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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.



Office of Medical Officer in Command,
Marine-Hospital Service,

Mobile, Ala.

Dec. 1, 1898.

My dear mother, I am again late in writing this week, but Sunday, my would-be day for writing was so thoroughly occupied in a social way that it passed without any attention to my correspondence. After the usual hospital duties of that day, which of course we try to curtail as much as possible, I put on my overcoat, which was indeed quite a comfort, and went to Christ Church for services. Mr. Tucker, as usual, gave us a long sermon, but a very good one, after which I joined Mary Minge, Inez Sedon and Miss Corinne Davis to dine at the Minges. He found cousin Maria busy with a beautiful design ordered by the Masons as a parting

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Surgeon.

SUBJECT:

quarters of the crew and were refreshed
with cake and cherry. In the evening I
paid a call on Lieutenant Cook and re-
turned to retire early.

Now, I must go back a few days and
tell you something of the Ketchum reception.
hardly do I know where to begin, it was
indeed a brilliant event. I had made an
engagement to go with Miss Randall and
when we reached the house about nine
o'clock there was an immense crowd pres-
ent. The entire lower floor of the house, two
large rooms on either side and the hallways
were literally packed. the profuse decorations,
the mirrors and polished furniture and every
one in evening dress made the scene one of
gaiety and festiveness. In the first room on
the right the "bride and groom" received their guests

DEC. 1, 1898

Office of Medical Officer in Command,
MARINE HOSPITAL SERVICE.

, 189 .

Surgeon.

SUBJECT:

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No. of Inclosures,

remembrance to rabbi Cohen - it was the
corpse and square in wax, white chry-
santhema, ferns, with in letter "C" in
something else I don't know what - all on
a pedestal of ferns - do you form a very
vivid picture of the design? Mary is
now housekeeper and gave me a very
nice dinner, which she said was also
economical, according to the stipulations
of the contract with Isaac Maria. By the
way, one of the novelties of the menu was
a salad (?) of pecan nuts with mayonnaise
dressing on lettuce leaves - I omitted.
Leaving rather early after dinner I joined
a party who were invited on board the
Light House Steamer Mangrove. He enjoyed
the dinner and the evening very comfortable

assisted by Mrs. Sage, ^{4th} daughter of Gen. Whiting,
and a number of other matrons and maidens, all
in their best "gowns", the former especially,
having laid on the agony "quite heavily". In
the parlor room on the left were spread all
the presents and it was a beautiful sight
to one who could take in the whole. Many
of the articles were very expensive, but I cannot
say as much for their utility, for instance, the
Medical Society gave him a "50" loving cup".
In the dining room around a magnificently
dressed table the guests gathered and were
served with light refreshments, wine and
other things. And to make that park even
more attractive, the prettiest girls in the
town served the dainties. This was not all,
in the rear hall were two immense bowls
of punch - flowing free. As I said the crowd
at that time was immense, and was told that
it had been so for the entire evening - no one
staying but for a short time. Many of the young
folks were asked to stay and dance - the orchestra
was secluded in a balcony on the back gallery - but we
preferred to postpone that part of the program.
The old gentleman seemed to be in the best spirits
and was looking well. This has been written by
matrons, and it was the end of the office hours, so must
close, but quite well, with love to all.

deaths of Mrs John Harris, she went to Epworth Station to visit Amanda,
(Mary Winifred), was
taking with her some
& did not see her
look her husband
not long ago, he was
shot through the ankle
by the falling of a pine
tree. How blood poisoning
a rather that set in
from the infection of
the leg. I am attending.
I wonder if I can tell
you that Dr Higgins
is the poorest surgeon
I ever saw over his little
daughter about a month
agoes yesterday, the morning was occupied
cleaning (2 1/2 hours) & cleaning up, before I
had quite finished around the dinner table
Mrs Collins & Mrs Jimmy Robinson came in
made quite a long visit & their evening
duties were to be attended to as there was
no time to write. I was glad I did not
for last night your very acceptable letter
came. We were interested in the programme,
I think it would be well for Auburn to
get up something of the sort for the
institutes the Prof there hold, the northern
people fix up such things nicely.
The storm you spoke of must have been the

one that wrecked so many vessels on the New England coast, I was reading an account of it last night, about the same time we had very bad weather, cold rains & a gloomy time, as soon as the rain stopped 6 or 8 mule wagons loaded with cotton were put upon the road for Gallien, returning loaded with coal so you can imagine the state of the road between us & that place, ruts almost without a bottom. Today is rather mild, the sun out but shines with rather an uncertain light & I fear we will soon have more rains. Wren says he has seen the sign that never fails. Fox is out bird hunting again today. Bob & Jimmy have been out every day since Jim came down but were unsuccessful, Bob in a fit of anger struck his dog with his 80 dollar gun, broke it

Bob
over the dogs head, strange to say did not kill the dog. It is said Bob has bought out Mr Foldes, I do hope he will not get the P Office but I don't see any one else to take it, Mrs Torbert has moved away.

