



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.

Mr. J. S. Miller -

Curator. Bristol Philos. Institution -



Dear Sir,

I must avail myself of this opportunity to congratulate you upon your appointment as Curator to the Bristol Institution, and to observe in passing that the Directors of that society have been singularly fortunate in meeting with a gentleman who is so competent to undertake the care, to prize, to explain the nature, the connexion, and utility of their collected treasures - I am glad to find that your Botanical party is likely to be so effective - Mr. Miller, I see permits specimens to be selected from his conservatory, this is very liberal, and for the purposes of illustration will be unquestionably a valuable conception: but too much credit must not be given to a plant from cultivation, it may present botanical distinction, but the character and habit are commonly materially altered by the soil and attentions of the gardener - the genus *Erica*. is a manifest example of the deviation from natural character in consequence of cultivation, most of them are natives of a poor, and arid soil, and thus are usually humble in stature, and shabby in appearance, but nursed, pampered, and fed in our stores, they become elegant and beautiful plants - The gramineae, again, become singularly altered in our gardens - you mention Mr. Baxter, as being much engaged in the investigation of the parasitick fungi - those minute plants which ^{are} attached to the leaves of plants; some years past, I hunted out, and delineated many of them, and found them a beautiful and curious race - observing (! thought) that peculiar genera, produced peculiar

species of Fungi - nothing is more difficult than to account for ^{their} propagation,
and origin - The most interesting that I remember at this moment is *Spheria*
biformis - (*Uredo biformis* - Lamark. Flore Française) peculiar to the leaf of *Prunus laurocerasus*)
the common Laurel - These plants, like many of the insect race, especially *Papilio*
acquire a concurrence of circumstances, perhaps a peculiar disposition and temperature
of atmosphere, to produce them - and are by no means to be found annually - Indeed
the whole family of cryptogamia fungi - have afforded me particular pleasure in their
investigation, perhaps the romantic and beautiful situations (the deep woods of
Monmouthshire and Brecon) in which I have spent so many hours in search of them,
the temperate season of the year, and other circumstances, combined with the beauty
of their forms, and colours, may have all contributed to this pleasure, and when I
say that I have delineated, and commented upon between four, & five hundred, of
this fugacious race, you will think me perhaps an industrious Fungist - Few persons
commenced the study of Natural History earlier than myself, I regret to say that
my progress and acquirement have in no way been commensurate with the time
expended; but that study has served to afford me much harmless and rational
amusement - Fortunately for me - public praise was never an object: of late years
ill-health has retarded, and now unremitting head-aches prevent almost entirely
any application to those things, or any of the earlier habits of my life - But I have
ran on so long, till I am sure you are weary - and thus I will only assure you that

with all esteem, I am your well wisher and

friend J. L. Kinagh

Alveston. April 20th - 1824.