



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](mailto:huntinst@andrew.cmu.edu)  
Web site: [www.huntbotanical.org](http://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The Hunt Institute Archives contains hundreds of thousands of pages of historical content, writing and images, created by thousands of individuals connected to the botanical sciences.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of time and social context in which these materials were created, some of the collections contain material that reflect outdated, biased, offensive and possibly violent views, opinions and actions.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 Archival records are historical documents, and the Hunt Institute keeps such records unaltered to maintain their integrity and to foster accountability for the actions and views of the collections'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.

ARTHUR M. SCOTT  
2824 DANTE ST.  
NEW ORLEANS 18, LA.

Dec 6 1952

Dr. Wm. Randolph Taylor,  
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Dear Dr. Taylor,

Of course I was joking when I asked about desmids on Bikini. I've read enough about these coral atolls to realize that the chances of finding desmids there are almost vanishingly small. Prospects might be better on some of the mountainous islands like the Marquesas, if there are any spots of the terrain flat enough to hold water.

I'm very much interested in tropical and subtropical desmids, and have made collections in some of the countries within reach of New Orleans, such as Cuba, Mexico, Guatemala and Panama, but the results were disappointing and not worth the time and expense of the trips. In El Salvador, Costa Rica, and Medellin in Colombia I drew complete blanks, because of the dry, mountainous country around the capital cities, which were the only places I could visit. I could not attempt to reach the coastal plains, where conditions might be more favorable, because of difficult access and limitations of time and money. My best catches were made in Panama, but friend Prescott has explored the Canal Zone so well that I found only half-a dozen or so desmids not included in his lists.

So for the last few years I have been trying to obtain, by correspondence, desmid material from some of the far-off parts of the world, and I have had a fair amount of success. From Japan Minoru Hirano sent me about 60 collections, not for publication, because he is working them up himself. Strangely enough the Japanese desmid-flora seems to be quite similar to that of the USA; in fact some of his gatherings might have come from my own hunting grounds in La., Miss., or Florida, except for the fact that in almost every one there are a few oddities that don't occur in this country.

Prescott and I have a short paper in press on desmids from South Australia, and I have a number of other collections from various places in that country not yet worked up. Also in collaboration with Prescott I have just finished and sent to Australia for publication a rather lengthy paper on f-w algae from Arnhem Land in North Australia, collected by the 1948 expedition to that little-known region. The botanist of the expedition, who knew little about algae, sent me 5 vials of material in which I found 251 different desmids, and Prescott listed 78 other algae. Many of them are new, and several of the desmids are rediscoveries of forms not seen since their original publication more than half-a-century ago. The paper will be illustrated with 22 plates of desmids and 6 plates of other algae. These 5 vials ~~xxx~~ represent an exceptionally lucky haul, in sharp contrast to the disappointing results reported by Dr. Britton in the last Bull. Phycol. Soc. from New Guinea and the Philippines, and to what Prof. Taft told me about some New Guinea material that he had worked on.

Also I have on hand a beautiful series of 25 collections from Borneo, Bali, Sumatra, Java and Singapore, sent to me by Mr. M. Sachlan, of Bogor, on which I have been working off and on. Most of these are extremely rich, and already I have seen most of the desmids reported in Krieger's "Sunda" paper, and many others that are completely unknown. Some of them have the most elaborate decoration that you could possibly imagine, and one (*Micrasterias ceratophora* Josh.) differs so completely from all others of its genus that Krieger excluded it from his monograph as being "wohl teratologisch". But it is a perfectly normal and beautiful plant that I also found in the North Australian material. I am enclosing a few sketches that you do not need to return.

If you ever get any tropical collections with desmids, I should greatly appreciate an opportunity of examining ~~in~~ them.

Sincerely yours,

18 vii 53

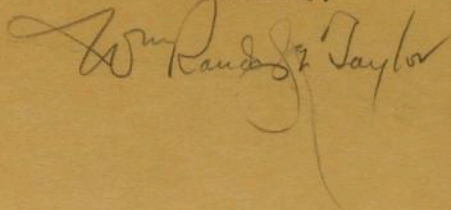
Mr. A. M. Scott  
2824 Sante Street  
New Orleans 18, La.

Dear Mr. Scott:

Your letter regarding an application to the National Science Foundation for a grant-in-aid to attend the 8th Internat. Bot. Congress in Paris next summer received. I think that by all means you should make an effort to go. If, separately or with Dr. Prescott, you can contribute a paper to one of the sessions of the Phycological Section you should do so, sending an abstract to M. Bourelley at the Mus. Nat. d'Hist. Nat. next month.

