



Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation
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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.

Jacob Bigelow
Boston June 13. 1812
Paris Nov 25. 1812

Thos.^r M. Jones Esq
London

Jacob Bigelow, eminent physician of Boston, Mass,
and a distinguished Botanist; founder of
Mt. Auburn Cemetery: b. 1787 d. 1879.

Libbie
3-3-1915

Boston June 13, 1812

Dear Tom

Understanding that you are in or about London where you may remain some time, a prisoner of war or otherwise, I take the liberty to interrupt your tranquillity in the manner following to wit. As in your epistle from Moscow, which by the way was duly answered in the proper time, you proposed some botanical queries respecting plants &c I have since had many & great qualms of conscience for ^{not} having answered those interrogatories in a manner more suitable to the dignity of the subject. For some time past I have been labouring under no small mania for the study of botany & have greatly lamented the want of a fellow student equally keen with yourself. Recollecting that you are in Paris & London & the like,

where you visit fine gardens, attend fine lectures & can procure fine books; your present opportunities may be made exceedingly advantageous to a future prosecution of the study of plants. Any rare plants or seeds which you may bring home from England scientifically packed after the Emperor of Morocco, will be worth their weight in gold. So will collections of dried plants ~~with~~ not indigenous in our country, with their names, which ^{collections} may be easily procured from the gardeners. But above all ~~all~~, the thing we sorely lack in this land of Milk & molasses, is good Botanical books & plates. I should jump out of my skin at the sight of Smith's Exotic Botany, Curtis' Flora Londinensis, & Dr Thurton's lottery book the illustrations of Linnaeus, Willdenow's species plantarum & many others. I have omitted Curtis' Magazine & Powersby's botany because

we have these in the Athenaeum -
Upon the faith of a Mupulman I think
a man might signalize himself without
difficulty among the New Englanders who
are as ignorant of botany as a nation of
Jackasses

Most of the exotic plants which
are to be found here are from the
east & west indies*; you would astonish
the natives with a nosegay from
Africa or New Holland. - Mem. -
take care not to fetch American
plants, i.e. coals to Newcastle -

Yours ever ad
Wigelow

* of devilish few of these
[& devilish few of these]