



Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation
5th Floor, Hunt Library
Carnegie Mellon University
4909 Frew Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3890
Telephone: 412-268-2434
Email: huntinst@andrew.cmu.edu
Web site: www.huntbotanical.org

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About the Institute

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

Hunt Institute was dedicated in 1961 as the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, an international center for bibliographical research and service in the interests of botany and horticulture, as well as a center for the study of all aspects of the history of the plant sciences. By 1971 the Library's activities had so diversified that the name was changed to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. Growth in collections and research projects led to the establishment of four programmatic departments: Archives, Art, Bibliography and the Library.

BOTANICAL MUSEUM OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY

*Oxford Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts*

September 4, 1946

Dear Dr. Woodson:

Your letter of July 31, has been before me for a long time. My failure to make a prompt reply is explained by my uncertainties and by my growing hesitation to undertake exacting work.

You are welcome to any drawings we have which will illustrate the remaining parts of the orchid flora of Panama. I have so informed Mr. Dillon.

As for going on where Williams left off. that is quite another matter. Of course I want to help you, but there are difficulties. Mr. Schwinfurth seems to have an unending job with his orchid flora of Peru so that I do not see how we can look to him. Correll might be willing to take on Panama after we finish the orchid flora of Guatemala for the Field Museum. But he has a strong desire to do the orchids of the United States for which he now has a nearly complete set of drawings. I am supposed to be co-author, but I assure you I am not interested. Correll could do a better job than Williams turned out. Sadly enough the "lone wolf" tactics that Williams developed resulted in some very sloppy key-work in the part of the Panama flora he attempted. Correll has a Guggenheim Fellowship and will probably hang round for a year. But I cannot go on paying part of his salary after the Guatemalan orchid flora is completed. Perhaps it would be cheaper for you to use Correll than to bring Allen to Harvard, although per-

sonally I should welcome Allen and do everything in my power to help him go through with what promises to be a very difficult piece of work.

One very strong reason for my hesitation to undertake the work is found in my habit of spending six months each year in Florida. If I were to be here this winter nothing would give me greater pleasure than to play again with Panama orchids. I could get out simultaneously my Orchid Flora of Barro Colorado, the manuscript for which and most of the drawings found an end about six years ago!

Shweinfurth is still on his vacation. When he returns to the Museum I shall discuss this whole matter with him. Your reference to him as about to leave the Museum comes as a complete surprise. He has said nothing to me and surely at his age it would be silly to leave the spot where he is finding satisfying pleasure. He is a very dependable, conscientious chap and I have a very high regard for his orchid work. It would be a crime for him to retire now, even if he could bring himself to do so.

With apologies for a sloppy letter,

I am,

Dear Sir,

Sincerely yours,

Oakes Cramer.

P.S. Fear not! I have no intention of offering my abilities in the realm of stenography

(A)

Post Office Box 43,
Gamboa, Canal Zone
May 7, 1947

Dr. Oakes Ames
Botanical Museum of Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dear Dr. Ames:

Graham Fairchild has been kind enough to lend me a copy of the recent, excellent "Drawings of Florida Orchids", which I find equal to my much prized set of your earlier "Orchidaceae", inherited through the Hunters from C.W. Powell. I am particularly anxious to secure a copy of this latest work since I have, I believe, a nearly complete set of your other publications. It would be greatly appreciated if you could let me know where a copy might be obtained, or better still, if you could place an order in my name with the publisher, or the American Orchid Society, to be mailed and billed direct to my postal box here.

Work continues on collections of Panama Orchids, which seem to be endless, with new species, or extensions of range coming to light on almost every trip. Such slight deviations from the beaten track as the Perlas Islands, and the wet mountain peaks north of El Valle in Coclé Province have recently produced plants of Cyrtopodium punctatum and Polycyenis barbata, both genera previously unrecorded from Panama. Although I have not seen New Guinea, or the mountains of Brazil, I would set the area covered by Costa Rica, Panama and Colombia against any in the world for wealth of species.

Sincerely yours,

Paul H. Allen

BOTANICAL MUSEUM OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY

*Oxford Street
Cambridge 38, Massachusetts*

June 14, 1948

Dear Mr. Allen:

It was a great disappointment for me to reach the Museum after you had departed. There were many things I wished to discuss with you and I was very anxious to see just what use you had made of my very precious collections. You left behind you a wilderness of praise and I heard on all sides kind remarks regarding the impression you made on my colleagues. We hope you carried away a satisfied view of our attitude toward you.

You are welcome to the use of any of the drawings we have. I do not know what arrangements you made with Schweihfurth or Dillon for having reproductions made, but you may give them the necessary instructions.

Well, the Fiftieth Anniversary dinner and the Fiftieth Reunion of my Class are things of the past. Now I may find time to make some better essays than those chosen for the volume called "ORCHIDS IN RETROSPECT".

Sincerely yours,

Oakes Ames.

Mr. Paul H. Allen
Missouri Botanical Garden.

ESQUINAS EXPERIMENT STATION
UNITED FRUIT COMPANY
GOLFITO, COSTA RICA

August 1, 1948

Dear Dr. Ames:

Your very kind letter has been with me for some time, and I hope you will forgive the long delay in answering. We have been on a rather strenuous round of inspection trips in Honduras and here, and I had hoped to have access to my files before again contacting you in regard to the illustrations which you so generously offer to let us use. My files seem to still be on the way, somewhere between Cambridge and Golfito, so I feel that any further delay would be inexcusable.

The total number of plates will be somewhat less than the number indicated in my former letter to you, since I have found that some of these were published in the Annals of the M.B.G. and that they have the cuts there. Until I can lay hands on actual records, I can only ask that if you still have the first list that I sent you that you pass it on to Mr. Dillon, asking him to locate as many of them as possible, and to have him send them on the St. Louis, to Miss Nell Horner, the Editor of Publications. Any which he cannot find in Cambridge which I have listed are probably those which they already have.

I cannot begin to express to you the sense of great privilege that both Mrs. Allen and myself have felt in having been able to spend the winter working in your magnificent herbarium and library. After our long years of field contact with all our precious Panama orchids, it was like a dream come true to do what we could toward working them up under such ideal conditions. We found Mr. Schweinfurth an exception-

ally helpful working companion. I do not read German, and even my Latin is decidedly on the sketchy side, and it would have been impossible to have completed our work without his cooperation, which was so freely given. We have both decided that we have never undertaken a project under so nearly ideal working conditions, and in association with such genuinely pleasant associates. Some work remains to be done on collections from Panama of the first half of the manuscript, that is, the portion published by Louis Williams, and we hope to perhaps be able some day to again spend some time on them in your wonderful herbarium.

If Mr. Dillon feels uncertain as to the actual list of cuts required, he can contact Dr. Robert Woodson at the M.B.G., or I can send him another list when my files arrive. I have gone into the matter of the unfortunate removal of identifying marks from some of the plates borrowed previously with Miss Horner, and I am persuaded that it was completely unintentional, and that in any event that it will not happen again.

Both Dorothy and I regret that we did not have the very great privilege of talking over some of the taxonomic problems with you while there, but we are glad that we could at least meet you, if only for a brief word at your anniversary dinner. Perhaps we can see more of each other when we are again in the United States.

Most sincerely yours,