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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.

A. F. Ridgway Esq.

My dear Sir;

on this Bulls head Seed
Vessel being given to me I wrote to
Sir Wm Hooker and received from him
the following reply. —

" Royal Gardens, Kew,
" Dear Sir. " " Nov 24, 1853 "

" The Seed Vessel of which
" you send the drawings is that of a
" Chinese plant, Trapa natans, or
" Chinese Water Caltrop, sometimes
" called Water Chestnut, and the seeds
" are eaten in the countries where they
" grow. — Mr Smith is glad to hear
" you are among the living, and he hopes
" in good health. — Your Ob^t Serv^t "
" W. J. Hooker "
" Capt. Ford, "

on

On being thus furnished
with the generic name I referred
to my Encyclopædia, and there
found a description of several
Species of Trapa, and a Chinese
one is therein called, Trapa bicornis.
Leaving no doubt on the subject -

As I have been informed
that you have some curious
Seed Vessels, I send this one as
an addition to your collection -
and I am, My dear Sir -

Yours sincerely

J. Ford

Friday

Nov 25. 1853.

If you already possess a Seed
Vessel of this Bulls head kind,
do not return this. - It may
be acceptable to some of your
friends -