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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.

Kensington Gore, near London.
Dec^r. 12th. 1771.

Sir

Reponse à celle du 8. gth.
Repondue le 4 Janvier
et le 8 fut. envoi par le

It gives me infinite pleasure to find that you thought my letter deserved an answer, & least you should think me guilty of unpoliteness in not answering ^{yours} sooner, I beg leave to inform you that although it was dated the 8th Nov^r. it only arrived here the 30th. I immediately went to Mr. Tilson who was greatly charmed with it, & we intend seeing you at Paris in August, but in the meantime will endeavour to answer your queries, & send you every thing you would wish to have, which England produces.

Mr. Miller is now superannuated, & is no longer Gardener at Chelsea, therefore suppose your Strawberries are lost, but will go there to enquire after them; he once had the *Amgidalus orientalis* but it is dead, I am glad you have other English Gentlemen who have cautioned you of his blunders: his Dictionary has been generally used here, because there was no other on such a plan, & many of the principal booksellers were concerned in it, which in England will always sell a book, however imperfect it is.

Your Almanac will be an agreeable present, & shall request another for Mr. Tilson; however trifling the varieties of the Strawberry ^{ries}

may be, I shall with pleasure cultivate them all, for I have as much enthusiasm for their varieties, as the most curious Florist in Holland can have for his Tulips & Hyacinths, for I intend planting some in pots to shew them more distinct & commodious than if only in beds.

I receive with the respect it deserves, your offer about the plates, I must consult some of the principal booksellers here, before it is possible to give you a positive answer, & must know how much you think the plates will cost, but would not they be better in 4^{to} the size of the Pomona Gallica, than in folio? with the text of the same size, for, for the first year or two I would sell none without the plates, & if you intend them to be coloured, which I think they should be, they need not be ^{quite} so elegantly engraved, I hope you will excuse these hints, but I know the booksellers here will say, that they may be printed much cheaper in 4^{to}. than in folio.

It is only the eight pages relating to the Strawberries, that I intend reprinting, as there are several errors in it, & after I receive your almanack & next letter, I hope to receive many additions & improvements from your kind assistance. Of my Botanist I have printed one thousand, & the demand is so great already, that the impression of the two first vol. is nearly sold, & my bookseller tells me he shall want another edition immediately, however I shall greatly correct & improve it, before it is reprinted, for the description of the trees & shrubs is not near so complete as it should be.

I always intended the very instant my work was finished, to come to France to have some assistance in adding the french names, in the same manner as the english; & to give an edition of it there for the use of the Continent. M^r. Tilson had lent me your Manuel Bot. although I did not mention I had seen it in my other letter, & shall particularly esteem that copy which you intend me as a present, you might be very certain, that after I had once seen it, you would be the only gentleman in France to whom I should apply for assistance, about the french names, & ^{only} omitted mentioning it untill I had the pleasure of hearing from you: every thing in my power or my abilities you may freely command of me, but you will please to be a little more particular, of the articles you want to be informed about, & before we meet my four volumes will be completed, & then shall be a better judge how to proceed about it, but think myself greatly obliged to you for the offer of your recommendation.

You are so obliging as to desire to know the expence of your letter to me, I believe you will find by the treaty subsisting between our two monarchs, that yours receives the postage for all english letters sent to France, & that ours likewise receives it, of all french letters coming here, consequently your Intendant General could not make it pass free to here; the price is ten english pence for each letter, & the same for the envelope or cover, or for every separate piece of paper in it, consequently I paid thirty pence for it, & as there were three separate pieces of paper besides the cover, ^{they} had

known it, it would have cost forty pence, however I beg that may never deter you from writing a long letter, as yours are too valuable to repine at the expence of postage, & without the cover they are always very much damaged. if a packet weighs several ounces, we pay forty pence for each ounce.

Mr. Tison & I are equally as curious about Roses as you are about Strawberries, in my first vol. I have enumerated only 80 varieties but we have since encreased them to about 140, although all the varieties are not yet in our possession, could you procure us one or two plants of each sort of the inclosed list, it would be of great consequence to our collection, the price they cost will not be an object with us, or if you would send us the most esteemed catalogues your kingdom produces, we might perhaps discover more sorts, it is no objection to us, their being the single uncultivated Roses, if they are but varieties not described by us.

We have ships coming constantly both from Dunkirk & Calais to London, but more from Dunkirk, as the Calais ship sails only once a fortnight, & the Calais Paquet from there to Dover will not take a parcel, unless it belongs to some person on board, therefore which place suits your conveniency best is almost equal to me. please always to Direct for me at Kensington Gore both plants & letters, for the Captain will immediately give me notice of the ships arrival in the Thames, to fetch the parcel away, I refer you to my postscript for ^a further answer what I propose sending to you, in the next sheet ^{also} you will find an answer to your remarks.

I shall wait with great impatience for the pleasure of hearing again from you & have the honour of subscribing myself with the greatest esteem & respect,

Your much obliged &
obedient humble servant.

Rich^d. Weston.