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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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Ball, Carleton R.

BOTANICAL BUCCANEERING AND AMERICAN SALICES

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Science is universal. It is non-national and inter-national. Botanical science is no exception. When new lands are discovered, botanists from older countries explore and describe their plant resources. Thus world knowledge grows. In many older countries, the natural sciences are not well developed. The plants of such countries continue to be studied by botanists from better equipped countries. This is as it should be. Much of the ~~xxx~~ work is done by specialists who have given long years of study to thier groups. This major obligation is that each shall know what is being done by others in ~~thier~~ his field.

On the other hand, there are many countries, highly developed scientifically, whose plants have been studied for 100 years or more and are relatively adequately covered. Any foreign botanist who describes new species from such countries obligates himself: (a) to be a specialist in the genus invaded, (b) to be reasonably familiar with the species of that genus in that country and with the literature describing them, and (c) to have access to adequate herbarium material. To publish new species from ~~a~~ well-covered ~~xxx~~ ^{an area} botanically without knowledge of the previously published species, without reference to available publications, and without consulting adequate material, is not taxonomic botany but botanical buccaneering. A buccaneer, be it said, is a pirate, a robber.

The purpose of this paper is to point out some flagrant cases of such piracy in the field of American Salices during the last few decades.

1. Germany. In the 8 years from August, 1895, to November, 1903, Dr. Otto von Seemen, of Berlin, published three papers () containing descriptions of 8 allegedly new species of North American willows (one was from the Asiatic side of Bering Strait). Dr. von Seemen was an expert on the willows of Central Europe and presumably of ~~Japan~~ ^{Japan} also. He was unfamiliar with American species and, neither then nor later, made any attempt at a general study of them. The necessary literature was all available to him in Berlin, together with creditable accumulations of American herbarium material.

His first paper (), in 1895, contained descriptions of five assertedly new species of which three were North American. One species was from the Asiatic side of Bering Strait but practically all species ~~are~~ are common to both sides and the islands between. He describes them and discusses their relationships at some length but cites only scanty material. His Bering species (S. behringica) is a doubtful variety of the circumpolar S. polaris L.

S. ~~Manibetzi~~ of Mexico probably is a good species, closely related to S. las-
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iolepis Benth.

S. saskatchawana is an exact synonym of S. arbusculoides Andersson (1867), well known, widely published, and frequently collected Arctic species, ~~but von Seemen~~

does not mention ~~ed by von Seemen~~ ^{ed by von Seemen} ~~the latter~~ in his discussion.
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In September, 1900, Dr. ~~van~~ Seemen published () the descriptions of two allegedly new species of Colorado willows from the 1898 collections of Baker, Earle, and Tracy. His first, S. pseudolapporum, is a part of the complex covered by S. glaucops Andersson (1868). Other names applied to it are S. desertorum Richardson, S. glauca L. and American varieties, S. Seemannii Rydberg, S. Wyomingensis Rydberg, etc. ~~Van~~ Seemen compares his "species" to S. lapporum of Europe and to the circumpolar S. arctica Pallas, which last belongs to another section of the genus. He makes no mention of the long published, well known, and widely distributed S. glauca L. and S. glaucops Andersson, to which ~~it~~ complex his plant obviously belonged. His second species, S. aemulans, is merely a renaming of S. saximontana Rydberg (April, 1899).

In 1902, Dr. C. F. Baker, then of Stanford University, collected a series of plants which were giving labels reading: "Plants of the Pacific Slope". In November, 1903, there appeared a paper () by Dr. ~~van~~ Seemen containing the descriptions of three alleged new species of willows. All three are from the Baker series and all three are renamings of well known American species or varieties. His S. Bakeri is S. lasiolepis ^{Benth}antham, his S. franciscana is S. lasiolepis Bigelovii (Torrey 18) Bebb, 18 ., while his S. ormsbyensis is S. lutea Watsoni Bebb (18). His paper mentions no published American species, indicates in no way the relationships of these willows, and gives not a single reason for supposing them to be new to science.

Those not acquainted with Dr. Baker may wonder why he felt it necessary to send his willows to a German botanist for determination, especially in the case of common California forms. Others may wonder, not only why a German botanist persisted in describing as new the willows of a country with which he was completely unfamiliar, but why in this case he departed completely from his usual custom of indicating, however erroneously, the relationships of his assertedly "new" species, each of which was based on a single fragmentary

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Baker collection. A footnote by Baker (p. 634) states that: "Specimens illustrating these species were distributed in the spring of 1903 under these names to all the greater public herbaria of the world" One of the "species" was named for Baker. He was in a serious professional jam at home, resulting from circumstances not wholly creditable to him. He needed some scientific bolstering. Did he find some one willing to give it? "Birds of a feather"?

The net results of these three invasions of unfamiliar American salicology are six synonyms (United States), one possible variety (Bering Strait), and one presumably valid species (Mexico). This totals 81 per cent of false alarms and 19 percent of possibly productive work. Quite a record!