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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.

From Fogg
Philadelphia, Pa.
March 7, 1927.

Dr. John Davidson,
University of British Columbia,
Vancouver, B.C.

Dear Dr. Davidson:

Ever since meeting you, which I did very hurriedly, at Ithaca last summer, I have had it mind to get in touch with you in the matter of the work on the Flora of British Columbia which I understand that you are actively prosecuting.

In the first place, if you design to publish such a work as will supersede Henry's "Flora," you will probably be interested in as many new records as you can possibly accumulate. We have in this Herbarium the rather extensive collections made in the Canadian Rockies and Selkirks by Miss Edith M. Farr in 1904 and 1905, which formed the basis for several new species and varieties. I have recently come across an incomplete duplicate set of these specimens and it occurs to me that you might be interested in receiving them on an exchange basis. We would be glad to accept in return any material from that region which you may have to offer.

I wonder if you have a copy of Miss Farr's Catalog of plants collected in the Rockies and Selkirks, which appeared as a Contribution from this Laboratory? If not, I should be happy to forward you one.

In 1925 I had the pleasure of collecting in the Purcell Range, B.C., working, chiefly, over the Grizzly Creek and Bald Mountain country. This is an inaccessible region (one seldom visited, I believe) and it may well be that some of my records from there are not without a certain element of interest. If you should care to see a list of my collections from this vicinity please let me know. I have some duplicates which may be of value to you.

I should deem it an honor to be able, in ever so slight a way, to advance our knowledge of a country which has been for me so exceptionally fascinating botanically.

Sincerely yours,

The University of British Columbia



OFFICE OF THE
HERBARIUM AND BOTANICAL GARDENS

VANCOUVER, CANADA

March 15th.1927.

Mr. John M. Fogg, Jr.,
University of Pennsylvania,
Botanical Laboratory,
38th. St. and Woodland Ave.,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Sir,

I was glad to receive your letter of March 7th. and to know that you have a number of duplicates of Miss Farr's 1904 and 1905 collections. I will certainly be glad to receive a set of all the specimens you have to spare, both from that region and from the Purcell range as I am specializing on the flora of British Columbia.

These will be very acceptable additions to our Herbarium and will enable us to compare the species from different parts of the Province. It is possible also that you may be able to add specimens to fill some of the blanks in our Herbarium, this of course is very desirable. I could probably let you have specimens from the coast region where most of my work has been done, and possibly some specimens from the dry belt in exchange.

I have volume 2, 1904, and volume 3, 1907 of the Contributions from your Laboratory, and would be very glad to have a specimen of what Miss Farr named Pachystima macrophylla. I have seen such a great variation in Pachystima myrsinites that I felt it would be necessary to see a specimen of this P. macrophylla before I could accept it as a British Columbia species. I have studied the description very closely, but so far have found no specific difference which could be regarded as constant; the differences seem to be such as one would expect in response to a moist environment. We find so many similar variations in other B.C. species many of them much more marked than is indicated in Miss Farr's description of P. macrophylla.

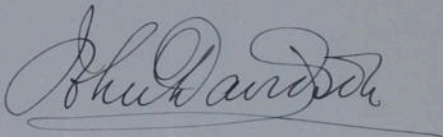
For example, some botanists regard Pinus contorta, and P. Murrayana as two distinct species. My experience convinces me that the two are the same species under different environmental conditions. In fact, I have in our Botanical Garden a specimen of a typical coast Pinus contorta and a typical dry belt Pinus Murrayana both were brought in as young trees about three or four years old, and now after ten years the two are practically identical. Any difference that may be seen is that P. Murrayana is more contorted than P. contorta.

I would be glad to have as many species of B.C. grasses, sedges, and rushes as you can spare from the Selkirk region.

Yes I would be glad to have a list of your collections of 1925. I have endeavoured to get geological men sufficiently interested to bring in specimens from the Purcell Range, but I am usually too late, as it is generally after men have visited the mountains that they tell me about the specimens they saw and ask questions about the specimens which they describe very imperfectly.

Looking forward to receipt of such specimens as you can spare, and thanking you for your letter.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,



Assistant Professor of Botany.

