work of this Museum and supply deficiencies in the National Collections.

This paragraph suggested to officers in the remoter parts of the Empire that the British Museum (Natural History) had a prior claim over foreign museums to any specimens such officers might feel disposed to collect.

The Trustees have now directed me to ask you to ascertain whether Secretary Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister would be prepared to go somewhat further and to give instructions that in the case of collections made by officers in their official capacities (e.g. geologists carrying out surveys) the claims of this Museum, as the principal repository in the British Empire of natural history specimens, should be borne in mind by the authorities controlling the disposal of the collections so made. The Trustees feel that there is considerable danger at present that valuable collections may be virtually lost to science owing to the fact that there appears to be no clear understanding as to the most suitable institution to preserve them. It is realized that it may in some cases be desired to retain specimens in the countries where they were collected, but the Trustees feel that so far as fauna, flora, fossils, and minerals are concerned, collections, especially from little known localities, should, whenever possible, be sent to a museum where staff is available to work them out and where the specimens will be at the disposal of those who need them for scientific study.

The Trustees would further be grateful to Secretary Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister if he could see his way to bringing more prominently to the notice of Colonial officials the fact that this museum is anxious to receive collections, especially from little known areas, and is always ready to advise and assist any who would be interested to make such collections.

I am, &c.

C. TATE REGAN

The Under-Secretary of State,  
Colonial Office,  
S.W.1.

23 JUN 1935  
TALKLANDS

CIRCULAR

Downing Street,

23rd April, 1935.

Sir,

*Recd!*

With reference to the final paragraph of Lord Passfield's Circular despatch of the 14th of <sup>JUL</sup> May, 1931, I have the honour to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a letter from the Director of the British Museum (Natural History) drawing attention further to ways in which Colonial administrations and officials could assist the work of the Museum and supply deficiencies in the National Collections.

2. I shall be obliged if you will consider sympathetically how far effect can be given to his suggestions in the territory under your administration.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

The Officer Administering  
the Government of