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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.

to Agnes Chase, 17 II 1926

from Fran Haeckel, announcing
death of Prof Haeckel

Elbersee 17 Februar. 26

HITCHCOCK A. CASE LIBRARY
Smithsonian Institution

Meine liebe Freundin!

Ich bin ganz unglücklich, mein lieber
guter Mann ist heute nacht um
2 Uhr verschieden. Er war 14 Tage
krank, Lungenentzündung, Myo-
Hardition, Apoplexie. Er litt an-
fangs an Schüttelfrost, dann gesellte
sich ein furchtbar quälender Dia-
gustus hinzu. Er war so unendlich
lieb u. gut u. geduldig, hoffte lange
auf Genesung. Ich kann mir nicht vor-
stellen, wie ich weiter leben soll ohne
meinen Mann u. ich mache mir nun
grosse Vorwürfe, dass ich ihm so viel
über das Leben hier vorgeklagt habe,
was seinem kranken Herzen gewiss

auch geschadet hat. Auch meine
Tochter ist tröstlos, wir weinen
den ganzen Tag u. seuffzen, wenn nur
der gute Vater noch lebte! Wie gern
wollte ich von jetzt ^{an} auch in Altsee
heiter u. zufrieden leben, mit ihm,
wenn er mir zurückgegeben werden
könnte! Der Schrecken über diesen
Verlust ist uns in alle Glieder gefahren,
wir sind wie gelähmt. Ich las
ihm etwas aus der Zeitung vor,
er war bei voller Besinnung,
der Arzt hatte mich versichert,
es bestehe keine Gefahr, er hörte
ruhig zu, plötzlich 2-3 rasch hinter
einander folgende Athemzüge u.
es war vorbei, alles vorbei!

Der letzte ausführlicher, interessan-
ter Brief hatte ihm ~~ihm~~ grosse Freude
beritet u. er sprach während seiner

Krankheit öfters davon, er wolle ihn
gleich nach seiner Genesung beant-
worten. Herzlichen Dank für Brief
samt Inhalt. Während seiner gan-
zen Krankheit gab's keinen Sonnen-
tag, heute, da er tod ist, sieht
man die Sonne, aber zum erstenmal
macht sie mich noch trauriger.
Liebste Freundin, für dieses Leid gibt
es wohl keinen Trost als die Zeit u.
da bin ich schon zu alt dazu,
Ich hoffe u. bitte, dass Sie mir Ihre
Freundschaft u. Liebe erhalten,
ich werde wohl auch bald
meinem lieben Manne folgen,
aber seit ich dem Tod in's schultz
gesehen, graut mir recht vor
ihm, welche Entsetzen, wenn sie
den Lieben, Guten forttragen werden

u. ich ihn nie nie mehr werde sehen
nie mehr seine liebe Stimme werde
hören können. Ich hatte mich so sehr
gefreut eine Zeitlang mit ihm im son=
nigen Süden verleben zu können, hat=
te gehofft, dass die Sonne unsere Lei=
den heilen werde wie eins am u.
traurig wird nun für mich das
Frühjahr, der Sommer werden.
Bitte, teilen sie traurige Nachricht
auch Herrn Hitchcock u. allen Ver=
ehrern meines lieben Mannes mit.
Wenn ich nicht meinen Kindern einen
neuen Schmerz damit bereiten wür=
de, möchte ich mir sofort das Leben,
das von nun an ganz wertlos für mich ist,
nehmen.

1000 herzliche Grüsse sendet Ihre
unglückliche Freundin
Betty Plackel

Translation of letter from Mrs. Hackel to Mrs. Agnes Chase

Attersee, 17 February 1926

My dear friend:

I am desperate; my dear beloved husband has passed away this morning at 2 o'clock a.m. He had been ill for two weeks with pneumonia, myocarditis and apoplexy. At the beginning he suffered from shortness of breath which later was accompanied by an agonizing singultus. He was so indefatigably dear, good and patient and, for quite a while, he hoped to recover. I cannot imagine how I can continue living without him and now I reproach myself with complaining so often about my life here which might have hurt his ill heart even more. My daughter is inconsolable too; we cry together all day long and sigh, "If the dear father were only still alive." How I would like to live in happiness and content together with him from now on, even here in Attersee, if he could only be returned to me! The shock of this loss has practically paralyzed us. I read to him from the newspaper; he listened completely conscious and the doctor told me that there was no danger, when suddenly 2 or 3 spasmic respirations ended his life forever. Everything was over!

Your last interesting and detailed letter made him very happy and he mentioned it often during his illness. He planned to answer your letter right after his recovery. Thank you very much for your letter and its contents. There was never any sunshine during the period of his illness, but today, after his passing, one can see the sun again. But for the first time in my life the sunshine makes me sader.

My dearest friend, I think there is no consolation for this grief other than time, but I am too old for that. I hope for and beg you to continue giving me your friendship and your love until I die too. I think I will follow my beloved husband soon, but since I have come face to face with death I am frightened. What a terror when they will carry my beloved one away and I will never see him again, never hear his warm voice again. I was looking forward to spending some time together with him in the sunny South and hoped that the sun would cure us of our sufferings. How lonely and sad springtime and summer will be for me.

Please pass this sad news on to Mr. Hitchcock and all other admirers of my husband. If it were not for the fact that I would provide my children with another grief, I would commit suicide right away since my life from now on is valueless.

A thousand kind regards sent to you by your unhappy friend,

Betty Hackel