Reuben was with us Sunday, looking better than usual, told us of a queer marriage at Fannedale. Ella Bethens was engaged to Joe Dollins, her family were opposed to the match, (he is so far beneath her socially) Thanks giving morning he hired a hack, took one of his sisters in, drove to Mrs Bethens for Ella, they then drove to Orr Stickney's house the marriage ceremony was performed & they returned to Fannedale to Thanks giving services, a very inexpensive wedding was it, her friends think she has thrown herself away, he gets drunk sometimes, he takes

of his Father's place in Harnedale.
It has been nearly two weeks since Uncle
Wade has been up but your Father saw him
yesterday, he has been close at home, living
on acorns. Livia's annual letter has not come
this week, he may be unusually busy this
~~week~~, wrote Dr W- was going off.
I heard from our old lady friends our Union
Sons, two each in bed & the other two hardly
able to keep up. I want to make them a
visit before year's but the train passes so
early, & the roads are so bad I don't know
how I can manage it, bad roads & weather
have caught me entirely unprepared as far
as some necessary shopping is concerned.
There is nothing of interest going on in this
community as you must excuse a short
letter. I hear from sister Sally occasionally,
Mrs H- is more blue than ever since the

I sent you some
home papers.
Nothing pressing
new - from
go off at future
W. H. Lygon (Dad)

Valdim Ala. Dec 14th - 1898.

My Dear Son:-

Yours to me dated Dec 11th is
duly to hand, in which you again
tell us about the probability of your
taking a trip to the Continent, to further
pursue your studies in Germany &c.
I have made up my mind some time
ago that ultimately you would make this
an advance course for yourself, so it does
not come unawares, and I am only
regretting the fact that I cannot furnish
you the means to satisfy your ambition.
We know pretty well how such a course
of study as you propose will endorse
you for promotion in American Colleges,
even our Ala Auburn - "Polytechnic" -
judges a man somewhat by what
he has obtained abroad - and if your
authorities at Cornell will promise in
a measure to hold a situation for

Give, or keep an "open door" for your
return, then I'll surely sanction
the more, being satisfied you will
not lose the time and the grand
opportunity for your future accom-
plishment. I don't believe altogether
in the fashion to underrate our own
schools, but our comparatively new
country has at progressed to that degree
yet where it can, for pure science
sake, appropriate \$100,000 at any juncture
just to encourage scientific research. In
the distant future she may undertake
these things & I hope you may be in a con-
dition when that time comes about to reap
some of the rewards, at any rate with your
present outlook, you'll be prepared to grasp
& hold what may be in reach, if it doesn't
seek you in due time. You are still really
young, at an age when a great many
people are only making a beginning,
with great obstacles opposing them.
If you are so fortunate as to get to the
grand Exposition at Paris - This will

DEC. 14, 1898

surely be an epoch in your life,
to be looked back upon in future years
with satisfaction. The good foundation
you have laid in your Botanical
Studies - the attention you have given
to the German Language; and your
successful connection with "Harvard"
& "Cornell", must all collectively add
very much to good results. It is some
weeks off yet awhile and perhaps
every thing may turn up well for
you.

Your Mother left yesterday evening to stay
all night at Mr. Hatch's & take the early train
for Uniontown this morning. She may
remain over & come back on the
midday Freight Tomorrow. I was
in Delmar last week two days - it
was terribly cold & even now some
of the sleet is to be seen on the north
side of buildings near home.

This is a hard winter, bad weather came early & is holding on continuously. Hay-killing time with most people is past & a splendid season they have had, my four hogs - I handed over to my neighbor "Bob Wood" to be fattened & ~~thick~~ in shares - they will scarcely be ready before February 1st I think, Our neighbors have kept us supplied with fresh meat for two weeks, so my Turkeys - Guinea, & Roosters have to wait for a more convenient season.

