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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.

from Bagnall
The School of Rural Economy,
University of Oxford.

20. ix. 28.

Dear Prof. Eames

Thank you very much indeed
for your very helpful letter & for Dr. Fisher's
reprint of your own.

I am afraid that our work is going
very slowly; Captain Batten-Pool is
handicapped by war-wounds & ill-health, &
I have a very great deal of teaching,
preparation & essay-correction to do, along
with the many odd jobs which are inevit-
able in a botanical laboratory however
small, if it is to be well-ordered.

I also, have discovered that it is
impossible to interpret floral morphology as a
whole without first understanding the anatomy
of the several kinds of floral organs. I have
read a good deal of the work on this
subject, but feel the necessity of doing a little
investigation for myself.

I have just returned from the British Association Meeting in Glasgow, where I heard Prof. McLean Thompson, speak about the fallacy of attempting to interpret the composition of the gynoecium on its vascular structure, which, he said, meant nothing, at all morphologically & phylogenetically. Miss Saunders replied from her point of view, & attempted to show that the gynoecium of the Leguminosae was composed of two carpels, Prof. McLean Thompson having demonstrated, from a developmental series of sections, that there was one - he disregarded the vascular structure. I couldn't help thinking that a combination of Prof. McLean Thompson's developmental series & Miss Saunders' anatomical investigations were what was needed. Dr. Hamshaw Thomas agreed with Miss Saunders that vascular anatomy of carpels did count for very much; he also agreed with Prof. McLean Thompson that there were not 2 carpels involved in the structure of the legume; his opinion was that there were more likely 3!

I agree — with all respect to Miss Saunders' Seniority; She was my Science "don" at Newnham! — But She has been carried away by her discoveries in the Cruciferae; I cannot see the need for complicating matters in almost every other family because they behave in an unusual manner — it is, as you say, absurd. She now sees a complicated structure in the Spiraeeas & maintains that in Filipendula, each of the 5-15 "carpels" is really a whole carpel, one fertile & the other sterile; in other genera of the Spiraeeae group, — & in the ^{generally} Pomoidae. She maintains that the ovaries are composed of 1 sterile, & two $\frac{1}{2}$ fertile, carpels. I revolt at her interpretation of the Primulas as having

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Thank you so much for your offer of help; I hope we shall be able to meet for discussion when you come to England. I greatly look forward to it.

Yours Sincerely,
Helen Bancroft