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April 4, 1923.

Mr. Walter Deane,
29 Brewster Street,
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Mr. Deane:-

I am at last returning your specimens of Penstemon from New England, and trust that these will arrive in time to be of some aid to you. With our move to new quarters in this institution, and with strenuous work in labelling and sorting into sets our Colombian Collection of last year, other matters have been, necessarily, put aside.

I note with interest the occurrence of specimens of Penstemon grandiflorus, P. laevigatus and P. tubiflorus in New England. All are common species in their native homes; but all seem to be rare introductions in the north-east. I have never had the fortune to find any of these occurring as introduced plants. It seems curious that Penstemon laevigatus and P. digitalis should be so much confused, when their behaviour as "weeds" is so different. Digitalis, first known to Nuttall on his expedition to Arkansas, has now become our common northeastern species, while laevigatus, known from Virginia before 1750, and abundant as a native plant in the southeastern States and lower eastern Mississippi Valley, is still very scarce outside of its natural range.

I note that you have no specimens in Penstemon pallidus, another species introduced from the middle Mississippi Valley. This differs strikingly from P. hirsutus, with which it is often confused, in having its corolla small, white, lined with violet, and its leaves softly pubescent; while hirsutus, our native, western species, has longer corollas which are purple, tipped with white and unlined, while the midrib of the leaves beneath, and the lower part of the stem, are hirsute with coarse hairs. A good specimen of pallidus is one collected for the New England Botanical Club, from Centreville, Barnstable county, Massachusetts, June 10, 1916, by Mr. Child and others.

Thanking you for the opportunity to consult your specimens, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Francis W. Pennell
Curator of Plants.

I trust that you are quite
recovered from health -
Flu is a trying thing.
FWP/EEC



Pennell, Francis W. 1923. "Pennell, Francis Whittier Apr. 4, 1923." *Walter Deane correspondence*

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