Philadelphia, Pa.
April 14, 1927.

Dr. John Davidson,
University of British Columbia,
Vancouver, Canada.

Dear Dr. Davidson,

There is going forward to you by Parcels Post a package of about 70 specimens of B.C. plants, of which some 35 are of Miss Edith Farr's 1904 collecting and an equal number are of my 1925 series from Glacier Park.

I had thought that I had a great many more of Miss Farr's plants to send you, but I find in going over her duplicates that most of them are from Alberta and not B.C. However, if you are interested in getting more material from Lake Louise, Banff, etc., I should be glad to forward these as well.

You will see that I am sending you an abundance of Pachystima material, concerning which you speak in your letter. I collected in the Bear Creek region, which yielded Miss Farr's type of P. macrophylla, and am forced to confess that I have yet to be convinced of the specific difference of that plant. I shall be eager to learn what you make of it with the material in hand.

The things of my own which I am sending you are all common enough, but may be of slight interest as representing a region seldom, I believe, visited. The specimens are in many cases fragmentary, as I was carrying every ounce of equipment on my own back and collecting had of necessity to be incidental to the exigencies of camp life. I have never really worked over the main bulk of my material from the Bald Mt. region, but have merely named a few of the more obvious things, as you will at once see. My list, therefore, I find to be too inadequate to send you at present, but I shall hope to remedy this soon, especially as concerns the Graminales and the rushes.

Another thing: since my own taxonomic field is so far removed from B.C., and since I find it out of the question to keep pace with systematic literature other than that of eastern North America, I have no course but to suppose that you will find many queer determinations on my labels. Will you be so good, I wonder, as to inform me of such blunders, placing beside my serial collecting number the name which you now use for the plant thus designated. I can then make the corresponding corrections on my originals here.

In regard to exchange material, let me say that we should be happy to receive any specimens from any part of your region

Philadelphia Pa.
April 14, 1927

which you might care to send us. While we have considerable material from the Rocky Mountains and Selkirk, our Herbarium is singularly weak in specimens from the coast.

I am taking the liberty of enclosing a couple of Miss Farr's separates, tho I doubt not that these are already known to you.

In conclusion, let me thank you for your very kind letter and its stimulating enthusiasm. I shall be glad to hear whether the few samples which I now send you seem to warrant a more comprehensive contribution. If so, I should be impelled to devote some immediate study to my P.C. things, at the expense of some other problems not claiming my attention.

Very sincerely yours,

You will see that I am sending you an abundance of Leopoldina material, concerning which you speak in your letter. I collected in the same region which yielded Miss Farr's type of L. macrophylla, and as I have not been able to compare it with the material I shall be eager to learn what you make of it with the material in hand.

The things of my own which I am sending you are all common enough, but may be of slight interest as representing a region seldom, I believe, visited. The specimens are in many cases fragmentary, as I was carrying every ounce of equipment on my own back and collecting had of necessity to be incidental to the exigencies of camp life. I have never really worked over the main bulk of my material from the Selkirk region, but have merely used a few of the more obvious things, as you will see. My list, therefore, I find to be too inadequate to send you at present, but I shall hope to remedy this soon, especially as concerns the Graminis and the rubra.

Another thing, since my own taxonomic field is so far removed from S.C., and since I find it one of the questions to keep pace with systematic literature other than that of eastern North America, I have no course but to suppose that you will find many new observations on my labels. I'll try to be good, I would, as to inform me of such discoveries, placing beside my original collecting number the name which you now use for the plant thus designated. I can then make the corresponding corrections on my initials here.

In regard to exchange material, let me say that we should be happy to receive any specimens from any part of your region.

The University of British Columbia

OFFICE OF THE
HERBARIUM AND BOTANICAL GARDENS

VANCOUVER, CANADA

May 23rd. 1927.

John M. Fogg, Esq., Jr.,
Botanical Laboratory,
University of Pennsylvania,
Philadelphia, U.S.A.