I am sending off the supporting letter as soon as our secretary can prepare the eight copies which are required.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Wm Rands Taylor". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Sincerely,".

ARTHUR M. SCOTT  
2824 DANTE ST.  
NEW ORLEANS 18, LA

Dec 16 1953

Dr. Wm. Randolph Taylor,  
Dept. of Botany,  
University of Michigan,  
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Dear Dr. Taylor,

Recently it was announced that the National Science Foundation would award grants in partial defrayment of travel expenses to the 8th International Botanical Congress at Paris next July. Since there will be a special section on phycology at this Congress, it would afford me an excellent opportunity of meeting in person several European phycologists with whom I have been corresponding regularly for several years, like Teiling, Grönblad, and Krieger, also others with whom I have exchanged occasional letters, like Skuja, Printz, Nygaard, Heimanns, van Oye, and Bourrelly.

I don't know if there is much chance of my getting such a grant, but anyway I wrote for the application blanks, and now I find that one of the requirements is that I submit two letters of recommendation from scientists who can testify as to the worthiness of my application. Accordingly, I am asking Jerry Prescott and you if you will be kind enough to write such letters, provided, of course, that you actually think that my application is a worthy one.

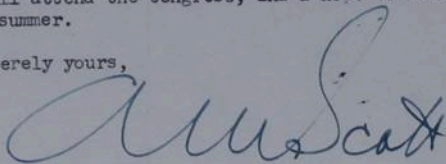
In this connection I may say that during the 15 years that I have been working on desmids, I have spent not less than \$10,000 on my hobby, principally for travelling expenses, but also for instruments, supplies, literature, and partial expense of publication. At the end of this year, which is only two weeks away, I am retiring from the business with which I have been connected ~~with~~ for the last 44 years. This will give me plenty of time for desmids, but my income will be greatly reduced, and I shall have to watch my expenditures pretty carefully.

I should appreciate a prompt response, because the applications must be in Washington by Jan 1st.

The latest news on my desmids is that I have found a new GENUS from Brazil. No kidding, - Prescott, Grönblad and Krieger have seen specimens and drawings, and they all agree that a new genus is required to receive it. Its distinctive feature is that the two semicells are constantly different, amazingly so.

I suppose that you will attend the Congress, and I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you in Paris next summer.

Sincerely yours,



ARTHUR M. SCOTT

2824 DANTE STREET  
NEW ORLEANS 18, LA.

Jan 1 1954

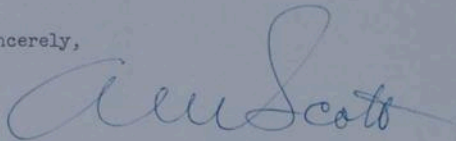
Dr. Wm. Randolph Taylor,  
University of Michigan,  
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Dear Dr. Taylor,

Many thanks for your letter of Dec. 18th. I had been expecting to receive your supporting letter, but as it has not arrived I assume that you have sent it directly to the National Science Foundation, and no doubt they will attach it to my application which is now in their hands.

At your suggestion I shall prepare a short paper on some extremely rare and little-known desmids that I have found in material from Indonesia and North Australia, several of which are rediscoveries of species that have not been seen since their original description, from forty to seventy years ago. I shall send an abstract of the paper to Dr. P. Bourrelly before January 15th.

Sincerely,



Mr. A. M. Scott  
New Orleans, La.

Dear Mr. Scott:

Your package with the mangrove alga came in this morning. I certainly agree that it is Batophora oerstedii so far as superficial characters go. I would not know what else to do with it, and since (with its variety) the species ranges a good deal in size there is no likelihood that it is a new variety or species. I am surprised that you did not get other typical mangrove-area plants, like Bostrychia and Catenella, or Poly. subtilissima, at the same place.

I am an enthusiastic photographer and do as much photomicrography as any other botanist I know, but I do not think photographs can compare for utility with such excellent drawings as you make of the desmids. With your skill, I hope you don't change. The photographs are certainly good for quick records, and I use them a lot for that. My camera is an Exakta, and I buy the film in bulk and load my shells, so that the cost is trifling. Thanks for the sight of the pictures,

Cordially,

ARTHUR M. SCOTT

2824 DANTE STREET  
NEW ORLEANS 18, LA.

Nov 13 1959

Dr. Wm. Randolph Taylor,  
Dept. of Botany, Univ. of Michigan,  
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Dear Dr. Taylor,

I have a letter from Minoru Hirano, of Kyoto, Japan, asking if I can tell him of any museum or individual from whom he could obtain specimens of two American species of *Prasiola*, *P. nevadense* and *P. mexicana*, which he wishes to compare with some South American material that he is studying.

