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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.

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from Johnston

Stromness Hotel,
Stromness, Orkney, Scotland,
16th December 1923.

Dear Sir David Brew,

I was very glad to receive your last letter
on 26th December 1922, and to hear all your news.
I was also glad to read in the "Aberdeen Press and Journal"
of 8th and 10th December 1923 the account of the unveiling
of the Trail Memorial Tablet by yourself on 7th December
at Aberdeen, and a review of the Trail Memorial Volume.
I have written to Aberdeen to see whether I can obtain a
copy of this volume by purchase. Had I known that it
was to be published by subscription, I would certainly
have subscribed to its publication. Miss MacQuibben
of 24 & Union Street very kindly sent me a present
of Professor Dickson's "Flora of Aberdeen" together with MacQuibben's
"Flora of Aberdeen" bound in one volume, which had
belonged to her father, the late Dr C. H. MacQuibben, who
died last year. I was very glad to get and read these
two floras, as I had failed to obtain copies of them from
second-hand bookellers. I spent last winter in Stromness
and was kept very busy reading books, and mounting
botanical specimens, of which I mounted nearly a
thousand sheets during the past twelve months. I
spent a fortnight in Edinburgh last April with
my brother & sister and twice Miss Marie Stuart.

with the rest of whom I went to Glasgow to see
the International Football Match between England
and Scotland according to Association Rules. I also read
a paper on "Additions to the Flora of Orkney" at a meeting
of the Botanical Society, which is being published in the
Society's "Transactions". On my way back to Orkney I left the
train at Leamington and had a most enjoyable six days' tour
by motor bus and car through the most beautiful and fertile
Lancashire, through magnificent, grand, mountainous country,
with numerous lakes and rivers of all sizes, an
ideal country for a motorist and sportsman. I visited
Cape Wrath, the Smoo Cave near Durness, which was visited
by Sir Walter Scott in 1814 and described in his "Journal".
I visited round the beautiful shores of the Loughborough
arms of the sea called Rhye of Durness, Loch Eriboll,
A Rhye of Tongue to Thurso in Caithness from which I
proceeded to Stromness on 30th April. At Fould Head
near Durness I collected specimens of the Cushion Pink
(Silene acaulis, Linn.) in flower in the end of April,
growing on the top of the rocky cliffs, 100 feet above sea-
level. In Orkney also it mainly descends to the sea shore
and flowers much earlier than on the Highland Hills,
where Bettingham gives July as the flowering season.
During May & June I traversed in search of the
North and South Isles of Orkney, and besides collecting

botanical specimens, I made lists of all the wild plants I saw growing on each island. Most of the islands I visited by motor or sailing boats were uninhabited, and it was very interesting watching all over these islands during the nesting season of the wild birds, and noting their nests, eggs, &c. in addition to my botanical work. As many of these islands are in out-of-the-way places, I brought back the notes of several species that were not in flower or fruit and which I could not identify, and grew them in flower-pots, &c. at Stromness, and then when the plants were in flower and fruit, I took them up and pressed them for my herbarium. In this way I have been able to identify the species. This is a good plan when collecting specimens of *Callitriche*, which require the ripe fruit for identifying the species to which they belong.

I spent three weeks at Edinburgh in July with Mrs. Miss Stuth, and attended the King & Queen's garden party at Holyrood Palace on 11th July, when there were about 4,000 guests present from all parts of Scotland. Fortunately the weather was fine. Miss Stuth came back with me to Orkney in the end of July and we spent a very pleasant month at the Burray Hotel, Burray, where we had some trout fishing.

in the Loch of Boddinua, and I botanized.
We then spent a week in Kirkwall, and another
enjoyable week on a visit to our friends the Beckins
at the Hall of Tankerness. Miss Stuck went back
to Edinburgh on 13th Sept. & I returned to Stromness,
where I have been busy ever since labelling and
mounting botanical specimens, and writing up my notes
on the flora of the different islands. I have finished
reading the whole of Sir Walter Scott's novels and
Dr Haysden Jackson's "Linnæus", in which last book I
was much interested. Having read Sir Charles Lyell's
"Antiquity of Man", "Principles of Geology", and "Sketches of
Elements of Geology", with much interest and profit,
I am now deep in Sir Archibald Geikie's "Text-Book
of Geology", which I find extremely interesting. I also
peruse also I reading Hutton's Tom in Scotland in 1809
and Gilfillan's Life of Burns & Burns Poems & Songs,
which I have never read right through before. The weather
in Orkney during the past summer and autumn has been
very cold, wet & stormy, and some of the early crops is still
standing up in the fields. I have not succeeded in ob-
taining a suitable house in my native parish of Bressay. Dr
W. James Forbes can well gladly let me have his former
residence at Scaurholm on loan, but the tenant of the farm is
not willing to give it up & live in a smaller house. With thanks
agents to yourself & Lady Pringle, and trusting you both a very
Happy Christmas & New Year, I remain sincerely, Henry H. Johnston