Dear Sir,

I wish to thank you for your letter of April 14th. and for the specimens which arrived latter. I am delighted to have those specimens of Miss Farr's, because I think she lost a splendid opportunity on doing some useful work in extending the range of variation within the limits of a species. I think it is much more valuable to do this than to split up these variations and raise them to specific rank.

It is said "that no two blades of grass are alike", and I have found in practically every district in British Columbia that *Pachystima* is very variable. We have in the Botanical Gardens here two forms selected because they were so different: one has comparatively large broad leaves, the other has small narrow leaves in fact it is what Miss Farr has called *Pachystima Schaefferi*. Of course, I cannot recognize it as a species because one does not have to search very far to find every intermediate transition from one to the other. It is so easy to pick two extreme forms, and give separate names to each, but we do not expect a real botanist to waste time doing that sort of thing. Her time would have been better spent in trying to account for the increase in leaf surface on the one hand, and the decrease in leaf surface on the other.

Please also accept my thanks for the specimens you collected from the Selkirks. I am glad to have them to corroborate records from that district. I notice in one or two cases your nomenclature is different from mine, we call Spiraea aruncus, Aruncus sylvester, and Spiraea pectinata we name Eriogynia pectinata; that is in accordance, I think, with the "International Rules".

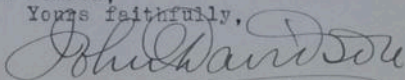
I notice one specimen labelled Pentstemon ellipticus. I think you will find that to be Pentstemon Menziesii there has been a good deal of confusion in regard to this. Some years ago, I spent some time trying to get them straightened out. I think you found your plant woody at the base and of a some what prostrate habit. I have not found a plant in British Columbia which I could refer to P. ellipticus. It is apparently herbaceous, and all our herbaceous species I have been able to refer to other species.

Dr. Krautter's "Monograph on the Genus Pentstemon" has much useful information in it, but its classification is so artificial as to make it difficult to arrive at a species through the use of the book. We have quite a number of species of Pentstemon in British Columbia, and sometimes I found Krautter's Monograph helpful, at other times the meagre descriptions of some species added to the confusion. For example, under Pentstemon ellipticus he states that the leaves are densely and minutely punctate leaves, but he does not mention that this character is also found in P. Menziesii, and in P. Menziesii he describes pedicels almost all one-flowered. In some of our specimens we have as many as five flowers; this would suggest that it may belong to P. ellipticus. We find the leaves of our specimens varying from thick coriaceous texture to semi-coriaceous.

As a matter of fact on perusing Coulter and Fisher's description of P. ellipticus one is led to believe that they described a form of Pentstemon which was described by Hooker as P. Menziesii 53 years previously. I compared your specimen with our specimens of P. Menziesii and although there are some points of difference, there seems to be no characteristic which might be regarded as sufficiently constant, on which one could separate a species, or even a variety.

Again thanking you for your interesting collection,
I remain,

Yours faithfully,



Assistant professor of Botany.

from Fagg

June 17, 1927.

Dr. John Davidson,
Dept. of Botany,
Univ. of British Columbia,
Vancouver, Canada.

Dear Dr. Davidson:

Many thanks for your kind letter of May 23rd. I am glad that the specimens reached you safely and very happy to learn that you find them of some interest.

I have gone over the case of Pentstemon ellipticus with Dr. Francis W. Pennell, who so determined my specimens, and he is quite willing to believe that it should better be called P. Menziesii. Dr. Pennell was much interested in your comments concerning the identity of this plant, and feels greatly indebted to you for suggesting a point which had never occurred to him. He says that he had always looked upon our typical Rocky Mountain form as ellipticus and had believed that Menziesii referred to a distinct thing of the Pacific coastal plain.