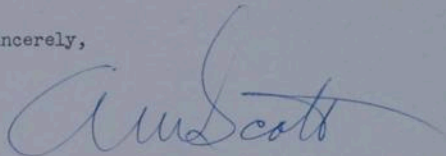
These are the only two species that he mentions, but I note from Smith's *FW. Algae U.S.* that there are three others known from this country, *P. calophylla*, *P. crispa*, and *P. fluviatilis*. I have never seen this alga in my own collections.

Can you help me with this request?

Many thanks for the batch of reprints received from you a few days ago. However, the only papers of interest to me are those on freshwater algae, so you might make a note to that effect on your mailing list.

With best regards,

Sincerely,



ARTHUR M. SCOTT

2824 DANTE STREET  
NEW ORLEANS 18, LA.

Sept 19 1960

Dr. Wm. Randolph Taylor,  
University of Michigan,  
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Dear Dr. Taylor,

It is in your capacity as one of the Editorial Advisory Board of the journal *Hydrobiologia* that I wish to bring the following matter to your notice.

In *Hydrobiologia* XII(2-3): 181-225, Dec. 30 1958, there is a paper by N. Woodhead & R. D. Tweed, entitled "Freshwater Algae of Sierra Leone 1. New and Unusual Algae from the Sula Hills". It deals with desmids, diatoms, and a few filamentous algae. My letter refers only to the desmids, for I do not know enough about the other groups to venture a criticism.

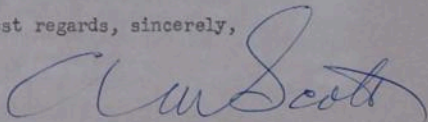
If you have not already seen the paper I wish you would look it up; it will take you only a few minutes to glance through it, particularly at the four plates of desmid illustrations. I think the illustrations are, without exception, the worst I have ever seen; so wretchedly poor that most of them are completely worthless and unidentifiable by even an expert desmidiologist.

The text is somewhat better than the plates, but not much. They have established about 30 new taxa in the desmids; some of them are certainly wrongly assigned, others highly doubtful, and still others unconfirmable because of insufficient information. I have been told that even the Latin diagnoses are poorly written.

In other words the paper is a thoroughly bad one that should never have been accepted for publication. But that's not the worst: the authors promise future papers on material from other parts of Sierra Leone, which presumably will be written and illustrated in the same manner unless someone in authority puts his foot down firmly.

Do you think you ought to take a hand in this? If you do, I will gladly provide a list of some of the more blatant errors.

With best regards, sincerely,



231x60

Mr. A. M. Scott  
2824 Dante Street  
New Orleans 18, La.

Dear Mr. Scott:

I am very sympathetic with your letter's contents. I saw the Woodward & Tweed more recent paper on Newfoundland algae within the week, and did not know what to do about it, since I'm so far out of freshwater algal work that anything I might say could be considered lacking in current professional qualification. However, I did write to criticize the bibliography, which was horrific, on the excuse that he cited my Newfoundland papers by their departmental contribution numbers rather than volume and page in the 'Papers...'. for these numbers are quite without bibliographical significance, and are clearly designated in the publications for what they are. The fact that I consider them superfluous is beside the point: I have not used them for years.

The person who ought to take action is the British consulting editor, Pearsall, but he is well along in years and quite inactive psychologically. I doubt if we could get much help from him. The journal is a private venture of Paul Van Oye: he puts up the money and does all the work. It is seldom that an American article has been referred to me, and never one from abroad.

In view that the paper comes from a Briton I am in a somewhat ticklish position, as criticising the opinion of a colleague (though I doubt if he saw the manuscript). However, if you can send me some ammunition I will scold out van Oye and suggest to him that he ought to have such papers gone over by one of the competent people before publishing them. As a matter of fact, I fear you will find a good number of the papers published in this journal are not very well done.

Sincerely,

Wm. Randolph Taylor

ARTHUR M. SCOTT

2824 DANTE STREET  
NEW ORLEANS 18, LA.

October 6 1960

Dr. Wm. Randolph Taylor,  
Ann Arbor, Mich.

