



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

The Hunt Institute is committed to making its collections accessible for research. We are pleased to offer this digitized item.

Usage guidelines

We have provided this low-resolution, digitized version for research purposes. To inquire about publishing any images from this item, please contact the Institute.

Statement on harmful and offensive content

The Hunt Institute Archives contains hundreds of thousands of pages of historical content, writing and images, created by thousands of individuals connected to the botanical sciences. Due to the wide range of time and social context in which these materials were created, some of the collections contain material that reflect outdated, biased, offensive and possibly violent views, opinions and actions. The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation does not endorse the views expressed in these materials, which are inconsistent with our dedication to creating an inclusive, accessible and anti-discriminatory research environment. Archival records are historical documents, and the Hunt Institute keeps such records unaltered to maintain their integrity and to foster accountability for the actions and views of the collections' creators.

Many of the historical collections in the Hunt Institute Archives contain personal correspondence, notes, recollections and opinions, which may contain language, ideas or stereotypes that are offensive or harmful to others. These collections are maintained as records of the individuals involved and do not reflect the views or values of the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation or those of Carnegie Mellon University.

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.



3. I. 1961.

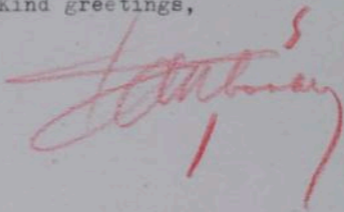
Dear Arthur,

From our mutual friend Hannah I had a letter where she told me that your health has taken a bad turn, so that you have sent all your N. Amer. drawings to Prescott. She also told that you are able to work very little every day. Now it is my turn to encourage you if possible. We have still much desmid work to do, you and I, there are African algae and Sioli's Brazilian collections. How is it with your "magnum opus" on the Indonesian desmids? Have you found a good periodical and a printer willing and capable of doing this work. Is it already begun? (You once told me of Reinwardtia?)

I have no news from Cramer or from the man who had to continue Krieger's Cosmaria in Rabenhorst. Do you know anything? It is already about 2 years since the Verleger Cramer told me that the Cosmaria were nearly finished. But I cannot see that an "new man" in a short time could have any possibilities to get a thorough knowledge of this mammoth-literature, which is rapidly increasing. Why not give it to Prescott as I once proposed? In my opinion he seems to be the only man capable of such a work (notwithstanding his faults!) It is a great pity if you do not feel it possible to partake in this great work.

My very best wishes for your recovery. Tell me how you are.

Kind greetings,



February 2 1961

Dear Rolf,

It seems that you and I ought to start a Mutual Cheer-up Society; both of us need it, but I am afraid that the sentiments expressed in letters, even with the best intentions, do very little good.

I was very sorry when I received your despondent letter of Dec 17, telling of your continued illness and the almost total lack of sleep. Also I suppose that your dark and cold winter weather is still with you, and will be for another month or more. All these things put together are enough to make anyone hypochondriacal, but I still hope that there may have been some improvement by now in your health. It would be wonderful if you would obtain the Government grant that would enable you to discontinue your dentistry. With your international reputation as the best desmidologist in the world it ought to be possible to get the grant, but it will need the help of influential friends, and the workings of any Government are always very slow. Yes, I remember Dr. Hans Luther and his pretty wife very well; in fact I shall never forget the delightful trip in their motorboat to the rocky islands of the Skerries, nor the delicious and appetizing lunch that she prepared in the cramped quarters of the boat. When you see them again please give them my best regards.

My long silence has been due in part to my own lack of energy, but also because my wife became seriously ill just after Christmas. She was in the hospital for two weeks, and the doctor permitted her to go home in an ambulance on Jan 15, our 41st wedding anniversary. A few days after she came home a bacterial infection developed and affected her kidneys, making her very ill again, but the doctor cured this with a very expensive medicine called Furadantin (\$9.00 for 20 capsules!). I am glad to say that she is now much improved, can walk around the house without assistance, and even get into and out of the bathtub by herself. As you may remember, we have no children and no relatives in this country, so each of us has to care for the other. Fortunately we have a faithful coloured maid, who cleans the house, does the washing, and cooks the meals. She has been with us for 37 years, and has been a wonderful help.

If you permit my name to appear with yours as co-authors of the Sierra Leone paper, it will be an honour, of course. As you suggested, I am enclosing a copy of my letter to Dr. Wm. Randolph Taylor, and a copy of my detailed critique of the paper by Woodhead & Tweed on ~~the~~ Sierra Leone desmids. I don't know what Dr. Taylor wrote to Prof. van Oye, but he sent me a copy of van Oye's reply, which was very brief and merely said that care would be taken that such poor papers would not be printed in *Hydrobiologia* in future. I have no objection if you think my entire critique should be published, or if you wish to modify it in any way. On the other hand it might be appropriate to comment only on those species that are found in both your Sierra Leone material and W & T's; for instance *Xanth. raciborskii*, which should be changed to *X. urniforme* (W & W) Grönbl. & Scott.