Now for another matter: I have still some two hundred plants of my own collecting from the Seckirks, most of which are named only to genus or somewhat doubtfully to species. My own work is taking me more and more into this region around here, especially to the north-east, and I scarcely see when I can ever find time or develop the critical knowledge to work over my western material. In fact, I leave here in a few days to spend three months studying the flora of the Elizabeth Islands, southwest of Woods Hole, Massachusetts - a problem which I wish to work up as a thesis for my doctorate at Harvard next year. If, therefore, upon the basis of the sample I have sent you, you would care for the remainder of my duplicates, unnamed tho they are, I shall, on my return here in September, prepare to send them to you. I feel that the Univ. of B.C. is the place for these things, if you desire them, since they represent a region which is a local one for you and which you are really actively interested in. Mail for the summer months will reach me if directed to Marine Biological Labty., Woods Hole, Mass. I shall be pleased to hear from you concerning this at your convenience.

Thanking you again for your appreciative and helpful letter, I am,

Most sincerely yours,



June 24th.1927.

Mr. John M. Fogg, Jr.,
Marine Biological Laboratories,
Woods Hole,
Mass., U.S.A.

Dear Sir,

I was glad to receive your letter of June 17th. and to learn by it that Dr. Pennell was willing to concur in the opinion that P. ellipticus should better be called Pentstemon Menziesii.

In regard to the latter part of your letter, I will be very glad indeed to receive any duplicate specimens you collected from the Selkirks. The samples you sent were very satisfactory, and in many cases better than some I received from our own correspondents. Your specimens will be very useful to us when we come to work out the distribution of species in British Columbia.

Thanking you and wishing you a pleasant and successful summer.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

Assistant Professor of Botany.

Botanical Laboratory
Nov. 2, 1928.

Professor John Davidson,
Dept. of Botany,
University of British Columbia,
Vancouver, B.C.

Dear Professor Davidson:

Nearly one and a half years ago you very kindly offered to look over and name for me a few duplicates of plants which I collected in the Selkirk Mountains in 1925. Since that time I have been away at the Gray Herbarium, where I spent a year in study, and have only recently returned to take up my duties here. In going over my Selkirk material I have succeeded in finding about fifty duplicates and these are now going forward to you by Parcel Post. I trust that they may prove to some slight degree, at least, acceptable for your collections.

Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately for you, the specimens which I am now sending are devoid, for the most part, of determinations. I sent you previously, as I recall, some thirty plants which I had essayed to identify, but, while I do possess hazy notions about the present specimens, I have seldom marred the labels by writing in names. My own work takes me more and more into the Northeast, and I naturally feel incompetent to express opinions about material from the Northwest. Since my sheets are all serially recorded, I should be grateful if, in sending me your determinations, you would cite my collection numbers.

Also, I am very eager to learn how your studies on the flora of B.C. are progressing. I sincerely trust that you are able to find leisure for prosecuting your work and that so valuable an achievement is not being handicapped by too great a burden of executive and academic detail. With every good wish, I am,

Most sincerely yours,

John M. Fogg, Jr.

Feb. 7, 1931.

Professor John Davidson,
Department of Botany,
University of British Columbia,
Vancouver, Canada.

Dear Dr. Davidson:

May I take the liberty of reminding you of a promise you made to me by letter over two years ago and repeated last summer at Cambridge, namely, that when time permitted you would furnish me with determinations on a set of plants from British Columbia of my own collecting sent to you in November 1928.

I am sure that you, like most of us, have much more to do than you have leisure in which to do it, and if my specimens are of a critical nature and require study I know from experience too well what that means to wish to hurry you. If, on the other hand, they are things that can be readily named I should be very happy to receive a list of determinations from you, for I holding from distribution a duplicate set pending your decisions.

I hope that your valuable work on the flora of British Columbia is progressing and that you are not too much bothered with requests like mine.

Very sincerely yours,

John M. Fogg, Jr.

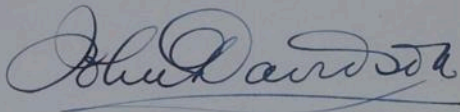
Feb. 16th, 1931.

Mr. John M. Fogg, Jr.,
Botanical Laboratory,
39th Street and Woodland Ave.
University of Pennsylvania,
Philadelphia, U.S.A.

Dear Mr. Fogg,

I wish to thank you for your letter of 7th Feb. reminding me of my promise which I intend to fulfil. I am sorry that I had forgotten about it, but now I will see if I can find some time to go through your collection. I have had no time up until now, and as I am still working on the manuscript of my second volume you can understand how much of my spare time is occupied with it.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,



Associate Professor of Botany.

from Fogg

Sept. 16, 1933.