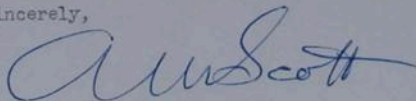
Dear Dr. Taylor,

After receipt of your letter of September 23rd I went to the library at Loyola University and saw the current issue of Hydrobiologia with the new paper by Woodhead & Tweed on New foundland algae, and found something that I would hardly have believed possible, - that their illustrations of the Newfoundland desmids are even worse than those from Sierra Leone. In their West African material there are many novelties for which there were no existing drawings by other authors; but for Newfoundland there are your excellent drawings, some others from Irénée-Marie, and at least one of mine (Staurastrum ornithopodum facies triradiata Grönb. & Scott 1957). So they cannot make an acceptable drawing of a desmid even when they have good figures to show them what the plant really looks like. I was not able to take the journal home and can only cite from memory a few species that struck me as especially grotesque:

1. Staurastrum brachiatum. Their figure looks as if the specimen had been collected in the 2-dimensional world of Flatland, where objects have length and width but no thickness. There is nothing in their drawing to suggest that this desmid is 3- or 4-radiate, as is always the case.
2. Cosmarium cosmetum. I know this plant quite well, but would never have recognized it from their drawing if they had not labelled it. They show some lines forming irregular quadrilaterals, with dots at the intersections. The real pattern consists of rows of hemispherical granules each surrounded by six pits in a hexagonal arrangement, beautifully regular. In old semicells that may have undergone a dozen vegetative divisions the pits become triangular and are separated by ribs between the granules, forming a pattern of connected triangles.
3. Staurastrum arctiscon var. truncatum. I know this one also from Mississippi, and there is a good illustration in Irénée-Marie 1939. Woodhead & Tweed's figure is an abortion.
4. St. ornithopodum var. triangulare var. nov. This was published in Scott & Grönb. 1957, and I personally mailed a reprint of this paper to Woodhead and another to Tweed in the summer of 1958. We published it as "Facies triradiata cellulis a vertice visis triangularibus", remarking that previously only the 4-radiate facies was known. The Latin word "Facies" was proposed by Teiling a few years ago, and since has been taken up and used by some other workers, to denote the number of angles or processes exhibited in vertical view; it is not a taxonomical epithet, and no author's name is attached. Woodhead & Tweed's figure is barely recognizable to me, and I am quite familiar with the plant.
5. In their figure 82 they have tried to portray a new species, Staurastrum whiteanum or wrightianum, I don't remember which. It is probably new, but they do not give the vertical view which they say is square, nor are the details clear enough for me to form a mental picture of what the plant looks like.

"There ought to be a law" against publishing trash like this.

Sincerely,



ARTHUR M. SCOTT

2824 DANTE STREET  
NEW ORLEANS 18, LA.

October 7 1960

Dr. Wm. Randolph Taylor,  
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Dear Dr. Taylor,

Enclosed is a detailed critique of all of the desmids published by Woodhead & Tweed in their Sierra Leone paper. You may use it in its entirety if you wish, or you may pick out some of the items that are especially important.

The first time I ever heard of either Woodhead or Tweed was early in 1958, when Grönblad and I agreed to divide the work and expense of distributing our large paper on Desmids from SE U.S.A. I combined our two lists of correspondents and then segregated them by countries. Grönblad took all the European countries except Great Britain, and I took Great Britain and all the rest of the world, which happened to make about a 50-50 split. The names of Woodhead and Tweed were on Grönblad's list of correspondents, and I mailed to each of them a copy of the above-mentioned paper, also subsequent papers by Grönblad, Prowse & Scott on Sudan, and by Scott & Prescott on Arnhem Land. Sometime later W. & T. sent me a few of their small papers, nothing of much importance, but not their Sierra Leone paper. Grönblad called it to my attention, saying that it was extremely bad, and later I procured a reprint direct from the publishers in The Hague, Holland.

After seeing the very poor quality I suggested that it might be possible to get someone in Great Britain to review the paper in a British phycological journal which W. & T. would be sure to see, and Grönblad wrote accordingly to J.W.G.Lund at Ambleside. I saw Lund's reply, which was to the effect that although he was thoroughly in accord with our opinion, there was nothing he felt he could do, for these reasons:

1. That Woodhead is an older man.
2. That he is the kind of man who would not take kindly to criticism and would not in any case be influenced by it.
3. That Lund thought the entire responsibility was van Oye's, as editor.

