

**An Early Application for a Bird Collecting Permit (1877).**—Before the U.S. Government and various state governments began issuing permits for collecting birds, birds' nests and eggs, and similar objects of natural history, licenses for such activities were usually granted by local scientific institutions or by state commissioners of fish and game. On 23 April 1877, Joseph I. Horton of Ipswich, Mass. wrote to Dr. A. S. Packard, Jr., Director of the Peabody Academy of Science in Salem, Mass., the following request:

"I am informed that you have authority to grant licences to persons who wish to collect birds for cabinets or scientific purposes. If such is the case, I would like to apply for one, too, as I understand that one has been given to an individual in this town. [Possibly Dr. Charles W. Townsend, author of "The Birds of Essex County, Mass."]

"I am a teacher in the grammar school and would like to make what additions I can to our cabinet which has been started, but a short time. If you want references, I am happy to refer you to M. N. Fiske, teacher of the high school, a person equally interested in the matter."

Three days later Horton sent the following proposal to Dr. Packard, who had apparently suggested the specimens collected be donated to museums or colleges in the state.

"The undersigned, Joseph I. Horton, a resident of Ipswich, Mass., having applied to the Peabody Academy of Science for a certificate to the effect 'that he is engaged in the scientific study of Ornithology, or is collecting in the interest of, or for the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Cambridge, the Massachusetts Agricultural College at Amherst, the Boston Society of Natural History, the Worcester Lyceum and Natural History Society, the Peabody Academy of Science of Salem, or for any incorporated society of natural history or college in the state [Mass.] and therefore may at any season of the year take or kill any undomesticated birds, or take their nests and eggs,' does hereby agree and promise that in availing himself of this privilege, he will strictly confine himself to the spirit and letter of Sec. 4 of Chap. 155 of the Acts of the General Court of Mass. for 1877, entitled 'an act for the preservation and protection of birds, birds' eggs, deer and game,' the substance of which is given above."

Signed,  
Joseph I. Horton

Witnessed: Charles Palmer, M.D.  
M. N. Fiske

At the top of the page of Horton's letter Dr. Packard wrote, "Permit sent May 2, 1877."

Ten years later, Arthur C. Bent sent a similar request for a bird collecting permit to F. W. Putnam, formerly Director and Curator of Vertebrates at the Peabody Academy of Science at Salem, and at the time was serving on the Massachusetts Commission for Inland Fish and Game (see Dexter, *Bird-Banding*, 35: 121-122, 1964). Bent was also successful in obtaining the permit needed for his field research in ornithology. Permission to quote from the Horton-Packard Correspondence was kindly given by Dr. Bryant F. Tolles, Director, Essex Institute, Salem, Mass.—RALPH W. DEXTER, *Department of Biological Science, Kent State University, Kent, OH 44242*. Received 17 October 1979, accepted 13 January 1980.