Dr. John Davidson,
Dept. of Botany,
University of British Columbia,
Vancouver, Canada.

Dear Dr. Davidson:

I am sorry to bother you again, but I wonder if you could possibly let me have the identifications of the small set of plants from British Columbia which I sent you in the Autumn of 1928.

I am withholding from distribution in our herbarium a duplicate set, pending your determinations, and would naturally be greatly pleased to be able to get these sheets sorted.

If you feel that you can not spare the time from more important tasks to run over and name my collection, please let me know; for I assuredly do not wish to impose upon you. If you care to return it to me I shall try to find some one else to whom to submit it for study, although I would naturally rather have your critical opinion on these plants than that of anyone else.

Sincerely yours,

Assistant Professor of Botany
Curator of Herbarium

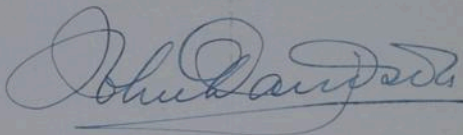
Nov.17th.1933.

Prof. John A. Fogg,
Botanical Laboratory,
38th. St. and Woodland Avenue,
Philadelphia, U.S.A.

Dear Prof. Fogg,

I received your letter of Sept. 16th. and have
looked out your collection to go over between classes.
A number of them will have to be examined critically, and
this takes more time than the identification of those
which are easily determined. I will try to let you have
a list of these as soon as I can.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Arthur Sargent", written in dark ink. The signature is fluid and somewhat stylized, with a horizontal line underneath it.

Associate Professor of Botany.

from Fogg

October 7, 1935.

Dr. John Davidson,
Dept. of Botany,
University of British Columbia,
Vancouver, B.C.

Dear Dr. Davidson:

With the aid of some additional help which I am to have in the Herbarium this year, I hope to be able to clear off all of our back accumulation of unmounted and undistributed material. If you could possibly let me have a list of determinations of the small series of plants which I sent you in 1928 I would be deeply grateful, as I should thus be able to place in circulation in our cases a collection which I have been holding until hearing from you.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,

Assistant Professor of Botany
Curator of the Herbarium

March 4th.1936.

Mr. John M. Fogg, Jr.,
University of Pennsylvania,
Botanical Laboratory,
38th. St., and Woodland Ave.,
Philadelphia, U.S.A.

Dear Mr. Fogg,

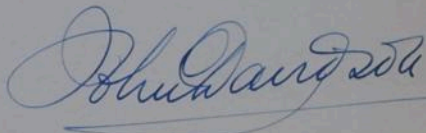
I have gone over the rest of your specimens, and I enclose a list of the numbers and names. I presume the specimens you sent me were duplicates which we can include in our collection, as this is our usual arrangement for identifying specimens. If, however, you did not intend us to keep them please let me know.

To me, the most interesting specimen in your collection was 1257. I do not think Hypericum Nortonae has been recorded for British Columbia before, and your one is certainly not like any of our recorded species.

I would draw your attention to specimen No. 1339 where there was one plant of Taraxacum scopulorum along with three Troxims.

I am sorry that this list has so long been delayed, but hope it will be acceptable now.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,



Associate Professor of Botany.

March 9, 1936

Professor John Davidson,
University of British Columbia,
Vancouver, Canada.

Dear Dr. Davidson:

I am greatly indebted to you for your letter of March 4th, with its list of identifications of my British Columbia specimens collected in 1925. I greatly appreciate the critical study which you have given these plants and assure you that your determinations will be of real value to us here in organizing our western material.

You are entirely correct in supposing that the specimens which you have are duplicates and that you are welcome to them if they interest you.

Please let me know if at any time I may be of service to you. As you will recall, we have Miss Edith Farr's collections here. If you should ever desire the loan of any of her types I should be only too glad to send them on to you.

Sincerely yours,

John M. Fogg, Jr.
Asst. Prof. of Botany
Curator of the Herbarium