



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.

Sir Joseph Banks Bart. P.R.S.

20th Square

with a ~~small~~ ^{small} ~~packet~~ }
packet

London

Oct 25
1791

MS. A. 1. 1. 1.

Drummond Lodge near 485
Savanna La Mar Jamaica
24 July 1794 —

Sir

I have had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 5th Inst. last — I beg you'd accept my best thanks for the care you have taken of the papers I sent you & the honor you have done me in presenting them to the Linnean Society, but I have not yet had the happiness of receiving any letter their President may have written to me — I would have wrote to Doct. Smith by this opportunity but I am not acquainted with his address — May I beg you to inform the Doctor of my not having heard from him? —

I am truly ^{very} your Success in raising the Ferns from the seeds I sent you has not been equal to your wishes.

Their damping off at so early a period gives me room to suspect that, in the directions I gave, I may not have paid sufficient attention to the difference of Climate between the West Indies & Great Britain. — I have sent ^{some} a few seeds of a few species of Ferns which I hope you will receive safe & get Mr. Arton to endeavour to raise ^{them} by a method ^{some} what varied from the former — After raising them by the former manner, it may be proper to begin, before the time the damps usually affect them, to expose them gradually a little more & more to the rays of Sun in the evening & morning, & also in the middle of the day when not too bright till it is known what strength of the Sun's rays they will bear, perhaps they may not only bear but really require the full force of the Sun in your Climate, especially in Winter. It is probable too that less water may be required than I directed; watering them ^{gently} once in two or three days may be sufficient without soaking the pots in a basin of water — Having ^{the} months of the pots something inclined rather than level, that the moisture may not stagnate, may be of use. — The heat they are placed in should be that raised by fire rather than

than by the fermentation of Bark &c. great care must be taken to keep them free from any decayed or mouldy leaves which would soon destroy such tender plants. Small portions of the seeds may be sown in separate pots & treated in different methods, it will soon be found which succeeds best. — To acquire experience in raising foreign Ferns from seed I think it would be an useful Practice to pay some attention to raising the native ferns from seed. Several observations I imagine might occur in the course of such employment that would be of much advantage in propagating ferns from other climates. — The months of ^{April} May & June are certainly the most proper for sowing fern seeds from West Indian climates, & I shall endeavour to send you a small collection by the earliest ship, for I do not doubt but by Diligence you will be successful. I do not know of the seeds sent you now would keep till April and vegetate, but you may try a few. —

I have to offer you my best thanks for the information you have given me concerning the seeds of the Cryptogamous plants. I had not before ever heard of the raising of plants from the seeds of either Ferns or Mosses, nor that their respective dusts were well known to be their real seeds. — I hardly entertain a doubt ~~that~~ ^{that} plants may not be as easily raised from the Dust (farina) of the genus Equisetum as the other Genera of the class, but as I have found none here I have had no opportunity of making a trial — you can easily have it done. If Mr. Dixon would send me a few full ripe heads of the Equisetum arvense & palustre I will try them here.

I must thank you kindly for your promising to remember me when you are naming New West Indian plants, I am sorry it has not been in my power as I intended to send you some specimens ~~and~~

~~moment~~ but I hope your other correspondents will fully supply you, I believe I sent you some Mssoscripts a few years ago!

I had sent a copy of my paper on the seeds of ferns, *Cinchone brachycarpa* & *Quercus polygama* to my good friend Dr. Monro in Edinburgh along with other papers which I showed to his friends, Mr. Anderson I suppose must have seen the paper on fern seed & inserted an abstract from it in the collection called the Bee - Dr. Wright from the same Copies introduced abstracts into the transaction of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. - I have had since the honor of receiving their official thanks & notice that they have admitted me a Non resident Member. -

The Bread-fruit tree & the other plants from the South Seas have the the most promising appearance of fully answering the warmest expectations - We expect some of the breadfruit trees will produce fruit in two years or less. - I have not seen many of them from those Seas. -

I do not know that there are any Sautmeg trees in Island, I heard of one which was said to be destroyed some years ago by a severe storm. - At any rate there is none within my reach, otherwise I would have had great pleasure in sending you specimens of it. -

I hope to have the pleasure of your acquainting me with your success in raising ferns from seed as soon as convenient, I shall with great pleasure give any hint that may occur to me tending to the advancement of that object.

I am Sir with the greatest respect
your most obed^t & affⁿ Serv^t
John Lindsay