Llewellyn writes in good spirits, & is an applicant for future honors - Your Bro Fred holds well & is gaining ground amongst his congeners - at Auburn - The little folks still going ahead & standing up to their meals like good fellows. Prof Hatch, an - a politician in Birmingham, (in my district the quint) is opposing me for Trustee at Auburn - The Governor has not yet made Kunen his choice, Reuben is still trying to get out his bal of cotton in the field - had nearly 100 bales when last heard from - was sick for a few days.

Dec 21st 1898

My dear Son

I feel very nervous today & almost tempted to post off my letter writing but don't know what may happen to interrupt me tomorrow as you will have to excuse defects as you often do, I can't write or do any thing with the satisfaction of former days, it is old age showing itself in that way, as well as others.

This will catch you on a sunny day, a merry & happy time may it be to you, how pleasant it would be if we could spend it together as in times gone by, "Could those days but come again" &c &c do you remember the verse? I would certainly "give the hopes of years for those by gone hours."

We hoped to have had Lewis with us at a time but he writes the "Hospital is filling up & it would not do to leave the old gentleman (Dr Murray) alone", will try to come some other time. He is again thinking of standing an examination for the M.D. Lewis we thought he had given up all idea of it & would begin private practice some time this winter. It nearly ate me crazy to think of it & both your Father & myself have written urging him not to do it, I don't know what effect the letters will have, Dr Murray advises the course the thinks of adopting. If he could choose his place

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we would not make an objection but he cant do that, likely as
not would be sent to Cuba, or Manilla, or some other dreadful
place. I thought when our boys were small that when they were
grown I would have a good easy time, nothing but satisfaction in
seeing them do well, ^{& being often with them.} but I find my anxieties are a hundred fold more
than when they were little fellows & I see little of them, anxieties more
than counter balance the hopes for pleasure. That brings me to your
expected trip, I am so sorry it has come to be a certainty, so far as we
can count on anything being a certainty. I knew your hoped some day
to go but I hoped I would never see it. It is bad enough to have
you so far away as I think, but to have the ocean between us is
awful, how I dread the trip over, & your being thus a stranger in a
strange land no one on earth knows. How can you have the courage
to attempt it, & in March too the stormy time. I am sure with your
present learning you can make a name for yourself & a good living
without adding to it (the learning) in a foreign land. But I must not
bores you, wish I could say I am glad you are going but I cant. Wish
I could sleep out the time of your absence.

This is a beautiful day overhead but Sunday night it rained hard
all night long so you can imagine what the condors are, we scarcely
need a fire today, only I have taken cold & have those chilly feelings
^{that} accompany a cold. Wave rode up to Reuben's yesterday evening I sent
him a bag of apples, some bread & turkey, a little home lunch is
always acceptable to him. I will be glad to hear from him & the

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most acceptable. Just here Uncle Waver came in, while he is
eating some cold dinner I will finish my letter as I want it to go
off this evening. I have so many things to attend to this evening but
interruptions will come, I am really glad to see how tho, he desires to
be remembered to you, I told him I was writing, wishing you a happy
yours, with much love

Your devoted

Mother

Dec 28th 1898

My dear Lora

Now that this little storm of snow is over and as I will
begin my letter to you I suppose today you are in New York city enjoying
meeting some of your botanical friends & seeing sights.
We had a very cozy, quiet, time, shall I tell you about it? well I
prepared a nice spruce dinner hoping Reuben & his Wave would be with
us but neither came, Monday I looked for them, still they did not come,
but about 12 o'clock yesterday Reuben rode up ate dinner & left soon
afterwards, quite late his Wave rode up, just after he came the box
from you came, & we opened the pictures, papers were scattered all around,
the new Lockselle blankets & all our spruce presents were on the bed &
all around, some one called for Wave & in a few minutes we found it
was Mr Benton, this was the only fire as we made some folks of
him brought him right in, then I clipped out to order some supper. I
put him up stairs with Wave & Uncle Wave in the chamber under the
new blankets which he pronounced fine. Mr Benton left early this
morning, Uncle Wave about 12; had an engagement to dine with the
Korogays in Demopolis. Mr Benton had written he would be down to
dinner ^{Friday} as we were much surprised to see him last night I was very
glad he came. I told him if you took the grip in N. Y. we hear it

is epidemic) that he must take care of you & write us how you
were. To return to the pictures - we all admire them very much & thank
you as much for them, Uncle Waver too. I tried to get him say which he
liked best, the Countess, or Maeko, but he would not, as I told him when
he came on his cart & could take it home we would draw straws. A pair
of the blankets are his, we sent on the road to have them made, blankets
that would sell for 16 dollars each we only threw, we gave Benben as for for his
& was gift, he was as pleased & glad to have them that he tied them to the
saddle behind him & took them home.