From the publisher I obtained a copy of Woodhead & Tweed's recent paper "Additions to the Algal Flora of Newfoundland", and was flabbergasted to see that their desmid illustrations are even worse than those in the Sierra Leone paper. I say this because there are undoubtedly several novelties in their African material, for which there were no existing illustrations to guide them. But in the Newfoundland paper they have attempted to draw several species for which adequate illustrations can be found in existing literature, e.g. *Cosm. cosmetum* W & W., *St. arctiscon* v. *truncatum* I.-M., and *St. ornithopodum* fac. *triradiata* in Scott & Grönbl. 1957, Pl. 32, Fig. 2. So they cannot produce accurate illustrations of desmids even when they have good figures by other authors to show how they should be done.

Woodhead & Tweed have another paper on Sierra Leone algae in *Revue Algologique* Vol. V, No. 2, October 1960, but since this deals with brackish water there are very few desmids; mostly diatoms and blue-greens. When I catch up with my arrears of correspondence I will write Bourrelly and caution him to scrutinize carefully the illustrations and text of any future papers they may send him for publication, especially if they deal with desmids.

My Indonesian "magnum opus" is now in press and will appear, probably, as the next issue of *Hydrobiologia*. They sent me a page-proof early in December, but I was so disgusted and furious at the poor typography, the departures from the style and type indicated in my typescript, and the unusually large number of typesetter's errors that I fired an hot 4-page letter of protest to van Oye. I received conciliatory replies both from him and from the publishing firm of Dr. W. Junk, who have agreed to make some of the changes that I demanded, but unfortunately it would require practically an entire resetting of the type to make all of them. So I am afraid that the published paper will be far from my expectations. By the time I pay for the reprints this paper will have cost me close to \$1500, which is a large amount now that my annual income is less than my annual expenditure for living expenses.

Mme. Kossinskaja sent me her large book on desmids, in response to my request, with an inscription to me. Now I have found the answer to something that has puzzled me for a long time, - why her name is spelled G. C. Kossinskaja in English and E. K. Kossinskaja in Russian. The "E. K." stands for Ekaterina Konstantinova, which become Catherine Constantinova in English. The book will be a valuable one even though a large number of the illustrations and probably a lot of the text have been "lifted" bodily from Krieger's and W & W's monographs, because she gives illustrations from other Russian authors whose works are unknown in this country and practically inaccessible to us. I was surprised that her bibliography lists so few American authors, but I managed to translate enough of a footnote to understand that she lists only those works that are of value in identifying Russian desmids; yet I should have thought that she would find something of value in the many reprints that I have sent her. She has another footnote on p. 267 relating to Telling's genus *Staurodesmus*. Can you translate this for me, or at least tell me the sense of what she says about it?

Kuno Thomasson has sent me some of his recent papers, including the 2nd one on *Lake Bangweulu*. His *Allorgeia incredibilis* seems to be identical with ours from Sudan, not with Mme. Gauthier-Lievre's which must be regarded as a variety, I think. It is almost incredible that this and *M. sudanensis* should have been found together in three such widely separated habitats, by three different persons, and within three or four years. Thomasson is fortunate in being able to get his papers published in such a handsome format, and he ought to take advantage of it by making his figures larger. Also the figures on his plates are poorly arranged; on one plate he has no less than six different genera, which also appear on other plates. I am glad to see that his drawings are getting better from year to year, though there is still room for more improvement. Some of his determinations are definitely wrong, and others are doubtful. For instance his *St. galpinii*, Fig. 9, No. 23, is nothing more than *St. rotula* with convergent arms, and the most that could be squeezed out of it would be a new variety. West & West have commented that the arms of *St. rotula* are sometimes convergent, and I have a specimen from U.S.A. almost exactly like his, even to the tall bifid apical verrucae, but I consider it merely a local variation. It seems to me that this young man is getting a little too big for his boots, in making transfers and new combinations that override the considered opinions of other desmidiologists who have had much more experience than he has. An example is the *M. torreyi* group, which he wants to split up into three different species, but I think he has never seen any more of the group than the plant illustrated in his Fig. 7, No. 21, which he calls *M. doveri* v. *wumbaensis*. I have seen and drawn all of the varieties of *M. torreyi* illustrated in Krieger's monograph, and have added another new variety from central Java. I consider that *var. doveri* (Biswas) Krieg., is closely homologous with the specific form, if for no other reason than that each of them has five lobules on each side of the semicell, a feature not possessed by any other species of *Micrasterias*.