From the International Directory of Specialists in Plant Taxonomy I find that Woodhead is 57 years old, and Tweed 60, and both list themselves as specialists on diatoms and desmids, especially from West Africa and Newfoundland. I assume they both are professors of botany, and if phycology is one of their subjects I wonder how and what they are teaching their students. It seems incomprehensible that men of these ages and holding such responsible positions can fail to perceive the inadequacy (to put it mildly) of their illustrations, when they have before them the excellent figures in the monographs of West & West and of Krieger. The inability to draw acceptably is no disgrace in itself, but I think it becomes disgraceful when such wretched drawings are published in a scientific journal for use by other scientists. Someone must tell them in plain English that these illustrations are worthless, and that since they cannot draw themselves they ought to find somebody who can. Quite likely one of their own students could do it under their supervision. Their determinations also are only mediocre. From internal evidence it seems that they have most of the important papers on tropical desmids, but they are not familiar with them, as will appear from some of the items in my critique.

It was news to me that Hydrobiologia is a private venture of van Oye's; it seems to be a successful one and I hope he is deriving a good income from it. But I think he does no editing at all, merely prints the papers exactly as received. He has never changed so much as a comma in the three papers in which I have collaborated, (not that any change was required, of course!). He has printed several papers by

Irénée-Marie, in which the most foolish errors of spelling occur, not once but repeatedly. For instance I.-M. always spells the name of E. O. Hughes as Hugues; he invariably omits the umlaut from Grönblad's name, and frequently from those of Lütkenüller and Eürgesen, which is as bad as omitting the accents aigus from his own name. There is rarely any error in the French text, but many in the botanical names, such as Desmidium gracileps for graciliceps. I see that van Oye is 74 years old, one year older than I, and perhaps he has lost much of his former energy, as I have. But any editor ought to catch such errors at first glance.

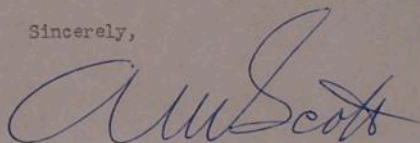
I don't know whether it would do much good to suggest to van Oye that he ought to have such papers gone over by one of the competent people. There is no desmid specialist on the Board of Consulting Editors, though some of them like Ström and Järnevelt and Pearsall have written about them in connection with phytoplankton, many years ago. No doubt van Oye considers himself as good a desmidiologist as anyone else, for he first wrote on them in 1921, when he was at the Botanical Garden in Buitenzorg, and has continued until quite recently. But any one of the editorial board who has ever worked on desmids could see immediately that illustrations such as those of Woodhead and Tweed are completely worthless and that such a paper should be rejected.

Last June van Oye accepted for publication in *Hydrobiologia* a large paper by Scott & Prescott, "Indonesian Desmids", and I am expecting to receive the galley proof at any time now. It describes 526 desmid taxa from Borneo, Sumatra, Bali and Sumatra, of which 29% are new. They are illustrated in 63 full-page plates. The paper was written and illustrated entirely by me, and is my largest and best effort to date. Prescott's collaboration consisted in allowing me the use of his iconograph, for which purpose I spent a week in East Lansing, and in giving me the best part of three days of his time, going over the new taxa, and helping to determine some obscure and doubtful ones.

As a special favor van Oye promised to try and print the paper in eight months from receipt of the manuscript, or sometime next Spring, and I would not like anything to jeopardize this. So if you mention my name to him, I hope you will be able to write in such a way that he will not be antagonized against me.

With my best regards,

Sincerely,



19 xi 60

Mr. A. M. Scott  
2324 Dante Street  
New Orleans, La.

Dear Mr. Scott:

I have written cautioning Dr. Van Oye respecting the papers of Woodhead and Tweed.

However, I think that Dr. Lund has the right of it: Dr. Van Oye as editor has the entire say respecting papers published in HYDROBIOLOGIA. He is a pretty old man, and easy-going. If a paper is submitted through one of the consultative editors, that man can of course decline to forward it to Dr. Van Oye, but that does not prevent the author from sending it direct.

I'm not sure at this long lapse, if the journal was set up by the publisher Junk and Dr. Van Oye selected by them as the editor, or contrariwise. I seem to remember that Dr. Van Oye got the idea and secured Junk as the publisher. In any case control lies with this firm and Dr. VanOye. The group of names on the cover are not a board of control, but really scouts to secure papers for publication and where possible of course persons who can dissuade authors from sending bad papers along.

It is not practicable in scientific circles to block a person from publishing provided he can find for himself a willing editor. Ethically, that is, of course. All one can do is to point out and criticize the errors when one's own papers touch on the same matters. It is not even very practicable to write a critique of a paper such as those of Woodhead and Tweed and get it published. Journals simply don't want such things. The other method just mentioned is the most used.

Sincerely,