We have not had a line from Fred this week, received two books he sent,
Tatars, A comrade of the Cross, & The Wreath of Philippi, since Sunday read-
ing. I expect he is using the holidays to arrange things on his place, find
renters &c. We were disappointed that Lewis did not come but the house
was so full he could not leave all the work to the old Dr. He sent me a
very comfortable pair of slippers & your Father The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by
Mitchell. I will send him & Benben the books you sent & must thank
you for them, also Waver, he would send a message I am sure if he were
here, has gone to Uncle John's tonight, tried it on the buggy, I was afraid
to venture over the rough roads. They say it is impossible for a carriage to go
from Johnson's to Cannonville, but he will go through the field.

This is a delightful day, your Father is sitting out on the porch talking to
some of his customers, one who owed him a 25 dollar bill came to say he
could not pay anything, his wife had taken up 100 dollars at the store
& his cotton would have to go for that & then not settle it. Mrs. King says
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DEC 24 1898

he will never eat enough except you to pay his bill, it would take as many
we would not have home room for them.

Mrs Garber & Miss Low were over yesterday evening & "Mrs Bob Wood" & Annie
this morning

Mr Benton told us your salary would be continued in your absence & your
place promised you on your return, I hope it is as, that would be a great
help would it not? I am sorry to see him as nervous, maybe tho he has
fiddled too much this week & is nervous about leaving too.

Mr Benton will tell you all about us as I will stop & try to get three to the
office. I wish you could have spent this week with us, the weather has been
so pleasant, with much love from us all

Yours devoted

Mother

1898
Cornell

Dear Colonel:

Just fancy
it is entrusted to
me to seal up
this valuable pres-
ent and as there
seems to be a
doubt in the
minds of the Table
as to my policy
I suggest the

return of a
receipt on
your part - it
would at least
maintain my
reputation and
much more so
if you made
it out for \$25.

Very sincerely,
Marcus Simpson

1878

B.S.

Benjamin M. Daggan, A.B., M.S., A.M., Ph.D. etc.

Not to be opened (under a penalty too horrible to
be described) until you are on the train
leaving Ithaca.

Dear Colonel:- The enclosed is to be used for the purchase of a steamer-rug. A committee endeavored to secure one in Ithaca, but could find nothing better than a horse-blanket. Decided that a horse blanket would not be suitable for a person of so high a rank as colonel. When you wrap the rug about you, may its warmth remind you of the warm affections of your friends, who wish you a most pleasant voyage and a profitable year abroad.

THE TABLE

No misapprehension
 Mr. Wiegand
 George T. Hastings
 Geo. Stewart
 C. J. Hammond
 J. R. Gaston
 Marcus Simpson
 H. Benton
 H. B. Tilling
 Oliver S. Shantz
 Oscar M. Stewart
 E. J. Donovan
 H. J. ...
 H. J. ...

He is all V.P.

DEC. 21, 1898

old folks" at Laneville, don't expect to see them any more this winter. I think your Father wrote to you the night I spent with Mrs Hatch on my way to Uniontown. Our old friends were so pleased to have me a day & night, they were all up but Misses Ann & Patsy look wretchedly, Mrs Warr better than when I last saw her, they spoil Willie as much as ever but that is natural, only it is not so good for him, few people can stand such adoration without being spoiled. They are making arrangements to call Mrs Brown to the church there, I wish we were near enough to join the parish, we belong to none now, I think we should be contributing our mite to the church some where. I don't know that we will have any one to dinner of our day not even Mr Warr, he seems to have dropped us, has not been here for over a month.

Tad has at last written in some of that prairie land near Montgomery that he has as long wanted bought 320 acres I think it is, 1 mile from the L & N road & on the chest road, 180 tillable land, 20 acres each in pears & apples, rather neglected, 40 acres in Bermuda, corn in & 40 in wood land \$10,75 an acre, pay mints easy, 5 years term. He expects of course to rent it out, will endeavor to find hands with their own teams.

I send you a pr of sleeve buttons, which I know what would be