Thomasson has also raised the question whether inaccuracies may have been

introduced in desmid illustrations in recently published papers, because of the fact that the authors' pencil drawings have been inked by another draughtsman. This question seems to be aimed directly at you and me and Telling, also perhaps Woodhead & Tweed in whose Newfoundland paper they have acknowledged that "Miss M.P.E. Stone has given us invaluable help in the preparation of our illustrations"!!! I happen to have on hand some blueprints of the plates in the *Micrasterias* paper by Prescott & Scott 1952. One set of the blueprints was made from my pencil drawings for the plates; another set from the same drawings after they had been inked by Mrs. Dorothy Perine. The ink lines are drawn over my pencil lines on the same piece of paper, and there is no deviation whatever. In all of the thousands of illustrations that she has inked for me, I think that on only one occasion have I had to ask her to make a small change. I am going to send these blueprints to Thomasson, and suggest to him that he would do well to attend to the improvement of his own drawings instead of criticizing those of other persons, (except Woodhead & Tweed, of course!).

I have sent all my U.S.A. desmid drawings to Prescott so that he may select those that he needs for illustrating the North American Desmid-Flora, for which he has a grant of several thousand dollars from the National Science Foundation. The drawings are merely on loan, and he will return them after he has finished, so that if I live long enough I may eventually get around to publishing them.

All last year the only work I did on desmids was on your Sierra Leone material, and checking the identifications of Kurt Forster's Brazilian desmids that were collected by Dr. Paul von Lützelburg about 1927. I am going to send you Forster's booklets together with my comments, and I am sure you will find them highly interesting. His drawings are really excellent, except for a few small peculiarities that I pointed out, and which I believe he will correct.

I received the small paper by Järnefelt and yourself on the peculiar little desmid *Cosm. dilatatum*, which seems to be on the border-line between *Cosmagium* and *Xanthidium*. I thought at first that I had seen something like it, in my material from either Brazil or Australia, but apparently I was mistaken, for I cannot find it in my drawings from either of these countries. I may have been thinking of *Arth. spechtii* Scott & Presc. from Arnhem Land.

If things go well at home here and my wife's health continues to improve I hope I can resume work on Sioli's Brazilian material and send you all my drawings for checking against your own. Then you can return them to me and I will write the paper and prepare the plates.

That's all for the present. I hope that your next letter will bring news of a great improvement in your condition. You asked if there is anything that you can send me from Finland in return for the books I have sent you. Please do not worry about this. The only thing I can think of is that you might have in your library some books in English on such subjects as travel, exploration, natural history, etc., that you no longer want. I remember, for instance, a book that I skimmed through when I was in Karis, an Australian book describing fruit-bats and other animals.

In the meantime I send you my very best wishes, and sign myself,

Your good friend,

Prescott told me that Frere Irene-Marie died last year, but I have no details.

ROLF GRÖNBLAD, Ph.D. D.Sc.
CENTRALGATAN 22
KARIS, FINLAND

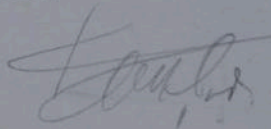
7.ii.1961.

Dear Arthur,

It is a very long time since I had a letter from you. I hope there is nothing seriously wrong with your health? Hannah told me in her last letter that you were not quite well. I am very anxious to know something about your present health. So I should be very glad to have just a few words from you. - My own health seems to have improved somewhat so I can work on dentistry a few hours 5 days a week, and after a long while I have begun to look at the desmids again - 1 or 2 hours, which is not much. Of course there is no possibility that I should get my former health, but one must be thankful for every small improvement.

If you have time to write and if you are not seriously ill I should be glad to have a short letter from you.

Your friend,



Feb 15 1961

Dear Rolf,

Your letter of Feb 7th arrived yesterday, having taken 7 days in transit instead of the usual four or even occasionally three.

It is very good to learn that your health has improved to the extent that you can now work on your dentistry for a few hours each day, and even to look at desmids again. I hope that the improvement will continue.

No doubt you have now received my letter dated Feb 2nd with its enclosures, though it was not mailed until Feb 4th. Perhaps it may have been delayed by the severe blizzards and snowfall in the northeastern part of the U.S.A. All three of the huge airports that serve New York City were shut down completely for two days, and there was so much snow that private automobiles were banned from the city streets, something that has never been done before.

In New Orleans we have had a rather mild winter, though the temperature has gone just below the freezing point several times. Our Mardi Gras celebration with its parades and balls has been going on for the last week, and for the first time in several years we have had really beautiful weather, bright sunshine and daytime temperatures up to 22° or 23°, and no rain at all.

I am glad to say that my wife is very much better, almost back to normal, though she has not yet regained her full strength and cannot walk very far. I am fairly well, but plagued by cardiac asthma and shortness of breath, caused by atherosclerosis and emphysema of the lungs.

There is nothing else to report here. I have done nothing on desmids for the last three months, not have I heard any more from Hydrobiologia about the big Indonesian paper. Minoru Hirano has sent me the final installment of his monograph on Japanese desmids, and I am going to have all the parts bound together in permanent form.

My best regards and good wishes for a continued betterment of your health.

Sincerely,